

Saint John's Arboretum Advisory Council Meeting
Friday, December 7, 2007
Natural History Museum, Saint John's Abbey and University

- 8:30 Morning set up for open house (Any help is welcome.)
- 10:00 Full Council Meeting (Tom)
Welcome & Introductions- We continue our 10th Anniversary this year!

CSB/SJU Reps (Sarah)
Full time Office Manager Position (Tom)
- 10:30 Update to Strategic Plan (Larry S.)
Operational plan funding ideas (Bruce D.)
- 11:00 New grants received (Tom)
- 11:30 - 12:30 Lunch (Meet at the Reef or at our offices)
- 12:45 Council Meeting Resumes

Educational program update (Sarah and Cassie and Alison)
- 1:15 Land issues (Tom)
Bridges (Tom)
Syrup House
Invasive species control position
Avon Hills position
Eagle Camera??

Newsletter idea (adding new member names?) Rachel
- 1:45 Open House Party Review and Assignments (Sarah)
Set the dates for our 2008 council meetings -Bring your calendars.
- 2:00 Meeting closes and afternoon set up for open house begins.
- 4:00 Snacks for workers (Seems many of us never actually eat at the party.)
- 5:00 Everyone in place for the party.

Committee Updates – for December 7, 2007

PreK-12 Education

- The Arboretum hosted the Project Wet, Wild, Aquatic Wild and Leaning Tree workshop for interested parties over four Tuesdays of 3 hour sessions. There were 15 participants who attended this workshop. The presenters included Sarah Gainey, Alison Binsfeld and Kari Dombrovski.
- Our annual two day teacher training took place in late August. The first day was a session entitled 'Incorporating Environmental Education into Education Everyday' and the second day was Orienteering. Thanks to ISD 742 who allowed teachers to put their training hours on their time cards.
- Through a partnership with Lincoln Elementary, we are bringing their students out to the Arboretum three times this year (instead of their usual one). The fall class will be their grade specific session, they will chose either a winter class or maple syruping class, then during the spring they will do some service learning and help us to plant plants in different parts of the Arboretum.

CSB/SJU Education

- The Arboretum student naturalist's held a bonfire on Watab in October. In addition to the fire there was a small scale drumming circle made up of 15 drums. This event had 35 CSB/SJU students who attended to enjoy the drumming, the company of fellow students and the fire.
- For CSB/SJU's family weekend, one of our Arboretum student naturalists led a guided trail tour. Family weekend took place on the 27th to the 28th of October.
- Outdoor week took place this year during the week of November 11th to the 17th. The Arboretum put on our annual polar bear plunge on Lake Sagatagan. There were 29 participants who took the plunge into the cold water then warmed up by drinking hot chocolate and standing by the bonfire on the beach! There was also a prescribed burn to aid in the removal of buckthorn during outdoor week as well.

Community Education

- The Arboretum is currently preparing and creating material for a winter library program. The program will be available from January 8th until March 8th, 2008 and will focus on Minnesota's animal tracks. The program will be geared toward children 3-12 years of age and there will be a variety of activities, stories and crafts for the children to engage in.
- Cassie is preparing a presentation for the Science Rocks Conference which will be taking place January 8th, 2008. She will be presenting the Minnesota's Amazing Animals program to 5th and 6th graders from surrounding area schools. The conference will be taking place at St. Cloud State University.
- See website for listing of other upcoming events. <http://www.csbsju.edu/arboretum>

Public Relations and Membership Benefits

- We received over 100 entries for our first photo contest and selected winners in eight categories. Judging on "Best in Show" will occur at the Open House. We hope to make the photo contest an annual event, and Saint John's Magazine is interested in publishing winning photos in an upcoming issue.

- We are considering publishing the names of new members in the newsletter.
- We have 448 member families to date.

Fundraising

- The Arboretum received confirmation of 3 grants since the last meeting.
 - \$337,431 from the Legislative Citizens Commission on Minnesota Resources Trust Fund. This funding will be over 3 years beginning July 1, 2008 and is targeted to protecting the Avon Hills.
 - \$47,980 will go to Community Outreach and Education. This includes a part-time employee for the Arboretum (Bill Fahrney) and the sponsoring of 2 major conferences.
 - \$256,551 will go to Conservation Easements in the Avon Hills.
 - \$32,900 will go to a consultant and conference to review local land ordinances.
 - \$3,600 from Supervalu Foundation targeted to working with Boys and Girls Clubs in summer day camps at the Arboretum
 - \$10,000 from the Gordon and Margaret Bailey Foundation for bussing students

Lands

- The renovations of the Stella Maris chapel are nearly complete. We also did some significant work on the Chapel trail near the Chapel by reconstructing the eroded grade and adding truckloads of crushed granite.
- Bill Mock and Steve Saupe led the start of the upgrades to the Syrup Shack. The building has new concrete floors and the floor for the addition is poured. The construction of the addition will occur next spring.
- The floating boardwalk repairs will run into the \$40,000 range using pontoons. We have researched pontoons and have bought one pontoon (\$400) for testing in the ice this winter.
- Completed prescribed burns for Buckthorn control and in the Oak Savanna. Have at least 2 burns scheduled for spring.
- A pair of eagles built a significant nest in the white pines near the chapel. No nesting this year. Would be nice to install a camera.
- Contacts are proceeding in an orderly manner with neighbors.

Program Administration and Volunteer Management

- The Arboretum and Environmental Studies program have requested to establish a permanent office manager position to be shared by both Departments and funded by Academic Affairs. The Arb agreed to allow the use of the \$20,000 in that budget for our Office Fellow to go towards the position. It looks hopeful.
- If this happens, we would still hope to have 2 Fellows, but both would be in Environmental Ed. One funded as now from Academic Affairs, the other funded from the grants we have received.
- We have hired a person (Bill Fahrney) to expand work on the Avon Hills jobs (freeing up Tom) using the grant from the Initiative foundation. Provisional position - no benefits. \$6,000- 10,000 for 1 year including expenses.
- We have hired an expert in invasive species (Jeff Evander) to do Buckthorn control through the winter using Garlon 4 stem applications. Provisional position - no benefits \$1,500 from our own funding.