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Watershed Week in Review

Llano River Watershed Alliance

Local students compete at Texas Envirothon

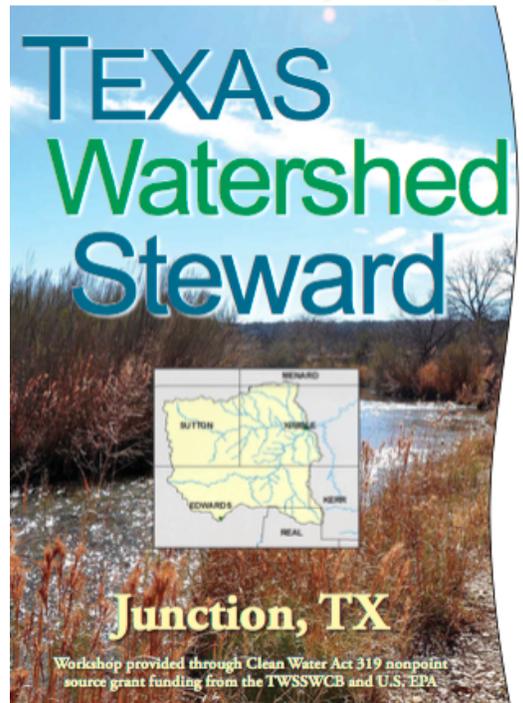


Junction High School students, who participated in the Texas Tech Outdoor School Envirothon on April 8-10, from left, standing next to their teacher Pam Bednarz, are, from left, Sterling Morrison, Michael VanWinkle, Isaac Neuman, Josh Richardson and Lauren Zion.

*By James Murr
Junction Eagle*

The Texas Envirothon for 2017 was hosted by the Llano River Field Station (Field Station) at Texas Tech University (TTU) in Junction during April 8-10. This event is held to enhance the environmental literacy of students and enable informed decision making on the environment. This challenging high school competition has involved, to date, 50,000 participants in North America.

Continued page 3



When: May 6, 8:30 am-12:30 pm

Where: Llano River Field Station, Texas Tech-Junction

CEUs Available

[...more info](#)

700 Springs Tour

This year's tour of 700 Springs will be
Saturday, **April 29th**.

As in years previous, the tour will be at
the Kimble County Courthouse in Junction
at 10am sharp and caravan to the 700
Springs Ranch.



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Family Park Programs South Llano River State Park Phone: (325) 446-3994



Golden-cheeked Warbler Hike

Thursday, April 20th, 8:30 am - 10:30 am

Meet at the Fawn Trail parking lot
(behind Park Headquarters)

Find out about the endangered Golden-cheeked Warbler that only nests in the Texas Hill Country, and then join us for a 2.5-mile, moderate hike to see if we can spot one. Good walking shoes, sun protection, and drinking water are recommended. Binoculars provided, or bring your own.

All ages and skill levels welcome.

Bird Walk

Friday, April 21st, 8:30 am - 10:00 am

Meet at the Fawn Trail parking lot
(behind Park Headquarters)



Yellow-breasted Chat

Come birding with us! We'll walk the trails, sit in the blind, and see what birds we can spot! Good walking shoes and drinking water are recommended.

Binoculars provided, or bring your own.

All ages and skill levels welcome.



Fawn Trail Nature Hike

Sunday, April 23rd, 9:00 am - 11:00 am

Meet at the Walk-in Campground parking lot

Join us for a morning hike on our Fawn Trail as we find out more about the plants and animals of the Hill Country. This hike is 3 miles round-trip, and is moderate in difficulty -- parts of the trail are steep and rocky, and others are more flat. Hiking boots or good walking shoes, sun protection, and plenty of drinking water are recommended. All ages welcome.

Park programs are open to the public and free with park entrance fee

Envirothon (continued)

Twenty-five teams participated in this year's Texas event, including a team from the Junction High School (JHS). Each team was comprised of five students accompanied by coaches, parents, observers, and fans. JHS Principal Dana Davis strongly supported participation in the Envirothon and chemistry/biology teacher Ms. Pamela Bednarz guided the students in preparing for the event: Sterling Morrison, Isaac Neuman, Josh Richardson, Michael Van Winkle, and Lauren Zion. (See accompanying photo.)

The Junction students met with local authorities and experts to learn about various topics to help prepare for the Envirothon experience. Those providing invaluable assistance included Sam Silvers (Kimble County Extension Agent), Holly Platz (Ranger, South Llano State Park), Alfredo Munoz (Natural Resources Conservation Service), Sylvia Lawler (Kimble County Library), former teacher Scott Richardson, and Sam Saenz (Chair, Science Department, East Early College High School). Earlier the Junction students attended the Outdoor School at the TTU Center in Junction, which gave them a good start in preparing for this academically demanding event.

Bednarz said the students gave up a good deal of their time outside of school to prepare themselves for an event requiring a depth and breadth of knowledge. Students were tested in wildlife biology, forestry, aquatics, soil science, and a timely environmental issue – Agriculture: Soil and Water Conservation.

The JHS students' participation was described by Bednarz as an enriching experience that pushed them to learn and work in a truly collaborative manner resulting in a genuine team effort. In addition, she said that learning about the critical importance of the environment and the shared responsibility for stewardship of our county's natural resources was strongly reinforced. Bednarz is hopeful that the students will be given the opportunity to make presentations on what they have learned to local civic groups (e.g., the Lions and Rotary clubs) and others.

The winner of this year's Texas Envirothon was the Academy of Science & Technology from Woodland, Texas. The team will now advance to the national competition in Emmitsburg, Maryland, during July, where scholarships totaling \$25,000 will be awarded.

In commenting on the Envirothon, the JHS team captain Isaac Neuman said "It was fun to have the experience and learn new things about what's in our own backyard, as well as important ways to protect the environment because it's the world in which we'll be living." Autumn Bryant, from East Central High School in San Antonio, commented that this was "a cool and interesting way to learn about environmental subjects, including very practical ways to deal with problems – ways to apply the knowledge learned." Jacob Hernandez, also from East Central, said "That one hears a lot about protecting the environment and that this experience 'filled his heart' with the importance of doing so."

TTU-Junction's Koy Coffey said it was a privilege to host this year's Texas Envirothon and that it was a perfect opportunity to introduce the City of Junction and the Llano River Field Station to many people from across the state. She also gave a big "thank you to the awesome volunteers who made this year's event happen".

The Envirothon, with its economic benefits for local businesses, was held in our community because of the presence of the Llano River Field Station and the Outdoor School, as well as the central location of Junction and the area's natural resources attractions.

