

President's Prize -- Ann MacKenzie

This award is given at the President's discretion in recognition of a member for unusual support of the Club and its aims.

The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club is blessed to have members with an interest in natural history but with expertise that serves the Club in areas of management and administration. Ann Mackenzie is such a person. She has served the Club very well in the role of President (2012 – 2013), Past President (2014 – 2016) and Treasurer (since 2017). I thank her for this.

However, I am recognizing Ann for her on-going work on the Club's financial sustainability and for her dedication to promote financial professionalism and accountability within the Club. If one reviews how the Club's financial operations have changed, there is a constant theme. That is, Ann has striven to enhance the Club's awareness of its financial responsibilities and execution. Today's Club financial procedures and policies have been modernized and in some areas revolutionized.

Before Ann became President, the Club was running unsustainable deficits. Yet there was no attempt to address this issue. Ann dared to suggest an increase in annual fees for the first time in almost 18 years. The practice of a separate fee for paper copies of the *Canadian Field-Naturalist* was implemented. And she fully supported the project to put the *Canadian Field-Naturalist* online to reduce costs.

In November 2015, Ann responded to an announcement of changes to the Ontario *Not-for-Profit Corporations Act* with a review and update of the long-obsolete Articles and By-Laws of the Club's Constitution. This also included a call for all Club committees to

update their Terms of Reference. The job is not over. The proclamation of that act has been delayed.

The receipt of a large bequest from Violetta Czasak led to Ann's recognizing future potential problems with regard to financial management and transparency. She subsequently developed an OFNC Investment Guidelines Policy and initiated the development of Club policy to administer bequests. The latter has supported local community projects in natural history and scientific research projects and has brought increased public recognition for the Club.

Each January the Board of Directors has first-time members. Ann, and probably only she, recognized the need for a guide to help these members become familiar with their roles and expectations. She published the March 2018 Directors' Handbook that all Directors have access to online.

Lastly, Ann has changed how the office of the Treasurer operates. In the past, the Treasurer did it all by his/herself. Within the last year, she brought in "new" volunteers to assist with investment management and the receipt of monies from membership and donations. Hopefully they will stay in the Club and make other contributions in future. It must also be mentioned that Ann has brought in online payment by the Treasurer of financial claims from Club members and the automated printing of income tax receipts for donations.

I wish to award Ann the President's Prize for 2018, with very best wishes and congratulations.

Presented by Diane Lepage, President