



Hays County Master Naturalist

November 18, 2003
Meeting Minutes

The meeting was held at the Extension Office and preceded by a Pot-Luck supper. Fourteen members were present.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by President Dell Hood. He recognized the three graduates of the 2003 class who were present. Winifred Simon presented the slate of officers for the coming year: President, Dell Hood; Vice President, Randy Moss; Secretary, Betty Watkins, Treasurer, Winifred Simon. Dell called for nominations from the floor. Dave Schwartz moved to accept the slate as presented. The motion was seconded by Joe Piazza and passed by voice vote.

Dell reported on the State Convention. Over two hundred Master Naturalists attended. There were a number of meetings of different groups and a variety of Advanced Training Options were available. Joe Piazza noted that the State Master Naturalist State Curriculum is to be published in January. The Curriculum Committee will decide whether or not to use this Curriculum. Betty Watkins reported on several sessions on Nature Interpretation and Environmental Education that she attended.

Joe Piazza reported on the Class of 2003. Fifty individuals started the course and forty completed the program, twenty-three of which had attended or made up all classes. The class completed over 1600 volunteer hours. The projects included wildlife rescue, trail building, extending a Native Plant Walk at St. Stevens Church, working at the Wildflower Center, and clearing the San Marcos River of exotic vegetation. The end-of-class survey indicated that meetings held away from the Extension Center were preferred. The Curriculum Committee will meet the first Tuesday in December. Applications and publicity will begin on December 15, 2003 and continue until January 14, 2004. The first class will be held on February 10, 2004.

The December meeting will be a joint Holiday Party with the Master Gardeners held on Thursday, December 18 at 7:00 PM.

Dell noted that the State Program requires pre-approval by the Executive Board for all Volunteer Projects so that they will be covered by Liability Insurance.

Some suggestions for projects and cooperating groups for 2004 were Aquarena Springs, San Marcos River Foundation, National Fish Hatchery (Paula Power), Bamberger Ranch, site visits and other activities for the Extension Office, Wild Basin Nature Center, Old Tunnel Bat Sanctuary, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, the Wimberley Birding Society, and Knox Ranch.

Dell stated that the policy of the Hays County Chapter is that volunteer hours counted for any other non-profit agency may not as Master Naturalist Volunteer Hours.

The floor was opened to a discussion of Advanced Training opportunities provided by the Chapter. The consensus was that Advanced Training should be related to long-term or on-going Volunteer Projects. Jamie Kerschoff noted the changing demographics of the area and wondered how we could get more Hispanics and other minorities involved. Randy Moss suggested that Advance Training would have to have more than one focus to accommodate members' different objectives. He suggested holding fewer meetings with speakers and more on-the-job training in conjunction with volunteer projects.

Joe Piazza presented a list of possible meeting places that are more centrally located than the Extension Office. Suggestions included the Wimberley Senior Center, Casa Loma Restaurant, Pioneer Village, Wimberley Library, Jacob's Well, and the Dripping Springs Library.

Winifred Simon reminded that she is accepting dues for 2004. Betty Watkins added that she is taking Annual Membership forms.

Dell announced that the next meeting will be held on January 22, 2004.

Joe Piazza moved to adjourn. Motion carried.