

Saint John's Arboretum Advisory Council Meeting  
Friday, November 30, 2012  
Saint John's Abbey Guesthouse (*tentative location*)

**Agenda**

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|--------------------------------|---|
| <b>11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.</b> | Lunch   |
| <b>12:30 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.</b>  | Brief committee/ Arboretum updates<br>- New ideas/discussion regarding organization name<br>- Other business<br>Visit Stickworks<br>Tour solar farm<br>Tour OLC/PRP space |
| <b>2:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.</b>   | Set-up for Open House celebration. Thanks ahead of time to whoever is available to help!  |
| <b>5:30 p.m. - 7:45 p.m.</b>   | Annual Open House Celebration   |

**Mark your calendars for the 2013 Council Meetings:**

**Monday, February 11:** Full Council meeting – program name change, FY2014 planning

**Please hold these tentative dates for meetings:**

**Friday, June 7:** FY2013 year-end evaluation

**Monday, October 7:** Long-range planning, 2-3 years out

**Friday, December 6:** Short meeting, committee updates, unfinished business, set up for Open House celebration

# Committee Updates – for November 30, 2012

## PreK-12 Education

- A record number of students attended field trips at the Arboretum this fall! Final numbers are still being tabulated but an early count projects over 3000 student visits.
- The Arboretum hosted the 4<sup>th</sup> annual Project Earth conference on Thursday, October 4<sup>th</sup> for over 200 area 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders. This daylong conference is designed to give students hands-on experiences outdoors in a variety of areas, such as invasive earthworms, birding, nature journaling, and voyageur canoeing. Cold weather after a long stretch of warm days caught some of the students off guard, but overall the experience was well reviewed. The Arboretum partners with Resource Training and Solutions and Sauk River Watershed District on this event.
- The Stickworks sculpture out by the prairie kiosk captured the imagination of visiting students and adults alike. A brief explanation and a tour of the sculpture was incorporated into every field trip and we enjoyed hearing comments such as, 'This is my dream house!' and 'Does the Lorax (3 little pigs, Wicked Witch, Sarah, etc...) live here?'

## CSB/SJU Education

- The Environmental Education Pedagogy class taught at CSB/SJU by Karen Bengtson helped to develop in school lessons about water for the new 4<sup>th</sup> grade Water trunk being developed this school year for the 8 St Cloud School District elementary schools.
- This year's orientation hike was a great success with all 1000 incoming students hiking through the Arboretum on the last day of orientation. Thanks to those who helped lead hikes!
- Collegebound took 70 students to the north shore for our pre-orientation wilderness trips.
- PRP hosted and "swayed pines" reprise with over 500 students attending throughout the night
- 28 FYS Classes have participated in Arboretum programs this semester. Up from 15 last year. Of these 15 were challenge courses, 13 were Hikes/talks/tours.
- We participated in "cultural orientation" for 75 foreign exchange students; discussing what the Arboretum is and opportunities available through Arboretum, PRP, and OLC programs
- 28 Students participated in 2 PRP "Long-weekend" trips. One went to the Apostle Islands for sea Kayaking and had a majority of international students participating. A second trip went to Lake superior hiking trail for backpacking and rock climbing.
- Lead solar tour for family weekend with over 85 students and their families participating.
- Starwatch presentation with Mike Lynch was a fun evening despite no actual stars in the sky...inspiring for another night out under the stars
- PRP is planning a winter break trip to California...\$550 for 12 days; sorry it is for students only!
- PRP's Apploozza event keeps growing with over 100 students participating in a day at Collegetown orchards. The day included transportation, group challenges, and Dutch Oven apple cobbler!
- PRP has facilitated ~575 people through the challenge course this semester.
- OLC held the Adventure Challenge, which included a wall climb, 2 orienteering courses to find canoe paddles and life vests, then portaging a canoe, canoeing across lake Sag, setting up a camp and hanging a bear bag, camp cooking and slackline

challenge. Finally given a match they had to bring on their canoe back across the lake to light a camp stove and run to the finish! 65 People participated.

- Outdoor week this year includes the ever popular Polar Bear Plunge, Run/Bike /Blade to class, medallion hunt, bike maintenance class, climbing competitions, the Banff film festival, a led hike to the chapel and an afternoon of John Ball and lawn games.

### **Community Education**

- Colledgeville Colors had perfect weather yet again! 435 participants, with many more estimated to have “stumbled” in.
- This year we again worked with Anna Marie’s Alliance and offered a few days of canoeing and challenge courses for both their residents and staff.
- We are gearing up for another great Avon Hill Conference February 2nd. We’ve confirmed this year’s keynote speaker: Stan Tekiela.

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

- Our membership numbers are on track with previous years’ numbers. We’ve had 74 renewals, 6 new members, and 2 student members join so far this year.
- Our total membership giving total is also on par with last year at \$7375 (compared to \$7410).
- The membership committee met and proposed several new ways to improve our message about member benefits – mainly appealing to our members’ sense of community and highlighting the intrinsic value of a membership.
- We plan to unveil a “Sustaining Membership” campaign as an end-of-year membership push. Watch for more information in upcoming renewal notices, newsletters, emails, and on the website. We’re using the \$5000 gift from CenterPoint Energy as a matching incentive to get people to sign up for either new or sustaining memberships in December.
- We already have more than 120 RSVP’s to the Open House, so it should be a great party as usual!

### **Fundraising**

- We welcome Marco Restani to the Arboretum staff as a part-time grant-writer. He’ll be working with us until the end of June 2013 researching, writing and (hopefully) receiving grants to support our programs.
- We’ve confirmed \$7000 in sponsorships for the Avon Hills conference on February 2, 2013. \$5000 from MasterMark Plastics, \$1000 from Blattner Energy, and \$1000 from St. Cloud Subaru.

### **Lands**

- No new updates.

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

- In an effort to hire more student staff with class schedules that allow them to help with field trips, we advertised for a Temporary Student Naturalist Aide position this fall. This position acts as an assistant to the field trip lead instructor, helping with class management, keeping students safe, and assisting with activities. The position was for limited hours just through our busy field trip season. We hired 5 temporary aides this fall and they were a great addition to our staff! We plan on posting the same position for the spring.

- Two sections of 'Introduction to Environmental Studies' classes participated in at least 8 hours of service-learning (per person!) as part of their class. Groups of students worked on buckthorn removal and hosting activity tables at Collegeville Colors.