Commissioner Steve Radack and the staff of Kleb Woods Nature Preserve invite you to see and learn more about how the early settlers of Harris County lived and thrived. Our annual “Diggin’ Old Stuff” festival is Oct. 22nd. Children can try their hand at many crafts and use skills their ancestors did in the early 1900s.

During October, we always welcome our first taste of cool weather and the end of 90 degree days. Overnight temperatures fall into the 60s, making for delightful mornings. The lower humidity helps plants blooms and seeds ripen. Beautiful plants like goldenrod are characteristic of fall, but unfortunately so is ragweed. If it is any consolation, the seeds of ragweed are favored by several species of sparrows.

**Volunteer activities**

Volunteers’ efforts in September were monumental. On the day of Hummingbird Festival, 69 volunteers put in 381 hours of service. Without their hard work, events like Hummingbird Festival would be not be the community event it has become. Volunteers are already preparing for “Diggin’ Old Stuff.” Please join them.

**Hummingbird Festival**

The festival was again a great success with 1,075 registered guests. The hummingbirds participated too. The feeders remained active for visitors throughout the day. Hummingbird expert Sumita Prasad was able to catch and band 13 Ruby-throated Hummingbirds and two Rufous Hummingbirds. Her day was highlighted by the recapture of two birds from previous years. A few lucky people had a- once-in-a-lifetime experience of having a tiny hummingbird placed in their hands as it was released. Occasionally, the birds remain in a person’s hand for a few seconds, allowing them to feel the pounding heart of the tiny dynamo.

Following the hummingbirds, the next top draw was Houston Audubon Society’s Mary Anne Weber. She brought some of her many raptors. Throughout the day she switched birds on display and allowed photographers to indulge themselves. She displayed a powerful Great Horned Owl, a diminutive Eastern Screech-Owl, an elegant Mississippi Kite and a rare and beautiful Swallow-tailed Kite.
The event had lots of activities for kids. They seemed to enjoy all of them. The activities taught kids about the biology of birds and allowed them to think about their abilities. There were also blacksmith demonstrations, nature walks and tours of the Kleb 1896 farm house.

During the event we shuttle people from the FM 2920 parking lot through the woods to the Nature Center in a six passenger golf cart. One young boy described it as the highlight of his day, taking a ride “through the jungle in a stretch limousine.” Two Precinct Four deputy constables worked the event and were friendly, helpful and engaged with the visitors.

The event demonstrated just how educational such experiences can be for the young and old. Often visitors learn much more than what is conveyed in the planned activity because of the talented people they observe. We believe many visitors were inspired by Commissioner Radack’s Hummingbird Festival.
History Discussion Group
Our September meeting was about Populuxe, 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. It is one of the favorite topics of Jim Wilson, park historian. He was animated and enthusiastic about the era and its artifacts. Probably, the most characteristic feature of Populuxe was the magnificent tailfins on the cars of the late 1950s. Its most common icon was a diagram/picture of an atom. The 1950s brought the hope that the future would be one of leisure thanks to technological advancements. All we would need to do is push a button. The next History Discussion Group will look at the history of settlement in the Trans-Pecos region of Texas.

A Closer Look at Nature class
The class in September was about hummingbirds. The kids learned some of the remarkable features of hummingbirds and their unique flying ability. They also learned these tiny birds, which weigh less than a nickel, are able to fly more than 500 miles non-stop. Some species regularly migrate across the continent from Alaska to Southern Mexico and from eastern Canada to Panama. The follow-up activity was on the porch where the kids made a couple of hummingbird models they could fly. Hummingbirds buzzed at the feeders only a few feet away while more than 50 kids made paper hummingbirds.

A Closer Look at History class
In observance of Celebrate Freedom Week, our September class was about the U.S. Constitution. A novel document in 1789, it changed the course of world history as it propelled the U.S. into the most powerful and influential nation in the history of humankind. The kids’ enthusiasm became boisterous as they joined in to sing the Constitution’s Preamble. They learned why the nation needed a new government and what freedoms our Founding Fathers felt were important to protect. Our next class will explore Native Americans in Myth and Legend and will take place Oct. 27th from 10 a.m. until 11 a.m.

German language classes
The fall classes are underway. Each class meets two Thursdays each month. German 1-A meets from 12:30 p.m. until 2 p.m., German 2A from 9:30 a.m. until 11 a.m. and German 2-B from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. 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.

Conservation Pioneers programs
The new series continues in October as we celebrate the centennial of the Migratory Bird Treaty of 1916 with a look at the life and contributions of Harriet Hemenway. Join us for the inspiring story of this Boston socialite who made it fashionable not to follow fashion and whose refusal to put a feather in her cap led to the founding of the Audubon Society. This program will be Oct. 15th from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. and repeated Oct. 19th from 3 p.m. until 4 p.m. The November program will be about Teddy Roosevelt.

Birding activities
September is the month we begin to see some of our winter residents arrive. These winter residents were welcomed by the Wednesday Morning Bird Walks: Blue-headed Vireo on Sept. 7th, Brown Thrasher and American Kestrel on Sept.
21st. A few warblers graced Kleb Woods bird walks as they traveled south for the winter including: Black-and-white, Nashville, Magnolia, Yellow, and Black-throated Green. In addition to the Blue-headed Vireo, Warbling, White-eyed and Red-eyed Vireos were also found this month on the walks.

An afternoon **Wednesday Birding Class** was held in September. Fred Collins began a four-part series about birding the Katy Prairie. This first class was about which species to look for in the fall and where to find them. Future afternoon programs will be Oct. 26th, Black Vulture Nest: A Story in Photos by Frank Hudspeth; Dec. 7th, Flammulated Owl Studies in Utah by Bob Honig; and Dec.14th, Birding the Katy Prairie in Winter by Fred Collins.

We held a **Swift Watch** program on the evening of Sept.16th. It was attended by class visitors and returning field trip participants. The group watched more than 260 Chimney Swifts circle and swirl around the parking lot. With each pass by the Chimney Swift tower, more swifts dropped into the tower. It was a memorable evening for all present.

We resumed our **Bear Creek Pioneers Park bird walks** in September. The monthly walks are from 8:30 a.m. until 10 a.m. The group found the only shower in all of Harris County that morning but still managed 30 species. The highlights of the walk were a Solitary Sandpiper and a couple of Broad-winged Hawks.

The September **Senior Birding Bus Trip** went to Galveston Island. The group was hoping to see a summering Pomarine Jaeger and find migrant songbirds in route to Central and South America. They were successful in seeing the rare jaeger and some even posed with the bird for a group photo. They found only one fleeting flock of migrating warblers at Lafitte’s Cove, but it included four Blackburnian Warblers, two Black-throated Green Warblers and a Black-and-white Warbler.
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 **October 28th** trip to search for rice harvesting which flushes Yellow Rails and other marsh birds. You may now sign up for the **Nov. 18th** trip to see Whooping Cranes in Aransas County and the **Dec. 16th** trip to the Katy Prairie to search for sparrows. To sign-up for these trips, email klebwoods@pct3.com or call (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 October and November 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

**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.