

# NATURES TALES

10201 Monte Cristo Road  
Edcouch, TX 78538  
956-262-4014

naturesresort@gmail.com  
naturesresorttexas.com  
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## *Dancing the Nights Away!*

The clubhouse was packed for the New Year's Eve dance, with music provided by Ruthi. We celebrated the New Year twice – First, for those wishing to retire 'early', we stopped the dancing at 11 p.m. and watched the ball drop in Times Square, and for those whose 'get up and go' had not 'got up and went' we celebrated it again at midnight.

There were four dances scheduled during January: 12 String Tim; Ralph & the Cruisers, a 5 piece band which was a first for Natures; Tom Wayne, an energetic entertainer with a good selection of both country and rock & roll; and Jack Kay of Lost in Time who tested our stamina by playing until 11 p.m.

Currently there are three dances scheduled for February, but watch the bulletin board ... It is quite possible that our energetic Fun Association may sneak another one in!

## *Plants Native to the Rio Grande Valley*

As many of us are learning the painful way, the plants that we grow up north do not do well in the Lower Rio Grande Valley. Up north they survive the harsh winters, and thrive in the summer, making a beautiful show of color. When we try to grow those same plants here, they survive the mild winter, but during the hot summer which should be their growing season, they wilt, and it is a struggle just to keep them alive.

In plant life, the summers here equate to the winters in the more northern areas. In the Lower Rio Grande Valley native plants, with the exception of various cacti, are dormant during the hot summers, and thrive and grow during the winter months.

Thus, if you want to have thriving plants on your site, the answer is to "go native". This is what Carol Goolsby from the National Butterfly Center in Mission, Texas told us during her very interesting presentation in our clubhouse.

We also learned that 'going native' does not mean buying plants that are marked "Native to Texas". There are a number of different climate zones in this huge state, so one should purchase plants that are "Native to the Lower Rio Grande Valley". These plants are not found in the big chain stores that buy in bulk. Even many of the smaller nurseries have few plants that are specifically native to the Lower Rio Grande Valley.

If you wish to 'go native', your best chance of getting plants that are truly native to this specific area is to go to either Valley Nature Center on S. Border Avenue & 4<sup>th</sup> street in Weslaco, or Valley Garden Center 801 E. Bus. 83 & McColl Road in McAllen.

Although these plants may be a little more expensive than plants at the large chain stores, because they are native to this area they will spread and multiply, so one plant will go a long way!

There are definite advantages to 'going native'. These plants are easy to grow. Once established there is no need to water them regularly and they do not need to be pampered. This leaves you with more time to laze around the pool! Due to their low maintenance, native plants are definitely a good thing for annual site holders who are away for the summer. Another advantage is that they will attract beautiful butterflies. The Lower Rio Grande Valley has the largest variety of butterflies in the United States – and you can enjoy them on your site if you have the

correct vegetation for them. You can also attract some of the beautiful birds that are found in this area that, like the butterflies, also depend on native plants for their survival. In light of the above, we encourage everyone to "Go Native".

There is a three ring binder in the library with information regarding native plants, where to get them, and which butterflies they will attract.

### ***The Blood Mobile at Natures.***

Once again United Blood Services sent their blood mobile to Natures. People gathered in the clubhouse enjoying cookies and complimentary coffee waiting for their turn to donate. Somehow it doesn't matter what we are doing, we turn it into a social occasion!

Twenty nine people were screened, and 24 eligible people donated. In total 27 units were collected, as three people donated double red units.

Thank you to all who donated blood, and also to those who registered and tried, but were ineligible that day. The next blood donation event will be on March 1, 2010. We hope to see you all there, plus some new faces.

### ***Tidbits from Speckles, our Proud Natures Cat!***

We are so busy! All the sites are full – even the overflow is overflowing! But I love having everyone here!

- There is a brand new exercise bike in the exercise room. Jean-Mark, Ben and Randy put it all together (and there were no parts over!) Check it out!
- While Terry & Nila – Site 118 - were driving south to Natures, their 5<sup>th</sup> wheel caught on fire! What a terrible thing to happen! We are so glad that they are safe and that they found another 5<sup>th</sup> wheel to replace the one they lost.

- Reg & Sharon – Site 37 - had problems with their truck and they had to have some very expensive repairs done on their way down to Natures.
- Bill R – Site #79 – has been hobbling around with a sore back for months, but he had a procedure that glued him back together again, and now he is back out on the dance floor.
- Boy, was it cold! For two nights the temperature dropped below freezing, and lots of our plants look very sad. (The native plants of the Rio Grande Valley didn't freeze! How about that!)
- The sprinkler was put on the orchard during the freeze, and look what happened! I'm glad I have a fur coat!
- Dixie – Site #35 – has added an awning to her home. It looks great!
- Bob and Jean – Site #5 – got a new house, and it looks awesome. Congratulations!
- I'm glad that Brad – Site #22 – is not afraid of heights. He has spent a lot of time on the clubhouse roof and up the Wi-Fi pole putting up new access points for the Wi-Fi system! Thanks Brad! You are awesome!

That's all from me! Have a purrrfect month!



### **Weekly Activities:**

**Aerobics:** 8:30 a.m. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. Clubhouse

**Bike Rides:** 9:00 a.m. Thursday. See bulletin board for details of each ride

**Bingo:** 6:15 p.m. Friday Play starts at 7 p.m. Clubhouse

**Bowling:** 9:15 p.m. Friday Flamingo Bowl,  
3301 N. 23rd Street, McAllen.

**CampFire:** 5:00 p.m. Friday. Bring a chair,  
something to drink and food to cook  
over the fire

**Chat & Craft:** 1:00 p.m. Friday Clubhouse.  
Bring your own craft project or sewing.

**Coffee:** 9:00 a.m. Thursday Site #100.  
BYOMug and enjoy a social time with  
other nudists.

**Dominoes:** 6:30 p.m. Wednesday. (Mexican  
train)

**Euchre:** 7:00 p.m. Monday. Bring a partner  
and \$1.00

**Ladies Brunch:** 10:30 a.m. Every other  
Tuesday.

**Men's Breakfast:** 8:30 a.m. Every other  
Tuesday

**Petanque:** 2:00 p.m. Every day. Everyone  
is welcome- even those who have never  
played before.

**Rock & Roll Concert:** 6:30 p.m. Sunday on  
Big Screen TV in the Clubhouse

**Soup Supper:** 6:00 p.m. Monday \$4.50  
per person. Sign up required.

**Texas Hold'Em:** See Bulletin Board for times.

**Trivial Pursuit:** 6:00 p.m. Thursday

**Water Aerobics:** 9:30 Monday, Wednesday,  
Friday

**Water Volleyball:** See impromptu board on  
the south side of the clubhouse for  
dates and times.

**Western Dancing:** 6:30 p.m. Wednesday

## ***February Activities***

**2<sup>nd</sup> CPR & AED Class** 9:00 a.m. to 1 p.m.  
for those who signed up.

**7<sup>th</sup> Super Bowl Party** 4:30 p.m. Pre-  
Game, 5:28 p.m. Kickoff. Hosts: Dan &  
Jan. Bring Hors de Oeuvres to share.

**14<sup>th</sup> Valentines Dance** 7:00 – 10:00 p.m.  
Music by Cindy. Hosted by Dave &  
Lauri. Door prizes! Hot Dogs will be  
sold at 6:00 p.m.

**16<sup>th</sup> Mardi Gras Party and Dance.** Hosted  
by Bob and Sharon

**20<sup>th</sup> Members Meeting 9 a.m.** If you are at  
Natures, you are a member. Your input  
is appreciated, so please attend. Free  
coffee and donuts!

**21<sup>st</sup> Pot Luck 5:00 p.m.** Bring a dish to  
share from your own State. Hosted by  
Rene & Marie.

**21<sup>st</sup> Birthday & Anniversary Celebration.**  
6:30 p.m. Join us for cake and ice  
cream as we celebrate the February  
Birthdays and Anniversaries.

**23<sup>rd</sup> Killer Bees Hockey Game** and Tail  
Gate Party. Sign up required.

**24<sup>th</sup> AARP Drivers Class** 10:00 a.m. to  
3:00 p.m. Sign up required

**25<sup>th</sup> Owners Appreciation Dinner.** 6:00  
p.m. Bring a smile and a towel to sit on.  
No reserved seats please. Sign up.

**27<sup>th</sup> Dance** 7 p.m. Hosted by Chuck and  
Sharlotte.