



# Midwest Bat Working Group

## Website Committee Report

22 March 2023

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Website Address: <https://mwbwg.org/>

Alternative website address: <https://mwbwg.wildapricot.org/>

Facebook Address: <https://www.facebook.com/MWBWG?fref=ts>

Website & Facebook Status: **CURRENT**

Custom Domain Status - DreamHost (mwbwg.org): **CURRENT**

Hosting Service Status - Wild Apricot: **CURRENT**

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### WEBSITE

This is the second year that Midwest Bat Working Group has operated our website, membership database, and annual meeting/meeting sponsor registrations through the WildApricot platform. The initial transition from the old website occurred during December 2020 and January 2021. WildApricot continues to provide valuable resources and a solid platform for handling everything from online membership renewals and automatic reminders to streamlined maintenance and automatic security updates. Online payments are handled through Affinipay, the integrated payment gateway included with our WildApricot account. Recently Joe Kath and Brian Heeringa worked to expand MWBWG's ability to accept mobile payments by establishing an account with Square, the mobile payment solution recommended by WildApricot. Two mobile card readers were acquired and can now be used at in-person events to accept payments for such things as registration, t-shirt sales, silent auctions fundraisers, etc. Website content updates were fairly minimal in the past year with the main efforts going toward updating board member information and developing the 2023 MWBWG meeting and sponsor/exhibitor event pages. Additional details and information follow below.

### Current expenses:

- Wild Apricot: \$648.00/year - renewed 12/29/2022
  - Current Website Plan: **Group** (250 contacts)
  - Plan pricing is increasing at the next renewal period (12/29/2023). Our current website plan will increase to \$810.00/year. Wild Apricot is increasing prices to “combat inflationary pressures experienced over the past 12-18 months.” More information about the 2023 price increase can be found [HERE](#).
- DreamHost (mwbwg.org domain registration): \$17.99/year - expires on 02/08/2024

**Website Contact and Member Summary (as of 03/22/2023)**

- Contacts: 229\*
- Members: 108
  - 99 Professional (144 in 2021, 117 in 2022)
  - 9 Students (25 in 2021, 17 in 2022)

## Membership change:

- March 1, 2021 (155 members) to March 1, 2022 (134 members) = -13.55% diff.
- March 1, 2022 (134 members) to March 1, 2023 (101 members) = -24.63% diff.

\*In February 2023, the MWBWG contact list exceeded 250 for the first time. To prevent increased charges and key website features from being shutdown contacts were reviewed and a number of them were archived. Archived contacts do not count toward the maximum allowed by our website plan. Contacts and members that were marked as suspended, lapsed or were not active on the website in over 2 years were archived. Since moving to WildApricot 116 total contacts have been archived.

**Membership Breakdown By Status (as of 03/22/2023)**

- 90 Active - Professional (45 with membership expiring 04/01/2023)
- 9 Active - Student (7 with membership expiring 04/01/2023)
- 2 Pending Renewal (Professional)
- 7 Overdue Renewals (membership expired on or before 04/01/2022)

## Accomplishments:

1. Continue to maintain organizational file structure for the website committee on MWBWG Google Drive and Wild Apricot (documents associated with web content).
2. Website Updates
  - a. 2022 MWBWG Hybrid Meeting
    - i. Added meeting photos and notes
  - b. 2023 MWBWG Hybrid Meeting
    - i. Setup 2023 meeting registration/event page, pricing levels, and automatic emails
    - ii. Setup 2023 sponsor registration/event page, pricing levels, and automatic emails
    - iii. Setup MWBWG web store to handle t-shirt sales
    - iv. Coordinated with meeting planning team and Treasurer to provide reports for registered attendees, payments, and outstanding invoices
    - v. Manually processed late meeting registrations, sponsor/vendor registrations, and refunds as needed.
    - vi. Updated meeting event page with sponsor logos, updated program, and other information provided by the meeting planning team as requested.
  - c. Coordinated membership and meeting registration troubleshooting and “customer support”.
  - d. Monitored and responded to numerous inquires that came into the general delivery MWBWG inbox. 30 responses since April 2022.
  - e. Created and coordinated online poll for 2023 Board of Directors election.

- f. Completed minor updates to a number of website pages as needed.
3. Continue to implement the New Member and Membership Renewal Policy (This outlines how the website is set up to handle memberships and provide automatic reminders.)
    - a. Memberships will renew every year on the specified renewal date of April 1<sup>st</sup>.
    - b. New Applications:
      - i. New members will be charged the full regular price AND extend renewal by one additional period starting 90 days before the specified renewal date.
    - c. Membership Renewals:
      - i. Members are able to process their own renewals and provide on line payment directly through the website and their individual member profile page.
      - ii. Automatic renewal notices will be sent by the website on the following schedule.
        1. Renewal Notice #1: 30 days before renewal date
        2. Renewal Notice #2: 10 days before renewal date
        3. Renewal Notice #3: On renewal date
        4. Grace Period Email Notice: If not renewed within 10 days
        5. Lapsed Email Notice: If not renewed within 30 days, and member status is changed to “lapsed”.
      - iii. If not renewed within 60 days the membership will be archived.
  4. Set-up an account with Square and acquired two new credit card readers to accept mobile payments.

### **FACEBOOK**

Jeremy and Megan are the primary contacts for updates to the Facebook page.

Generally posts are made, at a minimum, monthly. There are periods with lots of posts, like Bat Week, followed by slower periods.

The Facebook page is up to 2,223 followers and 2.1K likes, as of 03/23/2023. Engagement is up 43.4%, Page visits up 41.7%, new likes down 27.2%. Graphical statistics were submitted comparing last year to the previous year: our ranking compared to similar pages, page reach, page visits, and new likes.

### **UPCOMING TASKS**

1. Continue to develop and maintain website and membership database.
2. Continue to monitor and respond to submissions to the general delivery MWBWG inbox, Facebook page, and website.
3. Evaluate the number of contacts versus the number of active members to determine if our current WildApricot plan is adequate for future membership needs. Consider establishing a contact database maintenance strategy to promote an efficient and cost effective website.