

# Green Timbers Heritage Society

## Annual General Meeting

November 6, 2014  
Surrey Nature Centre



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The meeting was called to order at 7:17 pm.

**Present:** Ellen Edwards, chair; Susan Lehmann; Stephen McGlenn (SNAP); Don Schuetze, secretary; Deanna Welters; Peter Maarsman, Jim Foulkes, treasurer; Neal Aven (City of Surrey).

## **1. Review of minutes:**

The minutes from the November 7, 2013 meeting were discussed. Moved by Peter and seconded by Deanna that the minutes be accepted as read. Passed.

## **2. Scheduled Tree Risk Assessment & Abatement Program:**

Neal Aven gave an update on the scheduled tree risk assessment & abatement program. This was a two-year program. The north half was done in 2013, the south half in 2014. The assessment was done by a contractor, and then by City arborists. Abatement followed. This is part of a 13-year cycle.

Approximately 200 trees were removed in 2014. The work was done this past Spring. Follow-up was the replanting. The City aims for a two-for-one replacement, but in this case approximately 500 were planted in two- and five-gallon pots, plus another approximately 100 seedlings. That's a three-for-one replacement!

The October 21 windstorm hit natural areas hard, because many of the trees were still in leaf. The City is still cleaning up from that. There are no hard numbers from Green Timbers.

A spirited discussion followed about the abatement. There was some question about the timing, whether some trees needed to be removed at all, and whether there had been some misreading of the arborists' notes. Neal promised to look into the one alleged instance if Susan can send him the details.

Jim expressed disappointment that there was no discussion about some trees that were borderline. The contractors hired to do the abatement were not open to listen to any input.

*Moved by Jim, and seconded by Susan, that the GTHS send a letter to Owen Croy, asking that any future tree risk assessment within Green Timbers Forest be given to the GTHS with sufficient time to have an independent arborist at our discretion review, and a process for arbitration be set up. Passed.*



### 3. Shovel:

Neal said he would work with the GTHS to find a suitable space and presentation for the shovel donated last year.

### 4. President's report:

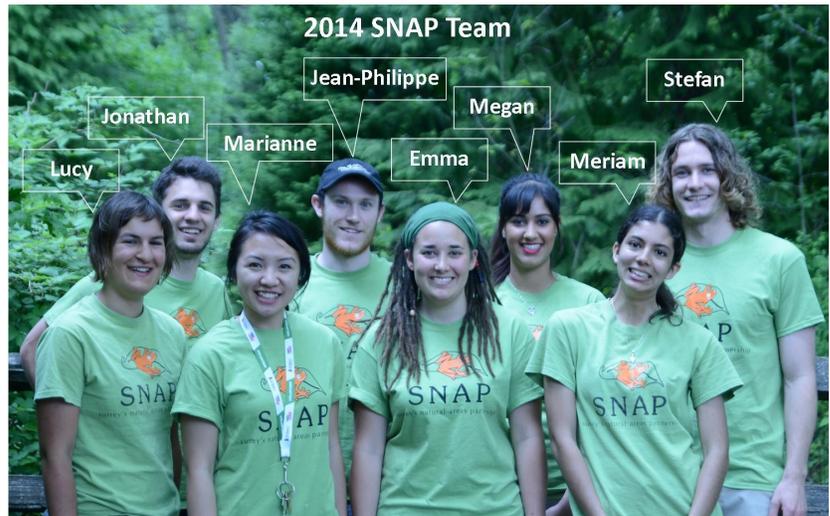
Ellen listed the accomplishments over the past year, including the SNAP program, the opening of the Lehmann Grove, the Garry Oaks watering, many events, the Trees at Risk program, meeting the School District about preserving as many trees as possible and tree plantings.

### 5. SNAP

Stephen gave a 6-minute video presentation of the past year's activities. This was his third year as the SNAP coordinator. Next year will be SNAP's 15-year anniversary. The plan is to use this video for recruitment, fund raising, and to showcase the importance of SNAP's work.

There were 10 students hired over the summer and about 40 volunteers.

- In total, SNAP removed over 180m<sup>3</sup> of invasive plants from over 5000m<sup>2</sup> of natural areas;
- SNAP spoke to over 7,000 people through their diverse Outreach efforts (e.g. Nature Play, events, park roving, door-to-door canvassing, etc.);
- Our 40 volunteers donated over 250 hours to help us achieve our goals;



- SNAP successfully completed a restoration project that was generously funded by VanCity.
- A formal report of SNAP's accomplishments in 2014 is forthcoming.

**The SNAP budget for this past year was:**

City of Surrey	\$120,000
Canada Summer Jobs	\$41,438.50
VanCity	\$10,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$171,438.50</b>

Over 80% of the budget was on wages.

An analysis showed a lot of SNAP's work is done in South Surrey and Blackie Spit, and there is concern that not all of the Partners priorities are equally represented in the work SNAP does. SNAP's work is identified by the City of Surrey, and since they provide most of the funding they have a lot of weight; however the intent of the Partnership is that we collaborate and share in the administration and decision-making of SNAP!

Therefore, Stephen is recommending that all the parties meet before SNAP begins next year to agree on priorities, and what contributions each Partner can make to the program. Besides identifying GTHS priorities for 2015, Stephen also suggested promoting the benefits to GTHS of participating in the partnership, such as fostering greater awareness of the benefits provided by our urban forest areas and the need to conserve and steward these areas.

There will also be a renewed attempt to secure Canada Summer Jobs funding from the South Surrey riding. This year nothing came in from that potential source. BC Gaming has provided SNAP with \$10,000 in funding for next year for Environmental Education and the coordination of Habitat Restoration volunteers. This is less than hoped for but still good news!

**The SNAP initiatives for 2015:**

1. BC Games Grant
2. My Neighbourhood My Future – a partnership between SFU, United Way, SNAP & SHaRP involving the expansion of Nature Play, one of SNAP's Outreach programs for kids & families, into the Guildford West area, with the goal of increasing participation in nature.
3. SNAP film: a documentary of the partners and why SNAP was created
4. UBC-SCARP Directed Study
5. SNAP's 15<sup>th</sup> Year!

## 6. Lehmann Grove

Susan gave a brief report. There were between 35-40 people at the opening. After a few problems, the kiosk storyboard it is now in place. A video of the event is also being created.

## 7. The big aerial map

A large aerial map was output for display at events. The photographs are done every year, but it was cloudy and grey in 2014. We'll see what the 2015 shots are like. If it's a grey day we'll ask for the 2013 shot.



## 8. Garry Oak watering

Deanna and Susan took charge of making sure the trees were watered. The wagon had to be repaired three times. All were photographed with numbers. The trees are all healthy and maturing in individual ways.

*Moved by Jim, seconded by Susan that the GTHS request the removal from Hydro and/or Parks of the redundant hydro wires near the Garry Oaks Plantation. Approved.*



## 9. School District parking lot expansion

The School District's parking lot expansion is completed. Jim walked the site, took photos, and said we could congratulate ourselves for having saved a few trees. A few more could have been saved, but our suggestions, although agreed to, were not completed. Jim recommends that whenever anything like this is agreed to it be followed up on more persistently.

## 10. Financial report

Jim gave the report. An accountant will provide the Final GTHS 2014 Financial Statements..

### Not including SNAP, the GTHS received:

Aspelet donation	\$1,000
Film company donation	\$5,000
Interest	\$295.92
Memberships	\$250.20
Tax credits	\$1,474.36

### SNAP Income:

VanCity Grant	\$10,000
Gov't Canada Summer Jobs	\$41,440
City of Surrey	\$120,000

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Total income:	\$179,460.48
Total expenses:	\$154,610.28

Note - Current Payables: Stephen's salary, WCB, Society Fees, and \$25,000 loan repayable to the City.

### Current Balances:

VanCity	\$31,380.52
Prospera	\$12,821.98
Gaming Account	\$374.65
Shares in three accounts	\$151.97
Petty cash	\$193.17
Current account	\$703.09
Term deposits	\$12,118.01

There was a discussion about how much cash a charitable organization should keep in reserve.  
Suggestion: earmark extra money for the Green Timbers entrance sign/sculpture to be erected by the Outpatient Hospital.

*Moved by Don, seconded by Susan that expenses for postage and stationery for the President, Treasurer and Secretary incurred over the past year be reimbursed. Passed.*

*Moved by Jim, second by Ellen that we accept the Treasurer's report. Passed.*





## 11. Communications report:

The focus for 2014 was how we communicate with members of the Society and interested members of the community at large.

To this end we spent some time developing our email presence, using a service provider called MailChimp. Because our membership is small this service is free. The two email programs developed were 1) reports of meetings and 2) activity updates. We've averaged sending a little more than one email a month. Our open rate averaged 45.6%. Industry standard is about 23%.

Our plan was to wean members from mailouts of the newsletter, and we've achieved some success with that. 29 members still receive newsletters via the mail.

There's still plenty of work to be done. We need to develop better – and more – media contacts and effective PR campaigns. There are lots of good stories to share from Green Timbers, the challenge to make sure they're heard and shared.

As well, the email program is a hook to develop interest and educate members of the public at large. It's free and easy to sign up for the emails on the website. Since starting the program in February 11 people have signed up. Our challenge for the coming year is to increase this number and possibly to convert these interested people into members.

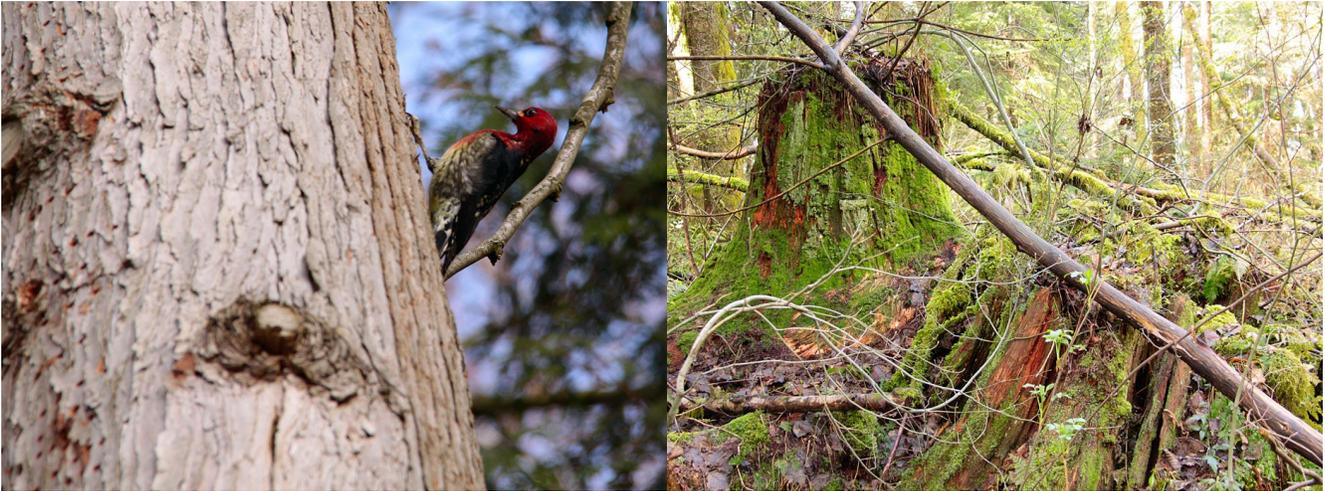
As of the beginning of November we have 124 subscribers to our emails. Add the 29 mailouts for a total reach of 153 people.

We've instituted analytics and regular reporting on the GTHS website. After the home page, the most visited page is the trails-maps page. Traffic has been consistently around 800 unique visitors every month, which is pretty good for a niche site like ours. Visitors see 1.7 pages per visit.

The GTHS website, although servicable, is starting to look a little dated. A project for the upcoming year will be rethink what the purposes of the site is and how it can best perform those functions.

### Some suggestions for the website were:

- Create a “burning issues” section for things like abatement, traffic lights, highway widening.
- Update the maps for the “trails-maps” page.



## 12. Membership report:

2014 was a year for consolidating and making sense of our membership lists.

As of the beginning of November paid-up membership, including a few complimentary memberships is 79. Of those, seven will expire this year.

We had eight memberships expire last year.

New memberships will not replace these losses, so an important task for the coming year will be to strategize on either increasing memberships or rethinking what it *means* to be a member of the Green Timber Heritage Society.

### Some discussion followed:

- Susan has approximately half-a-dozen forms and money for new members from the tree planting event.
- Peter recommended writing a physical letter for renewals, explaining why they should be a part.
- We should work with Sunnyside on ideas for membership.

## 13. Election of directors for 2015

*Moved by Peter, seconded by Susan, that all six directors in attendance be elected by the process of acclamation: Ellen, Peter, Jim, Susan, Deanna and Don. Passed.*

Positions and duties will be decided at the next meeting.

## 14. Next meeting:

The next meeting of the GTHS directors will be Wednesday, December 3, 2014 at 7pm at the ABC Fleetwood on Fraser Highway.

The AGM was closed at 10:30 pm.