



Draft of 16Jun12

CRADLE OF TEXAS CHAPTER
 AGRILIFE EXTENSION BLDG.
 21017 CR 171, Angleton, TX 77515-8903
www.cot.org

TMN-COT BOARD MEETING

Wednesday, June 6, 2012

2:00-4:00 a.m.

Sea Center Texas, Lake Jackson, Texas

Attendees: Ed Barrios, Barbara Burkhardt, Marty Cornell, Jerry Eppner, Sandy Henderson, Mary Holler, Mary Helen Israel, Edgar Johnson, Neal McLain, Tom Morris, John O'Connell, Pete Romfh, Connie Stolte.

President Barbara Burkhardt called the meeting to order at 2:00 pm.

Action Items: Secretary Marty Cornell reviewed the action items from the May, 2012 board meeting. Only one item remains outstanding; Barbara Burkhardt has a list of ten people who have expressed an interest in taking our training classes and she is to invite them to begin attending our monthly meetings prior to their enrollment in our next training session in the first part of 2013.

Minutes of May Board Meeting: Ed Barrios moved to accept the minutes of the May board meeting as revised by e-mail input. This motion was seconded by Edgar Johnson and unanimously approved without discussion.

Financial Report: Treasurer Sandy Henderson submitted the following financial statement:

CHECKING ACCOUNT

Date	Check Number	Checks	Deposits	Int.	NSF	Carry over from 2011	Comment	
						\$5,037.64		
01/07/12	Deposit		\$80.00				2012 dues	\$5,117.64
01/11/12	Deposit		\$645.00				2012 dues and interns	\$5,762.64
01/19/12	Deposit		\$160.00				2012 intern	\$5,922.64
01/23/12	Deposit		\$80.00				2012 intern	\$6,002.64
01/31/12	Dividend			\$1.22				\$6,003.86
02/01/12	Chk 1298 - Barbara Burkhardt	\$648.26					Intern manuals and notebooks	\$5,355.60
02/01/12	Deposit		\$240.00				2012 intern	\$5,595.60
02/08/12	Chk 1299 - Marty Cornell	\$119.91					Intern field books	\$5,475.69
02/09/12	Deposit		\$15.00				2012 dues	\$5,490.69
02/29/12	Dividend			\$1.13				\$5,491.82
03/07/12	Chk 1300 - Marty Cornell	\$31.96					Pails and sand Speaker donation	\$5,459.86
03/14/12	Deposit		\$25.00					\$5,484.86
03/31/12	Dividend			\$1.19				\$5,486.05
04/30/12	Dividend			\$1.13				\$5,487.18



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05/09/12	Chk 1301 - Barbara Burkhardt	\$96.00	Name tags	\$5,391.18
05/09/12	Deposit	\$42.00	Name tags reimbursement	\$5,433.18
05/23/12	Chk 1302 - Carole Wenny	\$53.01	Social supplies	\$5,380.17
05/08/12	Chk 1303 - Marty Cornell	\$54.54	Intern lunch	\$5,325.63
	Total Interest	\$4.67		

Invasive Species Workshop: Organizer Dave Brandes was not present; in his place Ed Barrios reported that the May 17th course, given by Jessica Strickland of the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, was attended by about 30 people, most (perhaps 22) from our Cradle of Texas chapter and a few participants were from the Brazoria County Texas Master Gardner chapter. Although invited, no attendees from neighboring Texas Master Naturalist chapters attended. Invasive insects were added to the repertoire of wildlife to be monitored, including the green ash bore, the cactus moth (which has yet to reach Texas), and the giant African snail.

Intern Training: Training Chair Ed Johnson noted that County Marine Agent John O'Connell will team up with Julie Massey, his counterpart in Galveston County, to develop a training program on coastal wetlands and estuaries that will include field trips. John mentioned that he intends to develop another training program on the salt water fishes of Texas that can be sent to inland TMN chapter for their use. Tom Morris plans to meet with John in July to develop concepts for this program. It was noted that COT-member Roy Morgan and deceased member Charlie Clements have created and presented the **ithicohogy** unit of our training program. **Tom will contact Roy to engage him in the July meeting.**

Connie Stolte reported that she and Roy have considered combining Roy's ithicology unit with her session on ocean ecology into one training session.

Ed Johnson noted that the Board has authorized intern classes to select two representatives to participate as non-voting members of the COT board, and requested permission from the board to ask the 2012 class to choose another representative on the board besides Pete Romfh who is currently participating. The resulting discussion concluded that such action was already authorized. **Ed was thus charged to pole the 2012 intern class to select a second representative for the COT board.**

Program Chair Mary Holler reported that the arrangements for the chapter's July 13th social outing on the Brazos Belle, debarking at 6:00 pm from Belle's Landing; guests should arrive by 5:30 pm. The cost is \$25 per person, with a 50 passenger limit. This fee will be collected at the June 13th general meeting. The "Belle" is not yet permitted to prepare and serve food, so participants are welcome to bring their own food and wine. Soft drinks and water are complimentary. Beer is available.



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The speaker for October is yet to be determined. Mary is considering Susan Conaty, who could provide background of the path that led to the Nature Conservancy acquiring the Nash Prairie. The November speaker will be John Jacob of TAMU-Galveston.

Ed Barrios reported that the **Camp Mohawk Summer Camp** had this morning completed its third day of the four-day session, with 38 kids attending. Three groups were formed based on age (7 & 8, 9 & 10, and 11 & 12), with each group accompanied by a shepherd (Jerry Krampota, Marty Cornell, and Joan Simonsen). New features this year include geocatching with GPS and microscope projection.

John O'Connell and Ed Barrios reviewed the issue of **Background Checks** that are required of anyone working with children. During the discussion, it was noted that the background checks of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD), which includes Sea Center Texas, only investigate a candidate's records in Texas; these checks thus do not satisfy the requirements of AgriLIFE, which involves a national search of records. The checks of both agencies are valid for three years and cost volunteers a fee of \$10. In contrast, the Brazosport Independent School District (BISD) conducts background checks at no cost to the volunteers, are annually required, but are only instigated upon a written request from the volunteer. **It is not known if the BISD checks cover national or only state records (Ed Barrios will contact BISD to clarify this point.)**

Since the COT leadership has incorrectly assumed that BISD was automatically conducting these checks for DEEP volunteers, all but a few of our membership are out of compliance for the required background screening. Ed noted that a discussion of this subject at the most recent board meeting of the Friends of Brazoria Wildlife Refuges (Friends) resulted in charging Bryan Adams with the tasks of initiating background check requests to the school district and of keeping records of the pass-fail results. At that Friends meeting, Donna Jablecki noted that the BISD science administrator is responsible for compliance with background screening requirements. It was also noted at this COT board meeting that the resulting list of volunteers who pass the background check for DEEP would only cover a fraction of COT volunteers.

After much discussion, the COT board decided to require all of our membership to complete the AgriLIFE form (which contains an option to opt out of any screening provided the volunteer agrees to avoid interactions with children). The board unanimously authorized payment for this first screening from chapter funds after a motion to this effect by Sandy Henderson and a second by Ed Barrios. Ed Barrios will present this decision and its rationale to the general membership at next week's general meeting.



John O'Connell will keep the pass-fail results of the AgriLIFE screening. Those volunteers that pass the background check will be given a letter from John acknowledging this result.

The volunteer may use this letter to certify compliance with his/her volunteer activities with children. Jerry Eppner, in a point of order, queried how one would know who "opted out" of the screening. The consensus answer was that John O'Connell could provide this answer. It is noted that anyone who opted out would not be able to provide their compliance letter for volunteer work with juveniles.

The chapter **Google Distribution List** contains many names of inactive, unknown, and non-members. Jerry Eppner would like to drop those names, and was supported by the board to do so. Jerry will send out his list of those that he proposes to remove from our distribution list to the board for one more review. Marty will send Jerry the records of member participation at COT general meetings from January, 2011 to the present. [both of these tasks have been done]. Those people dropped from our e-mail communications can notify the chapter to request reinstatement.

Barbara Burkhardt has been dialoging with Michelle Haggerty on a policy statement that would clarify what does and does not constitute **reportable volunteer time**. This updated statement was not available at the time of this meeting.

A quick review of **summer activities** was made:

- ✓ Saturday, June 9th, the Quintana County Park celebrates its 30 anniversary. COT will participate with a booth and reptile exhibit, in cooperation with Friends. Ed Barrios and Barbara Burkhardt will make appropriate arrangements.
- ✓ The Summer Library Program for June, which features Ruby Lewis' talk on reptiles, has begun with the first event yesterday. Over 80 people attended. The July theme will be "Wild in the City", and needed volunteers will be solicited at next week's general meeting.
- ✓ The chapter's summer social will be on Friday, July 13th on the Brazos Belle cruising the Brazos River. Space is limited to 50. Mary Holler will begin taking the \$25 per person fee at next week's general meeting.
- ✓ The Lake Jackson Historical Museum has asked COT to provide a talk on July 14th.
- ✓ The Freeport Fishin Fiesta will be from 10:00 am to 8:00 pm on Saturday, July 7th; volunteers are being recruited.

Gifts for Guest Speakers has been discussed via e-mail since the May board meeting, with a consensus to purchase 25 cast iron business card holders from Double F Metal Art for \$15.50 each plus shipping. Sandy Henderson made a motion to so do; this



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motion was seconded by Ed Barrios and approved by all. Marty Cornell was charged with placing this order [which has been done with delivery mid-July].

Barbara Burkhardt noted that there will be no board meeting in July as many members will be on vacation. Marty Cornell reviewed the action items. With no other business, Barbara adjourned the meeting at 3:51 pm.

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