



CATS Communications Committee meeting January 19, 2023 at 10:30 AM

In attendance: Anne Benham, JoAnn Dalley, Phyllis Johansen, Penny Kaiserlian, Martha Orton, Jackie Savage, Joe Simard, Mary Spear, Chris Stroupe, Chris Vanden Wymelenberg

Opening remarks: Many thanks to Penny for heading Communications for the past number of years! She has graciously agreed to continue helping until some of her jobs have been filled.

Chris Stroupe is helping with meeting minutes and along with Natasha Heller will assist Mary with inviting and hosting speakers for member Meetings in future.

Facebook: Jacki Vawter has been the administrator of our Facebook page, but is longer on Facebook. JoAnn will follow up with Jacki Vawter to be set up as an administrator if she isn't already. JoAnn and Martha will continue with current postings.

There was some interest from the 2022 class to post on Facebook and Mary will contact those individuals to let them know they will first need to submit Facebook posts to JoAnn Dalley. After being evaluated for interest and content, they will be cleared and given access to post on their own without going through JoAnn. Mary will share the names of people interested in contributing to the CATS Facebook page.

JoAnn mentioned that RMN have two Facebook pages (different purposes) and will follow up on how to do this for CATS.

Should we add an Instagram page, with pictures and short captions. Who will do this? To be discussed with 2022 volunteers with interest to work on social media.

SmugMug: Jacki Savage talked about SmugMug as a good resource for all social media posts and the importance of having people who take photos at projects and events to load photos on the site for others to access. She will be contacting those interested in photography from the Volunteer Interest Form to encourage them to go to projects, but also to load them on SmugMug. Reminder from JoAnn that it's OK to stop by projects to just take photos.

To encourage use, we will include reminders about SmugMug in emails sent via MailChimp and have Jackie report at Member Meetings.

CATS Website Blog: Bill Sublette would like to pass on responsibility for the newsletter blog, but will help anyone interested in contributing articles and photos get oriented. Mary will look for several volunteers with writing skills to take over and possibly make it more of a monthly newsletter.

To expand the visibility for the website blog, a link to the page will be sent in a monthly email announcement and added to the Facebook page.

It was suggested to include reminders to post photos on SmugMug in email announcements as will be done for the blog. The downside of this is that it would require the usual login in order to be able to upload/download photos.

Tabling and community outreach: There was a lot of interest in the 2022 class for tabling and community outreach. An orientation meeting will be planned soon.

Mary Spear and Barbara Monfort previously discussed combining efforts between Education and Communication and deciding it was mutually beneficial, have set up a meeting with Anne Benham,

who has been organizing tabling this past year. They will discuss how to expand current outreach and tabling activities. Considering there has been a lot of interest in information for kids at tabling events, and for resources for home-schooling, having children's mini-events or activities will be on the agenda.

Anne shared that it was useful to have cards with useful URLs (e.g. ISA's list of arborists) printed on them to hand out when tabling. Could we expand this to a page of bookmarks on our website?

JoAnn has tabled at the Landowner's Conference in the past and plans to do it again this year. She will pass the information for the event on to Anne to include on the Tabling Activities spreadsheet. A master spreadsheet is being kept of all tabling activities to ensure continuity of information for anyone taking on the job in future.

CATS Library: Anne Benham has been managing this; Lily Engle expressed an interest in helping.

Thanks to Penny for her efforts in supporting Anne's work with the library this past year.

The library's link on the "Additional Resources" webpage could be made more visible by removing duplicate links. (*website updates planned*) Only 4 people checked out books from the library last year!

When the library moves to Geology, access will be via Anne Witt, who will be in the office at Unpredictable times. This was disputed, however. Also, her contact information is easily available to set up a time to come to the library.

Consider more promotion before getting rid of our library altogether by moving books to another location or giving the books to the public library.

Q: When will the books be moved to Geology? A: Still waiting to hear from Dept. of Forestry

The point was raised that the cabinet containing the books has a limited capacity. If we want to get another cabinet/bookcase, best to do it soon because any empty space in Geology will soon be filled up. Further discussion at a meeting specifically for the library concerns will be planned.

CATS website: Looking for people to help with updating the ongoing website information and to join a workgroup to plan redesign. Mary will meet with Chad Denby about plans for a complete redesign and possibly other web designers to get a competitive quote. Barbara White will be consulted regarding a grant to fund this effort.

Track It Forward (TIF): It's difficult to get people to record their hours. Some aren't comfortable with computers and need help recording their hours. There is an automatic prompt in place if someone signs up on TIF for a meeting or project, but we can periodically add reminders to our email announcements.

Joe Simard knows TIF better than anyone and would like an "understudy". Mary and others will look for someone to work with Joe and to potentially take over the responsibility. Joe has been managing TIF for 7 years, assisted by Phyllis Johansen for some of that time.

Barbara White and Martha Orton have looked into sharing a TIF group subscription through Trees Virginia with other tree steward groups. We will still need a CATS organization administrator.

Tech access: Chris Vanden Wymelenberg will organize all CATS technology, e.g. setting up specific email addresses for accounts to facilitate multiple users rather than personal emails.

Chris has also taken over managing Google Workspaces and is clearing out and verifying email addresses with the cvillareatrestewards.org domain name.

Next meeting date: TBD