April: Cetaceans of the Hawaiian Islands

Laurie MacIvor Gillum with be the guest speaker at the April 16 meeting of the Oklahoma City Audubon Society.

Laurie has been studying and learning about the natural world as long as she can remember. At a young age, she became interested in animal behavior by watching birds in her back yard in Oklahoma City, as well as reading about primates. At ten years of age, Laurie became fascinated by Jane Goodall's behavioral work with chimpanzees, which led her to work on a project teaching American sign language to a group of chimpanzees at the Portland Zoo, and later getting the opportunity to work with Goodall on this project.

Laurie attended Lewis and Clark College in Portland, Oregon where she received her undergraduate degree in biology. For the next few years she worked as a wildlife biologist for the U.S. Forest Service in the rainforests on the Big Island of Hawaii and Kauai studying the endangered family of honeycreepers and other rare avian species. She then worked on marine mammals in the oceans of Alaska and Canada, primarily focusing on humpback and orca whales. Laurie received her graduate degree from UMASS-Amherst where she did research on the Piping Plover. Following graduate school, she worked as the endangered species biologist for the state of Maryland.



After marrying her best friend, Tim Gillum, they had three children; Trevor, Haley, and Jack. While her family was living in Maine, she was asked to be a part of a banding study of Saw Whet Owls to determine population and distribution dynamics of this obscure species of owl. In 2017, this study completed their 20th fall field season.

Currently, Laurie is the science teacher at Kings Gate Christian School in Oklahoma City. As a science educator, Laurie received an opportunity to live and study in the Peruvian Amazon rainforest for several weeks, and using her experience, still teaches about the importance of biodiversity and the animal/plant connection.

Laurie will be talking about several topics of Hawaii including whales, native and introduced birds.

Our meetings are held September through June on the third Monday of each month (with the exception of January, when the meeting is held on the fourth Monday). Meetings begin at 7 p.m. Visitors are always welcome.

Meeting Location:

Our meetings are held at the Will Rogers Garden center, located at the intersection of NW 36th Street and I-44.

President's Perspective

By Betsy Hacker

Last month a friend of mine sent me a wonderful book, "One More Warbler: A life with Birds" by Victor Emanuel, University of Texas Press; 2017). Victor Emanuel is widely considered one of America's leading birders. He has observed more than six thousand birds species during his travels that have taken him to every continent.



Best know for starting the largest birding and ecotourism

company, Emanuel has devoted his life to the mission of sharing with others his passion for birds and nature. It's a fascinating read and I highly recommend it. But if you do pick it up, be prepared to spend many hours looking up the locations and birds he writes about.

Spring migration is ramping up an

Spring migration is ramping up and OKC Audubon has organized some opportunities to get out and see birds. Field trips are a way to

learn about the many birds that migrate to Oklahoma. For me, every field trip is a chance to hone my skills and expand my knowledge and even when the weather doesn't cooperate, it's fun. Nancy Vicars says, you don't have to be an expert birder to lead a bird walk, and I'm certainly proof

of that! If anyone is interested in leading a field trip, contact me or Pat Velte and it will be posted on our website and sent via email to our members.

Will Roger's Park

As mentioned in past newsletters, a subcommittee is developing a plan to attract wild birds into the

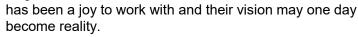


park. The landscape is diverse and there is a good source of water but due to previous maintenance practices of mowing and the heavy use of pesticides, very few birds and butterflies are seen in the gardens. The 120

acre park sits in a good location to attract birds, so with a little planning and a few changes, it could be come a birding hot-spot.

Project Bluebird, the subcommittee's first project, was completed in March and we are now working on phase 2. to re-

phase 2, to relandscape the peninsula area of the pond. The Will Rogers Park staff





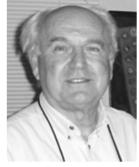
A big thank you to John Cleal, Marion Homier, Nadine Varner, Terri Underhill, and Hal Yocum and park staff for getting up early on March 24 to put up 6 bluebird houses. What a team. By 10:00 am, the boxes were up! While we were putting up boxes, we also did a little birding and observed a mating pair of red-tailed hawks. Volunteering is fun!

Volunteers needed! 2018 Garden Festival in the Park, Will Rogers Gardens. May 19.

OKC Audubon will participate in this years' May 19 (Saturday) Garden Fest. The booth can be set-up after 7:00 am. The festival lasts until 4pm but volunteers do not have to be there the entire time. Consider volunteering 2 or 3 hours and bring your binoculars! You never know what you will see. In the spirit of Victor Emanuel, it's a good opportunity to share your enthusiasm and knowledge of birds with the public.

Volunteering at park events like this one also helps our club offset the cost of our monthly meetings. OKC Parks Department accepts volunteer hours in-lieu of cash for room rental. To volunteer, call or text me at 405-638-6210, or email me at 321eowl@yahoo.com.

Bird of the Month



By John Shackford

When someone mentions hawk, the Red-tailed Hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*) is usually the first one to come to my mind. I suspect it is also the one that typifies for many other people the idea of a hawk. There are several reasons for this I believe. First it is the most populous hawk in the

United States; in North America it is the second most widely distributed hawk, behind the American Kestrel; and it is the easiest hawk to be found and observed.

Most adult Red-tails have a reddishbrown color on the tail which—if present—makes them relatively easy to identify as to species. First year birds are harder to identify—they have barred tails that do not have reddish-brown in them. One interesting point of identification on the Red-tail is that the back has random splotches of white on it; this field mark can get you started in the right direction when the tail cannot be clearly seen or when you are dealing with a young bird.

On Breeding Bird Surveys (BBSs), Redtails through the central plains, including Oklahoma, vie for the area where they are recorded most frequently. (This does not mean that this is where they are most populous, only that more birds per BBS route are seen here.) Breeding populations cover the entire U.S., and winter populations cover most of the U.S.

Undoubtedly it has been the most successful species of hawk in the U.S.

There are 14 subspecies recognized across the range of the Red-tail, some of these outside the U.S. These subpopulations vary from very light- (Krider's) to very dark- (Harlan's) plumed birds. To complicate the situation further, within a particular subspecies there are light and dark forms (as well as "intermediate" birds in some cases); and on top of all of this is the fact that each form has a differently colored pattern in juvenile plumage, not to mention the added complication of interbreeding among these different forms. Thus, precise identification of a form is complicated and sometimes virtually—if not actually—impossible, outside of DNA analysis. Our most common hawk is also our most variable in plumage.

Varying more from the normal Red-tail than any other subspecies is the Harlan's Hawk: adults and young are mostly black. For many years, classification of the Harlan's has bedeviled the American Ornithologists' Union (AOU) (who set the terms for species/subspecies classifications). From 1833-1891 Harlan's Hawk was considered a full species; from 1891-1944 a subspecies; from 1944-1973 a species; and from 1973-present a subspecies.

One of my favorite stories about Dr. George M. Sutton involves a dark Red-tail. Some members of the Tulsa and Bartlesville bird clubs had taken some pictures of a dark Red-tail and quite a debate arose among club members

as to exactly what form it was—I suspect the debate was between Harlan's and other dark forms of the Red-tail. To settle the question, several people gathered at the OU Bird Range in Norman to hear Dr. Sutton's diagnosis of the bird's true identity. After carefully looking at all the pictures, Doc said, "Well, it's a dark hawk all right." Sometimes you need to take a step back and realize you just cannot ID everything.

Items that serve as food for Red-tails varies greatly: from insects to mammals at least as large as raccoons; only about 15% of their diet is

birds or poultry. Now, in the middle of April, many nests should be active in Oklahoma. The number of eggs laid by a Red-tail can vary from one to five, but usually only two or three. Eggs are incubated for about 28 days; and from hatching to fledging takes about four weeks. Bent (A. C. 1961, Life histories of North American birds of prev. part 1, Dover Publ., Inc. New York) discusses an interesting habit of nesting Red-tails: he states that a green bough is brought to the nest almost daily. particularly while the hatchlings are young; Bent believes that, at least in part, the green bough is brought to the nest to act "as a sun shade, as the young have been seen to repeatedly pull the bough over themselves and crouch beneath it." Bent also says that these boughs may serve as food, because the young have been observed to eat them; they may also serve to hide the young from enemies.



April 3 Field Trips

Leader: Betz Hacker Lake Overholser Field Trip

At 7am April 3, as I prepared for the morning's bird walk to Lake Overholser, my cell phone buzzed a freeze warning. I thought it was a mistake as it was 64 degrees and balmy. I met participants at 8am and it was beautiful but by 10am, the temperature had dropped 14 degrees and there was a fierce north wind. We birded for 2 hours and logged 29 species. A few of the more notable birds included 200 American Pelicans, 25 Bluewinged Teal, and 5 Red-breasted Mergansers.

Red Rock Canyon SP

That afternoon, 5 hardy birders braved the fierce north wind and were rewarded! We birded from 3pm to just after 5pm. Initially our thoughts were that it may be a waste of time because what bird would want to be out in that wind. Fortunately, the Canyon provides protection and many birds were active. We logged 25 species. A few of the more notable birds included 2 vocal Louisiana Waterthrush, a Black-and-White Warbler, a Pileated Woodpecker, 3 Blue-gray Gnatchatchers, a Spotted Towhee, and many Eastern Phoebes and Bluebirds.

SPRING LITTLE SIT

A "little sit" will be held Saturday April 21st at the home of Marion Homier and John Cleal from 9 a.m. until dusk at 3626 Santa Fe Drive, Choctaw, OK 73020.

Some snacks will be provided and please bring a folding chair. Notification of attendance is always appreciated: phone (405) 390-2001 or email at mhomier@yahoo.com Come-and-go or come-and-stay, we hope you'll join us.

Directions - Due to construction on I-40, we recommend the following if taking Interstate 40 eastbound: Take Exit 162 at Anderson Rd. Go north on Anderson about ½ mile to SE44th. Turn right on SE44th and go east 5 miles to Triple X Rd.

Turn left (north) on Triple X Rd. and go appx. ¼ mile to Santa Fe Drive. Turn left onto Santa Fe and after appx ½ mile, bear to the right at the "Y". Note: After Santa Fe bears to the right and runs north the numbering sequence changes.

We are the first house north of the intersection with Railhead Dr. There are two flags on a flagpole in the front yard.

Mitch Park Field Trip

On Saturday, March 17, we met at the Old School Bagel Cafe near Covell and Edmond. Between 7:15 and 8 am we managed to have 12 birders arrive plus myself. Several of them were chomping at the bit and there quite early. It was a cool morning.

First we traveled a couple miles south on Kelly to see the "nearly resident" Red Crossbills at Chitwood Park. I counted 21 that day. Great views and they "posed" for photos at 15 -20 feet. That has been their usual non concern about our presence. OBTW- they are still there to-day 4/4, as I write this very delayed story.



Also at Chitwood we saw: Mourning and White-winged Doves, Blue Jay, Red-bellied Woodpecker, American Robins, European Starling, and Dark-eyed Junco.

Then on to Mitch Park where we sighted 32 species. Sparrows, including House, Harris's, Fox, Whitecrowned, Lincoln's, Song, White-throated, and Field Sparrow. We saw Killdeer, Robins, and Starlings on the athletic fields as we drove in. Other notables included Eastern and Spotted Towhee, many Cedar Waxwings, Brown-headed Cowbird, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Eastern Phoebe, Eastern Bluebird, Tufted Titmouse, Carolina Wren, Cooper's Hawk (sitting high in a cottonwood), Redtailed and Red Shouldered Hawk, Downy and Redbellied Woodpeckers, Northern Flicker, Eurasian-collared Dove, Mourning Doves, Rock Pigeons, Red-winged Blackbird, Great-tailed Grackle, Dark-eyed Junco, Carolina Chickadee, Blue Jay, Canada Goose, Mallard, and flyovers of Turkey Vultures.

A couple specials sightings were both American and Fish Crows and a leucistic female Northern Cardinal. The entire group of 12 lasted until 10:30 and the die-hards made it until noon. Lots of bird, photo opportunities and friendly talk. It was a great start to almost Spring.

—Hal Yokum

Oklahoma City Audubon Society Welcomes New Members

Linda Dillner, Norman Clarissa Sharp, OKC LeighAnn Brown, Edmond Ian Harvey, OKC Patricia Kirch, OKC

REFRESHMENTS

Refreshments for the April 16 meeting will be provided by:

Snacks: Marion Homier and Hal Yocum

FOR SALE: Zeiss Conquest compact 10X25 binoculars. Barely used - mostly for backyard birding. Very lightweight and can be folded to fit snugly in a shirt pocket. Drawbacks are restricted field-of-view and non-waterproof. Original price:\$400. Selling for \$225. Contact Mark Delgrosso at: 405 403 5655 or markdelg94@gmail.com.

Oklahoma City Audubon Society Officers 2018

President	Elizabeth Hacker	638-6210
Vice President	John Shackford	340-5057
Secretary	Sharon Henthorn	521-9958
Treasurer	Nancy Vicars	831-1945
Parliament	Ted Golden	354-3619
Programs	Warren Harden	596-2759
Recorder	Esther M. Key	735-1021
Conservation	Dave Woodson	601-622-3467
Field Trips	Betz Hacker	638-6210
Newsletter Editor	Pat Velte	751-5263
Publicity	Doug Eide	495-8192
Historian	Vacant	
Refreshments	Sue Woodson	601-622-3467
Webmaster	Pat Velte	751-5263

The Oklahoma City Audubon society is neither a chapter of nor affiliated with National Audubon.

For up-to-date Oklahoma City Audubon news visit: **OKC-Audubon.org**

Minutes March 19, 2018

Meeting was called to order by President Elizabeth Hacker. Guests introduced are Floyd Murdock (Altus), Tony Futcher (Hyattsville, MD), Ron Vandervort (Bowie, MD), Adam and Jackie Hutzell (Edmond), Dayton and Bobby Mather, Matt Burney (Moore), and Kate Burger (Moore).

A member roster was distributed to interested parties and will be updated as needed. Meeting minutes of February 19th approved with no changes.

Nancy Vicars read the Treasurer's report. \$6,012.67 is in the account.

Recent birding: March 17 Mitch Park north of Edmond.

Upcoming field trips: Consult the website www.okc-audubon.org for details.

Old business: the task force to improve birding opportunities at Will Rogers Park is proceeding, with six bluebird houses planned. Demo model was shown and Terri Underhill suggested modifications for bird safety, which will be added. Vote of the members present approved the use of our club account to purchase the birdhouses for \$310.

A beginning birding session will take place from 8-10 on Saturday April 14 at the Park. Audubon volunteers will be arranging a display case in the foyer, date to be determined.

New business: the relationship of our independent Audubon Society with the National Audubon Society was discussed, with caution recommended to avoid hasty decision-making about joining National.

Statewide Audubon meeting was held at Stroud on March 17. Wind energy issues, Nathan Kuhnert's Safe Passage Program, and important birding areas to be added to the Audubon national map.

Mark Delgrosso has resigned as Field Trip Coordinator and the position is open for volunteers. Also the position of Club Historian is available

Business meeting was adjourned. Presentation was given by Mike Mather, Professor Emeritus of University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma in Chickasha. Birding and photography are developing passions for this retired herpetologist who showed photos of his birding in Costa Rica.

Meeting was adjourned.

Report by Sharon Henthorn, club secretary

Recorders Report March 2018

Spring Begins



As the redbuds and wild plum thickets began to bloom, visions of spring and spring migrants begin dancing in birder's head and questions arise. Which spring migrant will show up first: Shorebirds, Warblers, NTMB (Neotropical Migratory Birds), Egrets/Herons and, yes Gulls? How long would the Red Crossbills visit Chitwood Park in Edmond and the Red-necked Grebe stay on Lake Hefner? And then as winter continues to linger, how will this affect spring migration?

On the 1st Larry Mays came across **Purple Martin** at South Lakes Park in Cleveland County; and Richard Gunn viewed Green-winged Teal, 50-60 Greater Yellowlegs and Western Meadowlarks along South Jenkins in Norman. On the 2nd Ben Sandstrom identified Ferruginous Hawk and Brewer's Blackbird in Logan County; Laura Madden recognized Barred Owl and Eastern Phoebe at Spring Haven in McClain County; and John Tharp observed Wood Duck, **Long-billed Dowitcher** and **Fish Crow** along South Jenkins in Norman. On the 3rd Scott Loss detected Purple Martin at Boomer Lake; and Esther Key watched Double-crested Cormorant and White-crowned Sparrow at Sportsman Lake in Seminole County and Wild Turkey in Pottawatomie County.

On the 4th John Tharp reports that despite the dreary weather, he managed a couple of decent birds on Ten Mile Flats in west Norman: Prairie Falcon and a quite

early **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher**. Meanwhile, Cory Riding counted Red Crossbills at The OSU Botanical Garden; and Tim Muzny encountered Purple Martins in SW OKC. On the 5th Bill Diffin added American Woodcock at Lake Stanley Draper; and Michael Kane spotted Little Blue Heron in Norman. On the 6th at the Audubon Field Trip in Canadian County at Stinchcomb Wildlife Refuge West Gate 3, Brian Marra photographed **Franklin's Gull** and Johnny Walker reported **Barn Swallow** found by Sharon Henthorn and Sandhill Crane discovered by Bob Holbrook.

On the 7th
Mary and Lou
Truex located
Greater
Roadrunner
along I-44 in
McClain
County. On
the 8th Scott
Loss
recorded



Rusty Blackbirds along Airport Road and at Boomer Lake **Neotropic Cormorant** while Corey Riding had Fish Crow; also, near the Jackson Elementary School in Norman Zach DuFran verified **Yellow-crowned Night-Heron**. On the 9th Zach Poland got Purple Martin at Taylor Lake in Grady County. On the 10th Caleb McKinney confirmed Canvasback at Lake Louis Burtschi in Grady County; Brian Marra discovered LeConte's Sparrow at Arcadia Lake; and Mike Yough saw Rusty Blackbird at his home in Payne County. On the 11th Joe Grzybowski tallied Greater Yellowlegs and Blue-winged Teal at Alex Marsh in Grady County.



On the 13th Brian
Marra found Vesper
Sparrow at Lake
Stanley Draper. On
the 14th Chad Ellis
turned up Cinnamon
Teal at Rose Lake
and Long-billed
Dowitcher along
Mustang Road; Zach
Poland discovered a
Prairie Falcon at
downtown Oklahoma
City: and Robert

Harding recognized Purple Finch at his home in OKC. On the 16th Brian Marra determined **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher** at Stinchcomb WR; and John Moyer encountered **Black-and-white Warbler** at his home

in Cleveland County. On the 17th Larry Mays recorded Pine Siskin at his home in McClain County; Brian Marra documented **Pectoral Sandpiper**, **Baird's Sandpiper** and **Stilt Sandpiper** at the Yukon Parkway/Mustang Road playa.

On the 18th Mary and Lou Truex spotted Pied-billed Grebe and White-winged Dove at Paul's Valley Lake in Garvin County; Bill Diffin identified Black Vulture, Fish Crow and Chipping Sparrow at Bell Cow Lake in Lincoln County and Hermit Thrush at Mitch Park in Edmond: Zach Poland added Franklin's Gull at his home in Logan County; John Tharp discovered Common Yellowthroat along South Jenkins; and Brian Marra viewed Common Yellowthroat and Marsh Wren at the Lake Overholser Coffer Dam and at Stinchcomb WR a Winter Wren. On the 19th Rachel Wrenn observed Lark Sparrow in her yard in Norman. On the 20th at the Stinchcomb WR John Hurd reported Lesser Yellowlegs and Austin Jones tallied Swamp Sparrow. On the 21st Rachel Wrenn found Cliff Swallow at Lake Thunderbird State Park.

On the 22nd Giff Beaton came across Red-breasted Mergansers at Lake Overholser; Jimmy Woodward

had Northern
Rough-winged
Swallow and
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher at the
Oklahoma Zoo
Park; Brian
Stufflebeam noticed Snowy
Plover at Lake
Hefner Prairie
Dog Point; Calvin
Rees saw Barn
Swallow at Lin-



coln Park Golf Course; and Rachel Wrenn detected White-eyed Vireo and Blue-gray Gnatcatcher along South Jenkins. On the 23rd Hal Yocum located Eastern Towhee, Blue-gray Gnatcatchers and Louisiana Waterthrush at Mitch Park in Edmond. On the 24th Roy McGraw watched Tree Swallow at Arcadia Conservation Education Center at Lake Arcadia; Tim O'Connell turned up Louisiana Warbler, Black-and-white Warbler and Pine Warbler at Lake Carl Black-well; Mike Yough got White-eyed Vireo at his home in Payne County; John Tharp verified Northern Rough-winged Swallow along South Jenkins; and Nathan Kuhnert and Emily Hjalmarson determined Yellow-throated Warbler along South Jenkins.

On the 25th Deanne McKinney discovered American Kestrel and Eastern Phoebe at Rose Lake; Roy McGraw located **Little Blue Heron** at Zoo Lake Park; Emily Hjalmarson observed **Yellow-headed Blackbird** at Ten File Flats in Norman and Black-and-white Warbler at Lake Thunderbird. On the 26th Zach Poland found a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher at his home in Logan County; Roy McGraw recognized Baird's Sandpiper at Lake Hefner Prairie Dog Point; Taylor Vance reported Yellow-throated Warbler at Boomer



Lake Park; and Rachel Wrenn confirmed Orange-crowned Warbler along South Jenkins. On the 27th John Hurd identified White-eyed Vireo, Tree Swallow, Barn Swallow, and Cliff Swallow at Taylor Lake; and Brian Stufflebeam spotted Cliff Swallow and Common Loon at Lake Hefner.

On the 29th Jimmy Woodard and Nadine Varner took a spin around Lake Stanley Draper and came across Black-and-white Warbler, Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, White-eyed Vireo and Louisiana Waterthrush. On the 30th Bill Diffin and Brian Marra documented **Little Gull** in Canadian County at the Stinchcomb Wildlife Refuge West Gate 3; Dick Gunn, Rachel and John detected **Northern Parula** and Vesper Sparrow along South Jenkins; and Caitlin Rottler counted Red Crossbills at Fort Reno. On the 31st Bill Diffin identified **Black Scoter** at Lake Hefner Prairie Dog Point.

Continuing through the month Hal Yocum has reported Red Crossbills at Chitwood Park in Edmond and different birders have sorted through the hundreds of swimmers to at Lake Hefner to verify the Red-necked Grebe is still here. When will they leave? And what will happen with the birds and the plants they feed on when the April Fools weather arrives?



During March of 2018 in the Central Oklahoma area **158** species were reported with **28** new species bringing the total for the year to **173**. I appreciate those who help provide the history of central Oklahoma birds by making reports at http://ebird.org. I can also be contacted by e-mail at emkok@earthlink.net. Esther M. Key, Editor.

Oklahoma City Audubon Society c/o Patricia Velte 1421 NW 102nd Street Oklahoma City, OK 73114

Upcoming Field Trips

APRIL

- 14: Saturday, Lake Thunderbird State Park. Meet Joe Sheppard, 8:00 am, in front of the Lake Thunderbird Information Center (13101 Alamameda Drive). Please RSVP to jcshep@yahoo.com or leave a message 405-371-0265.
- 21: Spring Big Sit: this laid-back birding event will take place on the property of John Cleal and Marion Homier. See page 4 for times and directions. Leader: Marion Homier (mhomier@yahoo.com)
- 28-30 Oklahoma Ornithological Society spring meeting: weekend: More information to follow

MAY

- 11: Myriad Botanical Gardens. Time: 8:00 am. Meet in front of the Conservatory off W. Reno. There are a few free on-street parking spots along S. Harvey Ave south of Reno. Leader Zach Poland (zpoland@okstate.edu).
- 12: Pathfinder Parkway Location: Bartlesville [in conjunction w. Tulsa Audubon]: Meet at 7:00 a.m at the McDonalds at Hwy 75 & Price Road in Bartlesville. Leader: Local expert Mark Peterson will lead us at one of the premier spots for warblers and Spring migrants in Oklahoma. For more information contact Jim Deming, birdbrain.jim@gmail.com, 918-864-4707.
- 12: South Jenkins Rd and other Norman locations. Time: 8:15 am Noon-ish. Leader: Nathan Kuhnert. Meet at Rudy's BBQ on Hwy 9 and Chautauqua. Nathan will lead the group along Highway 9 and stop at what he refers to as "migrant traps." He has been birding this area for many years and says it's possible to see Acadian Flycatchers, Yellow-throated Warbler, Northern Parula, Yellow-breasted Chat and many more migrating birds. RSVP Betz Hacker (321eowl@yahoo.com)
- 22: Will Rogers Park. Meet at 8:00 am in the parking lot of the Will Roger's Garden Center, NW 36th & I-44. Leader: Betz Hacker.