

**Minutes of the GENERAL MEETING of the  
Texas Master Naturalist Cradle of Texas Chapter  
WEDNESDAY November 4, 2012  
AgriLIFE Extension Building, Angleton, Texas**

**Attendance:** 48 members and 2 guests: Dick Schaffhausen and Randy Holcomb (both guests have signed up for the 2013 training classes).

President Barbara Burkhardt opened the meeting at 8:57am.

**General Announcements:**

- ✓ Barbara began with a slide show of COT participants at the state TMN meeting at Camp Allen, with photos taken by Peggy Romfh. 15 COT members, including chapter advisor John O'Connell, attended this event. Special recognition went to Rainbo Johnson who won a Best-of-Show award for her carved Chinese tallow cane, and to Pete Romfh who took a first-place prize in photography. At this meeting, Kathleen Murray was recognized to achieving 250 hours of volunteer service, and Ed Johnson for reaching the 1000 hour VT level.
- ✓ Joan Simonsen reviewed the options for ordering TMN shirts.

**Membership** Chair Jerry Eppner announced that six members recertified in the last month; these were Barbara Bruyere, Mickey Dufilho, Donna Graham, Ruby Lewis, Kathy Speights, and Bob Woods. George Bettinger has completed the training requirements to certify. Noted was Peggy Romfh, who not only certified this year, but she also reached the 250 hour level of volunteer hours. Also recognized was Susan Severance who passed the 1000 hour VT milestone.

To date, 55 COT members have turned in timesheets this year. Jerry requested that members turn in their time before January 2<sup>nd</sup>, as our chapter report is due by January 15<sup>th</sup>. Barbara Burkhardt informed the chapter that a large part of the state TMN organization operating funds come from a Federal grant via the US Fish and Wildlife Service. This grant requires in-kind matching effort of volunteer time, valued by the grant at \$19.50 per hour. Thus, the 40 hour VT recertification level translates to \$780 in support.

**Training Chair** Ed Johnson was pleased to introduce the chapter to two visitors to this meeting, Dick Schaffhausen and Randy Holcomb, who will be part of next year's training class. They are part of a list of 25 people who have indicated an interest in joining this class. Members were asked to help recruit additional people. The COT Chapter will staff a booth at the upcoming Lake Jackson Festival of Lights, to be held on Saturday, November 17<sup>th</sup>; this event will provide an opportunity for recruiting.

**Chapter Officers and Directors for 2013** will be elected at next month's general meeting. Past President Dave Brandes thanked his nomination committee members John Marshall and Carole Wenny for helping to recruit candidates Mike Mullins for President, Peggy Romfh for Vice President, Marty Cornell for Secretary, John Marshall for Treasurer, Ed Barrios for State Representative, Jerry Eppner for Membership Chairman, and Ed Johnson for Training Director.

**Policies and Procedures Handbook (P&P)** The new requirement for members who work with children to comply with the State of Texas Youth Protection Standards (YPS) has made it necessary to modify our P&P Handbook. Ed Barrios, who was appointed by President Barbara Burkhardt to head an ad hoc team to draft revisions to the P&P, presented the proposed revisions to the membership. Prior to this meeting, all members were e-mailed a copy of these suggested changes. Dave Brandes moved, and Kirby Rapstein seconded to accept these revisions as presented. Discussion commenced about the rationale for creating different types of membership, i.e. Active, Inactive, Lapsed, Emeritus, and Honorary. Marty Cornell then called the question and the revisions were accepted with no objections.

The plethora of upcoming **Christmas Bird Counts** were listed by Tom Morris. Dates and details can be found on our chapter website. Tom also sampled interest of attending members to participate in a winter outing to view the whooping cranes around Aransas National Wildlife Refuge. The first week of March is proposed for the annual field trip.

Although not a COT-sponsored event, chapter members were invited by Ed Barrios to attend the 9<sup>th</sup> annual **Hog Wild Party** at his home on December 12<sup>th</sup>, following the chapter general meeting.

The general meeting ended at 9:46 am and was followed by a lecture on Soils from John Jacob, Texas A&M University, Professor & Extension Specialist, Department of Recreation, Parks & Tourism, Coastal Community Development Specialist.

Submitted by

Marty Cornell

Secretary, Texas Master Naturalist, Cradle of Texas Chapter.