

Friends of Arlington's Great Meadows
Steering Committee
May 22, 2007
Approved 6/26/07

Present: David White, Mike Tabaczynski, John Bartenstein, Sandra Ruggiero, Don Miller; Guest: Jim Barry

1. Our guest, Jim Barry, has lived near Arlington's Great Meadows (AGM) since 1931 when he was ten years old. He described some of his recollections over the years, including playing there as a child, and the fact that the area near Lowell Street was wilderness back then. About once a year there used to be a big fire in AGM which could be seen from miles away. Jim ran for Lexington town meeting in the early 1970's when there was a proposal to create a golf course in AGM – the proposal was defeated. The committee thanked Jim for sharing his memories of AGM with us.
2. The minutes of the April meeting were approved as revised.
3. The next meeting will be Tuesday, June 19th, 7:30pm. [Later changed to the 26th]
4. There was no financial report. A contribution to ALT/FoAGM was received from the Girl Scout group for whom Andrea led a nature walk recently.
5. Japanese Knotweed Area: Don did a number of hours of cutting JKW and pulling out garlic mustard last week. Sandra and her students dug out root crowns to the west of the black plastic area. Additional root crown digging is needed to reduce growth of the JKW this summer. Currently some JKW shoots are levitating the black plastic, but we will leave it alone unless it begins to cause problems. A small number of 3" to 4" shoots are emerging in the area planted to grass last fall. Those will be cut back regularly. In the cut-cut-cut areas, we will wait until the shoots reach about four feet in height before cutting them back. A brush mower could be used to maintain the JKW area. We will look into borrowing one. We approved signs marking the project area, and **David** will obtain & install them.
6. Grassland Restoration: The ten-year grant for the Rock Meadow restoration came to the Town of Belmont from the US Department of Agriculture under the Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program ("WHIP"). **Mike** will ask Roger Wrubel about WHIP. A field trip with Jeff Collins of Massachusetts Audubon is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, May 29, at 8:00am. **Don** will bring copies of the section on AGM's sandplain grasslands from the Frances Clark report.

7. The Big Hole: At the end of April, Mike worked with some student volunteers on this project, though more work is needed to complete it. An additional work date has been tentatively scheduled for June 2nd, provided that Mike can get student volunteers.
8. No-Dumping Signs: The Lexington Conservation Commission is concerned about the wording. **Mike** will contact them to work it out.
9. Educational Programs:
Vernal Pools: On each of two days in May, two classes from the Brackett School were brought to AGM and taught about its vernal pool and the creatures which live there. This is the fifth year of this program. One of Sandra's students is putting together a proposal for vernal pond kits.
10. AGM Field Guides: The Steering Committee approved expenditure for printing of 200 additional field guides.
11. Two Walks Being Planned for Fall: **Don** will seek to make arrangements for walks with naturalist Boot Boutwell for September, and with Harvard mycologist Donald Pfister for October.
12. Mini Grants Program: A proposal is being developed by students of Waldorf High School to prepare kits for the study of vernal pools at AGM. Such kits could be located at Arlington schools. Each kit could be a banker's box with four dip nets, one teacher's reference book, and perhaps other materials. The SC suggested starting with one school on a pilot basis, then expanding to other schools. **Sandra** agreed to work on the forms and letters for the Mini Grants program over the summer.

The meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Don Miller