

FLORIDA WHIPS GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

May 14th, 2011- Port Mayaca

The meeting was called to order by President Mary DeGreef at 4:10 PM. Mary gave a brief President's report, stating that being president has been a learning curve for her. She then called on Dona Love to give a Vice President's report. Dona reported that it has been a very busy driving year without too many date conflicts.

The minutes of the last general meeting held on October 17, 2010 were attached to the agenda and they were approved as written. The membership thanked Secretary Helen Tolmach for her last 4 years of service.

Nelie Boehle then gave the Treasurer's report which was also attached to the agenda. Mary reported that she and Nelie have been very busy putting the Whips financial accounts on Quick Books and in straightening out our finances. She stated that we have a healthy balance and that she would like to keep one year of operating expenses in reserve. Mary explained that with our finances now on Quick books it should be much easier to keep track of our money in the future.

The question of our status as a "not for profits corporation" came up. Mary stated that we are a "not for profit corp." as far as the State of Florida goes. However, our Federal status is not as clear and we could owe some IRS back taxes. Mary is going to work on that situation this summer with the assistance of her accountant. The assembled members then thanked Mary and Nelie for their efforts in straightening out the Whips finances.

Linda Bennett who had assumed the Membership Chair then gave a membership report.

We have a total of 220 members.

Northern region--101

Southeast region--58

Southwest region 33

Panhandle region --15

The regional reports were then given as follows:

Northern region was sent by Linda Evans as she couldn't attend the meeting. This was read by Mary and should be attached.

Southwest region was given by Linda Bennett, she indicated that they had a nice year with the fun show at Little Everglades and the clinic at Cypress Keep with Fred Merriam.

Panhandle report was sent in by Cynthia Perkins and was read by Mary DeGreef, also attached.

The members then thanked the Southeast region for hosting this general meeting and Peg Belvin serving her last term gave the regional report. They have become quite active with Wellington and The Port Mayaca events. Peg explained that their planning Meeting will be very important because of elections. Kathy Beeson has been nominated for SE regional director.

The special recognition award went to Bettina Scherer who then spoke saying that she is humbled and honored to be associated with the Florida Whips. This award was presented by Peg Belvin, SW region director and included the awarding of a beautiful engraved vase.

We then moved on to old business which brought up the newsletter. Mary reminded the group that at our fall general meeting a motion was passed to make the online newsletter the default position and thus, if one wishes to receive the newsletter by mail one will have to make that known at the time of the renewal of one's membership.

Mary pointed out that Deby Stewart is doing a great job as our newsletter editor and we as a group thanked Deby for her efforts. Deby then spoke encouraging all members to send in articles and pictures etc. for the newsletter. Deby would like to change the dates for the newsletter to August thru May rather than Sept thru June as it is now. She would keep the online letter thru the summer months June and July. The board will take this request under advisement. Deby said the dead line for articles is the 15th of the preceding month. She pointed out that the online letter is much more current. It was also pointed out that 2/3 of our dues go to the newsletter. Details of any changes will be worked out by the Board and published.

There will be no Fall workshop/Carriage Affaire as no one has come forward indicating an interest in running same.

New business: Florida Whips decal are available free to every member; Whips pins are available and Florida Whips license plates are available for \$ 10.00. Mary said that embroidery patterns are available to members wanting to decorate shirts etc., just let Mary know if you want one.

It was pointed out that to add or change information on the Web site one should contact their regional director.

Dona Love , VP organizes the "other event" calendar to let drivers know what is going on other than Whips events.

Mary would like to see us include at least one educational event in our regions. Nelie recommended we reach out to junior drivers. This topic has been discussed at length and it sparked some more heated discussion.

Mary reminded all that we need 2/3 of our membership to make the necessary changes in the bylaws. She will send a group e-mail out reminding members to return their ballots.

The new officers were elected unanimously as follow;

Secretary-- Mary Beth Miklos

Treasurer--Nelie Boehle

Membership Chair Linda Bennett

The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 PM

Submitted, Helen Tolmach Sec.

Northern Region Report

I wasn't able to attend the Steeplechase Fun Darby but I understand everyone had a great time. The remarks I have heard said it was well run, relaxed and congenial. The fact that it was local and inexpensive to enter made it all the more enjoyable. Congrats to our VP, Dona Love for all her organizational efforts. I would like to take this opportunity to invite all Northern Region members to the planning meeting at my house on July 9 at noon. I will provide lunch and the meeting will follow. Bring your ideas for next years activities. My address is 11550 SE 21st PL, Morriston, FL 32668. My phone number is 352-486-3197, email is levans0277@aol.com. I hope to see all you northern region members here!

Linda Evans

2011 Panhandle Region Report

May 14, 2011

As a result of the August 2010 planning meeting, Panhandle Region held two very successful events this year: a Halloween trail drive and a Spring event which included driving demonstrations, practice opportunities and a trail drive. We have seen our membership increase and have had participation in our events increase steadily. Our next activity will be the annual planning meeting in June, which we are expanding to include a clinician, and of course, lunch with great desserts as we have some tremendous cooks in the group!

There has been an emphasis on communication, both through our email contacts and "regular" mail. "View from Behind the Dash" has been instrumental in the growth of membership in our Region. There has also been an active "word of mouth" outreach. We have relied on the experience, expertise, and enthusiasm of our members to strengthen camaraderie at our events. There has also been a revised interest from members who have been inactive for some time.

Because of the geographic spread of our region—Tallahassee to Pensacola to Montgomery—and several points in between—we are making an effort to vary the locations of our activities, so to encourage attendance and participation. For example, our spring event was in Kinston, Alabama which is a mid-way point in this region, while the annual planning meeting will be in Tallahassee.

We hope to continue these kinds of positive experiences in the coming year in this Region.

Testimonials

The information and publicity from the Whips newsletter made some remarkable contributions to the increase in interest and participation for our region. For example:

During the LiveOak event, I was approached, at random, at the Whips Hospitality tent, by a young woman who was asking for information to send to a friend. The friend had long wanted to learn to drive, and now as she was

recovering from cancer, she really wanted to do this. She had, in fact, purchased a Doctor's buggy and a horse—now, she needed to learn to use them, but didn't know anyone who could help her. The friend lived near Dothan, Alabama, less than 30 miles from where our Spring event was scheduled! Subsequently, we made contact, she actually began lessons with the trainer in Kinston, Alabama, and was an enthusiastic spectator at the Spring event. *(For me, this experience alone was reason enough to have had the hospitality tent!)*

More recently, a young man contacted me, as a result of seeing the online newsletter, to find some driving information for his mother—he wanted to give her a “driving lesson” for Mother's Day. She lived in Monticello, Florida, about 20 miles from my barn, so I invited them to come meet my pony, Boo. They came, and we had a lovely afternoon, and she will be joining us.

Submitted by Cynthia Perkins for the May 14, 2011 General Meeting