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ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION
COMMITTEE
-UNITING NEEDS AND
RESOURCES-
THE EVOLUTION OF AN IDEA

FROM WHENCE IT CAME...

- ⦿ Eco-Tourism
- ⦿ Estero High School 11th Grader
- ⦿ Sanibel-Captiva Neighborhood Club



PRACTICALLY PRACTICAL PRACTICUM

Who?



PRACTICALLY PRACTICAL PRACTICUM

Stakeholders:

- Flying under the radar



Action



Power
Of
Influence

Power of Position



ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION COMMITTEE: MEETING #1

◎ Making Contact

- Pure network-people who knew people
- Email Structure-Formal
- Conflicting ideas, interests welcome

I would like to cordially invite you to be a founding member of the Southwest Florida Environmental Action Committee. Unfortunately, many environmental education and management efforts have become more and more insular. Increased communication can be beneficial between all groups that work within the natural resources community. As organizations are often being forced to do more with less, collaboration has become a buzzword among both governmental and non-governmental agencies. This isn't surprising because a larger impact can often be achieved with fewer financial resources, compared to traditional project implementation that often only utilized one organization. However, collaboration is impossible without good communication between interested parties. The Southwest Florida Environmental Action Committee proposes to create the necessary communication framework.

The initial meeting will be held in room 247 of the Cohen Center at Florida Gulf Coast University on February 1st, 2017 from 9:30am until 11:30am. The community of environmental organizations and professionals in Southwest Florida is a small one, but many of us do not know each other. This meeting will enable us to all sit down to gather information, exchange ideas and discuss the structure, format and viability of the EAC moving forward.

Thank you,

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ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION COMMITTEE: MEETING #1

- ⦿ 9:30 in the morning
- ⦿ Academic Institution
- ⦿ Mission based intent
 - Establish a recurring committee!

ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION COMMITTEE: MEETING #1

- ◎ 24 Donuts
- ◎ 20 chairs
- ◎ 5 tables
- ◎ 3 people
- ◎ 1 room



- ◎ However!!! The meeting was a success!
 - And not just because of the donut surplus

TIME TO REGROUP

- ◎ What went wrong:
 - Contact style
 - Timing
 - Implied formality
 - Commitment Fear (Surprised?)

TIME TO REGROUP

- ◎ Contact Style-Fine-toothed comb
 - Cold calls
 - Face-to-face
 - Key! Remove commitment factor
 - Email style less formal

Dear Fellow Environmental Professionals and Educators,

I am sure by now many of you have been inundated by dozens of requests to join local coalitions, committees and groups. With that in mind, I would like to cordially invite you to explore another one. Many of us may know each other or may have even worked with each other in the past, but the fact that many environmental centers and institutions still remain insular is a persistent theme in Southwest Florida.

I would like to introduce myself, my name is Walter Cheatham and I am the Education Coordinator at the Calusa Nature Center and Planetarium, however I am also in the Natural Resources Leadership Institute Fellowship Program with the University of Florida. As a part of this program, I must complete a practicum in which collaboration and networking is paramount. I will not bore you with the details of how I came about my idea for the Environmental Action Committee, but it was born of seeing many opportunities and little communication during my time spent in environmental education.

Perhaps this will be a one-time event, perhaps it will be something which we can build together, but I would like to put all of you in a room and get you talking about needs and resources. I have hand-picked individuals in the Southwest Florida environmental education, management, academic, and volunteering arenas because we all have something to offer and we all have goals that may be accomplished through communication and meeting and meeting is done best face to face.

In order that we all may meet, exchange ideas and gather information, I am hosting a meeting at the Calusa Nature Center and Planetarium on April 3rd at 6 o'clock pm. I encourage each of you to come, if for no other reasons than curiosity and free food. Please if you know someone who would be beneficial to this discussion, bring them along.

I appreciate your participation in my practicum exercise and in the advancement of moving environmental education, management and knowledge forward in Southwest Florida. We are all in this because we want action for our environment; I hope to see you all at the Environmental Action Committee. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at cheatwb@gmail.com.

Thank you,
Walter Cheatham

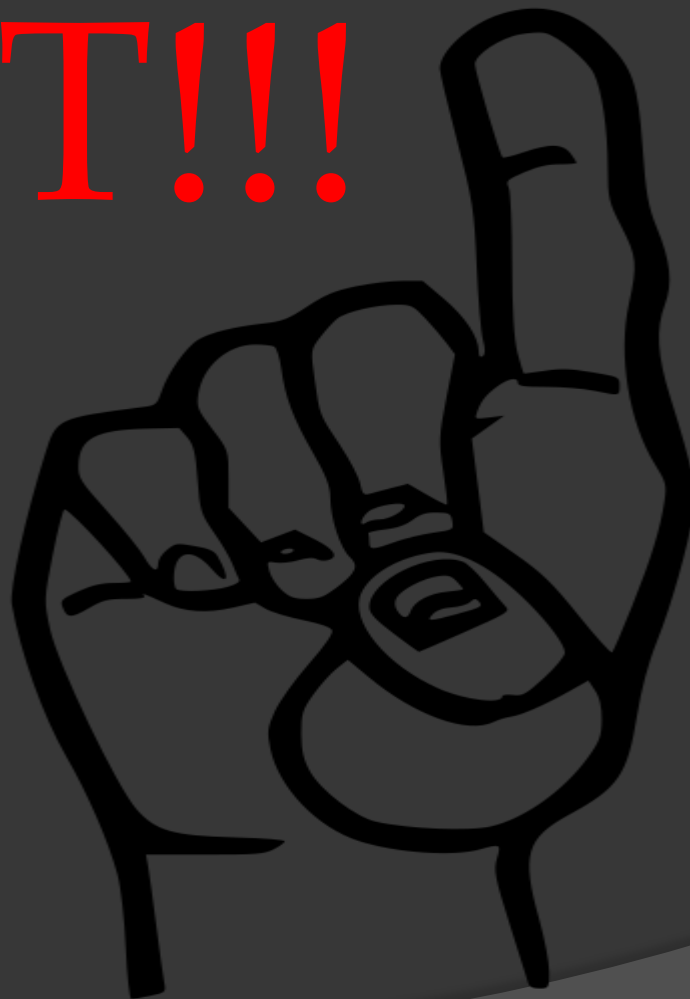
TIME TO REGROUP

- ⦿ Meeting time: 6pm on a Monday
- ⦿ Located at a Nature Center
- ⦿ Shout out to the NRLI Project Team for the blue tape maps
- ⦿ Margolis Wheel
- ⦿ New Activity: Crackpot, harebrained, looney-bin, featherbrained, insane, scatterbrained, screwball, completely bananas ideas. (Based on the Two Rules)

ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION COMMITTEE: MEETING #2

- ◎ 100% Increase in Participation
(excluding myself)
- ◎ Two people with sick children...
- ◎ One Broken Commitment
- ◎ Two pizzas...

BUT!!!



PROGRESS...

- ⦿ Sacrificed the “U”
- ⦿ The idea is strong
- ⦿ More Connections made



PROGRESS...

- ◎ Group Maintenance (Lesson Learned, I skipped this part originally...)
 - Even less formal
 - Keep the meetings collaborative and conversation based for the organic generation of actionable ideas
 - Bring a friend
 - No Requirements for attendance
 - Facebook?
 - Name change to reflect evolution

CONTINUITY...

- ◎ Unanimous opinion of calendar use
- ◎ Some questions remain:
 - Fear of prohibitive hierarchical interjection
 - i.e. "I have to ask my supervisor..."
 - Circumnavigating mental barriers in similar, existing organizations.

THE CORE HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED

- ◎ The idea and the goals of this group are sound and accepted by key stakeholders.
- ◎ Ideas have already led to action
- ◎ Special Thanks to:
 - NRLI Project Team, Jessica Mendes NRLI XIV, Arlo Simonds, Matt Wegener NRLI XVI,
 - Florida Gulf Coast University, The Calusa Nature Center and Planetarium
 - My wife (because she allowed me to leave her at home with two ankle-biting bedlamites)

SUBVERSIVE CUTENESS TO MAKE
YOU FORGET YOUR QUESTIONS...

