Kleb Woods Nature Center Director Fred Collins will be honored at the annual Houston Audubon Society Gala. This year’s gala, titled *Education that Soars*, will be Oct. 20th at Lakeside Country Club. Fred is being honored for his lifelong contributions to environmental and bird education.

September is the end of summer and signs of fall are everywhere as the month progresses. Bird migration picks up its pace. The peak migration period for Ruby-throated Hummingbirds is mid-September. The birds, which breed across most of the eastern half of the United States, migrate through Texas on their way to Central America for the winter. They sometimes congregate by the hundreds at the Nature Center’s feeders. Precinct Three Commissioner Steve Radack and his staff of Kleb Woods Nature Preserve invite you to see and learn more about these fascinating birds at our annual *Hummingbird Festival* on Sept. 10th.

Volunteer activities

Volunteers are always in a flurry of activity in August despite high temperatures. They’re still busily preparing Kleb Woods for an anticipated crowd of more than 1,000 for the annual Hummingbird Festival. The regular Tuesday volunteer crew continues to complete task after task. The culmination of the preparations was a special work party on Aug. 27th. We salute the invaluable efforts of these great folks.

History Discussion Group

Our August meeting focused on a new DVD entitled *The Heritage of North Harris County*, recently produced by the North Harris County branch of the American Association of University Women. This group published a book by the same title as a Bicentennial project in 1976. This effort updates that work. Their DVD chronicles the varied and dramatic growth of the lightly-settled area in the mid-1800s through its metropolitan status today. The many small communities are quickly losing...
their identity as development fills in the rural areas between them. The DVD will help preserve the history of the small communities and document the changes that have occurred.

The next History Discussion group meeting will be about Populux, a consumer culture and aesthetic in the United States popular in the 1950s and 1960s. The term comes from a combination of popular and luxury. This is one of park historian Jim Wilson’s favorite topics. The discussion should be lively. Participants are urged to bring in their favorite example to add to the discussion.

**A Closer Look at Art classes**
The “A Closer Look at Art” classes for the summer were a series of watercolor classes taught by Gary Spessard. In the Aug. 4th class the students learned how to use the absence of paint to make a pale pink rose. Watercolors require one to think far in advance how the colors come together. Where one wants white, they paint nothing at all and let the white paper become the white in the painting. The classes were well received and we appreciate Mr. Spessard’s efforts. We are working on developing future art classes.

“A Closer Look at Nature” and “A Closer Look at History” will both resume this month. The fall schedule can be found at the Nature Center. You can also find the coming month’s schedule on the Precinct Three website at [www.pct3.com](http://www.pct3.com).

**German classes**
The summer German introduction classes enticed a few families to sign up for German 1-A so we have a new group of students forming a class. That class will meet from 12:30 p.m. until 2 p.m. two Thursdays a month. The following German Language classes will be conducted this fall: 1-A, 2-A and 2-B. German 1-A and 1-B are the equivalent of high school German 1, while our German 2-A and 2-B are equivalent of high school German 2. For more information, contact Linda Martin-Rust at KlebWoods@pct3.com.

**Birding activities**
August was hot, but occasional migrants often helped the observers forget that fact. The first Saturday walk found Tree Swallow and the first returning Rufous Hummingbird of the winter. The Wednesday walks found the following migrants: Olive-sided Flycatcher, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, and American Robin.

The August senior birding bus trip went to Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR). The first stop was the visitor center at the upper end of Trinity Bay. This heavily-wooded area allowed the group to see some woodland species they would not find during the remainder of the day. From there, they went to the original ANWR unit that includes Shoveler Pond. This fresh water pond is one of the most popular birding sites on the entire Upper Texas Coast. It did not disappoint the group and they found many broods of cute, downy whistling-ducks and the small, downy, black chicks of both Common and Purple Gallinule. These chicks could easily walk across the water because of the unseen submerged vegetation. Imagine raising children that really could walk across water instead of just thinking they could.
By this time, all were ready for lunch overlooking the Intracoastal Canal. After lunch they visited the Bolivar Jetty, which provides a great view of the Houston Audubon Society’s Bolivar Flats Bird Sanctuary. The flats featured many close views of Reddish Egrets, which dance while chasing fish. Gulls and terns were plentiful, and the shorebirds that have been in the arctic tundra raising babies have begun to return to the flats for the winter. Two Red Knots were a highlight. Participants ended the day with a ride on the Bolivar Ferry, where ten Magnificent Frigatebirds were seen. These pirates of the bird world have six-foot wingspans and steal food from hapless gulls and terns. A refreshment stop on the way home made for a good ending to a great day. By the end of the trip, the group list totaled 99 species.

**Signing Up for Senior Birding Bus Trips (Must be at least 50 years old to go on these trips)**

There is now a waitlist for the Sept. 16th trip to Quintana and the San Bernard National Wildlife Refuge. You may now sign up for the Oct. 28th trip to search for rice harvesting, where we expect to find many rails. This trip will leave late and return late. You may also sign up for the Nov. 18th trip to see Whooping Cranes in Aransas County. You may now sign up for these trips by emailing klebwoods@pct3.com or calling (281) 357-5324.

You may only sign up yourself plus one friend/spouse. No multiple reservations. **You will get a confirmation e-mail a week before the trip if you have a seat.**

**The calendars** for September and October can be found on the website. There is a link from the park web page or you can look under the Community Center events calendar. The website is www.pct3.com

**Save the date: October 22, 2016 Diggin’ Old Stuff**
Dog owners: Pets are no longer allowed in Kleb Woods. For your convenience and enjoyment, Precinct Three maintains five popular dog parks where your dog can run free. They are the Millie Bush Dog Park, 16756 Westheimer Parkway, in George Bush Park; the Danny Jackson Family Dog Park, 4828 ½ Loop Central Dr., near Loop 610 and Westpark; a dog park in Congressman Bill Archer Park, 3201 Highway 6 North; Deputy Darren Goforth Dog Park, 9402 Barker Cypress Road and Beverly Kaufman Dog Park located in Katy at Paul D. Rushing Park, 9114 Katy Hockley Road. The dog parks have their own set of rules. Please visit the Precinct Three website www.pct3.com for more information.