

Notes for 7/16/23 SGH Leadership Team Meeting

This quarterly Leadership Team meeting for Board Members, Officers, Program Manager, and Lead Facilitators was held at Dahlonega Chamber of Commerce, 342 Hill St., Dahlonega, GA, beginning at 1:00 p.m. Participants were Chris Curtin, Kat Carey, Ray Lorenzi, Jonathan Micancin, Jon Jones, Holly Cochran, Jim Wentworth, Buz Stone and Donna Shearer. Derrick Morris, Betty Larsen, Todd Jackson, Jody Webb, Renee Gracon, Jimmy Stewart, Dara Sinclair, Nick Gardener, Kim Wood, Robert Patchett, Elliott Segall, Lee Higgins, Jim Heilman, Ray Lorenzi, Cary Allen, Bob Pledger, Ray Lorenzi, Jim Heilman, Alan Barnes, Al Battle, Darrel Sheffield, and Dave Teffeteller and John Shearouse were unable to attend.

BOARD MATTERS

Buz Stone called the meeting to order and took roll. Meeting notes from the 4/23/23 meeting were approved. The agenda for the 7/16/23 meeting was approved.

Shearer Scholarship Fund:

As of meeting date, the scholarship fund total was \$20,099. To receive the \$10,000 matching donation that has been offered, we need \$30,000. Buz will send our matching donor the list of current funds raised and verification the money on hand has been raised legitimately for the intended purpose. He would like to see more specific targeting to raise the remaining funds.

Buz requested Jonathan's and Kat's help with specifics for restricting the fund. He is meeting with Steve Shepherd, Director of Development for Math and Science at UNG, on August 10th regarding our other goals for honoring Donna. We want commitments from UNG prior to establishing the fund. Donna said we should request info on the application season and when the funds will be applied.

Donna stated we still have funds remaining in the Gheesling Scholarship Fund at UGA. SGH originally pledged \$5,000, and \$3,000 has been used so far used. To our knowledge, UGA hasn't selected a recipient at this time. Donna will call Dr. Dale Greene and express that we would still like to provide the remaining funds.

Kat stated there needs to be publicity about this. The community needs to know about the good work Donna has done. Buz noted that publicity is a big part of non-profit generosity. Kat suggested the Dahlonega Nugget editor writes great editorials. We should consider reaching out to local papers, especially Dahlonega.

Holly mentioned we can publicize the scholarship via MailChimp as well. We can identify different lists within our contacts to target. Holly will email the draft newsletter for feedback.

NW GA/TN Project:

Jimmy Stewart spearheaded partnership with The Wild Trails (501)(c)(3). SGH has sent signs and chemical for the first portion/recon of this project to treat hemlocks on the Cumberland Trail. TWT's goal is to treat the beginning 18 miles of trail, 50' on each side of the trail. They'll need supplies and materials, potentially grant funding in partnership with SGH. Marking the trees will depend on the land manager. Projects on FS require tagging. Other project managers may choose to mark via different methods. Holly requested approval to send materials to get this started. All were in favor of initial support. Jon has some extra work kits he will share. Holly will order diameter tapes. We'll put together at least 4 more kits and send Imidacloprid to support the first leg of the project. Holly provided Jimmy Stewart's breakdown of needs. Buz approved.

Holly noted this could turn into a much bigger project for SGH if we're willing to partner with TWT and secure grant funding. Ally Bartholomew is a new Facilitator in Tennessee who has been working with Jimmy in the northwestern GA counties. She is a retired professional grant writer who is willing offer her services to secure funding. Buz requested information regarding what the grant funds would be for specifically. Donna suggested we could build out a large project if including Cumberland, Lula Lake Land Trust, and Cloudland and request enough funding from various foundations in GA/TN. Funds would be used to cover treatment materials, work kits and other supplies, potentially administrative support, and any other related out-of-pocket SGH expense. Donna noted that project managers should plan to include funding for year 2 treatment of trees over 22" DBH.

Kat noted we need to determine if the foundations are open to multiple applications for this project- they might like to see those types of partnerships. Or one large grant could be possible.



Grant Funding:

Holly mentioned SGH has a lot of potential for grant funding as we already meet several metrics in terms of what we offer and the extent to which records have been kept since SGH was established. Buz noted SGH has historically had very low overhead as there were no salaried employees, and employees are typically the largest expense for non-profits. He recommended that we consider grant funding but shouldn't need the funds immediately. We should be covered for at least two years based on our current operating and CD funds. At the point of the Executive Director's full-time employment, SGH will have a significant increase in the need for grant funding. Kat noted it might be worth planning for that now, as a young non-profit moving toward paid staff, and should be able to do the grant applications in house. She noted many grants require a match, and sometimes that can be paid in-kind. However, no applications requiring financial match will be submitted without Board approval.

Chattooga River Project:

Jonathan reported there are a lot of treatable trees on section 3 of the Chattooga, both GA and SC sides. He mentioned Chattooga will appeal to hardcore boaters, and sections 3 and 4 are beloved by the whitewater community. There is already paddler interest in a project of this nature. Jonathan discussed this with PHHAT leader Alex Harvey. Donna mentioned David Hedden in SC who has a similar group that is not yet working with USFS but has members interested in working on their side of the Chattooga. Jonathan stated there are a multitude of clubs that, if organized, would provide the volunteer base with SGH leading the coordination effort with USFS, specific paddling groups, commercial companies, etc. to ensure success.

Jim W pointed out that there have been similar attempts in the past, but FS needs more of a proposal/something in writing as to the scope of the project to move forward with it. Jonathan suggested that doing this in a pilot format is the best way to start, then expanding and applying for permits, grants as needed later on. Jim stated that FS is supportive and if SGH drives it, we should be able to coordinate this effort. Holly will reach out to USFS Michael Starbuck, and there will be more discussion at our next meeting.

Buz noted that no amount of effort we put in to save them is going to match the amount of effort it would require to clean up dead trees- it's urgent to get this project started.

License Plate:

Derrick Morris had a great idea for creating a SGH specialty license plate. The initial startup cost would be as follows:

Bond or Prepayment. Unless your organization is a Georgia-based college or university or a Georgia government agency, you must provide either a bond or prepayment. The prepayment option allows your organization to move forward without collecting 1,000 prepaid applications.

A. Bond in the amount of \$50,000. The bond protects individuals who pay you the \$25 prepaid application fee to order a plate. You must obtain 1,000 preregistration applications.

B. Prepayment of \$25,000. Your organization may pay for all of the required 1,000 pre-registration applications. If the number of registered plates is below the 500 minimum at any time after two years from the signed agreement, the manufacturing of plates will cease. No extensions or refunds of the \$25,000 prepayment will be permitted.

This proposal is tabled for the time being, but it's something we should keep in mind. Chris said the honeybee specialty license plate generated a lot of money for the GA Beekeeping Club.

REVIEW OF 2023 FINANCIAL MATTERS (6/30/23)

Starting 2023 Balance	\$72,039.68
Total Income	\$17,287.65
Total Expense	\$16,170.66
Net Change	\$1,116.99
Investment (Fidelity)	\$40,000.00
Op Ckg 6/30/23	<u>\$33,156.67</u>
Total Funds	\$73,156.67

* **Report on Annual Appeal 6/30/23:** 72 donations totaling **\$7,705**

* **Dedicated Funds:**

Ghesling UGA Scholarship	\$1,475.00	
Private donation, Rabun	\$0	Lake Seed, Tugalo, Burton projects
Lake Rabun Foundation	\$2,254.90	for use in Rabun County
Lake Burton Civic Assoc	\$1,824.14	for use in Rabun County
Laurel Ridge	\$391.00	
Rock Creek Project	<u>\$0.00</u>	Rock Creek Project Mar 5
TOTAL DEDICATED FUNDS	\$5,945.04	

* **Donna Shearer Scholarship Fund Acct: \$20,099**

REVIEW OF 2023 STRATEGIES & ACTIVITIES

* **Progress Report** as of 6-30-23:

- **All 19 HWA-infested Georgia counties** in native hemlock range now served by our Hemlock Help Program.
- **Hemlock Help Line** available 7 days a week with **265** calls handled to date.
- **2 Hemlock Help Clinic** with total of **5** attendees.
- **1 Facilitator Training Workshops** with total of **3** new Facilitators trained.
Total active Facilitators = 415 in Georgia and 93 in other states.
- **7 Presentations** for **118** adults
- **1 Hemlock Lesson** for **222** students and **2** adults
- **1 Customized training session** for **11** volunteers and public land managers
- **7 Festivals** with **50** volunteers and estimated **2098** visitors:
- **1 Article / news item** written by, with the assistance of, or about SGH published in newspapers/magazines
- **84 Facilitator visits** made with charitable treatment of **3065** trees
- **11 hemlock treatment projects** with 117 volunteers treating **7,940** trees:
- **2 sapling rescue projects** with 12 volunteers, 125 saplings rescued and potted for use in educational / service activities or future adoption:
- **70 hemlock saplings adopted.**
- **5 saplings donated** to schools, churches, nonprofits
- **2 hemlock sapling planting projects** with 15 volunteers planting 55 donated hemlocks:
- **3 soil injectors repaired/refurbished**
- Total of **2,231** volunteer hours logged.

Fairs/Festivals

UNG Volunteer Fair	March 2023	40 visitors, 2 volunteers, 8 combined volunteer hrs
Bear-on-the-Square	Sat., Apr. 15 & Sun., Apr. 16	480 visitors, 25 trees adopted, 12 volunteers combined 87 volunteer hours
UNG Gainesville Earth Day	Wed., Apr. 19	89 visitors, 2 volunteers, 16 combined volunteer hrs
Trout & Outdoor Adventures	Sat., Apr. 29	370 visitors, 12 trees adopted, 10 volunteers, 45 combined volunteer hours
LRA Memorial Day Meeting	Sun., May 28	visitors, 6 trees adopted, 1 volunteer, 3 hours
Etowah Meadery	Sat., Jun 17	40 visitors, 6 trees adopted, 2 volunteers, 8 combined volunteer hours
Blairsville Farmers Market	Sat., June 3, Sat., July 1	200 visitors, 13 trees adopted, 4 volunteers, 24 combined volunteer hours
LRA Labor Day Meeting	Sun., Sept. 3	Clayton BUZ to book
Elachee Wildlife Festival	Sat., Sept 9	Gainesville HOLLY
Trail Fest	TBD (Sept. 16?)	Dahlonega BETTY to book
Foxfire Mountaineer Festival	Sat., Oct 7	Clayton BUZ to book
Marble Festival	Sat., Oct 7 & Sun., Oct 8	Jasper JIM H. to book
Blue Ridge Arts in the Park	Sat., Oct 14 & Sun., Oct 15	Blue Ridge HOLLY to book

Blairsville Farmer's market was a new event for the year, and we received very positive support from the community. We'll plan to keep the Farmer's market for next year.

Education

In the most recent clinic, 12 registered and 4 attended. Three new facilitators were trained 7/15.

Clinic	Sat. Feb 25	Fannin, Gilmer, Union RESCHEDULED
Facilitator Training	Sat. March 25	Fannin, Gilmer, Union RESCHEDULED
Clinic	Sat. Apr. 15	Towns, Rabun Habersham (1 attendee)
Clinic	Sat., June 17	Pickens, Cherokee, Dawson(4 attendees)
Facilitator Training	Sat., July 15	Pickens, Cherokee, Dawson
Clinic	Sat., Aug 19	Lumpkin, White, Hall
Facilitator Training	Sat., Sept 23	Lumpkin, White, Hall
Clinic	Sat., Oct 21	Dade, Walker, Whitfield, Murray
Facilitator Training	Sat., Nov 11	Dade, Walker, Whitfield, Murray

Presentations

DATE	CONTACT	EVENT
2/7/23	Rasmussen, Margaret	SGH presentation for Redbud Project in Gainesville -- Donna
3/9/23	McKee, Jacquelin	UNG Peaks Program in Blue Ridge -- Holly
3/14/23- 3/16/23	Arp, Tori tarp@fannin.k12.ga.us	Hemlock Lesson & treatment project with Fannin 6th Grade Exploratory students in Blue Ridge -- Donna, J. T. Kieffer, Buz, Jim, Holly
3/24/23	Lesley Hanson	Customized training for GA/Alabama Land Trust-- Holly
8/29/23	Sam Fricks	Elachee Center's Science Night at TapIt! Brewery in Gainesville-- Holly
TBD	Kelly, Patrick	Customized training & treatment project for Lula Lake staff in Lookout Mountain, GA – Donna, Holly, Jimmy Stewart

Treatment

Treatment projects have had excellent volunteer turnout so far this year. Jim and Jonathan will coordinate a Facilitator training/treatment for YHC at Ivy Log. Jon will recon his areas in Warwoman for the October projects. Donna noted we need to take more photos of treatment projects to publish in local papers.

Signal Mtn TN	Jan 1-Jan 9	Grandview Area (1387 trees)	ALLY
Rock Creek	Sun. Mar 5	Walker County (170 trees)	JIMMY S
Boyscout Project	Sat. Feb 18	Lake Rabun Beach (154 trees)	HOLLY
Signal Mtn TN	Sat. Mar 11	Green Gorge (612 trees)	DAN/ALLY
Fannin Middle	Thurs. Mar 15	FMS Campus (25 trees)	JIM W/BUZ
Signal Mtn TN	Jan. 1-Mar 23	Signal Mtn Tn (4653 trees)	DAN R
YHC Ecology Class	Fri. March 24&31	YHC Campus (56 trees)	JONATHAN
CRRD	Sun., Mar 26	Tate Branch/Sandy Bottom(308 trees)	JON
Woodruff final trtmt	Sat., Apr 22 nd	Blairsville(120trees)	JIM W/HOLLY
BRRD treatment	Sat., Jun 17	Clements Branch (144 trees)	JIM W
Conasagua RD treatment	Sat., Jun 24	Bear Creek (311 trees)	HOLLY
BRRD Treatment	Aug/Setp	Ivy Log	JIM W/JONATHAN
BRRD Treatment	Sat., Sept. 30 th	Dockery Lake	JIM W
Chattooga River RD	Sun., Oct 8th	Warwoman Area	JON J
BRRD Treatment	Sat., Oct 21 st	Fodder Creek/Hog Creek	JIM W
Conasagua RD treatment	Sat., Nov 18 th	Bear Creek (GILMER)	HOLLY
Chattooga River RD	Sun., Oct 29 th	Warwoman area	JON J

Saplings/Planting Projects

Dig at Tom Deal's w/ GNPS	Sat., March 4	Chris C- 60 saplings rescued
Sapling Planting at Billy Goat Island	Sat., April 29	Buz- 48 saplings planted
Dig at John Edgar's	May	Donna- 65 saplings rescued
Sapling Planting at Woodruff Scout Camp	Sat., May 27	Holly-5 saplings planted
Sapling Planting Whitepath Golf Course (In Memory of Paul Berry)	TBD	Chris/Donna

The family of Paul Berrey set up a memorial with SGH, and we will arrange to plant a hemlock on Whitepath Golf Course in his memory at his most or least favorite hole on the course.

Buz completed his Billy Goat Island sapling planting project. He coordinated with Andrew Hunt, a local contractor, to get the materials and saplings to the island. A dozen Burton homeowners and 3 SGH members planted 48 saplings. Two homeowners agreed to water the trees for the next year. The trees are still healthy and doing well.

Jonathan would like to plant some trees on YHC campus, potentially an outdoor insectary. Donna noted SGH did something similar at UNG. Buz approved. Donna noted we may want to use the trees from Brevard for this project. We need to do something with the larger trees in Chris' nursery before they get too big to transport. Holly will coordinate with Jonathan sometime in late Oct or early Nov to get the project scheduled.

Jonathan mentioned Project Chimps has a volunteer program we may want to get involved in called Roots and Shoots. Kickoff is in August. Jonathan will forward the email with project timeline.

Chris and Donna did a dig at a property in Dahlonega, rescuing around 65 trees.

Injector Repair

Donna has trained one individual for injector repair.

OTHER

Buz has a scout group interested in either a digging or treatment project. He will check out the trees at a property in Rabun where there are over 600 trees. The sooner we get them in pots, the sooner we get them out for adoption in a few years.

*** Staffing**

Donna said we need a Membership Coordinator to maintain new contacts from festivals, etc. and update those to email lists. It's vital to keep our contact list up to date. Jon said he would reach out to a friend of his who might be interested. Donna will look into a web admin to maintain the website. She also recommended having a Facilitator Coordinator to connect with our Facilitators, both new and old, to keep them engaged.

*** Organizational Continuity**

Each Leadership Team member needs a backup or understudy and is asked to identify one or more individuals who can shadow for replacement should the need arise.

2023 MEETING DATES

Sunday, November 5th 2023 (REMEMBER DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME)

Starting at 1:00 p.m.

Dahlonge Chamber of Commerce

342 Hill Street, Dahlonge