

Rio Brazos Master Naturalist Chapter Meeting

Dec. 4, 2014 – Cleburne State Park

Program: There was no program since it was the Christmas party.

Guests: Dawn Janez and Jeff Titus, rangers at Cleburne State Park, were our guest at our meeting and Cathy Crocker in turn thanked them for allowing us to be guests at the facilities of Cleburne State Park.

Thank you and presentations:

- Wendy Moore presented Robert Theimer with a card signed by the advanced training participants at Big Bend National Park thanking him for his excellent work in securing the two days of advanced training.
- Dave Moore then presented Robert Theimer with the official letter from President Barack Obama commending him on reaching 4,000 volunteer hours. Dave pointed out that this accomplishment is the same as working full time for 2 years. He also presented him with a presidential pin.
- Dave Moore recognized Jake Balmuth for his honorable mention award that he received in the adult category of the photo contest sponsored by Hagerman Wildlife Refuge and showed the winning picture to the group.

Election of new officers:

- Bill Diehnelt, nominating committee chair, announced the proposed slate of officers for 2015-2016. They were Dana Inbody for president, Robert Theimer for vice president, Linda Diehnelt for treasurer and Scott Taylor for secretary. Then he asked if there were any nominations from the floor. There were not. He then made a motion to accept the proposed slate of officers. Cathy Crocker seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Training Committee Report:

- Robert Theimer said that classes in 2015 will start in January and run once a month through September.

Outreach Committee Report:

- The newly formed education subcommittee will be placed under the Outreach Committee. Billy Teels has agreed to continue to chair this committee. He proposed that each of the subcommittee heads should give an update in their area at each meeting. There are still a few positions to be filled. The next meeting of the education subcommittee will be on Jan. 7, 2015 at the ANC library.
- Billy Teels said there will be a first Saturday bird walk at the ANC on Dec 6 and Jan 3, 2015 at dawn.
- Billy Teels said the deadline for submitting articles for the newsletter is Jan. 20, 2015.

- Henry Bogusch said that the eco area program at the McGregor House in Cleburne is winding down. The last job for the students will be line the area with rocks.
- Tessa Chenoa-Owenby reported that at Meridian State Park they have gotten some plants catalogued for the herbarium. She also said that they are open to have Master Naturalists teach anything we want. There theme for the coming year is water and that could include the effects of the drought.
- El Tesoro is looking for more help on Dec. 6, 2014 with their Breakfast with Santa. They are looking for help with nature walks and arts and crafts projects.
- Cathy Crocker said that a Friends of Cleburne State Park group is forming. The group will partner with the park. If anyone is interested in joining there is a sign-up sheet. They just got a grant that very morning and are still working on their non-profit status to really get going. She said they will go through the process of becoming a partner with the Master Naturalists so that volunteer hours will count. She also reported that a new chapter of the Dutch Oven Society is starting at Cleburne State Park. The meeting will be on Jan. 17, 2015 near the meeting room and will begin at 9:00 AM. They will meet from September through May on the 3rd Saturday of the month. The annual first day hike on Jan. 1, 2015 will begin at 2:00. There were close to 80 participants last year so if anyone can help, contact either Cathy or Jim Crocker.
- Karen Langdon said all the proofs (except for the map) for the new signs at ANC are now ready for proofing and editing.
- Chris Inbody said he is continuing to develop the website for the education resources storage. He asked members to continue to submit ideas for improvements.
- Bill Diehnelt said that he will be planning another workday at the ANC to work on the bird blind/water feature for the 2nd Saturday in January, weather permitting. One of the jobs will be installing the hardie board.

Membership Report:

- Wanda Riley said it is very important to submit volunteer hours now. The year-end reports are due January 15, 2015 and the hours are also needed to be able to order the appropriate service pins. She said there is a new reporting system coming and will report back as more information becomes available. It will be easy for reporting hours but somewhat difficult for approving them. It will require hours to be logged online within 45 days or they will not be counted.

Notices:

- Valerie Tabor said thank you to Dagmar Higgins, Nancy Theimer, Maryann Matthews and Cathy Crocker for the wonderful table decorations and to Scott Taylor for the dragonflies.

Wendy M. Moore

Secretary