



Virginia Christmas Tree Growers Association

June 18, 2012

The Conference Call was called to order at 1:00 p.m. by President Virginia Carroll with the following on the call: Charlie Conner, Greg Lemmer, Dave Thomas, Derick Proctor, Danny Neel, Sherrie Taylor, Donna O'Halloran, John Carroll and Jeff Miller.

Annual Meeting Planning – John Carroll reported that most everything is finalized for the VCTGA Annual Meeting for August 23-25. The committee is still working out the details for the dinner and entertainment for the Thursday evening dinner at the Frontier Museum. There will be 2 cases of wine available for the dinner. The VCTGA is covering the travel expenses for Rick Dungey.

Awards - A motion was made to present a “Friend of the Industry” award to VDACS Commissioner, Matt Lohr who has been an active supporter of the Christmas tree industry and will be the keynote speaker at the Thursday Marketing Luncheon and a President’s Certificate of Recognition of Garth Nelson’s service to the industry, seconded and passed.

Grant updates – Jeff Miller reported that additional grant reimbursements were being submitted at the end of the month for approximately \$8,000. The first grant has \$10,370 left from the original \$29,965 which \$6,400 had been requested to be reallocated to billboards and the balance would be used for printing of additional consumer brochures. Jeff will also look into re-allocating the billboard funds to print media promotions for members for this upcoming selling season. Jeff will check on getting “stickers” to go over the VCTGA member farm signs with the new logo

The second grant has approximately \$16,465 left from the original \$29,680. The balance is allocated mostly for two winter meetings and additional displays.

It was suggested that for a future grant, that an educational grant request be made to target teachers, and children with the possibility of developing an Educational Kit for Teachers to be made available on disk and/or online.

Website – Greg Lemmer reported that the VCTGA website had been completely revamped and was operational. Each grower will now be able to edit their own mini-page online. Administrators for the website will be Greg Lemmer, Jocelyn Lampert and Jeff Miller. Greg is also looking into establishing a blog through the website.

Ruritan Updates – Virginia noted that she had drafted a letter to contacts that had been made at the Ruritan National Meeting in Raleigh and noting that a VCTGA Ruritan member would be available to attend one of their meetings if needed to help get them started on a Christmas Tree fund-raising project.

Mount Rogers Updates – Virginia reported that she, John Carroll, Charlie Conner, Danny Neel, Sherrie Taylor and Billy Cornette had met with Mt. Rogers growers: Rodney Richardson, John Rosser and Earl Deal to discuss how the two organizations could work together more. There is a need for more consumer materials starting a blog, having news releases available during the season, developing a new tree tag with additional info and logos, and continuing support of the seed orchard. There is an increasing demand for real trees, but there are still issues in obtaining sufficient labor.

Winter Meetings in 2013 – It was the consensus that the winter meetings should cover marketing, labor and technology with one in the Waynesboro area and one in the Wytheville area. A motion was made to have the two winter meetings in late February and early March, seconded and passed.

Annual Meeting in 2013 – Tentative plans are to have this meeting in Wytheville.

Nominations – Virginia announced that Jocelyn Lampert would be resigning from the board at the annual meeting. She and Joe are selling their farm and moving to South Carolina. Greg Miller had agreed to be the nominations chair with assistance from John Carroll and Robert O’Keeffe.

Virginia Farming radio will be doing an on-farm interview with Dave Thomas in mid-July as part of the VCTGA support of the program.

National Christmas Tree Association Annual Meeting – Sherrie noted that they are trying to get more members to the national meeting and that it might possibly be in Washington, DC in 2013.

Southern Living magazine – Sherrie noted that the North Carolina Christmas Tree Growers felt that they had a good response from their ad in the magazine last November.

Financial Report – Jeff reported that when we receive our next grant reimbursement, the VCTGA cash position on the Balance Sheet will be about the same as it was this time last year. The income and expenses are in line with the same period last year.

Membership – Jocelyn had emailed a report stating that a final letter will be sent to members who have not paid their 2012 dues that they will be de-activated at the end of July.

Being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:15 p.m.

Respectively submitted, Jeff Miller, Exec. Dir.