



WYE MARSH WILDLIFE CENTRE

Escape... Explore... Experience

AGM APRIL 24, 2021

Friends of Wye Marsh Land Acknowledgement Statement

We acknowledge that the Wye Marsh Wildlife Centre is located on the Treaty and traditional lands of the Anishinabek (*ah-nish-i-NAH-beck*) Nation, territory of the Beausoleil First Nation, and traditional historic period homeland of the Huron-Wendat Nation. The Friends of Wye Marsh also recognizes that it is home to a large and diverse community of Indigenous Peoples, including Métis and Inuit.



AGENDA – AGM 2021

1. Quorum and Welcome	All
2. Participation and voting instructions	N. Horbatiuk
2. Review AGM 2020 Meeting Minutes and Motion to Accept	All
3. Financial Statements for Year Ending Oct. 31, 2020 presented by Grant Thornton	T. Turnbull
4. Motions to Accept Financial Statements and Appointment of Auditors	All
5. Acknowledgement of Current and Past Directors	D. Robertson
6. Board of Directors Election	All
7. ED Annual Report	M.A. Milne
8. Report from the President of the Board	D. Robertson
9. Other Business	All
10. Motion to Adjourn	All



REVIEW OF 2020 AGM MINUTES FEB. 29, 2020

- **Wye Marsh Annual General Meeting (AGM): February 29, 2020**
- **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by Dave Robertson at 10:05 am.
- **Approval of the April 27th, 2019 AGM minutes:** Debbie Lovas (moved), Allan Mantel (seconded). Carried¹.
- **Financials - Thomas Turnbull (Grant Thornton) presented our financial statements and audit:**
- The findings were presented to the Board on February 12, 2020.
- Revenue is up by ~\$70,000 as a result of general admissions, memberships, and gift shop sales. There has been a decrease in recreational programs and school visits. Expenses have stayed fairly similar over the past year. Net assets and general operations are in a deficit of \$11,940, but there are positives in the capital assets (\$45,000), the internally restricted fund (\$172,000), and the HCF fund (\$218,000).
- Liabilities are similar to the prior year – Wye Marsh is in the positive.
- The audit includes the amortization, whereas Mary Ann's numbers do not. Therefore, Mary Ann's numbers will show a profit.
- The overall cash flow for the year is a positive \$27,000.



REVIEW OF 2020 AGM MINUTES FEB. 29, 2020

Motions¹:

- Members will receive the financial statements for the fiscal year ending on October 31, 2019. Lucie Thompson (moved), Ashlea Veldhoen (seconded). Carried¹.
- The Board of Directors will appoint Grant Thornton as auditors for the financial year ending October 31, 2020. Allan Mantel (moved), Lucie Thompson (seconded). Carried¹.
- Approve the actions of the Board of Directors for the financial year ending October 31, 2019. Dorothy Harper (moved), Gary Van Gelderen (seconded). Carried¹.
- Appoint Jana Luker, Lucie Thompson, Nicole Horbatiuk, Ashlea Veldhoen and Melanie Dupuis to the Board of Directors for a two year term commencing on February 29, 2020. Allan Mantel (moved), Colin Harper (seconded). Carried¹.
- **Acknowledgements:** Sean Dienen, Jim MacMillan, and Amanda Woodman will be stepping down from the Board and will be missed. Debbie Lovas, Richard Leavens, and Dave Robertson will be returning as Directors.



REVIEW OF 2020 AGM MINUTES FEB. 29, 2020

Report from the Executive Director:

Mary Ann has three goals:

- Review everything – replace, rebuild, or remain. We have done two software integrations for our finance and donor software. We are looking for a new internet tower and talking to Vianet to have better internet. We looking to rebrand our education programs to make it “Marsh School”, which Emily Metcalfe would take the lead on. Wildlife care and camps continue to be improved. Camp revenues have now gone up substantially with the addition of PA Day, March Break, and Strike Day camps.
- Stop lurching: We can’t control the weather and we don’t have to be at the mercy of what we can’t control. We have an annual calendar of events. Our goal is not always to raise numbers, but to make sure we are in line with our competitors.
- Instill a business mindset into a non-profit environment. When we look at outreach, we don’t make a profit, but we get our name out there and people start to come. We must align our mandate with stewardship, education, and public programs. We do not expect to make a profit on stewardship, but we can use it in other programs, such as education and public programs.



REVIEW OF 2020 AGM MINUTES FEB. 29, 2020

- Both Mary Ann and Tasha are quite familiar with the daily cash flow. We have not gone to the Hartog Fund in about a year, but we are going to have to this year, as the education visits are hitting us hard (a lot of this is due to the ongoing strikes, however, the school boards are not providing schools with appropriate funding to visit). Teachers must make sure that the program would meet the requirements of the curriculum. We are able to run the occasional programs in schools though and will travel to them. Any busing grants we receive are for Simcoe County, but we do reach out to Toronto and Muskoka, despite the expensive costs. Ideally, we could find some kind of sponsor-to-sponsor program, where we still get paid, but the schools could come without needing to pay. If it is easy to come to us, hopefully that will put us at the fore front against competition.
- If we do the gift shop right, we could get a 50% return on the money spent – there is money to be made here. We have \$55,000 in spending currently and are looking to have \$75,000 - \$80,000.
- We raised the rates of memberships and got rid of the family pass.
- Admissions for the fiscal year are up, education is down. We brought in \$28,000 from Sweetwater last year. Camps were up as we added an extra week, but overnight camp is down. Weddings and birthdays are up. We don't make a lot of money off of workshops – we often break even, but it helps to get the word out about us.



REVIEW OF 2020 AGM MINUTES FEB. 29, 2020

Report from the Board of Directors:

Goals from 2019 AGM:

- Increase number of Board Members: we've increased from 6 to 8 Board Members.
- Increase revenue – we almost broke even this year.
- Increase Environmental Stewardship: Mary Ann's report
- Increase communication and public awareness: Monthly newsletter, website, social media, program promotion, online marketing, and enhanced outreach activities are going strong.
- Special note: Bob Whittam, the Father of the Wye Marsh, passed away. We plan to name the display hall after him and republish his book.

2020 Goals:

- Continue to increase Board membership Continue to improve revenue by developing program opportunities, improving budgeting accuracy and revenue and expense designation, increase fundraising efforts, and implement an endowment fund.



REVIEW OF 2020 AGM MINUTES FEB. 29, 2020

Challenges:

- We typically operate on a deficit of \$70,000 - \$80,000 per year and can no longer rely on our reserves to draw from – we need to focus on fundraising.
- There has been a dramatic reduction in revenue from school visits. We cannot rely on estate donations or good weather for special events. Furthermore, the Tay Township dinner would be split between multiple organizations this year. We need to create a true fundraising effort.

2020 Optimism:

- Our Executive Director and all of our staff are extremely dedicated, which is reflected in the increase in all of our metrics.
- We have gained some valuable new Board members with diverse skills and experiences.
- Membership and general attendance are up and steadily increase.
- We have improved our operational consistency and fiscal control.



REVIEW OF 2020 AGM MINUTES FEB. 29, 2020

Members Appeal:

- We are asking any interested members or volunteers to help out. This could be through volunteering, membership, being an ambassador, assisting with fundraising, etc. Your contribution is appreciated and instrumental to the Wye Marsh.

New Business:

- Tom (and the outreach crew) continue to bring the birds of prey to outreach events. They are a magnet for people to come and chat with us and are great for promotion.
- Question: Has anyone considered reaching out to private corporations for fundraising? Yes, we currently have a list of corporations that we're working through to see who would be appropriate. The Board would like to focus on the larger corporations, rather than the smaller businesses that are often used for our events as sponsors.
- Jeremy is still the chair of the Stewardship Committee and we continue to struggle to get others to the table. We continue to work out a budget and a stewardship plan, but we do have some grants to help with some of the work that needs to be done. We are hopeful that as we develop a more structured plan and brand that more people will commit to the committee.



REVIEW OF 2020 AGM MINUTES FEB. 29, 2020

New Business Con't:

- We are contacting universities that have environmental programs to see if they can support us and we can support them.
- We should look at having Indigenous representation on the Board. We do have a partnership with the Native Friendship Centre currently. We plan to have staff trained and continue to make connections. There are many people and organizations we could reach out to.
- Last year was excellent, but we do have a significant challenge ahead of us this year and need to focus on fundraising.

Meeting Adjourned: The meeting was moved to adjourn at 11:37am.

- *1: It was discovered following the meeting that there had been a procedural oversight during the meeting. Following most of the motions no vote was taken. Upon realizing it I obtained a list of all the voting members in attendance and canvassed them via email for their vote on each motion. Their responses are recorded in a document entitled AGM 2020 Procedural correction.*



REVIEW OF 2020 AGM MINUTES FEB. 29, 2020

- Motion to approve minutes of 2020 AGM meeting of Feb. 29, 2020

• Moved by

Seconded by

Vote:



FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR FISCAL YEAR ENDING OCTOBER 31, 2020

1. Thomas Turnbull, Grant Thornton – Presentation of FY 2020 Financial Statements
2. Questions

Motions

- Members will receive the financial statements for the fiscal year ending on October 31, 2020.

Moved:

Seconded:

Vote:

- The Board of Directors will appoint Grant Thornton as auditors for the financial year ending October 31, 2021.

Moved:

Seconded:

Vote:

- Approve the actions of the Board of Directors for the financial year ending October 31, 2020.

Moved:

Seconded:

Vote



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Acknowledgement of Past Directors

Ashlea Veldhoen and Lucie Tomson

Current Directors entering second year of their two year term.

VP Nicole Horbatiuk, Secretary Melanie Dupuis, Director Jana Luker

Current Directors standing for reelection

Debbie Lovas and Richard Leavens

Motion to elect Debbie Lovas and Richard Leavens to a second term.

Moved:

Seconded:

Vote:

New Board members appointed since last AGM

Susan Molenda, Rebecca Cowie, Natalie Majer, Alasdair Maclean

Tim Martin, Stephanie Zoschke, Allan Grant and Allan Marion.

Introductions

Motion to elect Susan Molenda, Rebecca Cowie, Natalie Majer, Alasdair Maclean

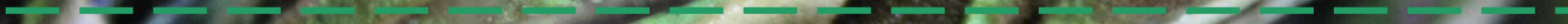
Tim Martin, Stephanie Zoschke, Allan Grant and Allan Marion.

Moved:

Seconded:

Vote:





RESILIENCE AND REINVENTION

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT 2019 / 2020

NOVEMBER 2019 - FEBRUARY 2020

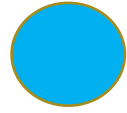
- Net revenue was ~ \$40K less from 2019/2020 compared to 2018/2019
 - Increase in labour costs – Camp Coordinator became full time position, transition of personnel in Animal Care, aligning seniority with job requirements
 - Change in method of calculating revenue from memberships
 - Labour issues with school boards
- Areas of strong growth
 - Gift Shop – 27%
 - General Admissions – 21%
 - Camp – 6,309%
 - Workshops – 43%



MARCH 2020 - SEPTEMBER 2020

- Mid March to End April - Staff hour reductions and lay-offs, cancel events, cancel orders, hunker down
- May to June - Re-group, open trails, determine level staffing requirements, consider available revenue streams
- July to September – Camp@Home, initial virtual programs, stewardship, Annual Fundraising Dinner re-vamp
- September to November – Centre opens, regular staffing levels, launch Marsh School, school visits





DECEMBER 2020 TO PRESENT

- Openings and closings in compliance with Provincial orders and consideration for staff health and safety
- Completing Simcoe County District School Board contract class visits both in person and virtually since February
- Grant applications
- Stewardship contracts for invasive species management
- Launched Marsh School
- Virtual Earth Day Event including on-line workshop
- Wye Marsh Summer Day Camp registration launched



COVID-19 FUNDS AND RESTRUCTURED PROGRAMS

- Canadian Emergency Business Account (CEBA) loan of \$60,000.00, of which \$40,000 is to be repaid by December 2022
- Canadian Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS) grant in excess of \$100,000, currently scheduled to run until June 2021
- Ontario Business Support, general operations, grant for \$23,000
- RT-07 PPE Reimbursement \$700
- Heritage Canada Emergency Fund, Sweetwater signage and installations, \$5,000
- Canada Summer Jobs extended to from July to December 2020, \$9,000
- Township of Tay and Township of Tiny - \$1,000 each



GRANTS - PROGRAM AND INFRASTRUCTURE

- Oct 2020 - TD Friends of the Environment – \$5,200 - rebrand the Swan Treatment Centre to Swan Landing, signage to transform the area into an educational hub
- Nov 2020 - Rotary Club of Midland - \$4,000 – new roof for Swan Landing
- Feb 2020 - The Weber Foundation - \$15,000 – new internet tower and wifi nodes
- Dec 2020 - Province of Ontario Resilient Fund - \$12,000 – update Pavilion to allow for classes 9 months of the year and transition to Microsoft 365
- Jan 2021 - Canada Summer Jobs - \$71,000 – camp counselors, outdoor educators, facilities assistant, two roles from September to February 2022



STEWARDSHIP

Three Pillars of Stewardship:

1. Invasive Species Management

2. Citizen Science

3. Baseline Population Studies for Native Flora and Fauna

- Created role of Senior Stewardship Coordinator, reports to the Program and Education Manager
- Responsible for developing 5 year plan, budgeting, and managing current contracts and grants



STEWARDSHIP

- Ganawenim Meshkiki (“GMI”) Trustee for Eastern Georgian Bay Initiative (“EGBI”) – 5 year contract, \$50,000 per year, for phragmites identification and removal on Provincial portion of Wye Marsh
- Canadian Wildlife Service – 2 year contract, \$32,000, for development of plan for invasive species management on the NWA
- McLean Foundation – grant, \$5,000, for signage and developing criteria for turtle population study
- K.M. Hunter Foundation – grant, \$6,000 drone mapping provincial portion and material support for GMI-EGBI contract

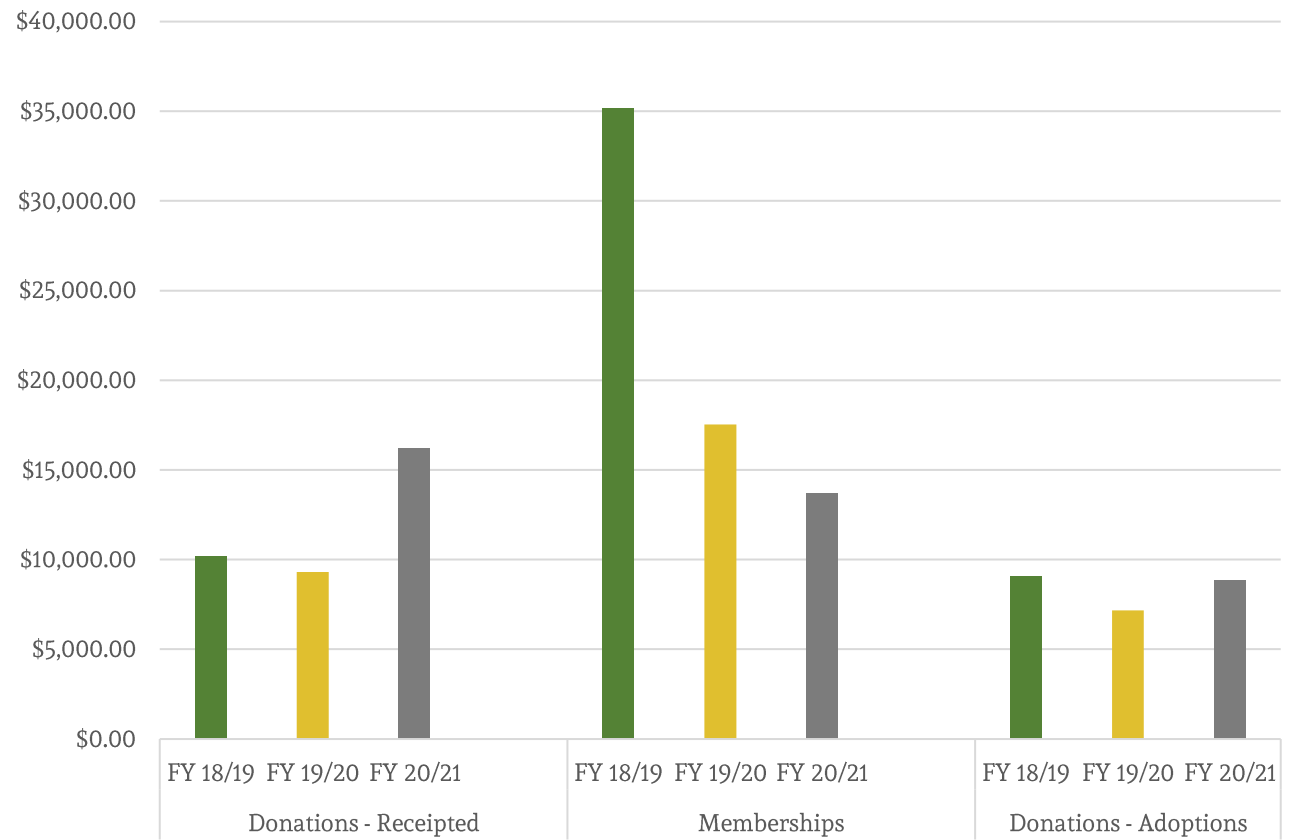
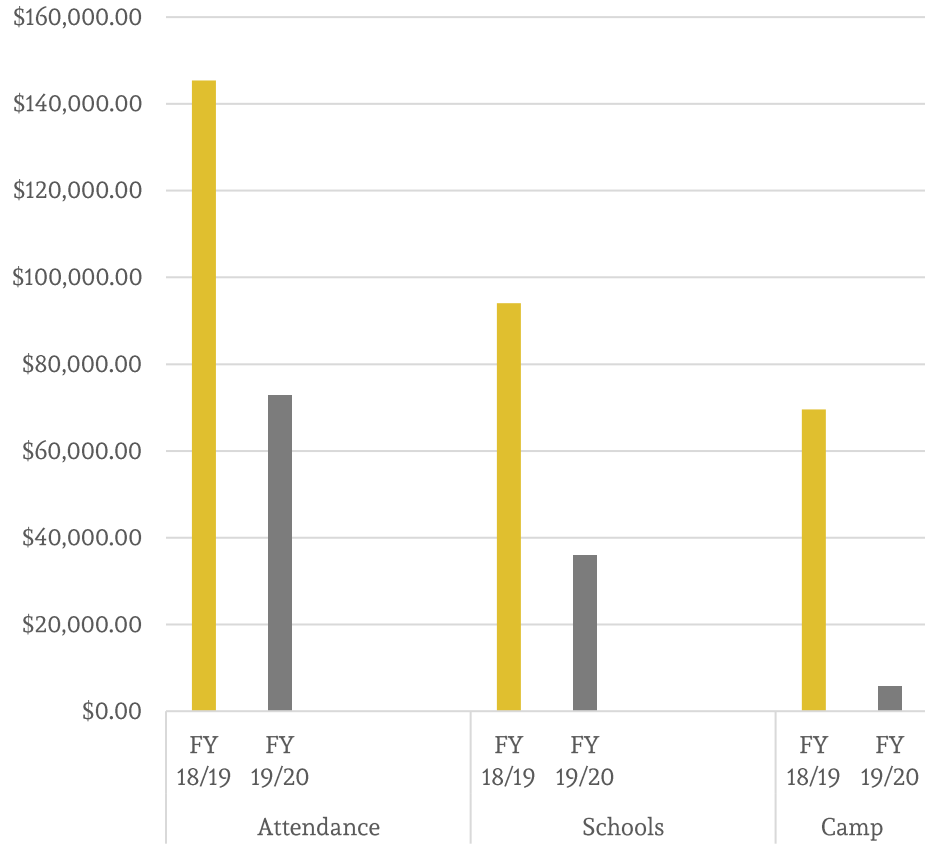


MARSH SCHOOL

- Launched Fall of 2020
- Based on the concept of Forestry Schools
- Nature-based program for children with the benefit of learning in an outdoor environment
- What sets Marsh School apart from other Forestry Schools?
 - Provides an opportunity to play and learn in a National Wildlife Area (NWA), a Provincially Significant Wetland (PSW), an Important Birding Area (IBA), and an Area of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI)
 - Wye Marsh has over 35 years of experience teaching nature-based programs that align with the Province of Ontario curriculum for Kindergarten to Grade 12



DONORS AND MEMBERS



QUESTIONS?



REPORT FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS: WYE MARSH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Dave Robertson

President, Friends of Wye Marsh Inc.



TWO CELEBRITIES

How cool is this



2020

Fiscal 2020 started off well with high expectations. We recruited several new board members who brought considerable skills to the organization. It was a steep learning curve for many. Our first big set back was the Ontario education issues which resulted in a considerable drop in revenue. We offset some of that impact by presenting virtual presentations and travelling more. Three weeks after our AGM the pandemic hit and every aspect of the operation changed to adjust to COVID guidelines and regulations. That continues to this day. The focus was on survival, innovating and being ready when opening opportunities were available.

Our staff did an incredible job of being flexible and innovative and rolling with the punches. They were prepared and took full advantage of any positive opportunities that became available.



GOALS FROM 2020 AGM

- Increase Board membership and committee involvement
 - Following AGM, board will be 9 members strong
 - Potential 2 additional members in discussions
 - Board members currently participating on 4 committees
- Revenue > Expenses and Fiscal control
 - Continue to develop program opportunities
 - Continue to fine tune budgeting accuracy and revenue and expense designation
 - Increase focus and efforts on Fundraiser events
 - Develop a Financial plan to ensure \$0.00 annual deficit
 - Implement an initial Endowment Fund and process for it's growth



2020 GOAL RESULTS

- Increase Board membership and committee involvement
 - Following AGM, board was 10 members strong
 - Efforts underway to recruit resources to provide Treasurer role.
 - Board members currently participating on 4 committees
- Revenue > Expenses and Fiscal control
 - Developed virtual program opportunities
 - Focused on cash flow and grant requests
 - Increase focus and efforts on Fundraiser events
 - Developed a Financial plan to minimize use of reserves
 - Participated in all government COVID-19 assistance programs.
 - Took steps to implement an Endowment Fund and process for it's growth



2021 GOALS

- **Managing the Pandemic**
 - Be very flexible and innovative in managing the pandemic challenges
- **Operational challenges**
 - Recruit and hire a new ED to replace Mary Ann on her retirement in July
 - Increase focus on stewardship activities
 - Target infrastructure improvement or replacement priorities
- **Increase Board membership and committee involvement**
 - Continuously work at improving and enhancing the Boards capabilities
 - Develop a Board succession plan
 - Formalize development of committees for priority requirements
 - Recruit or develop a director that can assume the role of Treasurer
- **Revenue > Expenses and Fiscal control**
 - Continue to develop program and marketing opportunities
 - Continue to fine tune budgeting accuracy and revenue and expense designation
 - Increase focus and efforts on Corporate level Fundraiser activities
 - Develop a Financial plan to ensure minimal annual deficit
 - Access all government COVID-19 assistance programs
 - Implement an Endowment Fund and process for it's growth



2021 CHALLENGES

- It looks like our programming opportunities will continue to be limited and be mostly virtual for the majority of the fiscal year.
- Community outreach will continue to be limited to primarily web and social media venues.
- We will be transitioning from our current ED to a new ED with it's inherent learning curve.
- Fundraising will be a constant priority for the entire organization with an increased focus by the BOD.
- The organization faces considerable challenges in upgrading and replacing deteriorating infrastructure.



2021 OPTIMISM

- Our Executive Director and her staff are an extremely dedicated and hard working team. Under their care, we have managed to weather the pandemic storm as well or better than many organizations.
- We have attracted a number of enthusiastic supporters of conservation and the environment to add to our current list of Board directors. Several also have high level business experience and skills.
- I would like to acknowledge Joep Dienen and Bill Byrick who have stepped forward to join the committee to recruit our new ED. They are the beginning of the “Wye Elders” initiative. They have demonstrated the potential of this idea.
- Wye Marsh memberships are up and attendance through the door has been strong when we have been able to welcome members and the public.
- Virtual programs and fundraisers are being strongly supported by our members and the public.



2021 OPTIMISM

- Government support programs have been a huge benefit to our organization and they will likely continue to some extent until the economy and our recovery is well under way.
- We have created a \$135,000.00 Endowment Fund with HCF which will grow over time, through public donations, to provide sustainable revenue for many years to come, ensuring the continuing legacy of the Wye Marsh Wildlife Centre.
- The vaccine distribution plan, while slower than we would like, is on target to allow some level of normalcy by the fall.
- We expect there to be a pent up demand for venues like the Wye Marsh. We will be ready to serve and take advantage of that demand when it is safe to do so.



2021 AGM MEETING

Other business

Membership acknowledgement and appeal

To all members, volunteers and the general public we want to thank you for your continuing strong support. It means so much to us and to the organization. Please continue to think about how you may be able to support the Marsh. Whether it be as a volunteer, a Board member, a committee member, a “Wye Elder”, an ambassador or as a financial donor, your contribution will not only be appreciated but it will be instrumental in the continuing success of the Wye Marsh.



2020 AGM MEETING

Mary Ann acknowledgement

Mary Ann became the Executive Director in March 2018. She immediately began the process of modernizing and improving the operation of the organization. The changes made over the next 3 years have been transformative with a few bumps but mostly very notable successes. She developed a strong staff to support and implement her plan.

The Board, and I am sure you all, wish to express our appreciation to Mary Ann for her dedicated efforts. She still has a tough 3 months to go but we wish her the best in her next life's chapter.

Motion to adjourn



