**LINDHEIMER MASTER NATURALISTS**

**BOARD MEETING**

**MAY 23, 2016**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Jim Teeling, Joel Dunnington, Cheryl Trock, Judy Brupbacher, Val Lefebvre, Darlene Varga, Rich Bradley, Rich Nielson, Susan James, Kim Wright

**GUESTS:** Brian Trock, Marilyn McFarland, Art Williams

**CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 6 PM.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Kim Wright had sent out the minutes for corrections. There were no corrections. Darlene Varga moved that the minutes from April’s Board Meeting be approved; Joel Dunnington seconded. Motion passed and the minutes were approved.

**OFFICER AND COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

1. **Treasurer---**Rich Nielson reported that the ending bank balance for April was $8560.45, with $138.99 outstanding. Rich N. said he purchased one water testing kit for around $420, and will order the second one when the supplier gets some more kits in. Coco Brennan was pleased that we now have at least one kit.
2. **Vice President---**Joel Dunnington reported that there were 12 people who attended the Meadows Field Trip on May 21. He said he has tried with not much success to get answers from State about the background checks. The June Chapter Meeting will be at Agrilife instead of TPML, so an email reminder will be sent out, along with a flyer being posted at TPML in case someone forgets about the change in location. The topic will be Rainwater Collection. July’s topic will be Lunar Rocks by Gary Lofgren, who was a geologist for NASA. Graduation will be held in October. November’s talk will be about Winter Sparrows by Tom and Patsy Inglet. Please see attachment for more details.
3. **Past President’s Report-**--Rich Bradley said that the Open House on May 14 was very successful. There were 418 people who attended, with 89 of those being children. Sixty-one children signed up for the scavenger hunt. County Judge Sherman Krause attended.

Last Wednesday Rich B. participated in a conference call about the upcoming State Meeting on Lake Conroe. See attachment. On their website is a form to fill out for topics presenters. Susan James mentioned that she had recently had a presentation on Ferdinand Lindheimer and thought that that might be a good topic for the State Meeting. Cheryl Trock thought that if you were a presenter at State Meeting, you should get your registration paid. Rich B. said that no fees are paid for presenters.

1. **Communication---**Susan James reported that Susan Bogle wanted to get in touch with old members to see what their status is in regards to active membership in our chapter. As a result, two members have returned. The website has been updated. Jim Teeling said he had received an email from Pat Gonser that even though she has resigned as Outreach Chair, she still wants to be involved with the Traveling Trunks. Pat is really good working with children. Susan James said she would help her with that. Susan’s Power Point about TMN was presented by Cheryl Trock to the retired teachers and it was well received. Susan J. would like to have a repository for these canned presentations so that others could use them.
2. **Education-**--Darlene Varga reported that there are 2 upcoming field trips. The night hike at Guadalupe State Park had to be rescheduled for Wednesday, June 1 at 7:30 PM. Craig Hensley will lead the hike; the topic is Fireflies. On Saturday, June 4 at 10 AM, Doug Dalglish will present a talk on Grasses at John Knox Ranch.

Marilyn McFarland designed a template for note cards that can be used as Thank Yous by the Chapter for Guest Speakers. The template can be sent to Board members for their use as needed. Rich B. said that there was $300 budgeted for Earth Day. The money was used for flyers, stamps, etc.

Darlene asked if any Master Naturalist can attend a training class. As long as there is space, any member may attend.

Val Lefebvre reported that there have been 11 inquiries for the next class. Brian and Cheryl Trock did some recruiting at the Open House. The Board thinks that since Marie Miller is young, that may attract younger people to join the Master Naturalists. Not all members are retired, older people.

1. **Membership---**Cheryl Trock answered the question that members have had about who reports the impact numbers to VMS on an activity if more than one chapter is involved. She said there will be one point person who will report those numbers and should be decided among the volunteers on the project.

Cheryl said that 37 members have recertified as of April.

Background Checks---Cheryl Trock said that Mary Pearl Meuth told her that it is required that all TMN members be screened by a legitimate agency. All members may not pass, but may remain active with certain restrictions. Each chapter’s advisor would receive that notice of pass or fail. Cheryl said that out of 127 active members, six of those have failed to put their date of birth, which prevents a check from being done. She will contact those people. She reported that 109 have had checks and passed. At what point does the chapter or State intervene if a member does not comply? Until Cheryl is notified about members who have not completed the request by VMS for permission to conduct a check, she cannot do anything unless a higher authority becomes involved. Brian Trock asked if the chapter is open to a lawsuit if a member does something illegal or inappropriate while volunteering as a Master Naturalist. Susan James said we should not press the issue until State makes a decision.

1. **Outreach---**Jim Teeling asked if the BOD thinks we should replace Pat Gonser as Chair. We do need someone in charge of the Trunks. Judy Brupbacher said the trunks can be checked out for use. Susan James said that she goes to Startzville Elementary with the trunks. Pat cannot oversee the trunks, but would she be able to replenish the trunks as needed? Rich Bradley moved that Outreach be moved under Communications; Cheryl Trock seconded. Motion passed. Susan James will now handle the Traveling Trunks.
2. **Projects-**--Judy Brupbacher had no report.

**COMMENTS AND OBSERVATIONS:**

Troy Luepke, our chapter advisor, was absent. No comments. He would like Kim Wright to send him a copy of the sign in sheet. Kim will do that.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

1. **Water Testing Kits---**This was discussed earlier.
2. **Snake Trunk---**Marilyn McFarland noticed that there was no trunk for Snakes. She put together a sample trunk for the BOD to see. She said she was a nurse who handled a lot of snake bite victims and thinks it is very important to educate the public about snakes. The trunk would educate people about venomous and beneficial snakes and how to prevent snake bites. It would also highlight threatened species.

Art Williams said that Marilyn will do a presentation at TPML in September about snakes. She asked for a budget of $260 to supply the trunk with skeletons, etc. Art thought we need to approve $300; Darlene Varga wanted to increase the budget to $350. Ray Laxson may have snake skins, bones, etc. that he can provide for the trunk. Someone will check with him. Anything taken from nature requires paperwork from State. Marilyn said she will attend Herp Days in Sanderson in June. She may be able to purchase some items there. Rich N. wanted to know where the money for this trunk will come from. There is only $110 left in the budget for Trunks. Earth Day has $220 left, but Rich Nielson said we are $250 in the red for the cost of the water kit. Even though there is not money available in the Trunk budget, the Chapter has funds to finance this endeavor. Rich Bradley moved that we increase the Trunk budget from $300 to $650 so that we can introduce the Snake Trunk; Darlene seconded. Motion passed.

1. **Adding Lapsed Members Back to LMN Email Listings---**Cheryl Trock said that she will send out an email blast??????
2. **By-Laws Change---**Darlene Varga said that she surveyed the majority of chapters about a “double certification”. Darlene thinks that we need to change our policy on this. After a student achieves their initial 40 hours of volunteer service, 8 hours of advanced training, and 40 hours of classroom and field instruction, they may start accruing hours toward a recertification within that year. Rich Bradley asked if it would require a Manual change, not a change to the By-Laws. Cheryl Trock thinks that a student should be required to graduate first, then they could start accruing hours toward their recertification. Darlene said that other chapters are allowing a student to start counting hours toward the second pin as soon as they achieve the initial requirements of hours. Darlene moved that the Manual be changed to reflect the new policy about students recertifying within the year. Susan James seconded. Motion passed. A student would have from October when they begin their training until the end of the next year, which would allow them 14 months to attain the initial and second certification. See attachments concerning this issue.
3. **New TMN Statewide Curriculum Updates---**All classes that started in January are under the new State Manual, but our classes began in November.
4. **TMN License Plates---**Jim Teeling thinks it is a great idea for the TMN to have their own license plates. A proposal from the Alamo Chapter is asking the State’s chapters to fund the initial set-up fee to produce the plates. If all chapters participate, the cost to our chapter would be $174. The plates would cost an additional $30 per year. The chapters would be refunded their investment if at least 800 plates are sold. A question arose about whether our chapter would get our initial $174 returned if the project does not go forward. No one knew for sure. Susan James can have Sara Riggs send out a survey to members to see how many would be interested in buying a plate.

Brian Trock mentioned that there is a new contact person for the recertification pins.

**ADJOURN:** Rich Nielson moved that the meeting be adjourned; Judy Brupbacher seconded. Motion passed. Meeting was adjourned at 7:35 PM.

**Next Meeting---**Monday, June 27, 2016 at 6 PM at Agrilife.

Respectfully submitted by:

Kim Wright, Secretary

Lindheimer Master Naturalists