HORNED LIZARD CONSERVATION SOCIETY
Post Office Box 122, Austin, Texas 78767

Phrynosomatics

The Newsletter of the Horned Lizard Conservation Society

Our purpose is to document and publicize the values and conservation needs of horned lizards, to promote horned lizard conservation projects, and to assist with horned lizard management initiatives throughout their ranges.

Volume 25, Issue No. 2 **MAY 2020**

Alexander Cochran and his Legacy

By Leslie Nossaman

Have you ever met someone who you connected with, enjoyed talking with so much, and who had a big impact on your life? That is how it was with Alexander Cochran. We first started emailing about horned lizard projects and his financial backing and then started talking on the phone about horned lizards and then about life. Sometimes we would talk for hours.

Alexander Cochran photo from the 1960's. *Provided by his sisters, Claudia Steele and Beryl Cochran.*

Alex first contacted HLCS in early 2017 with some ideas for HLCS and for funding. He and I started emailing in February 2017. One of his ideas was to fund our grant program. He also wanted to check us out with a smaller donation in anticipation of making a larger one in his estate plan. We discussed his ideas. HLCS had not yet funded our one grant award for 2017 so he offered to fund that grant study for $1000. The award was for Cecilia Morales who did a project on a database and distribution maps of the six species of horned lizards in the Ajos-Bavispe Reserve in Sonora, Mexico. He requested intermediate reports from Cecilia to make sure his funds were being used appropriately which she was happy to provide.

He and I remained in contact during 2017 and 2018. He funded another $1000 for the grant program for 2018 to be distributed across the four grants that year. He was always so thrilled to hear about the research happening on horned lizards. He said "My plan is to let you folks do the administration, while I hide behind the curtain and provide the coin."

In June 2018 he contacted me from the hospital to let me know he was in poor health and did not think he had long to live. When he called I was actually on a horned lizard survey in central Texas with the Houston Zoo and Texas Parks and Wildlife looking for horned lizards. He thought that sounded like fun. He let me know he was finalizing his will and was making a $20,000 donation to HLCS to use however we wished. He did say he would

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like for us to use the funds to create something that will bring funding to us in the long term and perhaps forever. He and I emailed a few more times after he first went into the hospital and then communications stopped. In early August his sister, Beryl Cochran contacted HLCS and let us know he had passed. Those of us in HLCS who had contact with him were very sad. Lynn Seman wrote an article in the November 2018 issue of the newsletter on how he inspired her. It is a wonderful article, please check it out. She also mentioned him in an article regarding a horned lizard hatchling release in the November 2019 issue.

Here is an excerpt from some comments that Claudia Steele, one of his sisters sent to me: "When we were young, we lived in Kingsville in south Texas. The town had a pet parade and I remember it as a yearly thing. Lex, my brother, was about 4 I think, and he took a shoe box with a horny toad in it as his pet. When the judge looked in the box it was gone, and he told my brother he was so sorry but his horny toad must have gotten away. Lex just said, 'Oh that's okay, I have spare one.' And pulled another one out of his pocket. I think he always liked them and that story is part of our family lore. "

Here is an excerpt from Beryl Cochran who is his other sister: "We all count ourselves as having grown up or at least been children in south Texas and have a soft spot in our hearts for the little, non-poisonous 'horny toads.' Lex and I played with them often much to our parents (and I'm sure the 'toads') displeasure."

His sisters sent me the photo of Alex that is included in this article.

His grant support contributions helped our grant program grow and infused some life into the program. We had no grants awarded in 2014 with two in 2015 and one each in 2016 and 2017. In 2018 it grew to four and in 2019 it grew to six! Now in 2020 it is four again. His grants helped create such energy with the grant program that everyone involved could feel it. One of his goals was "to stimulate others to join in the fun of giving". It was not just the finances that he provided but the inspiration and energy that came with it. And even after his departure, his legacy to the grant program continues.

A lot of us have been touched by him and his love of the horned lizard.

I will end this with some of his quotes to give you some insight into the person he was:

"Let me provide you with a bit of background on myself. I am a 68 year old retired electronics engineer, raised in Kingsville, who has been adequately fortunate in my life and anticipate having some resources left over when I make my terminal exit. Some of that excess coin can hopefully help my dear Horney Toad friends cope with their rapidly changing habitat."

"Around the turn of the century, I began to entertain the fantasy of leaving them an adequate Game Preserve to allow them to survive the rude intrusion of us Two Legged Monsters into their habitat with the resulting wholesale massacre of their primary food source, ants. While examining the total impracticality of my hair brained notion, I was lucky enough to find HLCS, and realize that some people were actually attempting useful work to help preserve these marvelous creatures. So...tag, you're IT."

"I am beginning to consider the breadcrumbs that I leave behind. Though we cannot stop inflation or guarantee the efficacy of our actions on future conservation, we can still work towards building a robust environment."

2018 Grant Recipient Work Summaries

Chris Valdez and Hannah Richards are two of our 2018 grant recipients. Two years after awarding the grant, HLCS requests a work summary from the grant recipients. Chris and Hannah have summarized their projects for your review in this issue.

Reintroduction into the Katy Prairie Conservancy

By Chris Valdez

Background

The Katy Prairie Conservancy (KPC) manages approximately 20,000 acres northwest of Houston, Texas. Bound by the Brazos River on the southwest, pine forest on the north, and the ever-growing city of Houston on the east, the Katy Prairie has been characterized as being a tallgrass prairie that contains numerous wetland areas. The KPC is part of the greater costal prairie ecosystem located along the Texas coast and extends into Louisiana. Due to agriculture and development, only .01 percent of this region remains undisturbed.

The Katy Prairie (Warren Ranch) *Photo by Chris* Valdez.

Texas horned lizards (*Phrynosoma cornutum*) were last seen on the Katy Prairie during the 1960's to late 70's on Warren Ranch, a 6,500-acre cattle ranch within the conservancy. Factors that have led to the decline of Texas horned lizards include habitat loss, broad pesticide use and the spread of the imported red fire ant. What makes this property unique, as well the adjacent property known as Jack Road South (JRS), is the amount of harvester ant colonies that are still active. These harvester ants have persisted in the midst of heavy fire ant populations as well as high flooding. Unlike the typically flat harvester ant colonies seen in central and west Texas, colonies on the flood plains of Houston are raised and can be seen from a distance similar to the raised mounds of fire ants. Fire ants and Harvester ant colonies have been found on the prairie in very close proximity to one another. With much of the harvester ant population around the greater Houston area gone, these last remaining hot spots in combination with land protection/restoration by the KPC provide the possibility for future horned lizard reintroductions within the greater Houston area.

Fire Ants and Harvester Ants living side by side *Photo by Chris* Valdez.

Suzanne Simpson with giant Harvester ant mound *Photo by Chris* Valdez.

Surveys

In 2016, volunteers from the Houston Zoo's Herpetology department conducted 21 surveys for Texas horned lizards on the KPC. During this time over 200 harvester ant mounds and 13 species of reptiles and amphibians were recorded. As expected, zero Texas horned lizards were found. Some of the reptile species found include Gulf Coast ribbon snakes, Western Cottonmouths, speckled king snakes, rough green snakes, red eared sliders, and a large common snapping turtle. The two lizard species found were little brown skinks and Western slender glass lizards.

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Western slender glass lizard. *Photo by Chris* Valdez.

Common snapping turtle. *Photo by Chris* Valdez.

Using the harvester ant data acquired in 2016, volunteers Chris Valdez and Colin Thompson strategically place 50 cover boards inside areas with higher harvester ant density in an attempt to focus survey efforts around Texas horned lizard's food source for the 2018 - 2019 study. These areas would be the most ideal locations for future horned lizard reintroductions.

Fourteen cover board surveys took place between April 2018 and April 2019 (See Tables 1 and 2). Both Warren Ranch and Jack Road South (JRS) had 25 cover boards placed on them. Cover boards on Warren ranch were placed in a grid formation while the JRS cover boards formed a line transect through the property. The goal was to alternate surveys between cover boards on Warren Ranch and Jack Road South however due to weather and limited access the JRS property was surveyed less frequently. Three different reptile species were found under the cover boards. The first and most common species found was the little brown skink (Scincella lateralis). Our second species was the very common Gulf Coast ribbon snake (Thamnophis proximus orarius). The third species found was a baby Eastern yellow-bellied racer (Coluber constrictor flaviventris); this was a species thought to be seen during the 2016 surveys but was never officially captured and recorded due to their quick speeds! No Texas horned lizards were discovered during the length of the 2016 project.

Fire ants may have contributed to the low success rate of the cover boards. Throughout the year, fire ants slowly began taking shelter around the cover boards. By the end of the project 32% of the cover boards had become overrun with fire ants.

Ribbon snake on cover board #11 *Photo by Chris Valdez.*

Baby racer uncovered by Colin Thompson. *Photos by Chris Valdez.*

Future Challenges

Although there is potential for future reintroductions, it will be many years before we will be able to see Texas horned lizards licking up ants on the Katy Prairie. Much of the current efforts to reintroduce Texas horned lizards are in North and Central Texas, much closer to the fringes of their current range. Fire ants continue to be a problem for the Houston area and would need to be controlled on the KPC in order for these lizards to thrive. In recent years the Houston area has also been experiencing extreme flooding; it is unclear how these extreme weather events may affect the dynamic of the Katy prairie ecosystem. As more and more of the surrounding prairie is bought up for development the risk of major flood events increases. What can be said for certain is that the Katy Prairie Conservancy will continue their effort to protect and restore the quickly fading prairie ecosystems around the greater Houston area.

Acknowledgements

This project was made possible through grant money received by the Horned Lizard Conservation Society and the Prairie Biotic Research, Inc. Thanks to all of the volunteers that were able dedicate their time and energy into this project and to everyone at the Katy Prairie Conservancy with assistance accessing the prairie.

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Table 1

JACK ROAD SOUTH SURVEYS					
Date	**Start/End Time**	**Temp (C)**	**Wind Speed (mph)**	**Relative Humidity (%)**	**Species Found**
4/27/2018	8:40am - 9:30am	16.1	NA	NA	None
5/25/2018	8:25am - 9:15am	25.5	0	84	None
6/29/2018	9:17am - 10:10am	28.6	2.5	77.3	None
7/20/2018	8:30am - 9:39am	26.6	1.1	88.2	None
10/5/2018	7:37am - 8:45am	22.7	0	100	*Scincella lateralis*
3/29/2019	9:24am - 10:20am	20	0.8	89	*Thamnophis proximus orarius, Scincella lateralis*

Table 2

WARREN RANCH SURVEYS					
Date	**Start/End Time**	**Temp (C)**	**Avg. Wind Speed (mph)**	**Relative Humidity (%)**	**Species Found**
5/11/2018	9:10am - 10:16am	26.4	6.5	77.1	*Scincella lateralis*
6/1/2018	8:45am - 9:59am	29.3	3.2	86	None
7/13/2018	8:24am - 9:28am	26.9	1.8	86.2	None
8/10/2018	8:16am - 9:26am	26.6	2.1	91.6	None
9/28/2018	7:19am - 8:34am	20.5	2.6	89.6	None
10/26/2018	7:26am - 8:36am	12.8	0.7	77.8	None
3/8/2019	7:00am - 7:45am	21.1	5	87.3	*Scincella lateralis*
4/19/2019	8:45am - 9:58am	16.4	8.2	60	*Coluber constrictor flaviventris*

An Oklahoman's take on Texas Horned Lizards

By Hannah Richards

As a child growing up in rural southwest Oklahoma in the 1990s, it was common to see Texas horned lizards roaming around the backyard on a hot summer's day. I wish I could say the same for children today. As a biologist at the Medicine Park Aquarium and Natural Sciences Center in Medicine Park, Oklahoma, I was constantly asked, "What happened to the horny toads?" This was then followed by a story of theirs of long ago when Texas horned lizards were abundant, echoing my childhood memories. Their faces lit up as I shared that scientists and horned lizard enthusiasts all around the country, including myself, are studying horned lizards and working on reintroduction efforts of the Texas horned lizard.

With help from the HLCS Grant, I conducted research that fulfilled my thesis requirement for my master's degree from Midwestern State University in Wichita Falls, Texas. I focused on Texas horned lizards that are a threatened species in Texas and Oklahoma largely due to widespread habitat loss, urbanization, and the decline of their primary prey, harvester ants. These ants experience declining populations due to overuse of pesticides and the spread of red imported fire ants. With its primary prey source in decline, the aim of our study was to determine if Texas horned lizards supplement their specialist harvester ant diet with other arthropods, like beetles; if beetles are digested with greater efficiency than ants; and if

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Texas horned lizards digest alternative food sources more efficiently than harvester ants, zoo herpetoculturists could add those non-ant prey items to the Texas horned lizards' diet plan which would be more cost effective

First, we determined the diversity of available prey by setting pitfall traps in known Texas horned lizard habitat in North Texas and we determined diet composition by dissecting horned lizard fecal samples found in the study site. Although many potential prey items were available, only harvester ants and beetles were constantly found in fecal samples (Figure 1). Harvester ants made up over 70% of the diet by number of individuals, but remnants of small beetles were found in most samples. Upon further investigation, we found that these lizards may actually be consuming more biomass of beetles than ants, therefore taking in more calories per individual prey item than ants.

We then used a captive breeding population of Texas horned lizards at the Dallas Zoo to test digestive efficiency, the measure of ingested energy that is actually absorbed by an animal, of different prey items. We fed the horned lizards separated into different groups a diet of only harvester ants, a diet of only meal worms, a diet of only cockroach nymphs, and a diet of only bean beetles. Once fecal samples were collected, we used a bomb calorimeter located in the Watson Lab at Midwestern State University to determine the digestive efficiency of the specific prey. We determined the amount of energy in prey and the amount of energy left over in feces. The ratio of these numbers is a measure of the efficiency of an organism's digestive tract in extracting energy from these different prey types. Although they make up most of the lizards' diet by number, they are unable to digest ants as efficiently (~30%). The digestive efficiency with beetles was variable but somewhat higher. Mealworms and roach nymph digestive efficiency were significantly higher than an ant or beetle diet, probably because of the reduced amount of chitin which makes up the exoskeleton of the hard-bodied insects.

Therefore, the lizards in the wild may be selecting beetles to enhance their energy intake from an otherwise all-ant diet. The high digestive efficiency of mealworms and roach nymphs may allow zoo herpetoculturists to use alternative non-ant prey items in the meal plans of Texas horned lizards to be more cost effective.

Thanks to this grant, I contributed to the study of the Texas Horned Lizard reintroduction effort. When asked now, "What happened to the horny toads?", I am able to offer them some hope that there are scientists, horned lizard fans, and members of the public that are actively trying to make their memories of seeing horned lizards in abundance a reality once again.

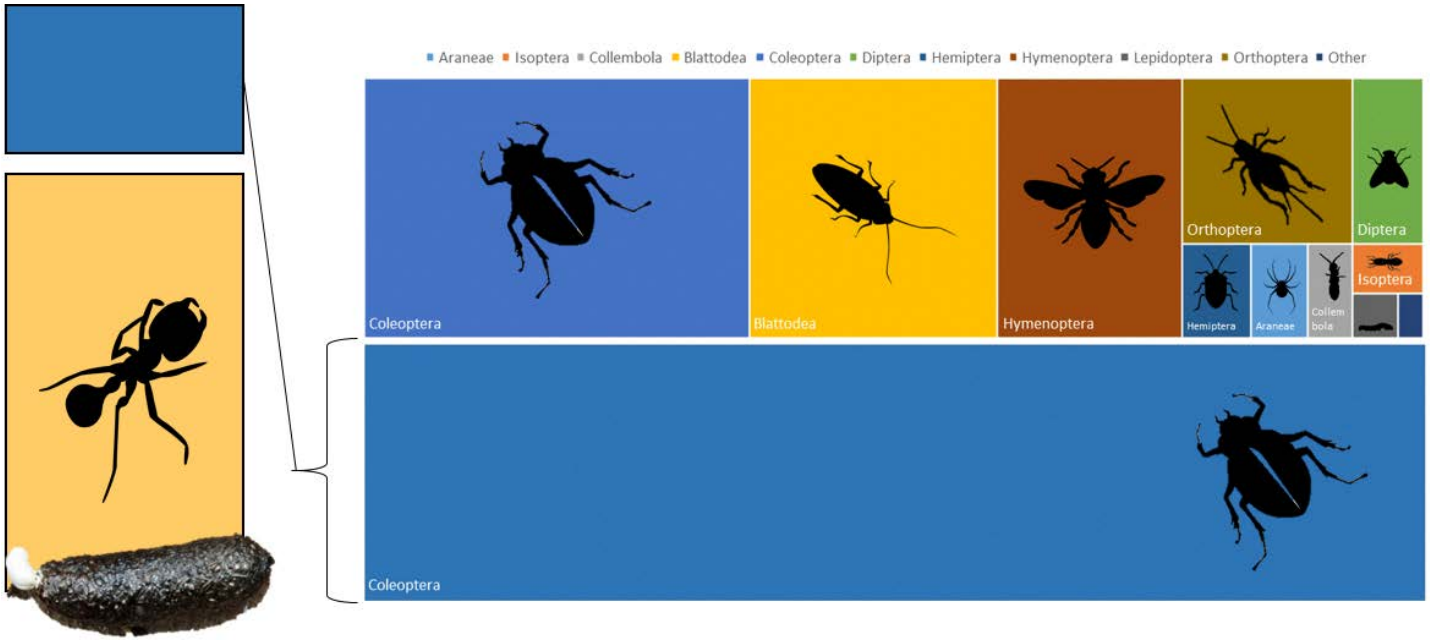

Figure 1. Proportion of ant and beetle prey items in Texas horned lizard fecal samples compared to the available prey at the study site.

Announcement of the 2020 grant recipients!

HLCS is pleased to announce the list of 2020 grant recipients! This year we are funding four grants to support conservation-based research. Their names and a brief summary of their projects are included in this article. We look forward to hearing of the results of these worthwhile projects!

Rachel Alenius - The ultimate goal is to improve captive breeding and reintroduction strategies for Texas horned lizards (*Phrynosoma cornutum*) by determining effects of diet on hunting skills and gut microbiomes of captive-bred lizards at a zoo. Diet can contribute to differences related to microbiomes and foraging behaviors between wild and zoo captive animals. It is unknown if such dietary modifications using harvester ants compared to available insects such as termites, waxworms, and crickets may influence the suitability of zoo captive Texas Horned Lizards for reintroduction.

Paul Bunker - The larger project is to train dogs to sniff out horned lizards to help when doing field count and health assessments. The award will be used for collection kits with instructions to send to people who can collect horned lizard scat samples. It is difficult to obtain enough samples to train the dogs. This will be an ongoing issue as there will always be dogs to train. This will supply scat to assist in the lab to help train the dogs.

Nicholas Kowal - One of the project goals is to better understand the distribution and micro-habitat selection of *P. hernandesi* in Nebraska which is probably at high risk. Another aspect of the project will be to collect DNA for a possible speciation between what might be two different species in Nebraska. The results may allow the horned lizard a higher at-risk status if found to be absent/declining with reasons pointing to a possible solution. This species is at the edge of its total range in Nebraska. It could be an important project to help study the issues and to protect this edge. The project will gather issues related to its food, predation, and habitat changes. Since the species is at its total eastern range edge this can be a vulnerable area for decline. So, research here could potentially be used in neighboring states. And maybe the process of understanding a species at the edge of its range can be used by other researchers for other species.

Charles Jacobi – The project goal is to understand how much artificial cover will help in giving the horned lizard predation and thermoregulation cover. Project will occur in the Texas panhandle on the Texas Tech University NRM Rangeland. There are no known papers or research on how horned lizards use artificial cover and the possible benefits.

Official Facebook Member Group Page

HLCS has a private Facebook page for communicating between members. This page also allows the HLCS Board to keep you updated with the latest news and activities and allows you a forum to post your photos and stories and ask others questions and make comments. This page is for the dues paying members and the objective is to provide more value to you!

If you are on Facebook and are dues paying member, look for the official page to be a part of this group. Go to this page and ask to become a group member:
https://www.facebook.com/groups/HLCSmembers/ It is easy to sign up and it is fun! Hope to see you there!

Member Survey Results

The HLCS Board wants to thank everyone who participated in our member survey. It was so much fun and very informational and will help provide direction to the Board for many years.

There were 8 questions:
1. What is your favorite horned lizard?
2. Why is it your favorite horned lizard? (TEXT)
3. Why did you join HLCS? (TEXT)
4. Rate the content of the website for being interesting and informative? Please offer a score of from 1 to 5, with 1 being of low importance to you and 5 being of high importance to you.
5. What new information would you like to see on the HLCS website. Please give feedback including suggestions and accolades. (TEXT)
6. What state/province do you live?
7. Please give any additional feedback about HLCS in general. The good, the bad and the in between. (TEXT)
8. What is your name? (needed to verify membership)

We had 79 responses which is over a 25% response of our membership which is incredible! What is more incredible is that we had 79% of the responses in the first 24 hours!

The U.S. state and number of responses were as follows: Texas 52, California 7, New Mexico 4, Oklahoma 3, Colorado 2, Arizona 2, New York 2, Wyoming 1, Massachusetts 1, Hawaii 1, Vermont 1, Kentucky 1, Louisiana 1, West Virginia 1. We did not receive any responses outside of the U.S. Most of our members are in Texas currently although those numbers are starting to expand into other states.

So since there were so many people from Texas who responded, it is no surprise that the Texas Horned Lizard was everyone's favorite at around 75%. The next was the Greater Short-horned Lizard at around 5%, then the Flat-tailed Horned Lizard, the Blainville's Horned Lizard, and the Desert Horned Lizard all tied at around 4%. In a fourth place tie were the Coast Horned Lizard and the Round-tail Horned Lizard at around 3%. In fifth place for a three-way tie were the Guerrero Horned Lizard/Sherbrooke's Horned Lizard, the Regal Horned Lizard, and the Mexican Horned Lizard.

What was really interesting was why people chose that species. Here are some examples of the species and why they chose them. Texas Horned Lizard: nearby to where they live, Texas state reptile, sold them as pets in the 60's, conducting research on them. Greater Short-horned Lizard: live birth and variable colorings and patterns. Flat-tailed Horned Lizard: high conservation concern, needs most help, nicest horns, cool lizard. Blainville's Horned Lizard: grew up with it, studying it for a master's degree, it's the local lizard. Desert Horned Lizard: overall appearance is really cool. Coast Horned Lizard: a 1950's California memory, grew up with them. Round-tail Horned Lizard: "Just the cutest little thing". Regal Horned Lizard: finding them as a kid. Mexican Horned Lizard: unique horned structure within the genus.

People had different reasons why they joined HLCS but most joined because of a childhood interest. This answer had around 29% of the responses but many of the comments under "Other"

mentioned childhood interest too. There was 19% who responded that they joined for nature interest. There was 14% who responded they joined for science interest. For uniqueness of species 6% responded that was why they joined. In the comments for the "Other" reason, people mentioned that they joined to learn more about them since they have them on their ranch, to help with their protection and conservation, childhood interest, and that they miss seeing them.

We asked people to rate and provide feedback for our website for being informative and how important it is to you. Out of a 5 score, the website received a total score of 4.31. We had 83% respond with a 4 or 5. There was 17% that gave it a 2 or 3 although most of the 2 and 3 ranks did not offer any suggestions for improvement so maybe they were responding with it is not very important to them. HLCS had made some significant improvements to the website several months before the survey so that may have helped the rating. We have lots more improvements planned.

We did receive a lot of suggestions for improvement for the website. About 80% of the comments were suggestions and 20% were just positive comments only. Some of the suggestions for improvement are: more on species other than the Texas Horned Lizard in Texas, want to see more research updates, more on what can be done to replenish their numbers, conservation updates, more on how someone can change their land to become a better habitat, more on ants, more photos, and more on their threats. Here are some of the positive comments: "HLCS does so much with so little", "Website content is excellent", "Thank you for all your work regarding Horny Toads!", "Thanks to all the good people who keep this project going!".

Question 7 was a very interesting question to give people the chance to say anything they want. There was a tremendous amount of support for what we are doing. For the last question, 95% of the feedback comments were positive comments. 5% were some additional suggestions for improvement. The suggestions for improvement were: more publicity, more events and work outside of Texas, fund more grants, partner more with other conservation groups, and more information on conservation easements for horned lizards.

The positive comments were so uplifting. There were several comments about the newsletter about how it is current and interesting with lots of articles on what is being done to directly impact the horned lizard, several comments about the improvements we made to the store, and several comments about how they notice that HLCS is becoming stronger and growing recently. Some of the direct comments were the best. Here are some examples: "You make life worth living", "You are like a breath of fresh air in a stale, smoke-filled room", "You have a group of dedicated volunteers", "Helpful and responsive about starting horned lizard monitoring program started in New Mexico", "Very appreciative that HLCS exists", "I love you guys", "Keep on keeping on. And thanks to all that keep the movement alive and well", "Amazing staff", "I hope HLCS continues to thrive and grow", and "Getting better all the time".

There is so much to learn from this survey. And so much work yet to be done with so many new ideas we had not thought of before the survey. These responses will help the Board determine decisions on making future plans. We will try and send out the survey again in a few years to check how we are doing and give you an opportunity to provide feedback again. We want to know what is important to you and to gather meaningful opinions and feedback. Thank you again to all of you who participated, it will make a difference. And if you were not able to provide comments or would like to provide additional ones, feel free to send to our main email at hornedlizardinfo@gmail.com or directly to the President, Leslie Nossaman at peoranun07@gmail.com.

Old Rip Festival 2019

By Leslie Nossaman

On October 5, 2019 HLCS sponsored and worked a booth to spread the word about horned lizard conservation and to make some sales at the Old Rip Festival in Eastland, Texas. This festival recognizes the horned lizard that was supposedly trapped in a courthouse cornerstone. And when the cornerstone was opened 31 years later, the horned lizard was still alive. The festival celebrates that does this. is the only festival I know of

From Left to Right: Leslie Nossaman, Ruthann Panipinto, Cameron Martin, Shana Fredlake, and Rachel Alenius. Lynn Seman is taking the photo.

We had so many wonderful volunteers this year who all helped with set-up, sales, talking to people, and booth take-down. Texas Parks and Wildlife stepped up and offered to send someone to help with our booth without us even asking and we are so grateful. Cameron Martin from the TPWD Muse Wildlife Management Area came and helped. Cameron also updated everyone on horned lizard conservation within TPWD. Rachel Alenius who is a student at TCU doing research on horned lizards also offered to attend and help. She let people know what TCU is doing for the horned lizard too. We also had Shana Fredlake from the Dallas Zoo, Ruthann Panipinto, and Lynn Seman who is the Member Services Officer on the HLCS Board. What a fantastic group of people to help! We had near record sales and the biggest amount of donations by two-three times!

Ruthann, Lynn, and I walked in the Old Rip parade with one of our banners and had the best time doing so. People seemed excited to see us and shouted out things like “Thank you for what you are doing for the horned lizard” and clapped for us and waved at us all down the route. When we passed the grandstand, the mayor who was the announcer on the podium stated, “Old Rip is very grateful to you” and gave us a nod, a wave, and a smile. Very cool.

President’s Message *by Leslie Nossaman*

Hello to our members! HLCS has so many wonderful things going on! We recently had our membership survey with some amazing results. You can find a summary of the survey results in the article named “Member Survey Results”. We have previously only sent one survey to the members and it had one question and that was to rank what HLCS was doing by importance. This was in 2008 and the newsletter was ranked by far as the most important activity that HLCS was doing back then. Also we have lots of other projects we are working on so stay tuned!

The HLCS Board decided to postpone the Horned Lizard Conservation Conference until May 2021 due to the uncertainty with the COVID-19 virus. We hope you watch for more information on this conference in the future. It is still planned for the Phoenix Zoo in Phoenix, Arizona. This will give you all more time to prepare some exciting presentations and gather more items for the silent auction!

Our funds have recently increased by $20,000 due to a will disbursement from Alex Cochran. He and I had previously talked about some ideas on how to use the funds so look forward to more on this in the future once the Board has had a chance to discuss and decide. We will miss Alex, his quick wit, and fun discussions. His legacy and impact will live on with his major donation and inspiration and we are forever grateful.

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