

Society of Grasslands Naturalists
Minutes of General Meeting- January 26, 2016
Police Point Park

1. Call to Order: 7:03 pm, Dave McKenzie – Chair, Betty Rainville – Secretary
2. Review and Adoption of Minutes of General Meeting November 24, 2015: Motion Carried.
3. Exciting Sightings: Sightings from members: racoon tracks in the Marlborough area, and an actual sighting on a deck in that area on Dec. 9, an owl (possibly a Great Horned Owl) was also heard on a few occasions in the same area. A Northern Saw-Whet Owl was seen in the parking lot of the Nature Centre, and 2 Golden Eagles were seen over a dead deer on the side of Hwy 41 South to Cypress Hills.
4. Treasurer's Report: Eileen reported end of December statements, total GN Club including GIC, Savings and Chequing account equals \$30,410.29. As reported at the previous Board meeting I.P: \$46,703.56 .She noted that Cenovus Energy Inc. has continued to match an individual member donation of \$300.00 yearly for the past 7 or 8 years .Moved that the Treasurer's report be carried. Seconded.
5. Membership: Eileen said 86 members were reported at the time of the January Board meeting.
6. Correspondence: Eileen reported no correspondence was received.
7. Priority Business:
 - a. **Bird Tales Update:** Dee Armstrong said GN will support Masterpiece Retirement as they operate their own program. Thanks to Ian and Angela Turner, and Betty Rainville for volunteering on December 10. Dee said John Acorn will do a presentation there if he comes to Medicine Hat. The Meadow Ridge program will hopefully start in March. They are presently looking at window feeders. Dee noted just these two facilities will be part of the Bird Tales program for now.
 - b. **Weir on Seven Persons Creek** near Marlborough Coulee: Dave has responded to the City about this. The subject is closed.
 - c. **MH Community Foundation Endowment Fund:** Hugh asked if we had received the signed contract from the Foundation. Eileen thought we had. Trish wrote an excellent article in the December Chronicle on how donations may be made now or bequeathed in a Will.
8. Interpretive Program Report: Marty mentioned the Display "Young Artists Inspired by Nature" at the Nature Centre will be up until Jan. 31.

Several events will be happening during the Alberta Winter Games:

 1. **Winter Story Walk:** "The 20 Adventures of Sunny the Bear" by Naisha Bradford opened Sunday, January 24th at Police Point Park and will run to the end of February.
 2. **Alberta Winter Games Cultural Event** will be held Feb. 7 from 12 - 4 pm. This includes a tipi set up, cowboy poetry, bannock making, storytelling by James Marshall, and a Drum Circle and Dancers. Volunteers are needed for this event.
 3. **Kiwanis Family Fun Day** runs from 11am - 4 pm. Volunteers are needed.
 4. **The Easter Event** runs from Good Friday March 25, to Easter Monday. Again, Marty said volunteers are definitely needed for this popular event.
9. Committee Reports:
 - a. **Issues Committee:** 1. John said Marty and Rob will be attending the PCES Conference in Saskatoon from Feb. 16-18. John and Martha will be attending the Alberta Ecotrust gathering Feb. 25-27 in Calgary.

2. John said the invoice for the Baby's Breath project will be submitted to the City soon. Approximately 15,000 plants were removed. At present, there is a 90% germination success rate on seeds being tested at the college. John noted we hope to have the City fund the project next year. Ian Turner suggested a poster on the topic might be taken to one of the conferences mentioned in 9.a. Sean Allan said that he has taken relevant information on this subject to various locations, including Quebec.
- b. **MHIP Operations Committee:** John mentioned this committee met on Jan. 11 and will meet again in April. Louise Sjovold attended as the new bookkeeper. As well, Anne Bernhardt is now a voting member of the Operations Committee. Thank you Anne.
John also said that traffic congestion at Police Point Park public events was discussed at the Jan. 11 meeting. 1,100 people attending an event at the Park in 4 hours results in so many vehicles. Shuttle buses and other options were suggested, and will be discussed again at the April meeting.
- c. **Indoor Program Speakers:** Dave said Shane Leuck cancelled as tonight's speaker due to illness. In his place, Dave will speak at tonight's program on Butterflies, Dragon Flies and Damsel Flies. Thank you Dave. Gary Martin said the speaker for Swift Fox Part 2 may still be in the field since he hasn't been able to contact him. Dave will check to see if Shane Leuck will be able to speak at the February meeting. John Acorn has offered to do a talk at the April 26 meeting.
- d. **Field Trips:** The idea of "exploring our own neighbourhoods" was mentioned as possible future Field Trips. GN members would be encouraged to lead walks in their local areas.
- e. **Fund Raising Committee update:** 1. Three to four more volunteers are needed for the Casino Feb.18 and 19. Please see Gary for scheduling.
2. Hugh sent an application for \$250.00 to the Medicine Hat Co-op Donation Request which is now in place of the previous 1% Co-op program. All funds will go toward the Bird Tales project. Thank you to Anne for helping GN with the Co-op program since its beginning.
- f. **Birding Trails Project update:** Milt Spitzer is away. Waiting for Phil or Milt to return to discuss speaking at a GM about this project. A trail map and article are printed in each Chronicle.
10. New Business:
- a. **Tree Planting Project for Spring 2016:** Dave Genio from City Parks Maintenance is planning to attend the next GN Board meeting to discuss this project.
11. Other Business:
- a. **Pamphlets on Wildflowers:** Martha Munz Gue needs photos of local wildflowers for this project.
- b. **Pamphlets on Butterflies:** Dave reported there is not much on the database in Alberta. He will speak more about this in the presentation tonight.
- c. **Nature Alberta representative:** A person is needed to fill this position. There are meetings four times/year, one or two by teleconference and usually two in Edmonton.
- d. **Annual Christmas Bird Count:** Thank you from Marty to all participants. The conditions were mild this year with a record number of individual birds seen. There was a high number of Canada Geese seen, whereas 2 Grackles observed at a bird feeder were rather unusual. Otherwise, the low 50's for the number of species seen was typical.
- e. **March AGM:** Gary will find a speaker for this event and Anne will see if the Honor Currie room at the Library is available. The College was asking \$40.00 for a group of 60 people, and \$150.00 for a large room.
- f. **Next GN Board Meeting:** Tuesday, Feb. 2. 6:30 pm at Ian and Angela Turner's house.
- g. **Next General meeting and presentation:** Feb. 23 at 7 pm at the Nature Centre.
- h. **Adjournment:** 7:51 pm with 19 people attending.
- i. Refreshment Break
- j. Program 8:00pm with 21 people in attendance. As stated in 9.c, Dave spoke on Butterflies, Dragon Flies and Damsel Flies. Dave will outline his presentation in an upcoming Chronicle. Thank you Dave.