

**Saw Mill River Audubon – Corrected Board Meeting Minutes  
April 4, 2005 – Chappaqua Library**

**Present:** Robert McCrillis, presiding, Jim Anderson, Joan Coffey, Tom McEnerney, Ken Novenster, Margo Peters, Jeanne Romeu, George Shakespear, and Stan Wecker. Guests present: Cori Cumming, Erika Miller, and Stan Rosenthal.

**Minutes of March 7, 2005:** Minutes were approved without change.

**Candidates for Board:** Two corrections were noted on the new Board Roster: Cori Cumming's name is spelt "Cori" and Erika Miller's email address is fraumiller2001@aol.com. In addition, all newcomers were requested to provide a photograph of themselves and a short, one-paragraph biography. Both items should be sent to the SMRA office by either email or regular mail, in time for the next newsletter deadline on April 27.

**Correspondence:** Andrew Spano, Westchester County Executive, wrote a letter endorsing our position against the proposed October 1 start of deer hunting. Spano's letter was addressed to George Latimer and the New York State Assembly.

Judy Epstein held a farewell moving sale on Saturday and Sunday, April 2-3.

Information was circulated about the Federated Conservationists of Westchester County outreach meetings scheduled for April 4, 5, and 7.

A sign-up sheet was circulated for a day-long symposium by the Nature Conservancy for land owners and managers in Westchester and Putnam counties on Thursday, April 28, in Briarcliff Manor. Robert McCrillis will attend.

A Saving the Sound dinner honoring "environmental fighters" [including Dave Miller of Audubon NY] will be held in White Plains by the New York League of Conservation Voters, Westchester Chapter, on April 7. Ken Novenster will attend.

**Annual Picnic:** Karen Wells has kindly offered to host the annual picnic at her house once again. Target is the evening of Tuesday, June 21.

**Community Relations and Development:** For this year's new approach to the annual fund drive, all new and old Board members were asked to join in the PSing party on Saturday, April 16 at the Chappaqua Library from 10 am to 2 pm. In advance, please turn in lists of names to sponsor and additional names to whom we can send appeals. Creative ideas for solicitations include all participants in past seed sales.

As of April 4, the annual drive has collected \$2,570.

Membership at the end of March was 757 total (down from 801 the prior month). Of these, 191 are chapter members (up from 188 the prior month).

**Bird Seed Sale:** March 26 sale was a slow one, perhaps due to being the day before Easter Sunday. Volunteers were requested for the April 23<sup>rd</sup> sale, at which a 10% discount will be offered. Ken Novenster also alerted the Board that there are three vacancies on the Bird Seed Committee, and asked people to consider joining. Margo Peters volunteered to join the committee.

**Environmental Action:** Ken Novenster attended a hearing about the Seven Springs property straddling Bedford, New Castle & Mount Kisco and will also attend the next meeting on April 6.

**Naturalist's Report:** Attendees of the Lower Hudson Roundtable meeting on Saturday, March 19 reported a good turnout and lively discussion, with four out of five Westchester chapters represented plus NY City, Orange, and Rockland. Representatives of NY State Audubon and National Audubon also attended.

Bird box building workshop had small but enthusiastic attendance.

Anne Swaim is working hard on pulling together the Environmental Quiz on April 30. It will be held at Chappaqua Library at 2 pm, following the annual business meeting at 1 pm. All Board members are requested to attend and to be present for a group photograph at the business meeting. For the EQ, six people are needed to be judges; please volunteer.

**Finances:**

*Treasurer's Report*—Tom McEnerney reported that revenues for the first quarter of 2005 are running about \$3,000 above plan, with expenses also just slightly above plan. The numbers reflect that the annual fund drive is just ramping up at the end of the quarter, and that some annual expenses came due in the first quarter. \$21,000 was transferred from the endowment.

*Investments*—Jim Anderson reported that, in March, we removed \$7,000 from our Vanguard money market fund for operating expenses. A 9-month CD matured on March 2 and was sold for \$64,321. Of this, \$40,000 was turned over for another 9-month CD bearing an interest rate of 2.91%. The remainder was deposited into the money market fund.

March was a weak market for stocks in reaction, in part, to a warning by the Federal Reserve of a threat of inflation and spasmodic variability in the price of crude oil. The value of our portfolio went down to \$864,206 with a loss of \$11,726. This 1.34% loss compares favorably to the 2.43% loss posted by the Dow Jones Index in the same period.

A quarterly report will be presented at the next board meeting following a Finance Committee meeting on April 25

**Sanctuaries Committee:** Jeanne Romeu reported that the Engineering Department of the Village of Croton was very positive about our proposed sanctuary signage on Route 9A.

Two teenagers were caught by DEC officers on all-terrain vehicles on their way to the Brinton Brook sanctuary. If they plead guilty, SMRA can then consider sending a letter to them and their parents warning of prosecution if they are caught causing further ATV damage.

**Garden and Arboretum Committee:** Tom McEnerney reported on a recent committee meeting. Mattie Varvaro is stepping down as chairman of the committee, but will continue to participate. Progress was made in assigning responsibilities for all the things that need to be done for the coming season, even though the chairmanship remains open.

Two committee members are working with the Cooperative Extension's greenhouse to obtain seedlings at a reasonable price for the Butterfly Garden. Jeff Pinerio is scheduling a badly needed field mowing at Pruyne, weather permitting. Inspection of saplings of the 100 native trees planted four years ago was promising. In almost all cases, at least one of each type of tree survives despite severe drought the first two years. Thirty new signs for Pruyne trails are being produced.

**Programs and Field Trips:** No programs are scheduled in May. On May 14, it's the spring migration "Birding Big Day" with a full day of counts scheduled at Pruyne, Rockefeller State Park, and Jamaica Bay. Joan Coffey is leading the Monday morning walks.

**Hospitality:** Thanks to Joan Coffey for tonight's refreshments.

Meeting adjourned at 8:42 p.m. The next meeting will be Monday, May 2, at 7 pm in the Chappaqua Library.