



Roanoke Valley Master Naturalists Quarterly Meeting Minutes
Sunday April 21 2013
Salem Regional Library, 28 Main St, Salem

Attendance: Nancy Fabian, Bill Fabian, Dennis Woodson, Christina Koomen, Beth Hawse, Sharon Vest, Larry Bradfield, Mike Crowder, Pat Taylor, Ann Stinnett, Donna Haley (11)

Call to Order: The general membership meeting was called to order at 3:04 PM by Beth Hawse.

Old Business:

- **Secretary's Report (Bill Fabian):** The minutes for the January 3013 meeting had been forwarded to all members who attended, and corrections made according to comments received. The final minutes were forwarded to all members and posted to the VMS. Sharon made a motion to accept the minutes as distributed; Ann seconded it, and the motion passed unanimously.

- **Treasurer's Report (Ann Stinnett):** Ann reported as follows:

- ✓ Total balance of the checking account as of April 21st, 2013 was \$ 2,316.79.
- ✓ \$10.00 was owed to Nancy Fabian for the Earth Day booth Registration.
- ✓ Ann received \$75.00 from hat sales, and \$6.00 from sales of *Native Plants for Wildlife Habitat and Conservation Landscaping* booklets.
- ✓ The resulting balance was \$2, 387.79.

Sharon motioned to accept the report; Bill seconded the motion and the motion was carried unanimously.

- **Other old business** –

- Sharon Vest had coordinated with Hugh Scruggs about leading the work that needed to be done on the trails at the Icimani Girl Scout camp. In addition to vegetation removal, clearing on the trails, and flower bed maintenance, they needed some actual trail construction done. Hugh had told her that he and his trail building group would be glad to do it, and help mentor any of our members who wanted to help. When he tried to contact George at Icimani to coordinate the work, however, neither he nor Sharon could get hold of him. Beth suggested that Sharon contact a person named Sylvie from the Girl Scout headquarters, and that she would be able to either coordinate the work, or find the right person for us to work with in lieu of George. Beth said she would try to find her contact information and give it to Sharon.

- Nancy reported on the results from the Earth Day booth event that we had on the day before. A total of 81 people came by the booth and talked to us, with 35 people leaving their contact information for us to notify when we had the details worked out for the spring

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basic training class. She also met Dan Crawford, the local head of the Sierra Club, who wanted to see if we would be interested in supporting some of their conservation projects. She has his contact information and will follow up on specifics. We also had copies of the US Fish and Wildlife Service, *Native Plants for Wildlife Habitat and Conservation Landscaping* booklets available at the booth on sale for \$2.00 each, and sold three of them. Bill noted that it was so windy, that the shelter had almost blown away several times during the event, and that it might be prudent to get more weights for the legs. Sharon made a motion to get more weights, Christina seconded it, and it carried unanimously. Bill said he couldn't remember the price for a set of weights but that he would order them.



○ Nancy also reported on the April 13 Poor Mountain Natural Area Preserve trash removal event. We had nine people participate to assist Ryan Klopff in picking up trash that had apparently been discarded from the road, down a steep sloping bank that adjoins the first quarter mile of the trail. The group worked for two hours and filled up a pickup truck with trash which Ryan took to be weighed and then dumped. Ryan also took a picture of the group with the results of their labor (above) which Bill said he would post to VMS and send a copy to Christina for the web site.



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○ Anne Stinnett had completed the action to price out t-shirts and polo shirts with the Master Naturalist logo, and brought a sample t-shirt being done for another Chapter. T-shirts would cost roughly \$7.00 - \$10.00 depending on how many colors we used on the shirt, and that Polos would be roughly \$15.00 - \$20.00 depending on the logo and quality of the shirt. Bill Fabian will canvas the Chapter for interest and preorder numbers in a separate e-mail from the one distributing these minutes.

Subcommittee Reports:

● **Executive Committee Report (Beth Hawse):** Beth reported that the executive committee discussion revolved mostly around a new requirement that was being talked about at the state level for Master Naturalist volunteers to have criminal background checks conducted. It appears likely that the requirement will be levied at some time in the future, but when it will be started is still up in the air until the issue of how they will be paid for is resolved. We discussed various options being considered, including having the volunteers pay for their own. Beth said that for our Chapter we can take care of new members by including the cost of the background check in their basic training course fee. The issue remains, however, how we will pay for a check on current members. Bill suggested that before we pay for checks on all the people listed on our Chapter data base that we check to see which members intend to stay active, and which would like to become inactivated, since there were many on the data base in trainee status who never finished the basic course, and others who were members, but had not actively participated in volunteer service nor Chapter administration for over a year. Donna suggested that Beth check with the executive committee to see if those who have already had recent background checks as a result of employment/association with one of the state agencies, and/or youth activity organizations like Girl Scouts and 4-H, could transfer the results to the Mater Naturalist requirement. Bill also suggested that we update our application forms to indicate that background checks will be required, and given those checks that the policy for local Chapters to conduct reference checks be suspended. Beth told the group she would forward our suggestions, and that the good part of this is that VCE risk management will do the adjudication on the checks to ensure professional assessment of risk involved with allowing someone to volunteer for certain types of service. She was hoping that a set of guidelines would be produced, such that people who wished to volunteer but had negative information on their record might be barred only from certain types of service, e.g. working with youths, or prohibition from serving as Chapter treasurer if they had financial problems.

● **Membership/Marketing Committee Report (Christina Koomen):** Christina reported that the link from the state web site now takes you to our new Chapter web site and said it was looking pretty good now. She stated that if you wanted to look at it, that the web site address is www.rvmasternaturalists.org. If anyone had content they wanted posted, they should send it to Christina. In addition to the picture Bill stated that he would send from the recent service at Poor Mountain, Ann had some pictures from Earth Day that could be sent to her to post on the web site. We discussed posting the pictures, and Beth asked if everyone had checked the block on their



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applications to allow their photos to be posted. Bill said he would send an e-mail to all, and have them notify him if they had any objections.

- **Curriculum Committee Report (Nancy Fabian):** Nancy reported that with the decision to have the class in the spring, that there were, as yet, no actions pending for the committee.

- **Advanced Training/Project committee.** Nancy reported that Fred Walters, who had chaired this committee, had indicated to her that he would no longer be participating. From the previous meeting, we had decided to split the committee into an Advanced Training/Continuing Education Committee, and a separate Projects Committee. Members present were asked if anyone wanted to volunteer to lead either committee, but with the small number of members present, no one volunteered to act as Chair. It was suggested that Laura Beltran who volunteered to work on the Advanced Training/Continuing Education committee might be interested in taking the lead position. Larry asked what the responsibilities of the Project Committee chair were. Nancy explained that the project committee chair led the effort to find new opportunities for service events, and making those opportunities known to the members. Larry said he would work on the committee, but being new didn't feel he should chair it. After discussion, Bill agreed to send out an e-mail to the members asking for volunteers to both chair the committees and work on them.

Ideas for training and projects were then discussed:

- Mike asked about the Bottom Gorge project, and Sharon explained that that was run by the Nature Conservancy. Mike then asked if we might want to adopt a specific place as our Chapter's responsibility, e.g. adopt a highway. After discussion, there was no consensus, since the type of work was mostly cleanup. Beth brought up that we could adopt just an exit ramp off the interstate, to minimize safety issues. Larry said that he would contact VDOT to get some details.

- We discussed supporting the Greenway along the Roanoke River. Christina said she would contact Parks and Recreation to see what opportunities there might be for us such as planting and maintenance.

- Sharon discussed a potential project at the Happy Hollows Garden. Parks and Recreation is looking for support in pruning overgrown azaleas that line the beginning of the walking trails. They said they could pay us if we sent them an invoice, but that is against our charter. Beth did bring up, however, that if we were required to purchase some gardening tools and supplies to perform the work, that we could invoice them for out of pocket expenses. Bill mentioned the requirement to store, maintain and inventory whatever property we got for the Chapter, and such a responsibility would need to be formalized to ensure proper accountability. Sharon said she would talk to Parks and recreation to see what tools and equipment they would supply, and if they did not provide the necessary materials, she and Nancy would make a list of what they thought was needed.

- Beth brought up the 4-H camp coming up at Smith Mountain Lake, and if someone wanted to volunteer as a counselor, she would put them in contact with the appropriate



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representative. The campers will be ages 9-13, and counselors are required to get training ahead of time, so if people are interested, they should notify Beth as soon as possible.

- Beth also mentioned an e-mail sent out by Carina Hughes on volunteers needed at the newly re-opening Science Museum.

- Nancy mentioned that she had talked to Ryan Klopf on whether he had a place to do invasive species removal on May 4th, "Invasive Species Removal Day". Ryan said that the right time to pull garlic mustard was after it bloomed so it could be clearly identified, but before it went to seed. He told her that he would notify us when it was time so we could set up an event.

- Nancy also said she would contact Fred Huber of the US forestry Department, who had set up a garlic mustard pull last year, to see if he needed help, and to ask him to help us set up appropriate event

New Business:

- Beth noted that e-mails had been sent out on the State Conference to be held in September. She noted that it was a good conference to get a lot of advanced training. Bill mentioned that last year's conference had very interesting classes, and that it was a good forum to find out what other Chapters are doing and maybe get some ideas for our own.
- Beth stated that with Alycia Crall taking over, the state steering committee wanted to do a needs analysis for the Mater Naturalist program. She said that it was possible that some of us might be contacted to discuss our opinions, and that Alycia might show up for some of our events and/or meetings.
- Beth brought up the next meeting and that in the past we have had our annual picnic in conjunction with that meeting. She mentioned that we had one at Douthat state park one year in conjunction with the Allegheny Highlands chapter, and at the Fabian's house last year, and did anyone have any ideas for a forum for this coming April. Bill brought up that he had been discussing this off line with several members, and that although he and Nancy would be willing to host it again, that is wasn't the ideal location for most of the members from a travel perspective. He noted that he had reserved the Salem library for the next meeting, and Denny had suggested that following the meeting we hold the picnic at Green Hill Park, about 5 minutes away. The group agreed that that would be a good forum, and Ann volunteered to organize the picnic. She made a motion that the Chapter foot the bill for the fried chicken, and Nancy seconded it. The motion carried unanimously.
- Mike mentioned he had not been getting all the e-mails he was hearing about such as the ones from Dan Cohen. Bill mentioned that the current e-mails for everyone were in VMS, but Dan was probably working from an old e-mail for Mike, because he had changed it sometime



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during the basic training course. Bill said he would contact Dan and advise him to update his list from the VMS, specifically noting Mike Crowley's e-mail.

Proposed Meeting dates for 2013 (third Sunday of listed month):

Generally, the Executive committee meets at 2:30 and general membership meeting is at 3 PM. The large meeting room at the Salem regional library has been reserved for all meetings below. If the annual picnic is held in conjunction with the July meeting, we will need to discuss a location for the picnic at the April meeting.

- **1st Quarter** **20 January 2013**
- **2nd Quarter** **21 April 2013**
- **3rd Quarter** **21 July 2013 followed by annual picnic**
- **4th Quarter** **20 October 2013**

Adjournment of Meeting:

With no further new business, Bill motioned to adjourn the meeting, Sharon seconded the motion, and all members were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 3:55 PM, at which time Donna Haley did an excellent job providing an hour of advanced training/continuing education on hummingbirds.

Minutes recorded and submitted by
Bill Fabian, Secretary
Roanoke Valley Master Naturalists