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*Keeton Ehrig*

## It's Time For The Annual Meeting

It is nearly time for the Lee County Wildlife Association's annual meeting. It will be held on Friday, February 1, at the Sons of Hermann Hall south of Giddings, just off Hwy 77 at CR 223. Social hour will get started at 5 p.m. and the meal will be around 6:30 p.m.

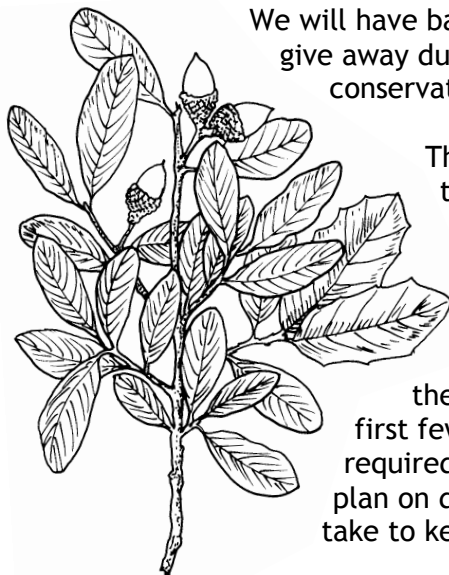
Come on out for a **rib-eye steak dinner** and great fellowship. As always, there will be plenty of door prizes and many great raffle items so bring plenty of money. Door prizes will be given throughout the evening so come early. To expedite giving out so many prizes we ask that each family member sign in at their co-op table to be eligible for the door prizes.

The meal tickets are \$10, *still below cost*. Kids 12 and under *still eat for free*, so bring the whole family. Tickets can be purchased at the time of registration.

Ross Melinchuk, Deputy Executive Director for Natural Resources at the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, will be the guest speaker this year.

We will have the annual photo contest and hopefully a few nice bucks on display. **If you have antlers or a mount from Lee County taken this season and would like to share with the crowd, please bring it to be put on display.**

## Tree Seedlings Available Again This Year



We will have bare root tree seedlings of several oak species to give away during the annual meeting, thanks to a conservation program sponsored by ALCOA.

The drought has certainly reduced the number of trees on most of our properties. We can help out mother nature by planting new ones to try to jump start their re-growth.

Planting trees is a serious commitment if you hope to have any success. I recommend the use of tree tubes to protect the trees for the first few years. Frequent watering will also be required so if you plan on planting trees go ahead and plan on doing it *correctly* and commit to the time it will take to keep them alive.

## Oldest Buck Contest

**We have added more categories to the buck contest this year.** New categories are for youth and archery. This is still an oldest buck contest but now up to **three prizes will be awarded for oldest bucks and one drawing for a spike.**

Categories are:

- Youth, 16 and under
- Adult, 17 and over
- Archery

Prizes will be awarded for the oldest buck harvested in Lee County by a member during the 2012-13 season.

We will still have a drawing from members who harvest a spike (at least one unbranched antler). To be eligible, all bucks must have been harvested in Lee County and be registered by a TPWD biologist. Hunters entering spikes will have their names put into a random drawing to determine the winner.

If you have harvested a buck and you haven't registered it yet you have until the 21st to do so.

Any bucks registered at a check station can be entered, **you need to get your deer to me and make sure I know you want to participate in the contest** and that I know about any spikes you shot to be entered into the spike drawing. My deadline for getting you entered will be January 21st.

The purpose of the current antler regulation is to allow more bucks to make it into older age classes by taking pressure off of the younger bucks. Hunters are encouraged to learn to estimate the age of a buck by their physical characteristics and behavior before shooting them.

**Please bring your antlers and mounts to the annual meeting to be displayed for all to see.** We will have the display walls on hand.

## 2012 Workshops

We strive to provide programs and workshops on subjects the Association members ask for and some we think you will find interesting. In 2012 we had a tree planting field day, field days about wild edible plants, converting your property to wildlife tax valuation, restocking and managing fishing ponds after the drought, and another opportunity to learn about and participate in a prescribed burn. We also helped to support a feral hog hunting contest in the county.

### Youth Shooting Sport and Hunter Education Event

In October we held our 8th annual Youth Shooting Sports and Hunter Education Event. This continues to be a great event and we are reaching youth that might not have the opportunity if we didn't provide this program. Each student has the chance to shoot archery, shotgun, pistol and rifles - including black powder - in a safe and controlled situation. Hunter safety and ethics are also taught. This is a fun and rewarding program that the students and the volunteers really enjoy. Grants and donations have continued to cover the expenses of this program.

We were able to help start another shooting program. Biologists at the Gus Engeling Wildlife Management Area located near Tennessee Colony wanted to start sponsoring a youth shooting sport event like what we offer to our local school students. After volunteering at several around the state they chose to model theirs after the way we run ours. Unfortunately they do not have a wildlife management association in their area and were unable to come up with the firearms in time for their first event. I was able to take and lend them

the ones that we use and help. They are pursuing grant money and partners to help them purchase the equipment they need to continue educating hunters of tomorrow.

We have had requests for a birding class for this year so we will see what we can do to arrange that.



**Rocky Mountain  
ELK FOUNDATION**

We would like to thank the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation for another year of support and we look forward to working together in the future!

## The Wildlife Photo Contest Will Have Six Prizes This Year

The rules are simple: the photos must be of a live animal taken in Lee County during 2012.

There are two categories:

- general (hand held camera)
- trail camera

Deadline: You must have your photos in to Greg Pleasant's office by January 21st.

The directors will be judging the photos and awards will be given during the annual meeting. We will be awarding prizes for first, second and third place this year for each category. There's a better chance of winning so send in those photos!

I have already started receiving some great photos for the contest, so pick out your best and get them sent in. Everyone enjoys looking at wildlife photos during the annual meeting so please share yours with the rest of us.

Please submit your digital photos electronically, saving printing cost and simplifying delivery. Email them to me at [tpwbiologist@bluebon.net](mailto:tpwbiologist@bluebon.net). Enter as many as you like, but **please have your name in the title of each photo**. And, if it's not obvious, which category.

## Cost Sharing for Food Plots

The reimbursement amount has been increased to **\$35**. Now that we have some soil moisture you might want to think about planting food plots. Remember to take advantage of the food plot seed reimbursement program. Members purchasing seed for wildlife food plots can receive up to **thirty-five dollars** in reimbursement from the Lee County Wildlife Association in an effort to reward members for helping wildlife in Lee County and to possibly encourage others to do the same.

You can purchase the seed from any retailer but the seed must be planted in Lee County to qualify. The deadline to have receipts to the Extension office for spring food plot seed will be May 1.

Mid-March is the typical time to plant spring food plots.

## 4th Annual Varmint Calling Tournament - January 26th

### LEXINGTON LONE STAR VARMINT TOURNAMENT

This thing has gotten quite big and some participants have said this is the most organized Varmint Contest they have ever participated in.

With really big payouts it continues to draw more and more participants. This will be the fourth annual 24-hour Varmint Hunting Tournament, and will be held the 4th weekend in January. Registration will begin at 10:00 a.m. on January 26 at the park building in Lexington.

Valuable raffle items and door prizes are also given away. Teams of up to four can register.

For more information on the tournament visit:

[www.lonestarvarminthunt.com](http://www.lonestarvarminthunt.com)

or contact Tommy Ramsey of KNOCKS BOW REPAIR at 512-636-9488 or Bill Woodward 512-217-0984.

## Time To Check Bluebird and Martin Boxes

You should already have your boxes clean and ready to use for the new nesting season. Using predator guards is important in helping nesting success.

We have a pair of bluebirds that have been sitting on our porch every morning the first week of January, I think they are here to stay. The box in our yard gets used every year and we enjoy watching them each spring.

Have your houses ready for those early nesters and be prepared to start checking your boxes weekly during the nesting season through July. Just remember that when you see nest construction almost completed, do not disturb the box during the first three days of egg laying. After that you can check the box in the afternoon without bothering the female. The other critical period not to disturb the nest is just prior to the young leaving the box (when they are about ten days old).


For more information about bluebird and purple martin nest box care and maintenance, please read past articles posted on the Lee County Wildlife Association's website at [leecountywildlife.org](http://leecountywildlife.org).



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