

SOCIETY OF GRASSLANDS NATURALISTS
Minutes of General Meeting, October 22, 2019
Police Point Park..

1. Call to Order 7:01 pm. with Hugh Armstrong presiding and Betty Rainville, Secretary.
2. Review of General Minutes from September 24, 2019.
It was noted that the spelling of Joan and Mark Wierbza, in the September 24th General Minutes, should be corrected to "Wierzba" in Item 8.d and Item 10.h.
Minutes were then Adopted. **CARRIED**
3. Exciting Sightings:
 - Ian Wallis reported seeing a Rough-legged Hawk.
 - Phil reported that Barry Anderson spotted a Varied Thrush in his back-yard.
 - Rob Gardner reported 14 Whistling Swans overhead while walking on the Mitchells' property.
 - Rob also reminded members of the "sabre-toothed cat" metacarpal fossil (see Medicine Hat News October 5, 2019), technically known as a *Smilodon fatalis*, found on GN members Neil and Rochelle Mitchells' land in a dig from the 1960s. This fossil was only identified this year, by scientists looking through finds stored at the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto.
 - Wendy Blackwell saw Sandhill Cranes and geese recently, as well as spotting a total of 65 Whooping Cranes North East of Saskatoon.
4. Treasure's Report and Membership: Eileen reported a Casino balance, on October 22, standing at \$14,651.21. Eileen reported a balance in the Chequing Account, as of October 22, of \$4226.43, and a balance of \$16,495.44 in the GN "Club" Savings Account, as of October 22, for a total of \$20,721.87.
There are 85 memberships now.
5. Correspondence: Eileen said a Sagebrush Chronicle was sent to the September General Meeting speakers, Joan and Mark Wierzba. GN received a thank you letter from the Wierzbas, with very positive comments about our Society.
6. Priority Business:
 - a. **Volunteers Needed for GN Monthly Meeting Set-Up:** Thank you to Hugh, Ian and Angela, and Milt and Elaine for setting up the Nature Centre before General Meetings. Elaine Spitzer explained that Corlaine measures out coffee earlier in the day for monthly meeting volunteers to plug in.
The bill, for cookies purchased by these volunteers, goes to the treasurer, Eileen.
Monthly meeting volunteers start chair set-up, and arriving members assist.
 - b. **Positions Open on the MHIP/Operations Committee:** Hugh reported there is at least one position open on this committee since Anne Bernhardt stepped down.
Thank you again to Anne for her dedication to this committee.
Hugh noted that the committee meets every 4 months for approximately 2 hours. Please let Hugh or Corlaine know if you are interested in joining this group.
 - c. **Budgets Due:** Committee Chairs please have their budgets to Paul Thibault by November 15th.
 - d. **SEAWA Educational Forum:** Martha showed posters for the upcoming Forum, which runs from 1 to 4 pm, November 1, at St. Barnabas Church. Alberta speakers will present on riparian restoration in southeast Alberta, water quality in the SEAWA watershed, and riparian habitat for native bees.
Martha noted that SEAWA is uncertain about further funding at this time.
7. Interpretive Program Report: Corlaine reported that mostly volunteers and close associates attended the very snowy Alberta Culture Days at the Fall Festival in Police Point Park September 29th. The Medicine Hat News published a large front page photograph the next day, showing Hugh and 2 other participants roasting marshmallows during the first snowfall of the season.
The new student, Ian, is working at Police Point Park Corlaine reported. He recently completed a survey of the invasive woody shrub, Buckthorn.
Saturday, October 19th is the Beaver Walk at 5:45 pm.
November will see a popular story from a previous winter for the Story Walk on a trail at Police Point Park.
Sunday, December 1st is the Annual Christmas Hayride sponsored by the Lions Club. Corlaine asked a few members to sign up as volunteers from 1-4 pm for the craft table. Parks Department have pruned the trail in Police Point Park.
Parking signs will be put out for the public.
Sunday December 15th is the Annual Christmas Bird Count, Feeder Count and Potluck Supper. (Marty suggested that members see him after tonight's program, or he will get in touch in November).

John Slater noted that a report from the Interpretive Program Operations Committee meeting will be published in the Chronicle.

8. Committee Reports:

- a. **Issues Committee:** Martha noted that the GN Issues report was submitted in the October Chronicle. (p. 9 & 10).
Martha spoke briefly on 4 topics at tonight's General Meeting
 - Water Art Show-This is still on throughout October, Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11:30 am to 1:30 pm. It can be viewed from the street side
 - Invasive Species Issue-Gerry Ehlert is still active on this. Martha reported that SEAWA and the Invasive Species group are endeavoring to meet.(Martha circulated a SEAWA information sheet on Russian Olives at the meeting)
 - Species at Risk- Martha passed around an information sheet on this topic.
 - Climate Conversations at Café Verve continue every Friday at 4 pm. Contact Martha Munz Gue.Martha stressed that if GN members have an issue, this committee is available for them.
- b. **MHIP/Operations Committee:** Corlaine advised members to see the report in the Chronicle.
- c. **Field Trips and Events:**
 - John Slater reported that (weather permitting); a walk is planned for next Tuesday, October 29, to Saratoga Park. Participants will meet at the bottom of Scholten Hill, where they will be able to see results of SEAWA plantings.
See Facebook for information on Neighbourhood Walks posted by Tina Regehr.
- d. **Indoor Program Speakers:** Linda Fisher reported that Meca Klem, Biologist, will be giving an update tonight on Greater Sage-grouse in Alberta Recovery Actions.
The November 26 speaker will be Alyssa Friesen, Ecologist, with a presentation on Calgary Zoo's Conservation Work. There will be a potluck dinner after the Annual Christmas Bird Count on December 15, in lieu of a General Meeting and speaker.
Brent Smith, Instructor at Medicine Hat College, will be speaking at the January GM on The Changing Face of Agroecology.
- e. **Fund Raising Committee:** No report.
- f. **Birding Trails:** Dee Armstrong reported that the residents of Sunnyview are enjoying the nature themed projects. There are pine cones with peanut butter and seeds hanging in the courtyard for the birds.
Dee commented on the two amazing volunteers who assist with Birding Trails at Sunnyview.
- g. **Communications Committee:** Angela Turner said there is nothing to report at this time.
- h. **Nature Alberta:** Ian and Angela reported they were part of the teleconference on October 9th, 7:30 to 9:30 pm. This N.A. meeting was held to discuss Strategic Planning and By-Law revision.
Angela noted she would submit a review of this in the November Chronicle.

9. New Business

10. Other Business:

- a. **GN Display Table at MHPL November 5th:** Thanks to Tina Regehr and Martha Maudsley for supervising the table at the Public Library.
Hugh noted the display is at his garage.
- b. **A/V training for GM presentations:** Hugh reported the A/V system is completely wireless now.
If anyone has questions about operating the system, please check with Milt, Ian, Angela, Linda, Hugh or a few other members who have had training.
- c. **Opening on UERAB-(City Advisory Board):** Hugh reported that Dave McKenzie steps down from his position on this board in December. Hugh thanked Dave for his participation.
Hugh noted there is one Wednesday dinner meeting each month.
- d. **Memorial Bench Dedication for Bev Slater:** Held Tuesday, October 15 at Marlborough Coulee.
John thanked members and friends for attending the dedication. Five people continued on the scheduled walk after the dedication. John also thanked Grasslands Naturalists for donations.
(See Facebook with Tina's post).
- e. **Praxis Science Olympics at MH College:** To be held this Saturday, October 26th from 10 am to 3 pm.
Marty reported that two College students would like information about bird watching.
The Birding Trail Guide will be available at the event for participants to look at.
Marty has emailed some bird watchers, but asks members to see him at the break if they are interested in helping Praxis with this

- f. **Next Board Meeting:** Tuesday November 5 at 1:30 pm at Ian and Angela's house.
- g. **Adjournment:** 7:45 pm. Attendance at GM is 21.
- h. **Refreshment Break**
- i. **Program start** 8:00 pm. Attendance 32. Speaker is Mecah Klem, Priority Species at Risk Biologist, on Recovery Actions for the Greater Sage-grouse.