

**Friends of Arlington's Great Meadows
Steering Committee
February 3, 2009
Approved 3/18/09**

Present: David White, Mike Tabaczynski, John Bartenstein, Laurel Carpenter, Sandra Ruggiero, Don Miller. Guest: Joe O'Regan

The minutes of the meeting of January 6, 2009 were approved.

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 11, 2009 [*subsequently rescheduled to March 18, 2009*], at 7:30pm at David's home.

Waldorf School Honey Bee Project: Joe O'Regan reported on the beehive project he conducted in 2008 with the support of an FoAGM mini-grant. The Waldorf School children were very interested in the project, and many visited the hives and helped to take care of them. During the initial months, the beehives flourished.

In mid-October, however, Joe received a call that damage had been done to one of the two hives. It appeared that someone had used a stick to tip the hive over. Joe put it back but the next day, both hives had been tipped over. The following day, both hives were again tipped over, and this time they had been more seriously damaged. Joe then moved the hives out of AGM altogether. (If moved, honeybee hives have to be taken at least 2.5 miles away or the bees' "navigating" system will be confused.)

Joe reported that one day while he was tending to the hives, a man walked by and said that the bees should not be there, and that he and his dogs don't like them. It appears that the damage was done by someone around noon each day. This does not appear to fit the usual pattern of youth vandalism.

Joe hopes to build new hives next year with the third-graders. He may use a different paint color so the hives won't show up as clearly. He has ordered bees again for next season, since it is unlikely that this year's bees will survive. Together, the SC and Joe will look for a new site in AGM. It was suggested that this be done more publicly by posting an announcement about the bee project (but not the specific location) on the kiosks and writing an article for the two local newspapers. Another suggestion was to post a sign near or on the hives themselves with contact information to dissuade anyone from harming them.

Tracking Walk: The tracking walk with Lydia Rogers of Walden Keeping Track, held on February 1, attracted 24 participants. Fortunately, one of them, Fran Ludwig, was an experienced tracker, and she agreed to lead half the group. Although the snow was crusty and not ideal for animal tracks, the group did see dog, rabbit, and squirrel tracks and learned a good deal about what to look for. The beautiful weather was a bonus. **Don** will send Lydia a thank-you note. **Don** will also ask her if she would like us to include a link to Walden Keeping Track on our web site. Joe Snodgrass, who attended the event, put an account of the event with photographs on his "Arlington Natural Connections" blog. **David** will put a link to Joe's report on our web site.

Cancellation Arrangements: It was agreed that, in publicity for future events, we should encourage potential participants to sign up (on our web site) for our Yahoo email list. This would enable us to notify them by email if the event has to be cancelled or other information needs to be sent (*such as, "The alligators are getting ornery, bring*

protective gear.”) Don will draft implementing language, noting that our list “is a low-traffic list”, that people who sign up will not be burdened with too many emails, and that each email sent from the list will contain a way to un-subscribe.

Meeting of the Arlington Land Trust: David, John, and Don attended the ALT annual meeting. Don spoke briefly about the habitat restoration project and the Third Saturday nature walk series. The audience was very enthusiastic about these projects and about AGM generally, and asked a number of questions.

Educational Mini-Grants: Sandra has not yet received any applications for this year’s mini-grant program. LCA sent a letter asking her to re-send information about the program, but did not afterwards submit an application. Several ideas were suggested for increasing awareness of the mini-grant program, including: notices in the Arlington and Lexington libraries; articles in the Minuteman and Advocate; and listing the program on a web site that informs of grant opportunities (though these sites generally deal with much larger grants).

Habitat Restoration: We reviewed the preliminary draft of Jeff Collins’s report and recommendations for habitat restoration and agreed on the following next steps:

1. **Mike** will convey our concerns and questions to Jeff by the end of the week.
2. He will ask Jeff to complete a final draft of the full report and, when that is done, will distribute it to the SC.
3. The SC will send the final report to the Arlington BOS and propose a presentation. (At the same time, a “heads-up” will be given to both ConComs informally.)
4. Extensive publicity campaign leading to public meeting and other means for citizens to express their views. (Public meeting to be about one month after publicity begins.)
5. Revisions in the proposal, if necessary, after public comments received.
6. Submit to Arlington BOS the application which we propose to submit to the Lexington ConCom

Don will prepare a more detailed preliminary schedule of the project’s steps for review by the SC.

Annual Report: SC members will send out the annual report to the persons or groups which have been assigned to them. **David** will put together two binders of all our annual reports, one for each Town library.

Third Saturday Nature Walks for 2009: **Don** will proceed with the publicity.

The meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Don Miller

DRAFT 2-7-09 by Don. Minor edits 2/10/09 by David, more edits 2/17/09 by John