

Western Cuyahoga Audubon Society
MINUTES FROM BOARD MEETING OF July 8, 2007

Members present: Tom Romito, Mary Anne Romito, Liz Clingman, Penny O'Connor, Nancy Howell, Terri Martincic, Diane Sigler

.Guest: Stan Searles, Curator of Ornithology at Cleveland Metroparks Zoo

Stan spoke first with suggestions/ideas for next year's Walk-a-thon for Rocky River Important Bird Area.

This year's walk was successful considering the short notice. Item for next year get more people involvement to walk, not necessarily to walk all 31 miles, but have more presence in the RR Watershed perhaps walk segments of the watershed.

Stan heard from & received thanks from 3 mayors

Stan's wife – Vickie and daughter Katie have resources for more people involvement.

Bike clubs, running clubs – send walk info. to their websites to be posted

- have fliers made for clubs and other organizations to post

Maybe have "team walks" pledge \$100, \$500 and a team would do segments of the walk, example: 6 mile or other length relay.

Champ racing will organize the walk and put it into their "package" of walks. Champ will register people, collect fees but \$ will go to WCAS.

Date suggested for 2008 – Memorial Day weekend, May 24, 2008

Action item: Stan will make contact with Champ racing with date and organizing event with WCAS.

Need publicity – Plain Dealer – Jim McCarty article, environmental reporter (?)

- Sun Newspapers

- T. V. Channel – possibly Channel 5 weather guy (Mark Johnson)

- Emerald Necklace – possibly an article written by naturalist (park publication will not accept something written by person outside of the park)

- other ?

Action item: Media contacts done through Jane Christyson – marketing/communications person for Cleve. Metroparks

Noted that the 31 mile walk took about 12 hours at a good pace. If have a crowd participating it will take longer.

Did not have an official “finish line”. Probably for media attention, have a place designated as the finish with WCAS banner ... flags, marching band, dancing girls, flyover by the Thunderbirds (whoa, I’m getting out of control)

Would like to have Metroparks’ Board involved, possibly walking part of the walk
Invite Representatives (ie Kucinich) to walk but don’t want to make it a political rally
Invite Mayors to walk

Check points along the way are important – will discuss how many and where located later. Use as:

- rest areas
- refreshments for walkers
- information about IBA
- staffing is important
 - o all day ? part of the day?
 - o Audubon volunteers
 - o Scouts – boy or girl scout organizations for a badge
 - o RR Watershed council
 - o Have a fun “passport” to be stamped or stickered for other park visitors – stop by all or a couple of the check points
 - o Highlight the IBA signs along the way

Costs involved:

- flyers
- shirts/hats – may be donated
- signage
- message board

Need to come up with a short, snappy name for the walk, ie. “Walk for the Watershed”

Get corporate sponsors, especially if local:

- money
- donate in-kind goods

Possible sponsors mentioned: GM, Heinens, Mittal Steel, Sherwin-Williams, Ford.
Grocery stores may give food donations for walkers

Get out to promote at Rotary, Kiwanis, Lions club meetings. Try to do programs in Jan., Feb., or March. Program should have a graph of volunteers prior to IBA, # of volunteers the first year, # of volunteers the second year, # of volunteers projected for future.

Rick Tyler is the Cleveland Metroparks contact for RR IBA now that Dan is gone.
Date selected for RR IBA kickoff event for 2008 to get more volunteers, Sunday, March 30 *Action item* Terri Martincic (?) or Tom Romito (?) will check on date of availability of Nature Center with staff

Would like to have the 20 new points generated by Metroparks by mid-September so can be found, mapped. Might include private property. Contact at Metroparks might be the real estate person ... name (?)

We enjoyed a wonderful barbecue with homemade ice cream by Liz. Stan departed at 3:45, with our thanks and enthusiasm.

1. Finances: Nancy Howell distributed a financial statement for July 1, 2006 through June 30, 2007.

2. Programs – upcoming season (Nancy)

Note: Penny is making a list of Bird of the Month presenters.

3. Ottawa car pooling list (August 18th) Penny will coordinate.

4. How to organize a birding or nature festival

If you have not printed off the How to Organize a Birding Festival publication, get one from other board member and look through. It gives step-by-step “how-to” suggestions that will help with our walk-a-thon and other fund raising.

Next Board meeting: Sunday, August 26 at 4 PM at Book and Bean in Berea.

Meeting adjourned at 5:35 PM

Nancy Howell, Penny O'Connor