

Hays Master Naturalist Board Meeting
Sept. 10, 2009 7:00 pm
Camp Jacob Watershed Education Center
Wimberley, Texas

Attending: President Dixie Camp, Treasurer Larry Calvert, Secretary Mary Arizpe, Training Committee Chair Mimi Boelter, Membership Chair Beth Ramey, Newsletter Chair Art Arizpe, Volunteer Project Chair Walt Krudop, Host Committee Chair Jean McMeans, TPNWD Sponsor Lee Ann Linam, chapter member Leo Butler.

Not attending: Vice President Ben Adair, Past President Dale Shively, Advanced Training Chair Betty Finley, Outreach Committee Chair Susan Nenney.

Dixie called the meeting to order at 7:12. The agenda and the August minutes were approved.

Officer Reports

President

Dixie reported that we may not have an extension agent for the rest of the year. She talked about the difficulties caused by not having an agent. Hays county poses problems for an agent because there is ranching, and agriculture as well as suburban needs. So far no one has applied for the job. She called Michelle for support and try to get help for site visits.

Vice-President

Dixie gave the vice president report. The September 24th chapter meeting will be a potluck dinner of salads and cold food. 2-3 notices need to be sent that include Ben or Tom's email addresses so people can RSVP. The October 22nd chapter meeting will be a field trip to the Fish Hatchery. 72 mugs with logos were ordered at \$3.18 each. This is over the amount budgeted for the mugs. We can sell them as long as the funds are returned to the organization.

Past President/Historian

Dixie also gave the past president/historian report. Dale has contacted Andy, Lance, and Charles to be on the historian committee. Dale has an outline for the historical information that he wants to put on the website.

Treasurer

Larry asked if there were any questions about the treasurer's report. There were none. He said that we received a \$25 memorial donation for Alleen Barnett. Do we put the money in general funds or should we use it for something special? Larry will add a line to the bottom of the budget. Larry will write about it and Art will put the piece in the newsletter. Larry will also let Richard know and write a thank you note to the donor. It's almost time to pay dues for 2010. Is there an official due date for dues to be paid? Members can pay at the gala for the upcoming year. Suggestions were made as to how to get people to pay their dues. Could re-certification be withheld if dues aren't paid? Walt made a motion that members get a \$5.00 price break on their dues if they pay before January 1st. Beth seconded. The motion failed because people didn't think the reduced fee would make a difference in whether or not members paid their dues.

Secretary

Due to the number of bounced emails and the fact that there are over 200 members on the email list but fewer than 80 have paid dues, Mary asked if it would be alright to send out an email asking people to respond if they wanted to be dropped from the Master Naturalist email list. The consensus was that it would be fine as long as the people who want to get master naturalist email don't need to do anything. The people who want to be dropped must respond. Mary will send a list of problem email addresses to Beth to see if Beth has working addresses in her database.

TPWD Sponsor

LeeAnn will hold a frog walk after the board meeting.

Membership

Beth will be the chair of the awards committee. The awards to be given are in the operating handbook. Dale and Walt will be good sources of information for this. Ray Franklin would be a good candidate for a lifetime award. He is always willing to help. He does site visits and takes the rain simulator around and gives talks about it. Through September 6th there have been about 3200 volunteer hours and 600 advanced training hours. Beth asked that a notice go out that October 20th will be the cutoff date to turn in hours if people plan to get their certification awards at the gala.

Advanced Training

Betty approved 8 advanced trainings this month.

Training Committee

Mimi reported that Jean and Leah worked on the application for next year. It includes information on background checks. The application letter has been revised and is ready for review by the training committee and then the board. We need to appoint a training committee coordinator for next year. Dixie is working on this. Mimi turned in a grant application for 2 models—a watershed model and an aquifer model. She will hear if she got the grant in November. The models will be housed at the extension office with 1 of our rainfall simulators. We may conduct training on how to use the models at chapter meetings.

The class is going to Bamberger Ranch on September 12th. The class members will provide their own transportation. The class on September 26th is the butterfly class at Freeman Ranch. LeeAnn will see if the 4-H-ers want to attend this class. There is a site visit on the September 29th.

There are currently 27 members in the class. They like the idea of combining graduation with the gala.

Newsletter

Art worked with Dale on "The Naturalist View". Beth will write the column for next month. Jean and Art still need to contribute a column.

Art worked with Minette Marr on the volunteer project article about the Wildflower Center. He recapped the projects he has already reported on and asked for suggestions for future articles. Suggested projects included EmilyAnn Theatre, Ecofest, and the San Marcos Greenbelt Alliance.

Outreach

Ecofest will be September 17. It will be held at KAP school. Master Naturalists will have their own room for people giving talks. These talks include birding, rain barrels, kids and nature, and finding native plants. Jane, Cara, and Ray will be speaking and Ray will have the rainfall simulator. The contact person for Ecofest is Louis Parks at 512-289-8666 and louis.parks@gmail.com.

The Speaker's bureau will have its first meeting on September 9th. Jane, Jackie, Jean, Cara, and Susan are members. They will establish parameters, possible topics, and future steps to be taken.

They will:

- establish a library of materials
- encourage speakers to travel in pairs
- develop programs 15-20 minutes long
- make sure the speakers know their audiences
- not promote personal businesses
- have power point programs and visuals
- provide practical information
- wear nametags identifying themselves as Master Naturalists

Possible topics include:

- This ain't Houston
- 10 things I learned as a Master Naturalist
- Xeriscape with natives
- A walking tour of the Patsy Glenn Bird Refuge
- Backyard habitat
- The truth about trees

They will borrow equipment such as projectors until they see if there is enough demand to purchase their own.

The next steps include making draft presentations, critiquing presentations, and promoting the availability of speakers. Donations to the chapter will be welcomed but the speakers will not be paid.

The focus will be on making presentations to home owner's associations, chambers of commerce, and developers. Susan and Jean will give a talk at the state meeting on how to develop an outreach plan. They will ask other chapters how they set up their speakers bureaus but they want to keep topics specific to our area.

Host Committee

The combined gala and graduation will be November 20th. The city of Wimberley is taking over the Community Center. They will honor our date for the Gala but they won't waive the requirement for security guards. The number of guards we need to pay depends on the number of people at the event.

Since the gala is being combined with graduation it was decided that the graduates will sit together with the chapter members seated around them. We talked about having a slide show of statistics. Dale put this together last year. Michelle should have a report for the state meeting so we can get it from her.

Volunteer Projects

Walt, Larry, and Beth are working on the background check information. Richard Parrish has been out of town so they haven't gone forward with any implementation. There are 2 parts to implementation. 1. informing potential trainees during the information and application process and 2. informing current members. Current members will be informed with a letter before they are asked to pay dues for the upcoming year. They will be told that the chapter will pay the cost for the background check. The letter will include contact information in case members have questions.

Beth said that currently the only time working with children is mentioned is on the volunteer project screening request. Forms, including the class application, will need to be revised. Walt will call Fred Burrell at the North Texas chapter and ask for copies of their forms.

The next board meeting will be Oct. 8, 2009 at 7:00 pm at Jacob's Well. The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 pm.