



Communications Committee Report

Prepared by: **Dave Krause, Chair**

Date Submitted: **April 23, 2019**

Date: January 15, 2019

Attending: Dave Krause, Chair; Rebecca Johnson; Randall Miller; Mundy Wilson Piper; Brandon Gallagher Watson; J. Eric Smith

Absent: Jim Urban

Topics:

- Spring Grant Cycle opened: Hyland Johns, UARF, Ohio Education Grant and all scholarships
- Website update will be moved to March as a Strategic Plan deliverable due to staff transitions

Actions:

- 2018 Individual Appeal hit \$30,000 goal.
- Karen Lindell has accepted a full-time position at Cal State Fullerton.
- Teresa Recchia hired as a part time position with TREE Fund effective January 28, taking over Communications from Karen Lindell.
- Maggie Harthoorn will begin full time at TREE Fund office effective February 1. She will split social media work with President and CEO Smith.
- Customer Satisfaction Survey will be completed by end of January.
- Rebecca Johnson is taking over as Texas Liaison. Onboarding meeting scheduled with Liaison.
- Tour route has been released and registration goes live February 1.

Date: February 26, 2019

Attending: Dave Krause, Chair; Rebecca Johnson; Randall Miller; J. Eric Smith; Teresa Recchia

Absent: Mundy Wilson Piper, Jim Urban, Brandon Gallagher Watson

Topics:

- Tour registration is at 36 with over \$20,000 raised.
- President and CEO Smith reviewed his efforts as web host to modernize theme of website and simplify structure.
- Webinar on The Salt Dilemma by Jim Urban had in excess of 1,000 attendees; next webinar is in May.
- Customer Satisfaction Survey was reviewed by J. Eric Smith. One thousand surveys were sent; received 7% response. Communications Committee learned that information of what TREE Fund is doing and how needs to be made accessible to constituents. Committee agreed not to add survey link to website and just close the survey.

Actions:

- Issued press release on fall grant awards.
- Design changes to TREE Press (high open and click rates compared to industry standards).
- Working on March Research Report with Dr. Michael Arnold to be released mid to late March.
- Updated Tour Ride Guide.
- Reviewed current ads submitted.

Date: March 19, 2019

Attending: Dave Krause, Chair; Rebecca Johnson; Mundy Wilson Piper; Brandon Gallagher Watson; J. Eric Smith; Teresa Recchia

Absent: Randall Miller, Jim Urban

Topics:

- Teresa will assess best times to post on social media for best open rate.
- Reviewed establishment of social media themes.
- Committee discussed opportunities to disseminate research findings. Website has been restructured with Grant Archive on home page. Suggestion was made to create short video clips with researcher comments on how research benefits the industry or riders explaining why they ride for TREE Fund. Teresa will investigate. Other suggestions discussed: tag grant award universities on social media posts and send grant recipients a checklist with their final grant payment on ways to disseminate research prior to publication.
- TSRF quarterly newsletter is in progress.
- Discussed partnership solicitation efforts.
- Teresa reviewed the editorial calendar and will distribute it to the committee.

Actions:

- Updated Liaison PowerPoint presentation to be added to updated website.
- Posting TREE Press articles on social media.
- Redesigned Ride Guide.
- Instagram account was created and is receiving favorable response.

Date: April 16, 2019

Attending: Dave Krause, Chair; Mundy Wilson Piper; Brandon Gallagher Watson; J. Eric Smith; Teresa Recchia

Absent: Rebecca Johnson, Randall Miller, Jim Urban

Topics:

- President and CEO Smith noted that partnership renewals are coming in and the goal is to have partnerships completed by the end of May. Committee was asked to submit partnership prospects to either Eric or Dave focusing on Kentucky & Tennessee businesses for Tour support.
- A completely revised Constant Contact email was used for April TREE Press. Preliminary campaign results show an increase in open rates (27.3%), but not an increase in click rates (11.2%).
- President and CEO Smith reviewed the updated TREE Fund website which went live on April 5.

Actions:

- Q1 Research Report was issued April 11 along with TREE Press featuring Dr. Bryant Scharenbroch; Q2 report will be distributed on June 13.
 - Social media themes implemented.
 - Corteva was added to Crown/Diamond partner array.
 - A landing page on our website was created for every article in the April issue of TREE Press for immediate sharing on social media.
 - March Ride Guide was issued March 21; April edition to be released on April 18.
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Accomplishments:

- Updated Strategic Plan which will be submitted for approval at the May 6 Trustee meeting.
- Annual Report was mailed April 1.
- Updated TREE Fund website (went live on April 5).
- Improved the appearance of our TREE Press, Trustee and Webinar pages.
- Updated Liaison PowerPoint presentation was added to website.
- Enhanced social media focus.

Objectives:

- Meeting targets for 2019 partnership renewals.
- Committee Chair Krause suggested linking grant awards with a list of innovations, tools, processes created by the research funded through TREE Fund.

Next Meeting Date: May 21, 2019