

## Saint John's Arboretum Advisory Council Meeting

Friday, December 5, 2008

Abbey Guesthouse Conference Room, Saint John's Abbey and University

- 8:30 am Morning set up for Open House (any help is welcome, meet at office)
- 10:00 am Committee Meetings at Abbey Guesthouse Conference Room  
Attendees will self select to participate in one (or more) of three working groups:
- Lands:**
    - Trail work needed:
      - Chapel trail trailhead - design being discussed
      - Chapel trail bridge - complete replacement needed
      - Floating boardwalk - 5 more floats
      - New hike /bike trail from campus south to County 51
    - Conservation easements and potential purchases on nearby land.
    - The City of St. Joseph comprehensive planning process.
  - Newsletter/Communications:** Discuss ideas for the future of the *Sagatanan Seasons* newsletter, as well as updates to member communications, advertising and member benefits. What do we do well? What can we do better?
  - Education:** Continue discussions on how to increase the quality of the educational experience at the Arboretum. Examine the long and short term goals generated at the September Education Committee meeting and determine priority. See other attachments for previous Education Committee meeting minutes.
- 11:30 am Lunch at Abbey Guesthouse
- 12:30 pm Full Council Meeting at Abbey Guesthouse Conference Room  
Reports from morning committee working groups (Tom, Sarah, Jenny)
- 1:00 pm Election of Advisory Council Chair (Father Bruce Wollmering)
- 1:30 pm Discussion of what is next for the council (Council Chairperson)
- 2:00 pm Meeting Adjourned
- 2:15 pm Afternoon set up for Open House (meet at the Alumni Lounge, 170 Quad)

# Committee Updates – for October 6, 2008

## PreK-12 Education

- With the addition of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Environmental Education Fellowship position for this school year, we were able to serve more students this fall, bringing over 2500 students out for environmental education classes.
- A number of new schools came for their first time to the Arboretum this fall, with word of mouth advertising from other teachers who are already participating being the most common way they heard about our program.
- New drafts of the Minnesota Academic Science Standards are currently being evaluated by our education staff and we are anticipating how these changes will impact our education program.

## CSB/SJU Education

- The Arboretum has proposed a series of one-credit classes entitled “hands-on-the-land.” See additional attachment for description and course list.
- *A GreenPrint for Minnesota: State plan for environmental education, third edition* was recently published by the MN Pollution Control Agency and CSB/SJU was given as an example of implementing EE assessment tools due to its participation in the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) pilot phase of rating campus sustainability. See [www.seek.state.mn.us/eemn\\_d.cfm](http://www.seek.state.mn.us/eemn_d.cfm) for a full version of the report.
- The Arboretum collaborated with the Outdoor Leadership Center and the Peer Resource Program on Outdoor Week 2008. Events on campus included an evening lecture on the natural history of lichens, free pancakes with Saint John’s maple syrup served at a SJU bus stop one morning, BAMPF film festival, and a medallion hunt. The annual Polar Bear Plunge was postponed until the spring due to ice conditions on Lake Sagatagan.

## Community Education

- Using the Avon Hills LCCMR grant, we put on a 1.5 day course on “Conservation Design” for the city of St. Joseph. The conference also included a review of the draft city comprehensive plan. 70 attended and the conference was very well received.
- The first several topics in the monthly MN Natural History Lecture series have been popular, with an average attendance of about 25-30 people attending each lecture. The series continues through May. Topics have/will include MN geology, wild edibles, lichens, dragonflies, paper wasps, bird migration and more.
- Dates are already set for the 2009 Maple Syrup Festivals-Saturday, March 28<sup>th</sup> and April 4<sup>th</sup>.
- Registration forms for the “Living in the Avon Hills” conference scheduled for Saturday, January 24 will be mailed in early January. Early registration will be available on the web site. New to this year’s Avon Hills conference are additional sessions on the arts (i.e. pottery demonstrations, photography, etc.) as well as sessions on nature and art designed for kids. The hope is to make it a family event with topics to fit a greater variety of interests.
- See website for listing of other upcoming events.  
<http://www.csbsju.edu/arboretum>

### **Public Relations and Membership Benefits**

- We currently have over 200 members, volunteers and guests on the RSVP list for the Open House on December 5.
- A group of students from the Strategic Communication Campaign class at CSB/SJU has been working on promoting the Arboretum to the students on campus in new and creative ways. Some of their efforts included hosting a bingo event (popular on campus) with prizes from the Arboretum, serving real Saint John's maple syrup at the dining services on both campuses for one day, creating new promotional materials, and developing the tag line 'It's your backyard, so get out and play!'

### **Fundraising**

- We are anticipating the need to secure long-term funding for our second EE Fellowship. Part of our current funding (a grant from the Edison Foundation) expires at the end of June 2009.
- We received \$3,000 from Walmart for buses for students.

### **Lands**

- We finished 2 prescribed burns totaling 22 acres.
- European buckthorn needs to be addressed more aggressively.
- Bud capping of 2000 conifers was completed in Oct.
- Deer hunt resulted in the harvest of 21 deer from 29 hunters.
- Trail work needed:
  - Chapel trail trailhead - design being discussed
  - Chapel trail bridge - complete replacement needed
  - Floating boardwalk - 5 more floats
  - New hike /bike trail from campus south to County 51
- The change in SJU presidents and the stock market uncertainty caused a cessation of talks with neighbors on land purchases for an indefinite time.
- The City of St. Joseph comprehensive planning process appear inevitably driven towards a very old-fashioned and "non-green" approach to new developments. St. John's has weighed in with other parties, but without much likely effect.

### **Program Administration and Volunteer Management**

- No updates