

**President's Report on the 2014 Annual TMN Conference (October 24-26)**  
**November 1, 2014**  
**Clyde R. Camp**

There were almost 400 people and the BPTMN attendee list was

|             |              |                |
|-------------|--------------|----------------|
| Clyde Camp  | Kathi Camp   | Donna Cole     |
| Ed Ellerbe  | Rich Jaynes  | Robin Levenson |
| Dave Powell | David Rogers | Rodney Thomas  |

**Switchover to the State Hours Entry mechanism**

1. It's been delayed set back several times but it does look like it's going to hit us in the first half of 2015 - maybe.
  1. Phase 0 is complete (the developers' three chapters)
  2. Phase 1 is about a dozen chapters including Elm Fork
  3. Phase 2 is a fewer number including us
  4. Phase 3 is everyone else
2. Yes, we will be required to use it and ours will go away.
3. The mechanism as demo'd looks reasonable, but there will have to be training - first of the administrators and then of the chapter members. In terms of effort, it's no more complicated than what we (the BPTMN) use now - just different - a lot different in some ways.
4. When fully implemented, it will eliminate us (the webteam) having to generate monthly or quarterly hours reports because Agrilife and Michelle will have realtime data
5. It will have all of the annual historical hours data back to the beginning of our chapter. This is just two summary numbers per year ... something like *Clyde Camp (2013) - 399.25VH 30.5AT* for each individual member for each year. Fortunately for us, Rodney already has this in exactly the format we need with almost zero additional work on our part. THANKS for the foresight Rodney - other chapters are going to have to go back through all their old records but your spreadsheet looks to do 95+% of the work.
6. Going forward, the system will capture which partner the hours are assigned to similar to what we do but more on a partner basis rather than a partner/activity basis. At least not to the extent we do now.
7. There will be some work needed by the VH/AT committee, one time, to set up our partners in a consistent fashion so that they represent best what we do. This will involve going through the database and two PDF lists to consolidate things at the same time. There will be some differences and special cases most likely. This can't be done as a bulk upload like the individual hours can but we only have a couple of hundred cases now and they need to be condensed. I \*think\* our Activity/Event pairs will have to be combined into what the new system calls "Opportunities".
8. Hours must be entered within 45 days of the date they are incurred or you lose them.
9. All VH and AT hours entries must be approved by an admin (the membership committee will most likely need to be a real membership COMMITTEE for this). There is apparently some allowance for multiple entries for a person to be approved at once and for there to be pre-approved things that are automatically approved. This is an area in which they are still working
10. YOU will be able to dump your hours to YOUR computer as an excel spreadsheet to sort/process them however you wish

11. There *may* be a connection to automatically file you for hours pins and recertification pins, but this is still being worked out
12. It appears that if you go over to another region and put in VH hours (not AT) for another chapter, that those will now be countable. This is still being worked.

### **Bylaws changes**

1. I took notes a lot of notes here, but, embarrassingly, I can't read my own writing (I was balancing a notebook)
2. Mostly the bylaws changes are wording changes to clarify certain issues
  1. Confirmation & Election processes
  2. Effective date of service of new appointees/electees
  3. Giving an incoming chair more say in the appointments made by the previous chair
3. We will have to comply with the new templates (bylaws and guidelines) and have the changes we made to the old templates OK'd again by Michelle.
4. A number of chapters were re-writing their Operations Handbooks (one was up to 60+ pages - by comparison, our draft document has a lot of additional stuff added from the template but is still only 14 pages long. I can see it *possibly* going to 20-30, but 60?)

### **Other stuff**

1. As has been mentioned by others, I can attest that the two days spent at the conference were WELL worthwhile. I picked up 12.25 hours of AT and met lots of people with similar and different issues, ideas, interests
2. Dave Powell got in a lot of VH as well since he helped at the registration desk and filled in on nature walks when a couple of scheduled leaders had personal issues crop up.
3. Donna Cole also got in VH with audio/visual assistance for Michelle and the keynote speakers
4. Dave Rogers took lots of photos and may have a slideshow worked up in time for the November chapter meeting
5. As a chapter, we could have done better with entries in the photo, project, craft and other competitions. Something to think about for next year.

### **President's Breakfast**

1. Freebies picked up
  1. The recertification pin for 2015 is a Bluebonnet - I have a sample I'll bring to the board and chapter meeting
  2. I also picked up a couple of TMN Project signs - Nancy Furth has asked for one for the Heritage Farm projects and this may fill the bill
  3. I also got a large green heavy canvas tablecloth that we can add to our Outreach Committee bag of tricks
2. The new training manual is getting there
  1. Being done by a professional third party using the work Kathi had done in 2012 as a starting point and going back to the original authors to review/re-edit their own chapters with new images, graphs, pictures, etc.

2. Four new chapters on *Land Stewardship, Texas Water resources, Citizen Science and Laws/Regulations* have been added
3. It will be a hardbound book (800-900 pages) but the same price for students as we pay now.
4. It will also be available to the public via Amazon - pricing TBD
5. It will also be available in eReader format in 2016
3. We (the Texas TMN Program) are getting lots of national recognition for Texas Citizen Science Programs
4. The state is going to re-think the Background check process and deliverables. It is planned that those getting background checks in September, 2014 and after will get a wallet card stating they have passed
5. Some discussion on the need for liability insurance for Board members. This is expensive unless some sort of group policy can be worked out.
6. For those leading walks, we should probably have some sort of consistent "Warn and Make Safe" practice. My interpretation of this is that we at least need to warn people via a notice at the top of signup sheets about bugs, bees, roots, snakes, etc. in a friendly way (common sense - not 2 pages of legalese) and then Make It Safe for them. At a minimum, the usual *I'm in front* and *don't step off the path* speeches but possibly even refuse people who show up in open-toed sandals for a hike. This is tricky I know, but I personally don't want to be on the receiving end of a lawsuit because somebody tripped on a root and fell while on a hike I'm leading. This actually happened to me last year - a lady went completely face down in the Cedar Break on a night hike and fortunately was the sort to laugh it off as her fault for not watching where she was going rather than hire an attorney as soon as she got home. Lucky.
7. Reference to TCAP - the 2012 Texas Conservation Action Plan. I may have sent out a reference to it sometime in the past but I can't find it. In any case, the statewide plan is at <http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/landwater/land/tcap/> and our particular ecosystem chunk of this is [http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/landwater/land/tcap/documents/tbpr\\_tcap\\_2012.pdf](http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/landwater/land/tcap/documents/tbpr_tcap_2012.pdf). Both are worth looking through - lots of issues, lots of challenges, lots of questions, lots of data.