

TMN – COT
Board of Directors Meeting
Wednesday, August 3, 2011
AgriLIFE® Extension Office, Angleton, Texas

Attendees: Ed Barrios, David Brandes, Barbara Burkhardt, Marty Cornell, Justina Dent, Jerry Eppner, Mary Holler, Mary Helen Israel, Jerry Krampota, Jeanne Manry, Neal McLain, Tom Morris, Connie Stolte

Start Time: 3:03

Action Items:

An outstanding action item from our June, 2011 board meeting was that Addendum 9 of our Policies and Procedures was to be modified per the motion passed at our January, 2011 board meeting, to wit: "Sandy Henderson moved to eliminate the current wording of Addendum #9 and to substitute a simple reference to our chapter web site for a list of partners and projects and for examples of projects." **Dave Brandes agreed to complete this modification before the September, 2011 board meeting.**

Minutes: The July minutes were amended to list attendees. Dave Brandes moved to accept the minutes as amended, the motion was seconded by Tom Morris and passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report: There was no report as Treasurer Sandy Henderson was on vacation.

Programs: Mary Holler, Program Chairperson, reported that the subject of next Wednesday's general meeting will be bird banding, presented by Robert and Kay Lookingbill. The September general meeting will be our chapter's Tenth Anniversary Celebration. Mary is pursuing several possible topics for the future, but has not received confirmation by two of the potential speakers:

- "Soils," by John Jacob of TAMU and AgriLife Extension Service
- "Edible Wild Plants," by Thomas Adams of the USFWS.

Other speakers under consideration:

- Dave Brandes has agreed to talk on "Phytoplankton," but the date depends upon the acceptance of the outside guests.
- In the general discussion, it was suggested that Judi James' presentation on "Astronomy" would be of high interest, noting that the venue for this talk should be at the planetarium of the Brazosport Center for the Arts and Sciences. The date would reflect her availability around teaching obligations.
- Cherie O'Brian was suggested as an expert on coastal wetlands.
- Andrew Sansom, Research Professor of Geography at Texas State University-San Marcos, on anything about Texas water.
- James L. Smith as a local amateur on butterflies.

Tenners: As a result of last month's general meeting presentation on "Tenners" by the Galveston Bay TMN chapter, Tom Morris and Jeanne Manry agreed to develop a proposal to adapt this learning format for our Chapter. The board approved their proposal with no dissent, having been moved by Dave Brandes and seconded by Ed Barrios.

ConocoPhillips:

Mary Holler reported progress in developing content for the CP self-run environmental education program. COT member specific assignments include the Watershed System that brings water to Sweeny and the CP plants (Jim Albritton), Owl Pellets (Jeanne Manry), and Aquatic Wild (Mary Holler). CP employees were encouraged to develop a poster that describes the operations of the CP-Sweeny facility. When these tasks are finished, our COT team will develop a "field journal" much like that used by the BISD at DEEP. Once running, CP will use only a few of our members for occasional support.

Membership: Chair Jerry Eppner reported that 44 members have submitted time year-to-date, totaling 5,527 hours. Although over half of 2011 has passed, we have less than half of the total hours submitted in 2010. The total since the 2001 inception of the Cradle of Texas chapter stands at 99,646; it is thus certain that we will surpass our target of 100,000 total chapter hours by our tenth anniversary celebration in September.

Jerry Eppner noted that his efforts continue to clean up our membership lists. Discussion indicated that a Google list can be modified to include just active COT members for business purposes, and a broader list could add those other persons who might have interest in our chapter activities.

Outreach: Chair Ruby Lewis was not present, but Mary Helen Israel reported that over 2,000 people were exposed to our summer library program so far this year.

Sonny Arnold, assistant coordinator for the Texas Master Naturalist program, will be retiring at the end of August. Sonny will be honored during the October TMN state convention at Mo Ranch, where remembrances and mementos are being sought by Michelle Haggerty. The board agreed to give Sonny a gift reflecting Brazoria County, perhaps a mounted shell. Another suggestion would be to have a custom-made laser-cut steel business card holder, similar to those given as speaker gifts during the 2006 training sessions (\$15 each). The design could be a sea shell. These were made by Michael Forest of Double F Metal Art (a friend of Rich Tillman, who has since moved to the Hill Country) See <http://www.doublefmetalart.com>.



Tom Morris agreed to locate a suitable gift.

Organization of the "Nature Night" program at Brazoria County libraries will resume in September when Mary Helen and Ruby meets with Tom West. It was suggest that Tennessees lists might prove to be a fun addition to that program.

Tenth Anniversary: Committee Chair Ed Barrios reported that the Lake Jackson Civic Center has been booked between 9:00 am and 2:00 pm on Wednesday, September 14th for our tenth anniversary celebration. Other venues, including the Angleton Recreation Center and several churches were booked for this Wednesday afternoon.

The lunch will be served by Affairs to Remember and feature Lombardy chicken at a per person cost of \$12; lunch tickets will be \$15. Not included will be special birthday cakes, one Italian cream cake iced with the TMN-COT logo and another chocolate alligator-shaped cake like the one auctioned at the MC11 kickoff event last April. Wild flower center pieces will accent white linen-clothed tables.



Seating at tables for eight will be assigned by place cards quasi-randomly distributed to mix members of different classes. "Quasi" because spouses and guests of members will be seated together (if they wish).

The committee estimates that about 120 people will attend, including ten special guests such as Michelle Haggerty and representatives from our partners. COT will pay for the lunches of these special guests. With the excess ticket income and \$500 allocated by this board, the committee estimates a working budget of \$800 after dinner expenses. Commemorative T-shirts with the COT logo augmented with "Tenth Anniversary, 2001 to 2011", will be offered to members at a cost of \$10 (\$12 for 2X and larger). Order forms for both lunch tickets and T-shirts will be distributed to members at next week's general meeting, and sent via e-mail. Payments are to be made before August 26th to Stephanie Taylor at the AgriLife extension office. **Barbara Burkhardt will pre-notify members of ticket costs and T-shirt sales in her reminder of the upcoming general meeting.**

Jerry Eppner suggested that we make arrangements for transport of older members. It was also suggested that a group photo be taken of all attending Master Naturalists, and perhaps partners.

Fall training class

It was reported that Ed Johnson, because of health problems, will not be able to serve as our training chairperson. It was also noted that we have had but three people express an interest in our fall training classes to be given in September. These factors led Marty Cornell to move, seconded by Dave Brandes, to eliminate the fall classes. The motion carried unanimously. The three people interested in joining COT will be invited by Barbara Burkhardt to attend our meetings and informed that our next training program will begin in the spring.

All recommendations for a training chair will be considered. Connie Stolte noted that other chapters select a training assistant from the most recent graduating class.

A discussion concluded that special outside speakers for training classes, like TAMU professors, be scheduled if practical as part of our regularly scheduled general meetings instead of being set on separate days. It was noted that many members have reserved the second Wednesday of the month on their calendars for COT activities, and have conflicts on other days.

Other stuff: Ed Barrios, our State Representative, noted that no one from COT attended a recent regional meeting. No other members of the board had received a notice of this meeting.

The meeting ended at 4:43 pm.

Marty Cornell, Secretary, Texas Master Naturalist Cradle of Texas Chapter
