Informatics Committee

Committee Members: S. P. Maher (Chair), V. Apkenas, C. Calderon-Acevedo, D. Green, G. Griffiths, M. K. Halsey, T. T. Hammond, B. Kohli, P. K. Connors, J. M. Martin, S. B. McLaren, S. Musila, D. K. Odell, E. Siracusa, B. P. Tanis, D. Villalobos, L. Yohe.

Mission:

The Informatics Committee is responsible for addressing issues that arise with continuing changes in technology and information processing, retrieval, etc. as they relate to mammalogy. In recent years, the committee has been primarily involved with maintaining and further developing the Society's website.
At the 2007 Annual Meeting in Albuquerque, New Mexico, the Board of the American Society of Mammalogists charged the newly redefined Informatics Committee to explore a redesign and improve the Society's website and to maintain the existing website during this period.

Information Items:

(1) The ASM web site (www.mammalsociety.org and www.mammalogy.org) went live on 17 March 2011 and has continued to function through the current year.

(2) The ASM web site is hosted on a server with InMotion Hosting. Annual web hosting fees are $2279.88 for 2019 and it now is hosted on a dedicated server, which improved within site search and increased our capacity.

(3) Informatics paid design firm Acro Media to implement additional changes and fixes to the web site ($480).

(4) ASM has a presence on a number of social media including:

Facebook
(https://www.facebook.com/American.Society.of.Mammalogists; 6643 "Likes" as of 16 April 2020; increase of 833 since last year)

Twitter
(@Mammalogists; 4150 followers as of 16 April 2020; increase of 735 since last year)

LinkedIn
(http://www.linkedin.com/groups/American-Society-Mammalogists-4575484; 216 Members as of 16 April 2020; increase of 16 since last year)

Instagram account (@amersocmammalogists 467 followers as of 16 April 2020; increase of 97 since last year)

YouTube page (https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCA6tp7M-8d9YFLorYysHR_Q; 45 subscribers; increase of 18)

Along with the Mammal Images Library Committee, an "Image of the Week" is posted on the Facebook page, and tweeted via the Twitter account. In general, the Facebook page can reach over 3,000 people each week through various posts (although direct interaction with posts is less). Twitter and Instagram do not provide summarized feedback. Announcements regarding newly published issues of Journal of Mammalogy, the Annual Meeting, grants and fellowship deadlines, and ASM Newsletters also have been posted through social media outlets. We have been posting mammal-related research on Facebook and Twitter, which has enhanced our presence. We also provide a "Mystery Mammal" photo quiz on the Facebook page each week. In 2018, we have added Spanish translations to select social media posts, particularly the Monday Mammal and the Mystery Mammal and have continued that effort.

(5) Routine maintenance and updates were performed on an as-needed basis, as requested by President Kelt and committee chairs. Leadership pages, including changes in Editors, Officers and Elected Directors, were updated following the 2019 annual meeting.

(6) Online submissions of fellowships administered by the Honoraria, Grants-in-Aid of Research, Patton Award, and Latin American Fellowship Committees were conducted using the ASM web site. Beginning in December 2019 and into January 2020, webforms were expanded for individual programs including the new Kaufman and Cameron awards. All letters of recommendation can be submitted through the website. We re-organized several pages regarding grants to provide better clarity regarding requirements.

(7) Requests for information, job postings, and announcements submitted to the web site were received by Dan Odell and routed accordingly. Odell received 52 emails through 1 April 2020, an increase in messages from the previous year. The most common requests are meeting notices and employment notices for posting on the web site. The rest were a wide variety of inquiries including lost password, career advice, and research. As usual, not everyone looks for the proper place to send their query (e.g. Business Office), although we have updated our 'contact us' page to better direct individuals for inquiries. This year there were additional requests for information regarding GIAR applications and these were sent to the Committee Chair. Committee chairs should always review their respective pages and the clarity of their contact information.

(8) ASM continues to operate a Members only area for blogging and a within community job board. Members must request access using their name and Membership ID. The Membership ID is available at the ASM Business Office (https://asm.wildapricot.org/). When you login to the Business Office you will see your ASM Customer Number. This number is used to verify your active ASM Membership. However, few members take advantage of this and only one blog post has been added since this feature was established.

(9) In 2016, an upgraded meeting app, Guidebook, was provided by the University of Minnesota, and Informatics and the Program Committee worked together to upload information. This platform provided many advantages to the free EventBase platform Informatics provided in 2014 and 2015. In 2018 and 2019, we contributed to delivering content to the App and part of our budget (See Action Item #1 for 2021).

(10) Beginning in 2015, we added a subscription service to Vimeo ($199, Pro option) and uploaded selected Symposium talks from the 2015 and 2016 ASM meetings. We continue to make these available to members through the Business Office site. Additionally, in 2019, we uploaded videos to the YouTube page from speakers who gave appropriate permission.

(11) Beginning in 2016, members of the committee provided content and images related to March Mammal Madness, which is a science outreach activity on Twitter developed by non-ASM members. Specifically, we provided post "battle" information about the loser, as well as preliminary images of the combatants, usually from the Mammal Images Library. We have continued that outreach in 2018, 2019, and 2020.

(12) Beginning in 2017, we worked with the Mammal Biodiversity committee to provide server access and support for the new Mammal Diversity Database. Since then, this committee has paid for the annual $14.99 fee to maintain the domain.

(13) In 2018 and 2019, we worked with the Program Committee and the Human Diversity Committee to develop webforms to allow submissions and requests through the ASM site.

(14) In 2016, the State List Project, in conjunction with the Public Education Committee, was launched on the ASM webpage (http://www.mammalogy.org/mammals-list). We have continued to update content as available and where errors have been identified. As of this year we have provided the committee with access to update and correct errors independently.

(15) In 2018 and 2019, we worked with the Ombudspersons to update page content and establish a webform for submission of a report of alleged misconduct.

(16) In 2019, we began partnering with the Program Committee to provide assistance on mammalmeetings.org.

(17) In 2019, we developed documents relating to best practices for social media by ASM committees.

Action Items:

(1) The sum of $13,000 is requested from the 2021 budget. Hosting the ASM web site on a dedicated server is expected to cost $2099.88 this year; this is an annual expense, but provides use of a server with sufficient resources to meet the demands of the website. Additional costs include: $45 per year to maintain the domains (mammalogy.org, mammalsociety.org, and mammaldiversity.org) and an annual subscription to Vimeo to support video delivery to members, at $199 per year. We request $1000 to contribute towards a meeting app (as noted in #9, above). We request an additional $10,556.12 as a placeholder for potential expenses related to the Society's web site upkeep and added functionality.

(2) We also want to make a separate request for $20,000 from the Society to begin to build a new website that will resolve known security issues with the Content Management System and accessibility issues on tablets and smartphones with the current design. We assume that at least

$5,000 from our base request (Action Item #1) would be used towards costs associated with the new website. This will be part of a two-year request totally an estimated $45,000. The goal would be to develop and design a site in one year (e.g. late summer early fall), and then complete the project, which would include content migration and testing, prior to the annual meeting. If the Society can not allocate funds at this time, the current site is functional and delivers the necessary content and many functions requested by Committees and Leadership. In such a case, we can wait and make similar requests in forthcoming years.

Respectfully submitted,
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