



WORKING TOGETHER/GROWING TOGETHER

MEMBERSHIP MEETING Minutes

Tuesday April 19, 2016

President Jane Hatchet called the meeting to order at 8:00.

Following the pledge of allegiance Program Chair Jane Darr introduced Sonny Sharp, one of the founding members of the Cotter Trout Festival, who recounted the history of the Festival in honor of its 15th anniversary. In the late 1990's, a group formed called the Cotter Committee for Arts & Commerce. They brought the Art Train from the Smithsonian for two years, but felt they needed something more. Gil Stammer, along with Peter Peitz, Benny Magness, Dick Hemmert and Sonny Sharp formed the Cotter Chamber of Commerce. They wanted to focus attention on Cotter's history and its importance as a railroad town and center of commerce and culture, and in September 2000 the first Cotter Fall Festival featuring Arts, Antiques, and Architecture was held. There was an art show in the Fielding Building, antiques exhibitors on the corner of Second & McLean and arts & crafts next to the Post Office. Mary Ann Messick gave seminars on Cotter history, and the Arkansas Game & Fish Commission presented the history of the White River. The Cotter Care Crew held their Pig in a Poke barbeque, and the White River Scenic Railroad gave rides to Sodie's in Flippin. Keith Hamm's gospel quartet performed in the open air. The festival was repeated annually and culminated with the rededication of the Rainbow Bridge. After that, the focus shifted to the trout fishing and events were held in Big Spring Park including fly casting instruction and demonstrations, fly tying, and the Kid's Fishing Hole and the White River Shore Lunch Fish Fry. Volunteers increased; publicity got better with online press releases. Gary and Paula Flippin were guests of Channel 7 and cooked hush puppies to promote the event, which has become an annual spring event for the past 14 years.

OLD BUSINESS:

- **Shawnee-Supreme Fishing Tournament** update – Nathan Buck reported on a successful event with 90 teams (72 in the water), which is the most ever. \$5,600 was given away in prize money, and the Chamber netted approximately \$3400 on the event. Some changes are planned for next year, and it is expected that it will max out with 125 teams. They are working on price points to figure out how much they need to make and how much they will give away.
- **Cotter Trout Festival** update – Jane Darr reported that things are on track and asked members to help pre-sell tickets to the Kick-Off event on Friday night, which features an Old Fashioned Shore Lunch, music, and art. Collector's Item posters are on sale for \$15. Fliers publicizing the event are available. Donations are being solicited for the bucket

auction. Gary & Paula Flippin will be the Grand Marshalls for the parade. Gary Flippin extended an invitation to retiring Cotter School Superintendent Don Sharp to join them. Sharp expressed gratitude and accepted.

- **Membership** update – The Chamber has added one new member, RiverNet Computer Solutions in Flippin. Jane introduced Larry Babbin, independent guide, who will be helping run the Natural State Fly Shop.
- **Gassville in the Park** update – No one from the Committee was present, but Jane Darr reported that they are on track.
- **Scholarship program** update – Marcia Taylor reported that 12 scholarships had been received. The Committee has reached a consensus on the award, which will be announced at the Cotter High School awards ceremony on May 2.

NEW BUSINESS

Arkansas Life, a glossy monthly magazine publication of the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, will feature Cotter in its Hometown section in November 2016. It reaches a highly affluent, influential, sophisticated audience. Its average net circulation is about 30,600 with a monthly readership of 109,400. The Board discussed advertising, and decided that the Chamber would not purchase advertising, but that the information about this advertising opportunity should be circulated to members who might want to advertise. Copies of the magazine will be available at the Natural State Fly Shop in the visitor's center.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Marie Wagner from Rocking Chair Realty announced an Economic Development Grant Workshop from 10 – 12 May 19.
- Brenda Mackey announced that the Cotter Saturday Club will be holding its annual Salad Luncheon at Hopkinswoode the last Sunday in May. Cotter Saturday Club supports the City, education (Quiz Bowl, FBLA), the Food Room, Serenity and Christmas decorations in the Park. The Butterfly garden in the Park is their ongoing project. They planted a large walnut tree in the Walnut Hill Cemetery, since all the existing walnut trees had died.
- Marcia Taylor announced that the Master Gardener's Plant Sale will be held Saturday, April 30 at the Fairgrounds. Come early.
- Don Sharp announced that Feed the Pack will be held Friday, April 29 to raise money for the school backpack program. For more information, contact Tiffany Watkins or Don Sharp, dsharp@cotterschools.net or go to the KTLO website. Volunteers are needed to be at various strategic intersections—WalMart in Mountain Home, SunFest in Gassville, and more.
- Jennifer Voloria-Dunn announced Family Movie Night at 7 p.m. Friday night, April 22 at the Gassville Branch Library. The movie will be inside. Kids can bring pillows and blankets.

FUTURE GENERAL MEETING SPEAKERS:

Cotter-Gassville Wastewater Treatment Plant
Northwest Arkansas Economic Development District

Next meeting 8:00 a.m. Tuesday, May 17, 2016

Respectfully submitted,

Gwen Khayat, Secretary