

Rio Brazos Master Naturalist Chapter

July 7, 2011

Program: None

Presentation made to Joe and Karen Langdon in recognition of their continued support and allowing us to hold meetings on their property and feeding us all at the same time.

Business:

No June Business meeting

Committee Reports:

Training Committee: Robert Theimer

Robert reports the 7 students completed the training. The Ayert Family is here this evening and were presented to the chapter. Tammy gave a positive response concerning the training they received. One student will stay active and will continue with the next class due to illness. Several folks have asked about fall training, and Robert is investigating putting these folks in the Ellis County class. He will let us know.

Advanced Training Opportunities:

Invasive Plant workshop at the BRIT last Friday. 35 folks attended from 4 different chapters. Class included tours of BRIT and lunch. Gary was applauded for his work supporting this workshop.

Texas Stream Training members received their training and were assigned bodies of water to manage by Cathy Crocker. Another training will possibly be held in late August, Gary will let us know.

Out Reach Committee: Billy Teels

Website Update: Jim Crocker reports website has some advanced training opportunities and a great slide show of the MN class in action presented by Tammy Ayert.

Newsletter Update: Billy reports the next newsletter will be in August and would appreciate any articles or pictures.

First Saturday Bird Walk: The last birdwalk only had one person show up but they did spot Yellow Billed Cuckoo. There is an abundance of painted bunting right now, so this is a good time to see them.

Nature Walk will be July "Plants that have many uses". August nature hike will be at night so make plans to attend.

Volunteer Services Committee: Ken Coy

ANC: Will not have a workday this month due to heat. Several members are watering the butterfly garden, and it has really taken hold. Monarch are flitting around the garden. Proposal coming to install a water line to the garden area and request for a few new trees according to the wildflower garden design.

Buffalo Creek: Carrie McLaughlin reports that the current president met with the city and loves our ideas of the creeper imbankment or Redbud Room. Carrie anticipates the process will take a full year. The current president is ok with that timeline. The committee is leaning towards the redbud room and will be seeking donations of trees or purchase. Would like the trees planted before January. Carrie has priced boulders and native rocks and runs about \$1000 for just the rock. President likes the instant gratification aspect. The Buffalo Creek Committee will be the deciding factor.

Membership Committee : Volunteer hours must be turned in monthly to accommodate the state.

Old Business:

Background Checks: Bill Diehnelt has sent in 17 background checks and 17 have been completed. You have been notified by email if yours is done. Some are still waiting on the approval card (only 4 have been received).

New Business:

Operating Handbook modification and additions were presented after several months of discussion at chapter meetings. The state has requested our current OH before August. Highlights include adding background checks verbiage, duties of the newly formed committees, officers and board with clarifications, active memberships. Carrie McLaughlin made motion to delay voting until all members had a chance to look at them. Motion died for lack of second . Information has been discussed at several meetings. Quorum was in attendance so changes were voted on and approved with changes during this meeting. New Handbook for 2011 can be found once edits are made on the website and will be sent to the State before deadline.

Member retention: The state has requested our views and opportunities for member retention. We sent in a long list of the things we do right. Bill asked for retention suggestions from the chapter . The chapter has asked the membership committee to contact the 15 folks who have not attended a meeting or paid their dues this year. A suggestion of early publication for programs may help if members know about the topic ahead of time. The website and Rio Brazos Facebook is a good communication tool as well as possible questionnaire and advertisement of the activities at each of our approved projects to expand our visibility. We have identified a logistics issue for the three counties but currently have no resolution for that.

State convention is in October. Robert is suggesting we contact Pat Kriener to present her new Junior Master Naturalist Program. He asks that we sponsor her going to present at the convention. Robert will contact Pat to see if she is willing and able.

Volunteer hours can be earned for both sponsors if it is an approved activity. The only exception is you may not double dip a master program; master gardner and master naturalist.

Next meeting 8/4 at 6 pm Somervell Training Center.

