Commissioner Steve Radack and the staff of Kleb Woods Nature Preserve would like to wish you a happy Thanksgiving Day and a wonderful holiday season.

Each of us mark the seasons in a personal way. November is marked by many with special football games, home cooked meals, pies or candy, shopping sprees and holiday parades. Nature presents its own special parade in November. This month our winter residents arrive in mass to fill the prairies and woods. In the 1970s, the wild geese arrived on the prairies of Precinct Three around Oct. 20th. Today, they don’t arrive until Thanksgiving. The winter sparrows that will liven our thickets also arrive in November. They provide a heart-warming picture throughout the winter as they visit our feeding stations from the warmth of their thickets.

We hope you will visit Kleb Woods during November and catch some of nature’s parade.

**Volunteer activities**

The volunteers are invigorated by cooler temperatures. They have completed more fun projects in October, including a telegraph display and a natural log bench. They devoted two days to preparing for our annual Digging Old Stuff festival and 70 volunteers helped the day of the event. The weather should cool dramatically in November. We have major trail work ahead for the Yaupon’s Worst Nightmare crew, as well as gardening tasks for fall and winter and some new woodwork and blacksmith projects, including erecting an old windmill. We hope you will consider joining them.

**Digging Old Stuff**

The festival resumed this year after rains forced the cancellation of last year’s event. We registered 281 visitors and 70 volunteers. The day was perfect with bright sun and a low of 49 degrees and a high just below 80. Kids participated in a variety of hands-on activities. They picked cotton, made candles, forged copper, dyed cloth, used a metal detector and dug for artifacts with archaeologists from the Houston Archeology Society. Visitors also enjoyed a farmhouse tour, the Bluegrass Jam group and a popular movie featuring Hollywood’s most famous archeologist. It was a great fall festival day for the whole family.
History Discussion Group
Our October meeting’s topic was the history of Texas’ Trans-Pecos region. The discussion began with the exploits of Cabeza de Vaca who, after years of enslavement on the Texas coast by Native Americans, eventually passed through the region on his return to Spanish Mexico in the 1520s. The discussion included the transition of tribes from Jumanos, Tobosos and Salineros in 1683 to Apaches and Comanches by 1724. Americans/Texans began to visit the region by the mid-1840s and, in 1854, established Fort Davis in the heart of the Trans-Pecos region. A high bridge was built over the lower Pecos in 1891, allowing the region to be crossed by rail. One might say the frontier was closed at that point. The November history discussion group will examine two “What if” scenarios in history involving the presidential election of 1912, when Teddy Roosevelt lost to Woodrow Wilson, and the congressional elections of 1948 involving Lyndon Johnson, John Kennedy and Richard Nixon.

A Closer Look at Nature class
The class in October was about weird and wonderful bugs. The kids learned about some bizarre insects, spiders and other arthropods that have strange appearances or behaviors. Some of the class favorites included flies that mimic bees, beetles that go blind when they run and bugs that build “spit” fortresses to protect them while they forage. The class activity was to search for some of the bugs we had just discussed. Students found spittlebugs, assassin bugs, Texas Bow-legged Bugs, Tiger Swallowtail caterpillars, Red Velvet Ants and more.
A Closer Look at History class
October’s class, entitled *Texas Native Americans in Myth & Legend*, featured two traditional Native American stories. *Wind and Thunder Quarrel* and *Coyote the Hungry* helped kids distinguish between myth, legend and oral histories. They learned how traditional stories convey deeper meaning about how individuals and society as a whole should conduct themselves for the greater good. Following class, they posed for pictures in a coyote headdress for the cover of their own personal myth book they will write at home.

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 October program examined the life and contributions of Harriet Hemenway. She was instrumental in creating the Massachusetts Audubon Society, a grassroots effort which led to the Migratory Bird Treaty of 1916. She used her status as a Boston socialite to advocate for bird protection after other conservationists failed. The treaty spawned legislation that still protects native birds today. The Nov. 16th program will be about Teddy Roosevelt. It will be from 3 p.m. until 4 p.m. and repeated on Nov. 19th 10 a.m. until 11 a.m.

Birding activities
October is typically the month that sees the regular passing of cold fronts, which carry migrating warblers to Central America for the winter and bring our wintering birds back. However, with many near record ninety degree days this past October, that hasn’t been the case. Our annual Halloween Bird Walk was well attended with 20 participants. They were required to use the special Halloween name, like Bloody-breasted Nuthatchet, instead of the real name, Red-breasted Nuthatch. If they failed to use the correct name, they had to get a jelly bean out of our trick-or-treat bag. The trick is that half the jelly beans are awful flavors such as skunk, rotten eggs, etc. It was great fun.
An afternoon **Wednesday Birding Class** was held in October. Frank Hudspeth presented a program entitled: *Black Vulture Nest: A Story in Photos*. This program was the result of a game camera being fitted inside a deer blind that a pair of black vultures chose as a nest site. The picture sequence went from eggs through growing chicks to fledglings. The program prompted many questions about bird biology. Future afternoon programs will be Dec. 7th, *Flammulated Owl Studies* in Utah by Bob Honig; and December 14th, *Birding the Katy Prairie in Winter* by Fred Collins.

The October **Bear Creek Pioneers Park bird walk** was a delightful day. The group found a male Pin-tailed Whydah, which is a fancy exotic finch from Africa. They also saw the rare Greater Pewee, which has returned to the park for the fifth consecutive winter. Future walks will be November 17th (early because of Thanksgiving) and December 22nd. The monthly walks are from 8:30 a.m. until 10 a.m.

The October **Senior Birding Bus Trip** went to watch rice being harvested. The combines flush difficult to observe species, putting on a show for someone in the right position at the right time. The trip was Oct 28th -- too late to make the newsletter with the report. We will hopefully have great stories and photos for the next newsletter.

**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 Nov.18th trip to see Whooping Cranes in Aransas County. You may now sign up for the Dec.16th trip to the Katy Prairie to search for sparrows and the Jan. 6th trip to Williamson County to look for Mountain Plover and Burrowing Owl. 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 November and December 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.