

**Minutes of Saint John's Arboretum Advisory Council Meeting
Monday, October 2, 2006
Natural History Museum, Saint John's University**

Council Members

Present: Terri Barreiro, Stephanie O'Keefe, Larry Schwietz, Fr. Bruce Wollmering, O.S.B., Bruce Dickau, Steve Saupe, Michael Swanberg, Alison Binsfeld, Tom Haeg, Scott Daninger

Absent: Mike Brown, Kari Dombrovski, David Hartwell, Bob Russell, Kathryn Sinner, Tom Wicks, Chuck Wocken, Janette Monear

Arboretum Staff Present: Sarah Gainey, Tom Kroll, Melissa Holm, Steve Devereaux

Guests: Mark Schwietz

The meeting was called to order at approximately 2:30 p.m.

Welcome and Introductions

Larry Schwietz opened the meeting with a prayer. Each advisory council member then introduced themselves to the full council. Mark Schwietz, son of Larry Schwietz, also introduced himself. Mark is the designated contact for the L&M Schwietz Endowment, the Arboretum's largest endowment. Tom then introduced Steve Devereaux and Melissa Holm, this year's environmental education fellow and office coordinator fellow respectively.

Review of Annual Report

Melissa provided an overview of the Annual Report for FY 2006. Highlights from the overview included: an increase in prek-8 student participation, community member participation, and CSB/SJU student participation in Arboretum programs. Memberships totaled 434 on June 30, 2006: an approximately 60 percent increase from the previous year. Also, lower grade Red oak timber, which is usually sold, was used as flooring in the new Abbey guesthouse.

Committee Reports

Reports were made by the Fundraising, Community Education, PreK-12 Education, CSB/SJU Education, and Lands committees.

Fundraising Committee

Institutional Advancement Updates

John Taylor from Institutional Advancement provided a brief update on the state of campus affairs. Nation-wide celebrations in honor of the Abbey's 150th birthday have been well attended. Fall semester enrollment at Saint John's University is at 1886 students and at 2027 for the College of Saint Benedict, making the combined schools the largest undergraduate, liberal arts college in the country. Tuition increased this year to

\$24,448. John also mentioned an Arboretum endowment from an unnamed source which is currently being discussed.

Grants

Sarah announced that the Arboretum did not receive the Department of Natural Resources grant which would have provided for busing during the 2007-2008 school year. Mark Schwietz suggested asking why the grant was turned down in order to present a stronger case the next year. Sarah also shared that the Gannett and Xcel Foundations funding did get approved. Fr. Bruce volunteered to contact Br. Richard Oliver, O.S.B, the Abbey grant seeker, to ask that he refer us to any pertinent grant sources he might come across.

Plans for the Silent Auction at Membership Appreciation Open House

Questions were raised over the number of silent auction items to be requested for the upcoming open house in response to lower-than-suggested-retail-cost final prices for the majority of last year's items. It was collectively agreed upon that the purpose of the open house was to bring people with like-interests together and in that spirit, making a profit would not be a major concern. In addition to the silent auction, it was also determined that a raffle would be offered at the 2006 open house.

Community Education

Woodlands as Resources Conference

Sarah felt that the conference went well. The conference consisted of tours, a keynote speech and dinner on Friday and break-out sessions on Saturday. A total of 140 to 150 people attended between the two days.

Homecoming and Collegeville Colors

Sarah and Tom reported leading a chapel walk the morning of homecoming and manning a raffle booth stationed in Sexton Commons during the football game. The Arboretum's participation resulted in seven new memberships. Sarah and Tom also felt that Collegeville Colors went well. Seven-hundred people registered for the event and an estimated 200 to 300 people participated without registering. Bouja and cobbler servers estimate that they served over 400 people over the course of the day. Sarah thought that this year's focus on increasing the number of trail activities contributed to the heightened success of the event.

PreK-12 Education

ISD 742 (St. Cloud) Update

Sarah announced that ISD 742 had set aside funding for Arboretum visits for the current school year. She expressed concern over future funding by the school district and asked for ideas on alternative plans. Alison suggested expanding the preK-12 education plan currently extended to ISD 742 to other school districts, but pointed out

that this would require expanded. She also recommended expanding the program to other parts of the campus as a long term goal. Fr. Bruce brought up the possibility of splitting up funding between multiple ISD's. The council showed general support for approaching the college's admissions programs and increasing the Arboretum's involvement on campus tours.

CSB/SJU Education

Increased Visibility and Outreach

Steve Devereaux presented a brief overview of his efforts at increasing the involvement of on-campus students in Arboretum programming. The council showed good support for Steve's Adopt An Acre program, which would allow individuals and groups of students to 'adopt' a section of the Arboretum to focus their stewardship efforts upon. Allison suggested expanding the Timberdash run to the surrounding community as well as possibly moving it to coincide more closely with homecoming activities. It was also suggested that a participant cap would allow for easier and more cost effective preparations to be made as well as being easier on the trails. The price for the run could also be set at the appropriate membership fee, allowing participants to get a membership, activity, etc. for one price. Steve outlined his plans to partner with the campus' education departments to allow student teachers to get credit for assisting in Arboretum educational programming.

Student Senate Representatives

Michael Swanberg, representative for Saint John's Senate, expressed the Senate's support for the Arboretum and offered his assistance. Michael suggested looking into registering some of the Arboretum's events as Fine Arts Experience (FAE) events, a program requiring all students to attend a certain number of fine arts events within their first year of study.

Lands

Chapel Trail and Chapel renovation update

Discussion occurred on the direction of the proposed Stella Maris chapel renovation. The Council is in keeping with the Abbey's recent guidelines to preserve the current exterior while improving the interior and fixing nay problems.

Environmental education/Ski building

The council showed mixed support for moving the stone house in Flynnntown to Cichy Pond for use as an environmental education base and ski building. Concern was expressed over the cost and feasibility of both moving and using the building and the counter-proposal was made to build a new, environmentally friendly facility for the same purpose. The merits of both ideas were recognized by the council and discussion of the topic will continue at the next meeting.

Timber bridge

Many council members expressed concerns over the merits of building a covered bridge. While a covered bridge may provide cover from storms and hot sun, it could also detract attention away from the Chapel or generally cost more than it's worth. The council concluded that it would generally support an uncovered, as opposed to covered, bridge on the grounds of keeping the path simple and a lack of need.

Land navigation (orienteering) course

Tom reported that lettered granite markers have been placed throughout the Arboretum's oak savanna. And SJU alumni did the engraving at half price.

PR/Membership

Mark Schwietz suggested discussing at the next meeting a plan for after the 500 member goal has been reached.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 5:30p.m.

Submitted by,

Melissa Holm

The next Advisory Council Meeting is *Friday, December 1, 2006* in the New Science Center, Natural History Museum