

## **WRNC Board Meeting 3/25/2018**

Teleconference call

**Present:** Carla Johnson (president), Linda Bergman-Althouse (vice president), Ann Rogers (secretary), Jean Chamberlain (treasurer), Cathy Burns, Kelley Odell, Toni O'Neil, Kathy Lillard, Mathias Engelmann, Amanda Falk, Amber McNamara, Elizabeth Chandler, Amy Akins

Carla called the meeting to order at 9:00am. The roll was called and all Board members were present.

The minutes of the last meetings had been sent out by email. Linda moved that they be approved and Mathias seconded the motion. They were unanimously approved.

Mathias said that the deadline for submissions for the next newsletter is June 1, but he would really like to have them earlier than that. Linda has been carrying the burden of most of the articles, and it would be great to have some from other people.

The next agenda items covered different aspects of the symposium. Carla had distributed the comments from attendees, some of which were valid concerns. Others seemed picky, but we wanted to address those that seemed to be trends.

### **Icebreaker**

One problem was that there were not enough tables and a lot of people had to stand. The food was great as usual. Some people objected to the "clapping" to get the attention of the audience. We need to think of another possibility...maybe flicking the lights off and on? We think most people enjoyed the activities.

We are considering having the icebreaker in the vet school cafeteria next year, which seats 150 people. This year, we had 115 signed up for it. We need to check to see if there's a speaker system in there. Carla has a portable one.

We will make our decision on how to proceed after we get the committees in place for next year.

Elizabeth asked what our purpose for the icebreaker is, and it was agreed that it's a way to have people meet both old and new friends, so that some of the greetings get accomplished before we get to the sessions at the symposium. We do need to be sure we make newcomers feel welcome, and can ask for first timers to be identified....maybe by stickers? We did use the animal stickers to indicate which animals someone works with.

### **Registration**

We thought the registration went pretty well, and there was less confusion about signing up for labs and meals. Apparently, some people thought they had to sign up for ALL the sessions they wanted to attend, in addition to the labs. Jean said this has been a recurring problem. We can put a blanket statement to this effect on the schedule and on the acceptance email. The registration committee can deal with this issue.

## **Classes**

We feel we had a better variety of classes this year with lots of new ones. We want to continue to include more advanced classes.

Some people suggested a class on snake care, since all our reptile classes have been on turtles. There was some discussion on the class on squirrel ailments, which did not go well. We need to make it clear which classes are a presentation and which are a round-table discussion.

Elizabeth asked whether we vet the speakers, and this is something we've talked about for several years. If they have spoken before or some of the Board knows the presenter, we don't require vetting, but we should probably do so if we don't know or have a recommendation for them. We do give them a copy of our guidelines, and we should require a signature on that. We do not have a contract with the speakers and do not give an honorarium. In previous years when we gave printed handouts, we requested them ahead of time, but now they often come late or not at all. We can tell speakers we need their abstracts in time for attendees to read them and encourage attendance. Now that we're spreading out and trying for more speakers that we may not know, we need to find a way to vet them.

## **Lunches**

There were many complaints about the soggy turkey sandwiches on Saturday. The caterer said it was because he used frozen turkey which got the bread wet. John has a list of caterers used by the vet school and we can consider those. This year, we had the caterer take up the tickets, but we can use a vet student for that, and not make that a requirement of whom we choose, although we feel the ticket system worked well. We spent \$1,000 less on lunches this year since we did not have to over-order so much. Since we are charging for lunches, we should upgrade them some. We need to consider whether we should use buffet-style instead of box lunches, since box lunches generate so much trash.

## **Banquet**

We thought the location and venue for the banquet was an improvement over the hotel. There were 115 attendees. Some people didn't like not having time to go to their hotel room before the banquet, but if we use the Ramada for our base hotel, that will not be an issue. Some thought the food wasn't as good and some of it was cold. The potatoes were bad. We should find out if we can have the dinner plated rather than serving buffet-style. Water should be more available (either on the tables or in an obvious location). Many attendees liked the location. We need to find out which items were provided free of charge because Lou was making the arrangements.

## **VSLs**

The VSL's helped a lot at the check-in table all day. They also dealt with A/V issues and helped with all the labs. Linda suggested we increase the WRNC visibility since some people seem to think it's a Vet School event. We need a way to identify Board members. Should we go with neon vests?

## **Raffle**

There were not as many raffle items as last year. Some items did not get delivered in time because of the winter storm and UPS was not guaranteeing delivery. Mathias was working with the Google Docs spreadsheet that Savannah created, but didn't have time to contact all previous donors. We made about \$1485 from the tickets. We need to have a committee in charge of it. We do not know whether Savannah has sent the thank you letters to the donors, and she has not responded to repeated inquiries by Mathias and Carla. If she has not yet sent them, we may need to divide up the list and have Board members send them. We are also not sure what items arrived at the raffle table since Savannah also has that list. Elizabeth mentioned that we are not required to list each item or its value on our receipt to the donor, but Kathy said we have done it in the past to personalize our thank you, and also to encourage repeat donations. We MUST get something out to donors, even if it does not itemize their donation

Mathias listed the donors that he knew of in the newsletter, and asked that we let him know of any that were left out.

We somehow must hear from Savannah since she was collecting the donation list. Linda will try and contact her through Facebook since nothing else seems to work.

## **Hotel**

We discussed using the Ramada as our primary hotel next year. It is right next door to the Vet School and is within walking distance. We just have to have them open the gate, which they usually close to keep vet school people from parking there.

They do have free a hot breakfast. The rooms are not quite as nice as the Hampton, but they are very adequate and much cheaper. The university rate is \$70/night and they are pet-friendly. This would eliminate the 20-minute ride back and forth to the vet school. People can still stay at one of the other hotels, but we will not reserve a block of rooms elsewhere since we would be fiscally responsible for them.

Mathias moved that we use the Ramada as our primary hotel next year, and Toni seconded it. The motion passed unanimously.

## **Financial Report**

Our net gain from the symposium this year was \$7746.35, which was more than usual. This includes the raffle ticket income. We reduced our expenses (mainly with the banquet and lunches), and did not pay for as many hotel rooms. We only paid housing for two out-of-state speakers, and the scholarship recipients did not need housing.

We usually make \$1,000-\$2,000, but last year we lost money. Our goal is to break even.

The \$582.28 “raffle donation” was income from selling the Fox Valley formula to Wildlife Welfare. It arrived after the symposium ended, and would have cost too much to return. Nick at Fox Valley said he would be happy just to receive his donation letter.

We pay the CE department at the Vet School 15% of the money they collect, as the administration fee. Plus, NCSU charges a 4% fee to use their facility. There’s no extra fee for credit card registration.

We paid \$80 for advertising on Facebook. This is to promote the symposium to a targeted demographic set of users. They will receive notices such as “registration is open” and other deadline reminders. This shows up off and on for about three months. This is our second year for this and we had approved a budget of \$100. Elizabeth asked whether we could track our success with this, and Facebook can tell us how many people we reached.

The books and t-shirt sales are not included in the symposium financial report since we also sell them other times of the year.

Elizabeth asked about the itemized charges for the banquet, and it’s in the invoice we received from Lou. We need to find out whether there are items that we got specials on because Lou made the arrangements.

We paid for two out-of-state speakers for two nights each.

Jean will file the document to request our state-tax refund.

### **Other items**

All Board members are on the entire symposium committee and are expected to help with setup on Friday and stay through cleanup on Sunday.

There was a signup sheet for other symposium volunteers and Kelley thinks she gave it to Jean.

### **Symposium committees**

The next agenda item was a review of symposium committees and who would volunteer to be on each of them.

- Raffle – Kathy, Amanda, Linda, and Toni volunteered to help, but no one offered to chair it. The plan is for the responsibilities to be divided for it.
- Hospitality - (lunches, banquet, coffee, speaker water/gift bags, food trucks)  
Amy and Carla will work on this committee. Kelley was asked to help and she stated that she is planning on resigning from the Board within the next week. Elizabeth will work on this committee and may agree to chair it.  
The moderators should take the gift bags to each speaker.
- Presentations (level of speakers, info, bios, abstracts) ... Contacting speakers and creating the schedule - Jean will chair with help from Ann, Amber, Mathias, and Carla. Elizabeth will review the contract with the speakers.

- Lab supplies – Amber is the chair; Mathias will help. We should get help from VSL's when the symposium is near.
- Scheduling classes – Jean will continue to chair, with help from Toni and Carla
- Registration/Website – We hope to have the registration start on the new website next year. We will wait on this until we find out the status of a new website. It has been down since sometime in Feb, and Kelley does not know the current status. Neal has been dragging his feet and we think we may need to find other options and pay for it. Neal thought he could connect to the CE office system, but that is unlikely. This will be discussed at the next meeting.
- VSL's – Carla will coordinate communication with them, and will talk with them to get impressions from the past symposium.
- Sales table – Linda will continue chairing. Jean does the book ordering and Linda orders t-shirts. We no longer order and sell rehab supplies. Other Board members will be recruited to cover it in shifts.
- Ice breaker – Linda will ask if Betty Holloway will chair it. Amy and Elizabeth will help.
- Thank you notes (to presenters, VSL's Greg, & John) – Ann

### **Other items**

We think the food truck made enough profit to want to come back.

Board members should send Carla any other ideas for changes to be discussed at the next meeting. Do we want/need to change anything else about our organization?

Can we have a room for a larger table for our Board meeting at the symposium? Is there a different time to hold the meeting that won't overlap symposium presentations?

Linda moved that the meeting be adjourned and it was seconded by Ann. The motion was passed and the meeting adjourned at 11:00am.

### **Board Admin**

On February 17, 2018, Lou Mitchell submitted her resignation to the Board. This resignation was accepted by Carla Johnson, President, on March 2nd, 2018.

On February 23, 2018, Calley Gerber submitted her resignation to the Board. This resignation was accepted by Carla Johnson, President, on March 2nd, 2018.

Minutes submitted by Ann Rogers, secretary.