



VOLUME 20, NUMBER 2

FEBRUARY 2008

JANUARY MEETING NOTES

reported by Secretary, Nicole Olson

Vice President Anna Dell Williamson called the meeting to order at 5:34 p.m. President James Blankenship was out. There were thirteen volunteers and two staff members present. the December 2007 meeting minutes were approved as posted. VIT Robert Wolfinger was welcomed at the meeting.

Superintendent Steve Killian and **Interpretive Ranger David Heinicke** brought their reports, which are printed elsewhere in the newsletter.

Treasurer's Report:

The Treasurer's report for the month of December 2007 was presented by **Diane Carpenter**. (See Financial Report in the Lounge for Complete Information)

The **budget report** was projected on the screen and discussed. Several donations were announced and allocations of funds were passed as follows:

Funds from the **El Paso Corporation** donation and from the **Shell** grant will be transferred to the Bryan Leach memorial.

Funds from the **Power Plant** will be put into the trail maintenance account.

Funds from the **McGovern's** donation will be applied to Steve Killian's herbicide application and equipment.

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The following **budget requests** were presented and approved:

Request from Barry Eversole, game warden, for 13 to 14 wood duck boxes to be installed around Elm Lake and Pilant Lake for nesting purposes. No money is involved.

Request from Steve Killian for PVC, U hooks, and bolts.

The **historical budget report** (historic equity and cash figures) from January 1, 1996 through December 31, 2007 was projected on the screen and discussed. A review of income and expenses for the period 1996-2007 was shown.

The proposed budget for the year 2008 was projected on the screen, discussed, and passed.

Maintenance:

David Heinicke gave the December Maintenance Report.

Gift Shop Report:

Beth Debenport reported on today's sales and thanked everyone for their help in the Gift Shop.

Outreach:

Judy Strauss reported that The Children's Museum in Richmond, Texas have their program in February.

Thanks to Diane Carpenter for the dinner!

Judy Strauss reported that the prairie platform is not finished but it is usable. **Chuck Duplant** wants to put on a roof and install a bench, which will take a few more months. Treated wood was used if anybody asks. It was a lot of fun tearing it down and then putting it up. Chuck Duplant did a really great job!

Training:

Anna Dell Williamson reported that Orientation will on February 9. The other training days are February 16 and 23. We will need help with mentoring, drivers for road tours, and the sandwich lunch. There's a signup sheet for the lunch. It's also a meeting night. There's now a requirement that VITs attend a meeting. There are 9 new volunteers coming up.

Old Business

Web site changes:

Diane Carpenter reported that the Information on the website is being reorganized. An email will be sent out explaining the changes happening on the website. Please bear with us.

Volunteer t-shirts:

Joan Jackson announced that the last day to order volunteer t-shirts is January 13. The order box is in the Gift Shop if you want to order for the next time. We order when we have a total of 12 shirts or sweat shirts ordered.

New Business

Sharing from David Heinicke - The widow of Bryan Leach, **Jean Leach** is doing well.

Noel Duncan mentioned that **Willie Anderson** came out to the park on Tuesday and Thursday. He looked OK, but will have more surgery.

The meeting adjourned.

Eastern Meadowlark
Jerry Zona, Feb 2008



STAFF REPORTS

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

STEVE KILLIAN

Steve Killian reported that December was a good month, with record visitation. The article in the *Houston Chronicle* really helped. It covered a lot of things at the park.



The deer hunt was successful. There were 110 hunters, and 41 deer and 13 hogs were harvested. The deer population is where we want it to be. The two hunts were during the first week of November and December. There will be no more full sized vehicles on the hunt. Some trailers will be ordered and kubotas will be used, so trails are not damaged. The number of hunters will be reduced and the way we get hunters into the field will be changed.

Impress on the volunteers that there should be no vehicles on dirt trails except the 2-wheeled drive gators. Surface trails are not a big deal.

We spent 1-1/2 weeks doing trail maintenance. Three staff members were sent to West Texas for training on controlled fire burns. Volunteers are welcome to observe future controlled fire burns.

Trail grant funding – we plan to purchase two gators and hope to get some staff help. Elm Lake and Creekfield trails get used a lot; the levee side of Creekfield needs to be resurfaced with asphalt, and the woodland trail needs to be built up. Some monies will to be used for trail head maps using a GPS. The maps will be state of the art with color, and will be ready mid to late summer.

When Saturday and Sunday traffic backs up, visitors will have to opportunity to read some new signage that will be installed along the entrance road. The signage will be quick, bullet point information, easy to read. Entrance fees will go up to \$5.00 and camping fees will go up to \$20.00.

December was a good month for donations of money as gifts. A question from Noel Duncan: Can one buy extra tickets as gifts for future entrance into the park? Steve Killian responded that only the Texas State Park Pass is available and good for one year for \$60. The idea of selling smaller gift cards may be brought up at a future date. Ken Debenport asked about the K1 tractor; Steve Killian replied that repairs are in progress.

Aaron Andgrade, the new resource management specialist and law enforcement officer, is in training at Wharton Junior College until May 1st.

INTERPRETIVE STAFF REPORTS

DAVID HEINICKE



David Heinicke reported that **Doris Mager** will be here in February with her Birds of Prey program Programs will be held in the Dining Hall on the following dates and times:

- February 8 at 2 pm
- February 9 at 10 am and 3 pm
- February 10 at 11 am and 4 pm

We will skip our **Earth Day** celebration this year – it has become a huge event and the costs are prohibitive. We have lost our funding. We may bring it back but on a smaller scale in the future. In its place, an **Arbor Day** celebration will be held April 26. Plans include tree giveaways, and tallow tree takeout. More ideas are appreciated. Also we will observe **National Trails Day** on June 7, Activities will be the same as last year. Steve Killian added that Earth Day is not significant in adding visitation and money. The Arbor Day and National Trails Day will help as special events.

January 24, a **potluck lunch** for staff, camp hosts, and volunteers will be held in the Dining Hall.

Carol Ramsayer and **Sharon Hanzik** are planning a field trip on February 6 to the George Ranch January 21-24 both David and Sharon will be attending an interpretive workshop in Killeen, TX; volunteers are in charge!

The well by the **windmill** near the horse trail will hopefully become operational soon

David will be taking some time off in the next few months because of overtime – Thanks to Sharon for helping.

February 29 is the date for the **annual school group training**. If you need a refresher, please come out, invitations will be sent out soon.

We are still looking for ideas for the **Bryan Leach** memorial – please let us know.

We are increasing the number of interpretive programs on weekends – occasionally we have programs that compete. The people who come to BBSP expect the programs. We want to give them something while they are visiting the park. Usually snake programs overflow. We can try to do programs in other locations. Just because David and Sharon are here doesn't mean they don't need help with programs.

The Executive Committee discussed having a facility outside for more programs, such as the amphitheater, a covered pavilion or a new classroom. A meeting will be set up to discuss ideas. At this time, we are not committed to anything. We will pick a Saturday or Sunday for a meeting to brainstorm.

From the new VIT (Rob Wolfinger) – what is the status of getting another kestrel? David received a call from a lady who has a screech owl and a kestrel. We had the kestrel for 8 years.

We appreciate all your hard work!

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

Jerry Carpenter
Noel Duncan
Peggy Farley
Bill Godley

Johnny Hite
Mandy Hite
Sid Jones
Judy Strauss

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

Elmer Aden
Willie Anderson
Rita Cooper
Joan Jackson
Herb Mann
Jennifer Parent

FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES

Linda and Rod Hite
Suzie and Rick Gann



MARCH ANNIVERSARIES
Glen and Maureen Kilgore



PHOTO WALKS

by Laszlo Perlaky



On January 5, the photo hike group looked for landscapes near Elm Lake. There was a cloudy sunset, and we did not get carmine orange sky, but we were happy when we clicked the large format camera shutter to capture the landscape at Elm Lake in a pink and gray clouds painted background.

The next photo-walk at Brazos Bend State Park will be February 9, from 3 PM till dusk. We will look for birds near Elm Lake and Pilant Slough, then 40 Acre Lake. We will return to the parking area at dark. Please bring your telephoto lens and your solid tripod. Please remember: the sharpest lenses money can buy won't give as sharp an image hand-held as a less expensive lens on a steady tripod.

The Wildlife Photographer of the Year 2008 contest is open for everybody. This is the world's best and largest nature photography competition. Last year there were 32,318 entries from 78 countries. Go for it! Do not miss the closing date of the online entry: March 31, 2008.

More info: <http://www.nhm.ac.uk/visit-us/whats-on/temporary-exhibitions/wpy-entry/?src=enews>

MEETING NIGHT SUPPERS

Thank you to **Diane Carpenter** for the January supper. Although the February and March dinners are covered, you still have the opportunity to bring a meal beginning in April. The person preparing the meal is reimbursed fully when they present the receipts for the items to Judy Strauss.

The meal gives us opportunity for a bit of socializing, a chance to sit back and "relax" after a long and sometimes hectic day, and to share a little time and laughter with friends and family.

Again, thank you to everyone who has brought us dinners in the past and for those who have signed up for future meetings. Please feel free to call Judy Strauss if you have any questions or concerns.

Thanks

- ☺ to **Ken Debenport** for putting together the 2007 Budget Report and the 2008 Proposed Budget.
- ☺ to **Patricia Marshall, Susie Gann, and Diane Carpenter** for helping with the Gift Shop inventory in December.
- ☺ to **Sharon Hanzik** for her help during the time David was working at Varner Hogg.
- ☺ to **Diane Carpenter** for the January meeting dinner
- ☺ to **Dennis Jones and Jerry Zona** for the contributions to the newsletter

NATURE CENTER REPORT

JANUARY 2008

by Anna Dell Williamson

Here is a breakdown of the various activities and attendance recorded for the Nature Center, hikes, and programs for January 1 - 31, 2008. Numbers come from the calendar in the Nature Center and may not reflect all activities. Be sure to report Nature Center visitation on the calendar, and attendance for all programs and hikes on the form behind the front desk.

	PROGRAMS	TOTALS
NATURE CENTER TOTAL: JAN. 2008, 4197 JAN. 2007, 4577	SATURDAYS (4)	1883 - High, 627, 1/12
	SUNDAYS (4)	1307 - High, 373, 1/13
	WEEKDAYS (23)	1307 - High, 107, 1/4
	CREEKFIELD HIKES (5 days)	53 - High, 38, 1/19
	SPOTTING SCOPE (2 days)	175
	SNAKE/REPTILE PROGRAMS (4)	170
	ALLIGATOR PROGRAMS (4)	109
	BIRD HIKES AND PROGRAMS (4)	75
	OTHER PROGRAMS (7) includes pond life, BBSP video, otters, story time (3), owl	74

JUST THOUGHT YOU WOULD LIKE TO KNOW

by Dennis Jones

I don't get to be around the vols much anymore, so I know there are a good many things that take place that I am not aware of when it comes to passing out Kudos. There are some folks, however, that I have either known for decades or due to their labors have become known to me, that I feel need to be recognized. At volunteer gatherings I am sure this takes place, but having it in print and preserved in the Volunteer record via the newsletters is another matter. I want to take time to do that here. Of course there may be some I overlook and for that accept my apologies in advance,

I will begin in no particular order and proceed with whoever comes to mind. What prompted me to write this was thinking of **Ken** and **Beth Debenport**. If you want to find Ken, try at the Nature Center where he is taking excellent care of the Volunteer Organization's finances, but if he's not there, check the wood yard, he's tying up bundles of wood for sale to generate the income that makes our customer service and interpretive experience at Brazos Bend second to none. Beth is at the Gift Shop making those interpretive opportunities happen one candy bar or field guide at a time. They are both outstanding interpreters in their own right. Watch them with a crowd and learn the joy of sharing.

Buddy and **Mozelle Franklin**, like the Debenports, have been volunteering at the park longer than I have been around. They helped keep the Nature Center open while I did bike patrols in the early days. Back then, there wasn't even an exhibit in the building. We pulled some touch table type things together, and that was our Center. Buddy and Mozelle were always there, greeting and educating the public with their warm Texas hospitality. And then there was the Mongoose; I built it, Buddy loved it and so did the public. The twinkle in Buddy's eye and the laughter of the onlookers when the Mongoose popped out was and is priceless. (The interpretive message is that the brain often is misinformed by what the eyes tell it. Look closer to find real meaning.)

Chuck DuPlant is hardly ever still. Even at a distance you will know him by the humongous camera he carries to capture the wonders of Brazos Bend to share with our public and document what's here. For years he WAS the outreach guy. Today he has passed that torch and most recently he reconstructed our prairie platform practically by himself. (To those that assisted him; please take no offense, Judy)

There are several couples that volunteer at the park, such as the Franklins or the Debenports, that can be and usually are referred to by their last name, as they are a team. and when you say one you mean both. **The Jackson's, Joan and Warren.** I have never understood how Joan can stand on her head and do gardening but she does and the beauty of the gardens around the nature center reflect those acrobatics and the loving care she gives to every plant Warren is a master of all trades. The gates across the spillway trail at the bridge are his brain child and the way the gates are fastened open or closed is simple and ingenious. Anytime you need to know the best way to build something to last, to be practical, and actually work, Warren is your man. He can be found these days sharing his knowledge about the park with visitors...And the flagpole. That's Warren's (it honors his dad) and the Sundial, if I am not mistaken, is Joan and Warren's work as well.

The Aden's, Rose and Elmer. I recruited Rose early on because I could not answer her tough questions about the park. Always inquisitive and eager to get involved, she has hand grubbed noxious plants from the prairies, led hikes, you name it, Rose has been there and knows. She is unstoppable. Elmer is as constant as the heavens, a voice of reason on many occasions and irrepensible when it comes to working. You can't slow the man down. Only he will decide when he's had enough. He can and has done it all.

The Williamson's. AnnaDell is amazing. Amazing in her ability to guide a hike, work in the Nature Center and produce one of the finest newsletters I have ever seen. (It's actually is something I look forward to reading every month.) Anna Dell is calm water in a tempest. I can see her now leading an unruly group of Tiger Cubs down the Creekfield Trail on a Saturday morning, walking stick in hand guiding her "flock", fanny pack with all her "possibles" at her side and the green Volunteer cap she wears with pride. Bruce is the "heart" of the vol. organization as I see it. Behind the scenes more than out front, he is always "there" with the right words at the right time. His love of people and service to something higher than himself cannot go unnoticed. I wanted him to be the FIRST president of the Volunteer organization.

Well I started out to write about a page for the newsletter and list a dozen or more people I have noticed as they go about their day to day, but, in the interest of space, I'll have to take up this topic again another time, as I fear I have taken too big a bite to name them all. There are others that have and do make invaluable contributions to this park. Take up the cause and recognize those folks on your own. I know they don't do it for the recognition but I suspect it's a good thing to know people see what they do. I don't know when I'll get to complete my list...In some ways the list never ends. dj



Little Blue Heron
Jerry Zona, Feb2008

DECEMBER MAINTENANCE REPORT

prepared by Ron Morrison

Wood Yard:

Unloaded 6 cords of fire wood, split wood, tied wood, and delivered tied wood to the wood racks in both camping loops

Mowing and Landscaping:

Filled in some holes at Hale Lake

Trail Trimming and Trail Maintenance:

Trimmed Hale Lake Trail (Fishing Pier to the Viewing area by the picnic grounds, and Big Creek bridge to the fishing Pier)

Trimmed limbs off Hale Lake Restrooms; Red Buckeye trail, Pilant Slough trail

Added trail topping to Hale Lake washouts

Cleared four viewing areas on Hale Lake trail: #1 and #2 by the gazebo, #3 by the dam on Big Creek, and #4 by the picnic grounds

Added trail topping and culvert on trail from NC to the wood yard

Hoot's Hollow - Filled large hole and a washout - String trimmed grassy areas and trimmed Hoot's Hollow Trail

General Maintenance:

Winterized the water stations

Reset some leaning benches and interpretive signs at 40 Acre and Hale lakes

Bought plastic felling wedges and 12" chain for pole saw

Vehicle Maintenance:

Repair four wheel drive cable on Kubota #2

Pest Control:

Treated for fire ants at Creekfield trail and Nature Center

Miscellaneous:

Collected Deer blinds



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

February 8	Bird Hike, 40-Acre Restroom, 8:00 AM Birds of Prey, Doris Mager, 2:00 PM, Dining Hall Night Hike, meet at HQ, 7:00 PM
February 9	New Volunteer Orientation and lunch, 10:00 AM - 1:30 PM Birds of Prey, Doris Mager, 10:00 AM and 3:00 PM, Dining Hall Regular meeting, 5:30 PM
February 10	Bird Hike, 40-Acre Restroom, 8:00 AM Birds of Prey, Doris Mager, 11:00 AM and 4:00 PM, Dining Hall
February 15	Night Hike, meet at HQ, 7:00 PM
February 16	New Volunteer Training, 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM
February 22	Night Hike, meet at HQ, 7:00 PM
February 23	New Volunteer Training, 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM
February 29	Night Hike, meet at HQ, 7:00 PM

VOLUNTEER AWARDS

(Ed. note: The following is a list of awards given at the annual Volunteer Picnic since 2002. It is a bit of our history as an organization. Not all of the awards are given every year, and some of the awards have been discontinued.)

2002

Leadership

Elmer Aden
Shawn Bachelor
Peggy Farley
Monique Green

Customer Service

Rose Aden
Beth Debenport
Marty Gay

Education

Glen Kilgore

Teamwork

George Butler
Melissa Dowling

Conservation

Lynne Ray

Excellence

Rose and Elmer Aden
Richard Board
Ken and Beth Debenport
Anna Dell Williamson

Outstanding Volunteer

John Bradford
Rick Dashnau

2003

Leadership

Herb Mann

Education

Pris Nelson

Customer Service

Judy Strauss

Teamwork

Willie Anderson
Don Nelson

Conservation

Rich and Sandy Jespersen

Excellence

Joan and Warren Jackson

Lifetime Achievement

Kay Lewis
Buddy and Mozelle Franklin

2004

Leadership

Bryan Leach

Education

Mark Garbutt

Customer Service

Bill Godley

Teamwork

Mark Garbutt
Nelda Gay
Carol Ramsayer
Anna Dell Williamson
Holly Zarate

Conservation

Rick Dashnau

Excellence

John Bradford

Emeritus

J.D. Alexander
Rose and Elmer Aden
Joe Carmichael
Dave Crockett
Frank Gregg
Joan and Warren Jackson
Kay Lewis
Herb Mann
Fletcher Morgan

Special Achievement

Shawn Bachelor
Glen Kilgore
Elmer Aden
Bruce Williamson

2005

Customer Service

Anna Dell Williamson

Education

Tom Prentiss

Teamwork (Hosts)

Tom Brooks
Bob and Mary Cradey
Pat and Terry Goodwin
Pete and Avis Shell
Bonnie and Steve Sigmon

Leadership

Chuck Duplant

Excellence

Laszlo Perlaky

Special Achievement

John Bradford
Glen Kilgore
Judy Strauss
Anna Dell Williamson

Conservation

Cord Eversole

2006

Customer Service

Nancy Partlow

Education

Rick Dashnau

Leadership

Judy Strauss

Excellence

James and Joyce
Blankenship

Teamwork

Maintenance Team:

Willie Anderson
Tom Draper
Noel Duncan
Bob Haynes
Jim Hiett
Dennis Keptra
Bryan Leach
Jeff McMullan
Ron Morrison
Clarence Neimann
Don Nelson

2007

Leadership

Bruce Williamson

Customer Service

Jerry and Diane
Carpenter

Education

Carrie Sample

Teamwork

Candice Kenyon
Carol Ramsayer

Conservation

Jim Calvert
Ron Morrison

Emeritus

Willie Anderson
Rita Cooper
Don Nelson



Brazos Bend State Park

Texas Parks and Wildlife
21901 FM 762
Needville TX 77461

FIRST CLASS MAIL

→**NEXT MEETING DAY AND TIME**←
SATURDAY, February 9, 2008, 5:30 PM

☆☆☆☆☆☆



REGULAR VOLUNTEER EVENTS

Creekfield Hikes	Every Saturday and Sunday at 10:00 AM, led by volunteers
Photo Hikes	First Saturday of each month
Volunteer meeting	Second Saturday of each month at 5:30 PM
Bird Hikes	See schedule in calendar

**BRAZOS BEND STATE PARK
VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATION**

VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATION OFFICERS

President:	James Blankenship
Vice-President:	Anna Dell Williamson
Secretary:	Nicole Olson
Treasurer:	Diane Carpenter

NEWSLETTER TEAM

Editor	Anna Dell Williamson
Production Assistants	Bruce Williamson Terry Williamson

The **Brazos Bend Bunch Bugle** is the newsletter of the Brazos Bend State Park Volunteer Organization, A.K.A. The Brazos Bend Bunch. It is distributed monthly to volunteers through the BBSPVO web site. For further information on this newsletter or the volunteer program, contact David Heinicke or Sharon Hanzik at Brazos Bend State Park, phone 979-553-5101.

Opinions expressed in this newsletter are the opinions of the author of the article and do not necessarily reflect the official position of Brazos Bend State Park Volunteer Organization nor of BBSP administration. The deadline for Newsletter contributions is the Saturday following the monthly meeting, if mailed to Anna Dell Williamson, or at the meeting if delivered to the park. (E-mail address: awilliamson4@comcast.net). Notify Anna Dell (281-485-2843) well in advance of any events you want announced in the newsletter.