

**Regular Minutes of the Houston Cy-Fair Lions Club
Tuesday July 12, 2016 at 7PM at the Lions Den**

Members: 12

Guests: 1

President Paul opened the meeting at 7:05PM. Lion Terry led the pledges to the flags. Lion Milly gave prayer. Lion Chuck, seconded by Lion Keith, motioned that we dispense with a song. Lion Don said he did not want to come out in the rain and wet as he is still adjusting to his new knee. Guest, Lion Sam Thomas of the Baytown Lions Club, and District Global Membership Chairperson, was introduced. He was supposed to meet someone who was interested in joining our Lions Club, but they did not show up.

Lion Vice President Keith introduced his wife, Lion Julie. She is a volunteer for the Texas Wildlife Rescue Center, and rehabilitates possums. She has been a Lion since last winter. Lion Julie reported that her passion is wildlife. Texas Wildlife Rescue Center is on West Beltway at Hammerly Blvd. They take in many various types of wildlife, but she specializes in possums. She said she hopes to change our thinking about the lowly possum. Researchers have dated them back to the time dinosaurs became extinct. Possum is a general term used to classify marsupials in Australia and New Guinea. The possum is the only marsupial in North America. The female has a pouch, but is different in that the slit is vertical on the abdomen. Twelve teats are arranged in a circle inside the pouch. The gestation period is 13 days, when the joey is born, about the size of a bean. They crawl up the abdomen, into the pouch, and attach to a teat. A litter of possums is called a passel of joeys. They live in the pouch for 50 days or more. The female is capable of two passels a year. Once the joeys leave the pouch, they cling to the mom's fur on her back, and typically stay with her for about 100 days. Possums also have prehensile tails, which can grasp and hang on like a monkey. They typically live for 1-3 years, although it may be longer in very rural areas. They eat a variety of vegetables, amphibians, eggs, bugs, small snakes, mice, and other yard pests, so they really are beneficial to have around. They are nocturnal, and if seen during the day it is usually because their habitat has been disrupted. They are not aggressive to other animals or humans. One defense mechanism they have is the ability to play dead. Predators think they are dead, and leave them alone. Possums typically live in abandoned holes or nests in trees. They typically roam between three and four different habitats in an area. Adult possums weigh between 3-5 pounds, and can get as large as 15 pounds. They are usually 21-36 inches long, including their long, naked rat like tails. Possums have opposing thumbs like raccoons, but do not sit on their back feet to have free use of their front feet. Their prehensile tails are strong enough for them to hang from. Possums have the lowest body temperature of any other animal, at 96-97 degrees. Because of this, they do not harbor diseases such as rabies, parvo, distemper, etc. Possums have more teeth than any other mammals, with significant jaw strength. They are great climbers, but don't jump. To discourage them around your property, remove sources of food like pet foods, and leave ammonia soaked rags around.

Lion Julie said she was hired as a bookkeeper for TWRC, and started learning more about wildlife. They offer classes on wildlife care, which she took, and then was hooked in rehabilitation of abandoned animals. TWRC trains and new rehabbers work closely with an experienced and licensed wild animal caregiver. She prefers possums as they are low maintenance, and have less feeding requirements than most other small mammals. Possum joeys are raised from the size of your thumb where they are tube fed, then syringe fed, and finally they learn to lap from low plastic lids. Like kittens and puppies, they need stimulated for elimination after eating like the momma would do. Growth is monitored by weight in grams. They can eliminate on their own when they start lapping their food. Possums urinate and defecate in water, not in the bed or food areas. At about 80 grams in weight they

start climbing, and need a hammock and climbing things for them to learn on. Lion Julie has many inside kennel cages for the smaller animals, and a large 4'x4'x6' outside cage, made by Boy Scouts, to condition the larger animals to outside prior to release into the wild. Possums hiss when frightened. She gets the babies from TWRC where the general public brings found abandoned animals. She has a permit from the state warden to care for wild animals. This summer she had 28 possums in her care at one time. Siblings are marked on the tail with different colored nail polish, which also helps to keep track of each animals weight and growth. Once grown and accustomed to being outdoors in the outdoor cage, they are released by a creek in a wooded area. Lion Julie is required to keep a log of the care and release of animals. She is not paid for this service, and must purchase all her supplies and food. Possums do not carry diseases, are not aggressive, and are beneficial to our environment. It is against the law to harm or kill possums, with fines up to \$500. She had slides but Keith was unable to get the computer to talk with the projector, so the slide show will be sent to the Secretary to send to members.

Secretary's report was emailed, and Keith's last name spelling was corrected. Motion by Lion Chuck, seconded by Lion Keith, to accept the corrected minutes passed.

Treasurer's report was given. All bills are paid except for International Dues which was received today.

Lion Bud reported that the Magic Show has not been finalized as of yet, but should be finalized prior to the end of the month.

There will be no further baseball until the fall.

We had a kickball tournament on our fields this past weekend. Eleven games were played. Lion Chuck motioned that we donate \$150 from our profits of that day to "Do Something About Bullying" who put on the tournament. Lion Keith seconded, and motion passed.

Dues statements were handed out and everyone urged to pay promptly.

The International Lions Club Convention was recently held in Japan. Lion Sam Lindsey was elected as International Director. He was once a member of the Conroe Noon Lions Club, now currently in the Buffalo Lions Club. He served as past president of the Texas Lions Camp.

Lion Chuck discussed maintenance of the building. The garbage disposal was clogged. He reminded everyone to please run lots of hot water through it at the end of each use. He reported that the wood around the landscaping in front of our building needs repaired as a large spike is sticking up and could hurt someone. The plaques for our Memory Trees have been fixed with liquid welding epoxy and new screws.

The proposed budget for 2016-2017 was distributed and reviewed item by item. It was noted that our endowment to the Texas Lions Camp has been completed, but motion by Lion Chuck, seconded by Lion Bud, to continue to send \$2400 per year if we are financially able, passed.

There will be a District 2-S2 Cabinet meeting in our facility July 16. All Cabinet members are requested to attend. Any Lions member can also attend by signing up on line through the district website.

Lion Sandy reported that she found a dead mouse and many dead bugs on the floor this evening. The exterminator has just been here. We all need to be very diligent about NOT leaving food out to attract varmints.

Lion Sandy reported that she will be leaving in the morning on a two week trip. Minutes will be completed when she returns.

Meeting was adjourned with a Roar by Lion Bud.

Respectfully submitted,
Sandy Martin, Secretary