



Chapter News

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Chapter News is published by Texas Master Naturalist Cradle of Texas Chapter.

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The Texas Master Naturalist program is coordinated by the Texas AgriLife Extension Service and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

Texas Master Naturalist programs serve all people without regard to socioeconomic level, race, color, sex, disability, religion, age, or national origin.

COT lost a valued member recently

Maurice Monie passed away in January 2013, at his home in West Columbia, Texas.

Maurice was a member of the Class of 2002 and was a certified Master Naturalist. He loved animals and teaching children. He and his wife Carolyn May-Monie often participated in the Chapter's Environmental Education activities including DEEP and LEEP. Maurice also volunteered at Gulf Coast Wildlife Rescue, transporting injured wildlife to rehabbers.

A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT MIKE



Greetings all:

We are now going full steam ahead to spring.

We have numerous events coming up that others will elaborate on.

If you have an event coming up, please be sure to get it on the website calendar. And if

you have attended an event, send any photos to Angelika for posting on our Facebook page.

Several of our members were privileged to accompany Denis Mudderman on the tour of Otter Slough at the Brazoria NWR. This was a very interesting trip.

On the subject of trips, there is still time to sign up for the King Ranch/Whoopers trip March 4 & 5. Check the calendar for details.

Remember we are seeking Member Emeritus nominations by the March 6th board meeting. They will be voted on at the March 13th General Meeting.

Enjoy the changing of the season. We will continue to get busier as summer approaches. Watch for special events that may pop up and continue to check the calendar.

—Mike Mullins
President, TMN-COT
mcmprm@embarqmail.com

A MESSAGE FROM THE PAST PREZ



Ruby Lewis shows off her award: a clock with plaque Photo Denis Mudderman

FREEPORT— February 13, 2013. TMN-COT outreach chairman, Ruby Lewis, was awarded the USFWS Texas Mid-coast Refuge Complex **Volunteer of the Year** award at the Volunteer Appreciation Dinner. The dinner, held annually, recognizes the efforts of USFWS volunteers during the preceding year.

Jennifer Sanchez, Project Manager, Texas Mid-coast Complex, noted that "Ruby is a mainstay for the chapter organizing and overseeing the chapter's outreach projects. The kids and adults all love her."

Five years ago, Ruby initiated the library outreach programs in Brazoria County. Ruby is an excellent example of what being a TMN volunteer is all about.

—Barbara Burkhardt
Past President, TMN-COT
bburkhardt@sbcglobal.net

Upcoming events

This page does not include:

- BCLS Library Program schedule. See calendar <http://tmn-cot.com/Calendar/>
- DEEP School Program schedule. See calendar <http://tmn-cot.com/Calendar/>
- INEOS School Program Schedule. See http://tmn-cot.org/INEOS/2012-13_Schedule.pdf

Wednesday, March 6, 8:30 AM

Intern Training Class

Sea Center Texas

http://tmn-cot.org/Intern_Training/2013-03-06.pdf

Saturday, March 9, 9:00 - 11:00 AM

Birds & Bottomland Blitz

Gulf Coast Bird Observatory, Lake Jackson

Conditionally approved for Advanced Training.

See sidebar at right

Tuesday, March 12, 7:30 PM

Brazosport Archaeological Society Meeting

Topic: Texas Parks and Wildlife Archeology

See calendar for details <http://tmn-cot.com/Calendar>

Wednesday, March 13, 8:30 AM

General Meeting, Advanced Training, and Intern Training

Texas A&M Agrilife Extension Building, Angleton

Approved for 1.00 Hour Volunteer Time

Approved for Advanced and Intern Training

<http://tmn-cot.org/Advanced/2013-03-General-Meeting.pdf>

Wednesday, March, 20, 8:30 AM

Intern Training Class

Brazos Bend State Park

Topic: Mammals of Brazoria County

Speaker: David Heinicke, Park Naturalist

http://tmn-cot.org/Intern_Training/2013-03-20.pdf

Wednesday, March 27, 8:30 AM

Intern Training Class

Agrilife Building, Angleton + Brazoria EE Station (BEES)

Topic: Botany 101: Plants and their structures

Speaker: Ann McLain, writer and teacher

http://tmn-cot.org/Intern_Training/index.html#schedule.pdf

Wednesday, April 3 8:30 AM

Intern Training Class

Hudson Woods Unit of San Bernard NWR

Subject: Columbia Bottomlands

Speaker: USFWS personnel

http://tmn-cot.org/Intern_Training/index.html#schedule.pdf

Wednesday, April 3, 10:00 AM

TMN-COT Board Meeting

Texas A&M Agrilife Extension Building, Angleton

See calendar for details <http://tmn-cot.com/Calendar>

MARCH 2013							www.freebookmarks calendars.com
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	
					1	2	
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	
31							

Birds and Bottomland Blitz

March 9, 9:00 AM

by Dave Brandes

This month's trek through the bottomlands will be with Warren Pruess, mycologist extraordinaire. We'll explore the tip of an unseen world; the tip because, like an iceberg, most is below the surface.

Have you figured it out yet? Yes, we'll get up close and personal with the mushrooms and lichens of the bottomland forest with a short presentation followed by a walk and some hands-on microscope work to get a really good look at what we find. If we've had some rain, we should see a good bloom. I hope to see you there.



Map to GCBO: <http://goo.gl/maps/65mUU>

All Birds and Bottomland Blitz events:

- Count as Advanced Training provided that you haven't had the same subject in the past two years.
- Count as Volunteer Time if you assist with the planning and execution of the event.

Texas Master Naturalist Program Cradle of Texas Chapter General Meeting, Intern Training, and Advanced Training Wednesday, March 13, 2013 AgriLife Building, Angleton

8:30 AM - 9:00 AM	Fun and Fellowship Refreshment Team: Gerald Forrest, Mike Mullins, Kathy Speights
9:00 AM - 9:50 AM	General Meeting <i>This meeting is approved for 1.00 hour Volunteer Time.</i>
10:00 AM - 11:30 AM	Program: Entomology - It's a Bug's Life Speaker: Ed Barrios, TMN-COT member <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p><i>This training is approved for Advanced Training. The number of approved hours will be announced at the meeting and will be available after the meeting at http://tmn-cot.org/Advanced/index.html</i></p> </div>

Ed Barrios holds a BS degree in Chemical Engineering from the University of Arizona, class of 1971. He was employed by The Dow Chemical Company in Freeport for more than 33 years, working in manufacturing and Environmental Health and Safety.

Ed retired in August of 2004 and started TMN-COT intern classes in September of 2004. Ed has always been interested in insects. As a boy he would tie thread to June beetles and fly them around like airplanes. He also liked to catch horned lizards and put them on top of ant beds and watch them eat.

Ed has taken several short courses on entomology during various TMN training courses. He took a one-week entomology course sponsored by Master Gardeners and taught by TAMU entomology professors

.Ed is also is a member of the Entomological Society of America, a Board member of the Cradle of Texas Chapter, Secretary of the Brazoria County Master Gardeners, President of Friends of the Brazoria Wildlife Refuges and does volunteer taxes for AARP.



Membership Report

By Jerry Eppner, Membership Chair

We have started a new year for volunteering and having fun, and the 2013 timesheets are beginning to arrive. At the end of February, eleven COT members have turned in 567 hours of VT. And best of all, three chapter members have already recertified.

Congratulations to Peggy Romfh, Pete Romfh and Dave Brandes! Good job guys!!

Just on the outside case that you did not get the word (you have been on an interplanetary mission or something of similar importance), please be advised that to maintain active membership in our chapter, members must attend one general meeting during the year and submit a timesheet documenting such, and hopefully some other VT and AT

Migration Celebration

Migration Celebration kicks off with a fundraising dinner at Freeport RiverPlace on April 12, followed by a two days of events at San Bernard National Wildlife Refuge on April 20-21.

Volunteers are needed, and participation is approved for Volunteer Hours. This is a good opportunity to rack up some volunteer hours toward certification or recertification!

Volunteer positions are available for a wide variety of interests — everything from assistant cook to parking attendant and tour guide to information booth host. If you'd like to volunteer, contact Ed Barrios:

Home: 979-297-1815

Cell: 979-415-4998

Email: ed77566@comcast.net

Migration Celebration is an annual spring nature festival presented each spring by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and Friends of Brazoria Wildlife Refuges. Many Cradle of Texas Chapter members participate in the planning and execution of the celebration.

For more information, see Attachment 2

<http://tinyurl.com/d5lemrl>

Roy Morgan and Tom Morris earn President's Call to Service Award

LAKE JACKSON, TEXAS — January 28, 2013. Sea Center Texas, a unit of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, has announced that volunteers Roy Morgan and Tom Morris have been awarded the *President's Call to Service Award*. These awards were presented at SCT's annual volunteer recognition banquet, held today at the Center, on behalf of the President's Council on Service and Civic Participation.



The *President's Call to Service Award* recognizes 4,000 hours or more of volunteer service over the recipient's lifetime. Persons of all ages are eligible to receive the award. The award includes a lapel pin (left), a Personalized Certificate, and a Congratulatory Letter from the President of the United States.

Both Roy and Tom are active volunteers at Sea Center Texas where they perform numerous duties. They serve as tour guides, leading tours for members of the general public, and provide special Fish Adaptation programs for school children. Roy occasionally dons scuba gear to go "Swimming with the Fishes." They both assist with hatchery operations, doing everything from collecting egg masses to releasing larvae into outdoor ponds.

Tom and Roy assist several of our other partner organizations including the Brazosport College ALLP, the Brazosport Planetarium and Nature Center, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Brazoria County Parks Department, and Gulf Coast Bird Observatory.

Tom and Roy are Certified Texas Master Naturalists and were members of the TMN-COT Class of 2004.

The Texas Master Naturalist State Office and Sea Center Texas were the Certifying Organizations for these awards.

The Cradle of Texas Chapter now counts eight members (or former members) as recipients of the *President's Call to Service Award*. Previous recipients include Phil Huxford, Tracie Teague, Mary Helen Israel, Tom Collins, Denis Mudderman, and Jim Renfro. Further information at:

<http://tmn-cot.org/Scrapbook/PCTSA.pdf>



Roy (left) and Tom at Graduation Ceremony for Class of 2004. Texas Cooperative, Extension Office, Angleton, December 2004



Sandy Claws (Roy Morgan) joins Rudolph the Red-Nosed Redfish in "Swimming with the Fishes," Sea Center Texas, November 2011



Awards Ceremony, Sea Center Texas, January 28, 2013. From left: John Blaha (CCA Assistant Director), Scott Boruff (TPWD Deputy Executive Director), Dick Huntington (SCT volunteer), Tom Morris, Trish Thompson (The Dow Chemical Company Public Affairs Manager). Roy Morgan was not able to attend the ceremony.

Meeting Program Survey Results

By Peggy Romfh, VP/Programs

Results of a program topic survey completed at the February TMN-COT meeting will be used to provide direction in scheduling meeting speakers for the next year. In fact, there is so much enthusiasm for a wild variety of topics that we will be well into 2014 before all high-interest topics can be scheduled.

The topics that received the most votes are noted in the table below. Topics highlighted in yellow are already scheduled for 2013. As subject matter experts are identified and speaker schedules become available, as many of the remaining topics as possible will be covered.

Several topics were suggested by members with write-in votes. They included such diverse topics as Wildlife Enforcement, Overview of Texas Parks and Refuges, Honey Bees, GPS How and Why, Jellyfish, Cranes, Rays, Herbs, Underground Dwellers, and Plantation Life.



Rank	Program - Proposed Topics
1	History of local rivers and creeks
2	Drought/salinity impact on estuaries and bays
3	History and impact of Intra-coastal Waterway on Gulf ecosystems
4	Large Cats/bobcats
5	Fish, invertebrates and anemones on/by Texas jetties
6	Geology of the Texas Gulf Coast (salt domes, oil, minerals, etc.)
7	Grasses, rushes and sedges
8	Hawk ID
9	What's that growing in the ditch?
10	Woodpeckers and flickers
11	Bay fish and fish ecosystems
12	Poisonous plants and fruit
13	Management of plant invasive and overgrowth species in parks/NWR
14	Wetlands on the Gulf Coast
15	Civil War Confederate Blockade Runners Acadia and Dinbigh
16	Crabs in Gulf and bays
17	Endangered species
18	Trees
19	Dune plants and vegetation
20	Estuary life
21	Feral Hogs - destruction to habitat; control of hogs
22	Fish overview and identification
23	Flower Garden Marine Sanctuary
24	Hummingbirds and Texas Nature Tracker: Hummingbird Roundup
25	Plant ecosystems
26	Wildscape Program/Wildscape Plant Guidance by Eco-region
27	Dragonflies [add damselflies]
28	Flounder
29	Mushrooms
30	Project WILD Program
31	Sea Turtles/ Turtle Patrol results and outcomes
32	Shell identification
33	Skull Identification
34	The Science of Clouds and Climate

Photo Gallery Monthly Highlights

By Peggy Romfh, Photo Gallery Editor

Several new species have been added to the TMN-COT/ Friends Photo Gallery website this month. There are over 750 photos currently on the site, and new photos are always welcome from TMN members.

February in Texas showed us the wintering species that still graced the ponds, prairies, and woods. New photos added this month include Greater White-fronted Goose, Northern Harrier, Eastern Phoebe, and American Wigeon, seen at Brazoria NWR and Belted Kingfisher, seen at Freeport ponds.

The mollusk photo galleries were expanded with the addition of several bivalve shell photos, as well as Shark Eye snails and egg collars and Striped False Limpets, all seen at Quintana Beach County Park,

Several TMN members have been searching their photo records to find species not yet represented, and some of the new species added with their efforts include American Crow, Cooper's Hawk, Common Snipe (seen at Sea Center Texas), Northern Mockingbird, American Goldfinch, Blue-Gray Gnatcatcher, Canada Goose, Southern Copperhead Snake, and Rock Pigeon.

To see all the photos that have been posted to date, go to the TMN-COT web site <http://tmn-cot.org> and click on Photo Gallery. Please send new photo submissions to me at peggyromfh@tmn-cot.org.

And be sure to check out the Photograph Submission Guidelines at:

http://refugefriends.org/Forms/Photo-Gallery-Guidelines_081012.pdf



Northern Harrier

Photo: Peggy Romfh



Common Snipe

Photo: Dave Brandes



Shark-Eye Egg Collar

Photo: Pete Romfh



Shark-Eye Moon Snail

Photo: Pete Romfh



Blue-Gray Gnatcatcher

Photo :Dave Brandes

Volunteers Needed for Quintana Spring Fling

By Cecilia Riley, Executive Director, Gulf Coast Bird Observatory

Every April, thousands of migratory songbirds arrive along the Texas coast. And every year, hordes of local and out-of-town birders descend upon the bird sanctuaries at Quintana to witness the migration. There are few services for visitors in the vicinity, so GCBO has established the "Quintana Spring Fling." During the month of April, GCBO staff and volunteers are stationed at our small Host Station next to Quintana city Hall.

We need volunteers to assist with Spring Fling! Volunteers perform several important duties:

- Serve as hosts for visitors, provide information about the sanctuary, and help novice birders identify birds.
- Periodically walk through sanctuary, listing birds seen, and maintain a daily log of birds on the white board.
- Assist with the operation of a small gift shop located in the Host Station, selling snacks, water, soft drinks, and some nature store items such as field guides and t-shirts.

The Spring Fling Station located just across the street from Quintana Neotropical Bird Sanctuary is operated seven days a week, from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm, throughout the month of April. Volunteers are assigned in three-hour shifts (9:00 -12:00 and 12:00 - 3:00). Volunteers may choose to work a full day, or work single shifts on multiple dates throughout the month. Note that you can stay later too, as many birds do not arrive until late afternoon.

Volunteers must attend a training session at the Quintana Host Station on Thursday March 28 at 3:00 pm. The training session will include an explanation of the duties, and the location of keys and supplies. GCBO is a partner of the Cradle of Texas Chapter. Volunteer hours count toward certification or recertification.

If you are interested volunteering, please email Carol Jones at cjones@gcbo.org or 979-480-0999. Spaces are already filling so call soon to get your desired date and time.

GCBO is an independent non-profit organization. It is recognized as an innovative organization, which has designed and conducted a significant number of large conservation projects, including migration studies, habitat enhancement, land acquisition, and regional habitat mapping. For further information, see the GCBO website at <http://www.gcbo.org/>

TMN-COT MEMBERS PLEASE NOTE

Quintana Spring Fling is approved for Volunteer time. You may claim:

- All hours spent at the Spring Fling Station.
 - Travel time for each round trip to the station.
- Travel time is limited to your actual daily travel time or the amount of time that you spend at the station *on that same day*.

Please code your timesheet "GCBO."



Spring Fling Host Station

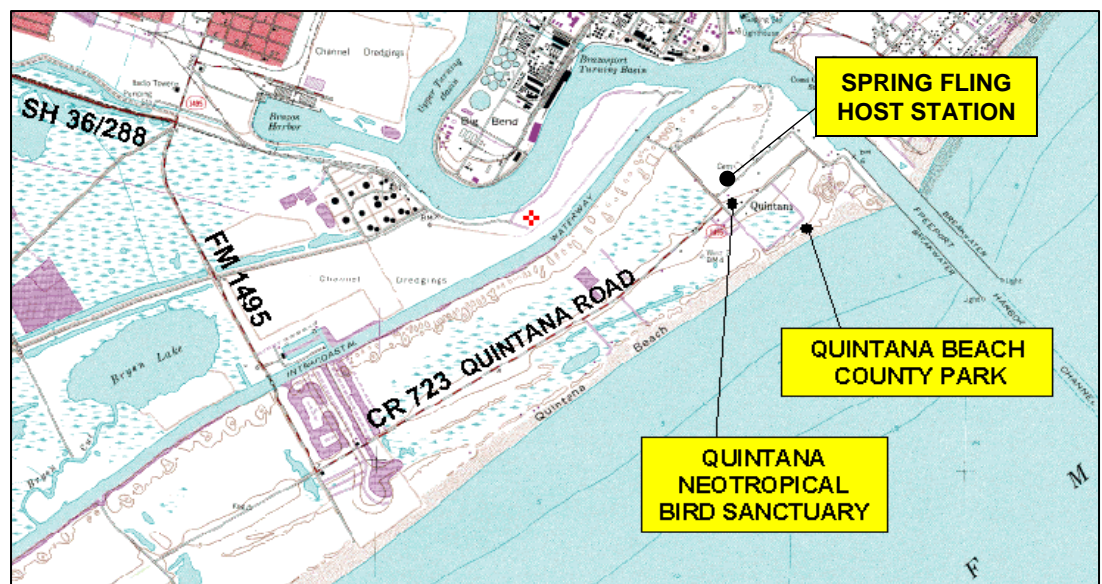
Location:

Quintana City Hall
814 Lamar St.
Freeport TX 77541
979-233-0848

Directly across the street from
Quintana Neotropical Bird
Sanctuary.

Google map:

<http://goo.gl/maps/g7IMh>



Betty Brown Unit of San Bernard NWR

By Warren Pruess Edited by Neal McLain



There's no time like the present to visit the Betty Brown Unit of the San Bernard NWR on the San Bernard River.

Starting in February each spring a little parsley family plant endemic to Texas, *auschia texana* (Texas umbrellawort), starts blooming. It is a ground-hugging harbinger of spring developing delicate, bright yellow, compound floral umbels above radiating clusters of dark green, pinnately lobed leaves. They are scattered in various size populations along the trail loop on the slopes of the natural levy along the San Bernard River. A few yellow Early Buttercups and white False Garlic (Crows Poison) will be seen along the way but not putting on the show of the Texas Umbrellawort.

By April, *Ptelea trifoliata* (Wafer Ash; Common Hoptree) will be developing its white flowers. They are along the trail on the natural levy also. They are the size of a large shrub or small tree. They have alternate, trifoliate leaves and may have a few wafer-like, winged seeds remaining from last year (Rutaceae). Some very showy, large Tropical Sage grows here too.

Easy access to these plants alone make this a special little tract that provides a short hike through the riparian woodland. Much of this riverside woodland has been removed by development in this area. When you enter the trail proceed to the boardwalk through the floodplain swale and on to the loop on the natural levy by the river.

Editor's note: Warren Pruess is member of Friends of Brazoria Wildlife Refuges, a respected naturalist and a "mycologist extraordinaire."

The photos at the right were taken in March 2007, during the initial construction of the trail. Volunteers from three organizations participated: Cradle of Texas Chapter, Friends of Brazoria Wildlife Refuges, and Friends of River San Bernard. USFWS personnel Jennifer Sanchez, Keith Ramos, and Tom Schneider led the effort. More photos can be found at <http://www.refugefriends.org/BettyBrown/index2.html>



Reconnoitering a route for the trail

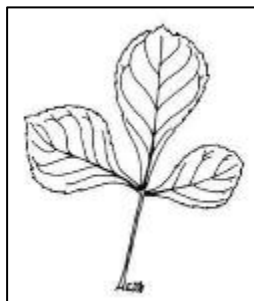


Kirby Rapstein (TMN-COT) and Keith Ramos (USFWS) clear the trail



Parking lot

Image: Google street view



Foliage of the Common Hoptree ^[1]



Jennifer Sanchez and helper plant the sign while FORSB members Pat Webb, Roy Edwards, and Darrell Powell hold it in place

[1] Foliage of Common Hoptree. Edward F. Gilman and Dennis G. Watson. *Ptelea trifoliata* "Gluca," Fig. 3. USDA Forest Service. Fact Sheet ST-532, October 1994. http://hort.ufl.edu/database/documents/pdf/tree_fact_sheets/ptetric.pdf

In Memoriam: Maurice Roch Monie, Jr.

Maurice Monie passed away in January 2013, at his home in West Columbia, Texas, after a four-year battle with cancer. In his younger days, he had served as a member of the Marine Corp reserves, and a member of the Louisiana National Guard. He subsequently served in a number of positions in the marine shipping industry.

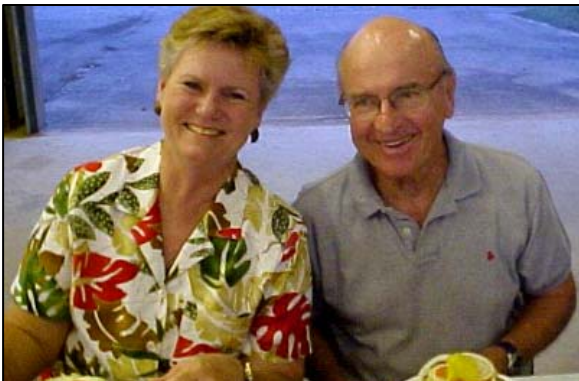
After retiring, he and his wife Carolyn May-Monie volunteered as docents at the Houston Zoo. After moving to the West Columbia area in Maurice and Carolyn joined the TMN Cradle of Texas Chapter, earning certification in the Class of 2002. Maurice loved animals and teaching children. He and Carolyn often participated in the Chapter's Environmental Education activities including DEEP and LEEP.

Right Preparing crabs for a crab boil for AISD fourth-graders at DEEP. San Bernard NWR, 2007.

Below Teaching school children at LEEP. Conoco-Phillips EE facility, c. 2006.



Photo: Marty Cornell



Carolyn and Maurice at Brazoria County Extension Service Appreciation Dinner, Master Gardener Service Building, 2005.



Above and left: Teaching school children about snakes at LEEP. ConocoPhillips EE facility, c. 2006.

Attachments

This issue of *Chapter News* contains two attachments:

Attachment 1 - Minutes of the February General Meeting
http://tmn-cot.org/Newsletters/2013-03_Attach-1_Minutes.pdf

Attachment 2 - Migration Celebration
http://tmn-cot.org/Newsletters/2013-03_Attach-2_MC.pdf

Reminders about the March Meeting:

- The refreshment team includes Kathy Speights, Gerald Forrest, Mike Mullins
- The 9:00 AM meeting is approved for 1.00 hour of Volunteer Time.
- Training provided at this meeting is approved for Advanced Training hours. The number of approved hours will be announced at the meeting, and will be available after the meeting at <http://tmn-cot.org/Advanced/index.html>

CRADLE OF TEXAS CHAPTER OFFICERS	
President	Mike Mullins, Sweeny
Vice President/Program	Peggy Romfh, Houston
Secretary	Marty Cornell, Lake Jackson
Treasurer	John Marshall, Lake Jackson
State Representative	Ed Barrios, Lake Jackson
Past President	Barbara Burkhardt, Lake Jackson
Training Director	Ed Johnson, Angleton
Membership Director	Jerry Eppner, Lake Jackson
Volunteer Service Chair	Neal McLain, Brazoria
Advanced Training Chair	Tom Morris, Lake Jackson
Outreach Chair	Ruby Lewis, Angleton
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