

Western Cuyahoga Audubon Society
Board Meeting Monday, April 21, 2014, 6 p.m.
at Panera Bread, Tiedeman and I-480

Minutes

Present: Nora Ebie, Dale Gaul, Mark Hofelich, Nancy Howell, Kurt Miske, Penny O'Connor, Mary Anne Romito, Tom Romito

COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Finances: Nancy Howell distributed a financial summary for the past month. The treasury has 24,188.22. The next major expense will be the newsletter for May, June, July.

2. Field Trip Committee

a) Birding with Jen Brumfield for Annual Appeal donors: Penny reported that Jen will develop an event sometime after May. Penny has suggested getting-together with Jen and the two donors.

b) Upcoming field trips: Saturday, June 7 will be Margaret Peak Preserve led by Jeanne Williams. Sunday, July 13 will be Bath Nature Preserve led by Sandy Brown. Saturday, August 16 will be Daughmer Prairie Savanna State Nature Preserve, led by David Dvorak (retired from Cleveland Metroparks) and Warren Uxley from Crawford Park District, which maintains Daughmer Prairie. This will be a Carbon Offset trip, due to the 115-mile distance from Cleveland.

3. Programs: Nancy reported that the June picnic and plant exchange will be Tuesday, June 3 at Lagoon Picnic Area. Don Howell will start the charcoal grill. There will be a plant exchange and a bird walk.

4. Website: Nora reported that the photo contest will start in September, so that it can be announced in the newsletter. Committee members are Marti Burrows, Peggy Joyce and Michelle Manzo. The committee met April 14 and will meet again in May.

5. Outreach:

a) EarthFest: Nancy reported that about 350 people stopped at the WCAS table. For an activity, WCAS had the Bird ID board created by scouts. EarthFest volunteers will see a "thank you" in the newsletter.

b) October Collaborative Event: Following the success of the March event cosponsored by Audubon Society of Greater Cleveland, Kirtland Bird Club and WCAS, there will be another on Sunday, October 19, 2014 in

Independence from 2-4 p.m. This will take the place of the October "first Tuesday" program at RRNC. On the committee are: Mark Demyan, Nancy Howell and Harvey Webster.

c) Bird Survey at Cleveland Lakefront Nature Preserve: The Port Authority has approved the concept of a study with Mark Shieldcastle coordinating. Lukas Padegimas will meet with Mark Demyan and Nora Ebie to make further plans.

d) Friends of Magee Marsh Fundraiser: Will take up a collection at the May program to supplement money collected at the April program. Nancy has also received some checks. The money raised will be matched by WCAS to benefit boardwalk renovation by Friends of Magee Marsh.

OLD/CONTINUING BUSINESS

1. Fundraising Committee: Tom and Mark will collaborate to identify revenue-generating activities based on some that have proven successful for WCAS, plus some innovative ideas.

Nancy listed some fund-raising (besides that Annual Appeal) that WCAS has done recently: Coffee Sales, Birdathon, Ultrawalk, Silent Auction, Rock Pile, Carbon Offset fund

Mark Hofelich and Tom Romito brainstormed with the board. Some possibilities:

Token gifts for donors, or to sell

Print names of donors and amounts given, keep track of whether a donor has increased giving from one year to the next. Could be one particular newsletter issue

Bird seed sale

Society events, such as a cozy dinner for donors or prospective donors

Silent auction at October collaborative event

Dinner, fun event

A well-crafted letter requesting donations, emphasizing that WCAS depends on "donors like you"

Event for beginning birders

Dale posed the question of how to publicize these fund-raisers, and suggested we consider what else we might market.

2. Conservation Projects:

a) IBA grant application: Tom reported that Grange Ohio Audubon Center has \$20,000 available to 16 chapters in Ohio for Important Bird Area

projects. Applications are due by June 10. Up to \$5,000 may be awarded to any one chapter. Tom will develop a draft proposal for the CLNP bird survey project. It will include a budget for training sessions, printed materials, and more. Collaboration with other organizations is a plus.

b) Phragmites project: Tom Romito reported that Brooklyn Centre Naturalists would like to eliminate this invasive plant from their neighborhood. They are starting small, targeting an area behind the newer Brooklyn fire station on Memphis Avenue, by the Brooklyn Oxbow along Big Creek. There will be a combination of cutting and treatment, not necessarily with herbicides. Tom invited the WCAS Board to a May 3 meeting with a native plants specialist from Genius Loci landscaping. Brooklyn Centre Naturalists would like WCAS to partner. Mark suggested involving local Eagle Scouts in this effort.

NEW BUSINESS

1. National Audubon Society Chapter Leader Report: Nora will develop a draft for review. This is simply a list of officers and committee chairs. Mark Hofelich will be listed as Fundraising Chair and Stan Searles as Conservation Chair.

2. Bird Ohio Day: Nora reported that the Ohio Senate has passed a bill making International Migratory Bird Day, May 10, Bird Ohio Day. Ohioans are encouraged to go birding. Black Swamp Bird Observatory is spearheading this. Per Kim Kaufman, the resolution and celebration each year will "raise awareness of the importance of birding to the economy and the value of conserving the habitat that this economic engine is built on."

3. Ohio Avian Research Conference: Academic event Saturday, October 18 at Denison University in Granville Ohio. Casey Tucker sent an e-mail requesting financial support in order to subsidize student attendance. Tom asked what recognition sponsors could expect. Is a display possible? Tom will propose a presentation on the WCAS Forest Breeding Bird Survey.

4. New Signage for WCAS: Nora would like more attractive indoor signage for podiums, events, etc. Kurt suggested a retractable banner stand, and/or signage on PhotoTex, which clings. He will bring samples.

5. Event idea: Movie night at a nature center - Tabled

6. Meeting Locations: Next is May 19 at Panera North Olmsted. Meetings for June-November will be at the Tiedeman Road Panera. Meeting rooms are booked.