

**Minutes of Saint John's Arboretum Advisory Council Meeting  
February 16, 2004  
Natural History Museum, Saint John's University**

**Council Members:**

**Present:** Al Barth, Bob Ellenbecker, John Geissler, David Hartwell, Tom Kroll, Fr. John Kulas, OSB, Kyle Lyndgaard, Scott May, Janette Monear, Linda Mock, Steve Saupe, Larry Schwietz, Tom Wicks and Ron Wienhold

**Absent:** Terri Barreiro, Chuck Wocken, and Fr. Bruce Wollmering, OSB

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m. Fr. John Kulas, OSB opened with prayer.

Tom Kroll introduced Alison Binsfeld, Tom Haeg and Sr. Phyllis Plantenberg, OSB. They are observing the meeting and have been nominated to join the Arboretum Advisory Council.

Tom Kroll announced that John Geissler might be leaving the Arboretum. John will be getting married on May 29th and they may be moving away from this area. John will make a decision by April 1, 2004. The Arboretum staff has started the process of replacing John.

**Committee Reports**

**K-12 Education**

Al Barth reported the partnership between Saint John's Arboretum and Saint Cloud School District #742 has been successful. The partnership is a little more than two years old. During that time teaching kits/trunks have been developed for 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th grade. This summer will be evaluation time. The K-12 Committee will review the existing programs and look at what has happened during the last two years. There will be teacher training for the programs this summer. The Arboretum summer student workers will refurbish the existing kits/trunks.

As part of the partnership, teachers from the school district work with Arboretum staff to develop the curriculum for the programs. The school district covers the cost of the teacher's time and the Arboretum covers the cost of materials and printing. The school district pays a fee to the Arboretum for the students to do on-site activities. In return, the Arboretum applies for grants to cover the cost of busing students to the Arboretum.

The committee is exploring the possibility of expanding the program to secondary level science classes. The secondary teachers are more specialized in teaching science and would need less Arboretum Staff time. They probably would do teacher lead/self tours.

The cost to bus students to the Arboretum may be increasing. If there were an increase, it would impact the amount of grants the Arboretum applies for.

\*The committee will check on the increase in busing costs.

There was discussion about finding tour leaders. Retired teachers could be a good resource.

• The K-12 Education Committee will draw up a list of teachers retired from the St. Cloud School District.

Inclement weather can pose a problem when student and other group tours are scheduled. How do we provide for tours during inclement weather? Currently, the Arboretum does not have a good space to accommodate this situation. John presented a drawing of an idea to expand the existing greenhouse. The addition would include four rooms about 30' x 20' with a connecting large group room. It would be nice to have a place for specimens when tours can't be outdoors.

This prompted more discussion and questions. What about expanding the outdoor activities to year around? Is it possible to extend the fall season into November? How can the Arboretum serve more children year around? What does the Arboretum want to accomplish with every visit here? We should do more strategic thinking and planning about this.

**CSB/SJU Education**

Tom Kroll and Larry Schwietz met with the Environmental Studies teaching team. The teaching

team includes thirteen professors from various CSB/SJU Departments. It was the first time this group of people has met. Environmental Studies has been a major for one year. They are looking for field projects, research projects, etc. This is a good opportunity for the Arboretum to support other departments.

The CSB/SJU Elementary Education Department has a service-learning program for students majoring in Elementary Education. The Arboretum is one elective available to students for their service-learning projects. The program is beneficial to both departments.

### **Community Education**

The Community Education programs/events are as follows: the Owl Hoot is Tuesday, March 9th, 2004, the Maple Syrup Festivals are Saturday, March 27th and April 3rd, 2004, the Woodland Wildflower Hike is Tuesday, May 11th, 2004, the Arboretum Plant Sale is Saturday May 15th, 2004, and the Wild Bird Walk is Sunday, May 16th, 2004. A Summer Poetry Workshop has been added. It will be every Monday evening in June and taught by Kyle Lyndgaard. A Landscape Drawing and Painting class may be added to this summer's events. The staff is still working on scheduling the GPS Introduction course.

The Summer Poetry Workshop is a new program. It was decided the fee for the workshop would be \$40.00 for non-members and \$20.00 for members. A contest among the participants was suggested. There could be a monetary award. The winner's work could be published in the Sagatagan Seasons. Larry Schug and Mary Hughes could be invited to judge the participants work. The workshop could be offered through the St. Cloud School District Community Education Program. In addition to the usual advertising avenues we use, the St. Cloud Whitney Senior Center newsletter, the Johnnie Update and other area school district's community education programs are resources.

- Larry Schwietz suggested increasing the event fees by a minimum of \$1.00 as one way to increase income.

The State of Minnesota Master Gardeners is having a convention on campus in June 2004. The Arboretum will have tours available for them.

### **PR/Membership**

The Public Relations and Membership committee met with Ryan Blake, a junior at St. John's University. Ryan is a marketing major and has been working with two other CSB/SJU marketing majors to redo the Arboretum brochure. They recommend the new brochure have full color pictures. The Advisory Council liked the full color picture brochure idea. The Council suggested doing one brochure, which would include both informational material and membership solicitation.

- The PR/Membership Committee will follow-up with Ryan and his group.

The Arboretum membership renewal letters were sent out in November 2003. The current membership is 360. Our goal is to continue increasing membership.

The Arboretum staff was recently trained to use the Banner software system that Institutional Advancement uses to keep track of Arboretum membership and donation information. This improves our access to membership and donor information.

As a follow-up to the last meeting, Kyle presented a new student membership application form. It was suggested to add the option of paying by credit card, asking for their e-mail address and indicating on both sides the student membership donation is \$10.

### **Fundraising**

The Arboretum has printed new note cards. Br. Simon-Hoa Phan, OSB, did the artwork on them. The Arboretum staff will use the cards for special notes to donors, members, volunteers, etc. They will not be for sale.

The Fundraising Committee met with Jim Dwyer, Director of Planned Giving. He suggests the Arboretum create cumulative lifetime donation recognition levels. The cumulative lifetime donors could be recognized at our annual Christmas event. The suggested levels are: \$1,000, \$5,000, \$10,000, \$25,000, and \$50,000. Each category should be named. The current lifetime donations to the Arboretum are: 42 people have donated \$1,000 - \$5,000; 7 people have donated \$5,000 - \$10,000; 4 people have donated \$10,000 - \$25,000; 0 people have donated

\$25,000 - \$50,000; 2 people have donated \$50,000 - \$100,000.

**MOTION:** Scott May made a motion that the Arboretum implements five levels of cumulative lifetime donations. The levels are \$1,000, \$5,000, \$10,000, \$25,000, and \$50,000. Larry Schwietz seconded. The motion passed. Kyle Lyndgaard will put together names for the five levels.

A suggestion was made to establish a Fr. Paul Schwietz Legacy Fund. This fund could be designated for estate planning donations.

The Advisory Council decided to make personal telephone calls to the donors and follow up with a written thank you rather than giving a donor a recognition gift.

- Tom Kroll will organize the thank you calls.

A recommendation was made to change the Arboretum membership renewal letters include to the date the donor first became a member and list the amount they contributed the previous year. Then ask them to increase their donation.

Tom suggested the Advisory Council consider establishing a Land Legacy Fund. The purpose of the fund would be to have monies available should a neighboring property be listed for sale.

### Lands

Tom Kroll is pursuing a new bridge to be built over Stumpf Lake. The ROTC department has an annual contest to design bridges. He asked them to include a bridge for Stumpf Lake in the contest.

Tom Kroll continues to meet with neighbors.

When Saint John's purchased the Philippi farm they agreed to let Philippi's have farming rights through December 2006. After December 2006 the land will be part of the Arboretum. This would be a good time to begin strategizing how to use that land within the framework of the Arboretum Strategic Plan.

The Avon Hills Initiative will be meeting on February 21, 2004 at Saint. John's. That group is formulating ideas about how they would like the area to look 100 years from now.

### Program Administration and Volunteers

The committee reviewed the job position description for John Geissler's replacement. The committee reported to the Advisory Council the top seven qualifications they think are important to the position. The qualifications are ranked in order. The #1 most important - ENTHUSIASTIC. #2. Communicate educational opportunities and initiates environmental use by area K-12 classes. #3. Recruit, train and supervise at least 11 student workers and volunteers for environmental tours. #4. Provide opportunities for the College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University to witness the conservation, sustainable forestry and wildlife protection illustrated by the Saint John's Arboretum. #5. Teach or arrange for teachers of 15 or more Community Education events annually. #6. Promote the Arboretum through tours, speaking engagements and community outreach. #7. Promote land stewardship values and assist in land stewardship activities including restorations and prescribed burning. The Advisory Council discussed additional qualifications for this position. Other suggests were: the person needs to be willing to learn new things, work hard at teaching children, have a Bachelor's Degree and a minimum of two years teaching experience. The person needs to be like John!

The following people are interested in being part of the interviewing process for John's replacement: Ron Weinhold, Steve Saupe, Bob Ellenbecker, Alison Binsfeld. The Arboretum staff will participate in the interviewing process.

Scott May made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Larry Schwietz seconded. The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,  
Linda Mock

*The next Advisory Council meeting is **Monday, May 10, 2004 at 2:00-5:30 p.m.** in the New*

Science Center, Natural History Museum. Mark your calendars.