



Board Meeting Minutes, Tuesday, June 10, 2025, 2:00 pm to 3:30 pm

The meeting was held at the home of Margie Gibson, Past President

Called to order at 2:00 pm.

Present: Cara Staab, Vice-President, presiding in the absence of the President; Betty Spence, Secretary; Margie Gibson, Past President; Marty Eberhardt, Elroy Limmer; Donald Graves, guest

Absent: Donna Stevens, President – proxy given to Cara Staab; Naava Koenigsberg, Treasurer; David Philips – proxy given to Betty Spence

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the Board meeting of April 8, 2025, were approved.

Board, Committee and Other Reports:

Give Grandly Final Update: Prior to the meeting, Marty circulated the following final report on the results of our participation in the Give Grandly 2025 event:

“We had a gratifying response at Give Grandly, given people’s uncertainty about their disposable income in these times, and given the dire needs in many areas. Many thanks to Donna, Betty, Don, Phil Hastings, Janice Embree-Bevers and Jon and Priscilla Titus for staffing the booth, Jim Blurton for his usual excellent set-up help, Naava for getting the cash ready and the results accounted for, Donna for clean-up, and Betty for writing thank you letters.

Here are the results:

Give Grandly 2025

Total Donations	3,831.00
Targeted for SCBG	850.00
Untargeted	2,981.00
60% to SCBG	1,788.60
40% to GNPS	1,192.40

39 total donations, 25 on the Give Grandly website, 14 via other methods (cash, check, PayPal). Donations came from 21 GNPS members, 14 non-members.”

Marty also noted that the donation level was our highest ever in the years we had participated in the annual Give Grandly events. Next year the Gila Community Foundation (formerly the Grant County Community Foundation) would be expecting participating nonprofits to do more of the organizing. Betty reported that tax-receipt and thank-you letters had been sent to all donors, except for two who had not supplied email or home addresses.

Silva Creek Botanical Garden Steering Committee Report: Prior to the meeting, Marty circulated the following Steering Committee report as of June 10, 2025:

“The entrance signs are up on Virginia Street. Check them out! We are now working actively with Steve Morgan on the sign frame for the welcome sign, and with Laura Howell on the graphics for that sign. We’ll soon be working on habitat thicket sign graphics.

We are also working with Steve on getting a bid for the pavers and trying to line up YCC to move the pathway. This will involve cutting back on the cactus garden a bit; we feel it needs renovating in any case.

Mural camp starts next month! We’ll soon have a lovely mural. The donor/volunteer tile policy is being presented at this board meeting in anticipation of that event.

One of the to-do items that came out of our planning meeting was to create an events policy, which is included as an action item at this board meeting.”

Discussion: Marty added that the hardest part of the Steering Committee’s job was lining up and working with contractors. She reported that the Steering Committee had had a good meeting with Jacqui Olea, the Assistant Town Manager. In our contract with the Town there was a slight discrepancy: in one place it indicated a one-year duration and in another a four-year duration (four years also appears on the purchase-order form we use with the Town). She would continue to gently nudge Jacqui to get that straightened out.

Education Team Report: Prior to the meeting, Don Graves circulated a report on the Spring 2025 events and activities of the GNPS Education Team. They included the development of a native plant/native bee display; coordination with the wall mural project; displays and activities at GNPS tables at CD Trail Days and Give Grandly; and participation with other organizations in a Journey Through the Food System event for children at San Lorenzo Elementary. The Education Committee’s most recent event (May 27) involved native plant instruction at the Silva Creek Botanical Garden for two 4th grade classes from José Barrios Elementary School, in which about 40 students cycled through three stations about plant adaptations and identification; plant uses and journaling; and seed planting and plant structure. The Education

Team hoped to be able to get more schools to participate in such events by the end of the year.

Thank-You to Betsy Kaido: Margie reported that she had found a pair of gift earrings and had given them to Betsy along with a card thanking her for her services to GNPS as Bulletin editor and membership coordinator. Betsy had expressed special appreciation for the comments on the card.

Unfinished and General Business

Picnic Seating Feedback: Cara asked for feedback on the method of mixing up the seating at our May joint picnic with the Bird Alliance. Board members agreed that it had worked well and that people had seemed happy to go along with sharing a table with people they didn't know. Cara noted that the volunteer sheet put out at the picnic had garnered a couple of offers to work in the garden, and Margie asked that those names be forwarded to the Garden Management Team. There was also a response to the request for volunteers to provide snacks at upcoming evening programs.

Bulletin Editor Update: Cara reported that no volunteers had come forward so far to replace Betsy Kaido as Bulletin editor. Donna had agreed to do the next issue as a stopgap. Jeff Boyd might be willing to work with her.

New Business

Native Bee Workshop Proposal: Prior to the meeting Don Graves circulated the following proposal.

"Olivia Messinger Carril has agreed to teach a workshop on native bees, much like the workshop that NPSNM hosted in Santa Fe last year. It would run from August 12-15 (3.5 days) here in Silver City. I would like GNPS to consider sponsoring this workshop. Participants will provide their own food and lodging, a lab fee (if any) and compensation for Olivia. GNPS will not be responsible for any funding or upfront costs. My request is that participants should send payment for the WNMU lab fee and instructor compensation to the GNPS Treasurer, who will then pay WNMU and Olivia Messinger Carril at the end of the workshop. I can be available to present to the Board."

Discussion: Don further explained that a lab at WNMU could be available for the workshop at a cost of \$69, according to Professor Bill Norris. The workshop would be open to all NPSNM members, and the information should go out to the presidents of the other chapters. Participants would be asked to sign liability waivers. Board members expressed enthusiasm for the project. Betty noted that Naava, our GNPS Treasurer, had said that she was fine with the arrangement but had stipulated that payments would have to be by check.

Motion: The Board agrees to sponsor the Native Bee Workshop as outlined in the proposal.

Book Sales: Adding the *Southwest Native Plant Primer*

Don had alerted the Board that Jack Dash, employee of the Tucson Desert Museum and active in the Native Plant Society of Arizona, would be introducing his new book, *Southwest Native Plant Primer: 235 Plants for an Earth-friendly Garden*, at the Whiskey Creek Zócalo, tentatively on August 1, 2025, shortly after its release. (The Silva Creek Botanical Garden is featured in the book, along with Betsy Kaido's native plant landscaping.) Cara asked whether the Board thought GNPS should carry the book for sale. Board members agreed that the book sounded interesting, but for the sake of due diligence we should first take a good look at it, and then find out what we would pay for it and figure out what we should charge. Cara said that she would follow up with Donna.

SCBG Tile Project: Criteria and Nominations for Star Volunteers: Prior to the meeting, Margie circulated two documents, one proposing the criteria for inclusion of donors' and volunteers' names on the wall mural and another suggesting a list of exceptional GNPS volunteers to date (Star Volunteers) to be so included.

Wall Criteria

Her proposed criteria for inclusion on the wall were as follows:

"Donors

Minimum donation levels:

\$500 for any individual or a non-profit organization.

\$1000 for any agency or business.

Star Volunteers

The general criteria are someone who goes above and beyond, has been an active member of the board, a committee, or other volunteer effort for at least four years, made a real difference to GNPS and/or the garden, and works well with others.

The nominee does not necessarily have to meet all the criteria. Self-nominations are acceptable. The GNPS Board will decide who is accepted.

In Memoriam/ In Honor of

Family members and friends may donate \$500 to honor an individual or in memory of someone who has passed away. Non-members cannot be included."

Discussion: Board members approved the term "Star Volunteers" to designate exceptional volunteers and agreed with the minimum donation levels. It was felt, however, that opening nominations to the membership, especially self-nominations, could result in some embarrassment or heart-burning; it was suggested that the words "Self-nominations are acceptable" should be deleted. Cara questioned whether, under the "In Memoriam" section, it was appropriate to specify that "non-members cannot be included," since the site of the Silva

Creek Botanical Garden belonged to the Town of Silver City and was a public resource, but Marty and others said that it was not unusual for non-profit organizations that managed a public space to give its members that privilege. However, it was suggested that the wording should be changed to “The honoree must have been a member.” Margie noted that the approved Wall Criteria should appear both under GNPS Policies and Garden Policies and could be revisited later if further thoughts arose.

Motion: The Board adopts the proposed Wall Criteria with the two changes mentioned and decides that they should appear on the website under both the general GNPS Policies in Effect and the Garden Policies.

Current list of Star Volunteers

In making up the tentative list of Star Volunteers, Margie explained that she had consulted Elroy and older GNPS members such as Angela Flanders. The idea was to include not just garden volunteers but all exceptional GNPS volunteers to date going back to the founding of the organization.

She described the way the Steering Committee proposed to reflect those names: “The new wall in the SCBG will have space to honor exceptional GNPS volunteers. A vine will wander between the three tile panels reflecting the garden's themes (people, wildlife, and climate). The Steering Committee proposes a flower design (our logo, *Potentilla thurberi*) for volunteers with their name inscribed on a petal. Diana Ingalls Leyba has agreed to create these, including as more volunteers or donors are added.”

Discussion: Board members approved of the list of Star Volunteers. Margie suggested that we should probably wait for a year before adding more names. Betty pointed out that, although the *Potentilla thurberi* image was used on our website opening page, the official GNPS logo featured a *Geranium caespitosum*; Board members agreed that the logo image was the one that should be used on the mural.

Motion: The Board approved the list of Star Volunteers to be included on the wall mural this summer.

Garden Events Policy: Prior to the meeting Marty had circulated a proposal for an action item to frame a SCBG events policy in anticipation of increased visitation at the garden. The proposed language was as follows:

“The Silva Creek Botanical Garden is not available for parties unless they are an official function of the Gila Native Plant Society. Special events and classes, such as bird counts or plein air painting classes, may be permitted but must be approved by the Steering Committee of the Garden.”

Discussion: Marty explained the new main entrance, the mural wall and other improvements, as well as the opening of the Waterworks across the creek, could be expected to draw more

people to the garden. SCBG should be seen as a living museum, not a park, so that it was reasonable to limit some public uses. Jacqui Olea, the Assistant Town Manager, concurred with that living museum concept. Board members agreed with the intent of the policy, but suggested changes to the second sentence. It was not appropriate in a policy to mention specific examples, like bird counts or plein air classes, but it would be wise to give an idea of the kind of events that were permitted. After discussion the sentence was amended to read: "Educational, scientific and/or artistic events may be permitted but must be approved by the Steering Committee of the Garden."

Motion: The Board approves the garden events policy as amended.

Board and Committee Event: Cara suggested that it would be good to bring Board members and GNPS volunteers together in a social event about once a year, preferably outdoors. Board members agreed that it was a good idea, perhaps in the fall. Discussions of a venue were inconclusive.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Betty Spence
Secretary, Gila Native Plant Society