



TMN-COT BOARD MEETING
Wednesday April 3, 2013
AgriLIFE Conference Room, Angleton, Texas

Attendees: Ed Barrios, Marty Cornell, Jerry Eppner, Mary Helen Israel, Jerry Krampota, Ruby Lewis, John Marshall, Neal McLain, Mike Mullins, Peggy Romfh, Pete Romfh.

President Mike Mullins called the meeting to order at 10:01am.

Neal McLain passed around a cover-label that will be used in books donated to the COT library to acknowledge the donor. Mike Mullins will send Patti Clements a note of thanks for donating the nature books of deceased member Charlie Clements to our library.

Outstanding Action Items were reviewed:

- Michelle Haggerty, the TMN State Coordinator, responded to Ed Barrios' inquiry on the insurance benefits resulting from signing the hold-harmless wavers. She confirmed that the waver has no reference to such benefits. Ed has requested an update on the insurance that is covered by the current waver, and is awaiting a reply. Michelle stated that, while at present signing a waver is not mandatory, it will become a requirement to be a Texas Master Naturalist in the near future. Only those that have signed the hold-harmless document are currently covered by insurance.
- Jerry Eppner and Ed Barrios have grammatically corrected the verbiage on Member Emeritus status in the chapter's Policies and Procedures Handbook (P&P), to wit:
 - A. *COT Chapter Member Emeritus.*
 - a. A Member Emeritus is a previously active chapter member who has made significant contributions to the chapter but is no longer active.
 - b. Candidates for Member Emeritus status may be nominated by any active member.
 - c. The nomination must be in writing and describe the contributions or achievements that qualify the member for Emeritus status.
 - d. The written document shall be presented to the Membership Director for Board discussion and approval.
 - e. The general membership shall be notified 2 weeks prior to the general meeting where a vote will be taken for the prospective Member Emeritus.
 - f. A candidate for Member Emeritus status shall be approved by a simple majority vote of the Active members present at a General meeting.
 - g. Members Emeriti shall be entitled to the privileges of a TMN - Cradle of Texas Chapter Member including the right to vote. Members Emeriti are exempt from paying dues.

These modifications and other proposed P&P changes will be presented to the general membership for approval at a future unspecified date.

- The board agreed to let Barbara Burkhardt choose the design for the Member Emeritus certificate.
- John O'Connell agreed with the suggestion of Ruby Lewis that the chapter would use the soil water percolation demonstration apparatus to support the AgriLIFE initiative on water conservation. Ed Barrios suggested that this demonstration unit could be included in the Camp Mohawk Nature Camp program.



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Secretary Marty Cornell presented the **minutes of the March board meeting**, as amended by email editing, for approval. Jerry Eppner **moved to accept these amended minutes**; the motion was seconded by Ed Barrios and the motion was **unanimously approved**.

Treasurer John Marshall reported the income and expenses as shown below:

CRADLE OF TEXAS 2013 TREASURES REPORT				
March, 2013				
	Current Month	Notes	Year to Date	
Beginning Balance	\$4,611.06		\$5,098.07	
Revenue				
Training Fees Paid in 2013			400.00	
2013 Dues	180.00		672.00	79
Miscellaneous Income	1.99	interest	14.99	
Total Revenue	181.99		1,086.99	
Expenses				
Training Expenses 2013			296.57	
Administrative	90.00	1	90.00	
Miscellaneous	14.94	checks	999.94	
Extraordinary - Board approved			110.44	
Total Expenses	104.94		1,496.95	
Net Income Gain, (Loss)	77.05		(409.96)	
Ending Balance	4,688.11		4,688.11	

Notes

- 1 Background checks for interns

John noted that 79 members have paid their dues; however about ten active members have not. Per the P&P, a notification of unpaid dues is to be made to delinquent members. The board agreed to do so with the "courteous nudge" of a personal conversation. Ed Barrios will talk to Elaine Crews and Howard Allan, Marty Cornell will call Susan Severance, John Marshall will chat with Kathleen Murray, and Ruby Lewis will contact Bob and Bette Long.

It was noted that we have three members who have paid \$25 in dues to be qualified as a "Supporting Member" (regular annual dues are \$10), and it was suggested that these members be publically recognized. After discussion, Ed Barrios **moved that the chapter should not publically recognize supporting members**; Peggy Romfh seconded the motion, and the **motion passed unanimously**.

There are members who did not pay dues in 2012, but who have paid this year. The question was raised if back payment of dues should be required. It was decided to forgo past dues collection, noting that future dues payments will be resolved as it is one requirement of active membership.



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Peggy Romfh asked for a clarification of the chapter’s long-term cash flow strategy. John Marshall observed that the Cradle of Texas Chapter is essentially cash flow neutral, with income being equal to expenses. Notable exceptions to this were the one-time ~\$2600 cost of our tenth year anniversary celebration and the recent one-time coverage of initial background screening of active members and of interns. Per the March, 2013 board meeting, the intern fee has been increased by \$10 (to \$90 total) to cover intern background checks. Since the \$10 background screening for active members will be required every three years, Peggy suggested that dues should be raised to \$15 per year. Ed Barrios noted that if the Brazosport Independent School District would check all COT members, there would be no cost. The issue of raising dues was tabled pending clarification of the BISD intent to annually cover background screening of all active COT members.

Membership Chair Jerry Eppner reported that year-to-date 19 members have submitted 1,408 hours of volunteer time. Ed Barrios, Denis Mudderman, and Mike Mullins have recertified in the last month.

Programs Chair Peggy Romfh noted that she received lots of positive feedback on her “Five Question” exercise that she conducted at the end of the last general meeting. Peggy will repeat this test at next week’s general meeting, and Leo Novak will ask Five Questions at the May general meeting.

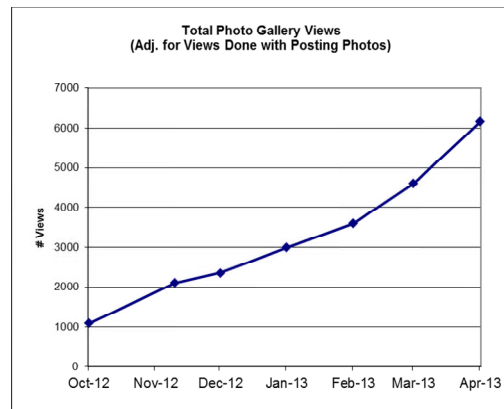
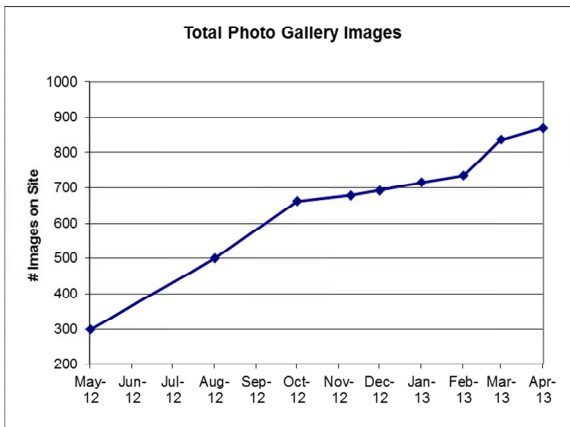
Peggy is pleased that the membership has proposed a long list of potential AT topics, some of which might only need one hour to cover, so she might schedule two such presentations at one future general meeting. The board explored the concept of occasionally extending the general meeting into the afternoon following a brown bag lunch as this would provide more AT opportunities. It was concluded that this extension would be too much at one time for many (most?) members, many of whom have allocated only the morning of the second Wednesday of each month to COT activities.

Peggy is pleased that many are visiting the chapter’s photo gallery, as evidenced by the following

date	Total Images	Number of images adj for gallery slides	Total Views on Site	Est. Actual Views	Est. Actual Views for the Month	Total # species	Avg Images/ species	Number of photos added for month	Number of New Species Added in Month
5/1/2012	300								
8/1/2012	500							200	
10/1/2012	663		2084	1090				163	
11/10/2012	679		3120	2102	1012			16	
12/1/2012	693		3398	2359	257			14	
1/1/2013	715		4076	3004	645			22	
2/1/2013	734	687	4700	3599	596	339	2.0	19	
3/1/2013	835	788	5864	4612	1013	378	2.1	101	39
4/1/2013	869	822	7473	6170	1558	393	2.1	34	15



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Member Denis Mudderman requested that the board approve a **VPAR** using Project Noah, which would build a mission of collecting wildlife data from the Texas mid-coast. After discussion, the board declined to approve this request as it is considered moot, being covered for volunteer time under the general provisions of our existing partnership agreement with the USFWS. It was noted that our P&P limits “at home” citizen science to two hours per week. Neal will respond to Denis Mudderman with this decision.

Webmaster Neal McLain, per the records retention meeting just prior to this board meeting, will move all chapter minutes and newsletters to GoDaddy.

Training Chair Ed Johnson emailed a status report of the current intern training.

Outreach Chair Ruby Lewis reported on the March 19th and 20th teaching of backyard birds to kindergarten kids at the Holy Comforter Episcopal Church, and the March 25th Nature Night at the Angleton Library that featured Barbara Burkhardt presenting “Habitat Gardening for Hummingbirds and Butterflies”.

Date	Event	Location	Attendance			COT Volunteers	
			Children	Adults	Total	#	Hours
12Mar13	Heritage Day	Varner-Hogg Plantation	15	10	21	3	7.50
25Mar13	Nature Night	Angleton Library	5	12	17	2	4.00
Totals for this Period			20	22	39	5	11.5
Previous Year-to-Date Totals			675	577	1252	17	73.25
Total for 2013			695	599	1851	22	84.75



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Upcoming outreach will include a talk on owls at the Angleton library on May 13th. COT will not be attending the May 3rd "Ag Awareness Day" for second grade students of AISD hosted by the Brazoria County AgriLIFE extension office.

The **Camp Mohawk Nature Camp** will be held from June 17th through June 20th. For this event, AgriLIFE requires volunteers to first pass an on-line course cover working with children. Ed Barrios will describe this volunteer opportunity to the membership at next week's general meeting.

The May General Meeting will feature both the intern project reports and the awarding of Member Emeritus status to Oliver Osborn and Gardner Campbell. Tom Morris and Jim Renfro will introduce Oliver, and Jerry Eppner will introduce Gardner. Pete Romfh will photograph the awarding of Member Emeritus certificates to these two distinguished COT members.

Following this ceremony a lunch featuring Barbara Burkhardt's taco soup will be served, with Jerry Krampota coordinating the logistics of the lunch.

Miscellaneous Items

- The time for future board meetings has been reset to occur on the first Wednesday of each month from 10:00 am to noon. The June 5th board meeting will be at Sea Center Texas.
- Some members have requested a **roster of the COT membership**. After discussion, the board concluded that rosters will not be posted on the web. Rather paper copies will be printed; these rosters will list only active members, members emeriti, and interns. Jerry Eppner will provide this data to Mary Helen Israel, who will then print copies for distribution to the general membership.
- It was decided to print more copies of our COT rack brochure, this time on heavy stock paper. Mike Mullins will check with Jami on the availability of heavy paper stock in the AgriLIFE supplies. Mary Helen will talk to Connie about the technique of printing brochures with a Facebook link and QR code. Ruby will arrange for brochures for MC13.

President Mullins adjourned the meeting at 11:56. AM

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