

## Friends of Nachusa Grasslands 2022 Annual Meeting Minutes July 30, 2022; Updated August 28, 2022

### Present:

Elizabeth Bach, Dave Brewer, Bernie Buchholz, Michael Carr, Molly Duncan, Heather Herakovich, Betty Higby, Dee Hudson, Eric Kingery, Bill Kleiman, Susan Kleiman, Charles Larry, Mary Meier, Tim Ngo, Stew Pagenstecher, Joe Richardson, Mike Saxton, Emmylou Studier, and Mary Vieregg

The meeting took place at the Nachusa Grasslands Headquarters and also via Zoom, an online video and audio sharing service.

**Exhibits:** Links to the exhibits shared during the meeting are posted on the Friends of Nachusa Grasslands 2022 Annual Meeting web page (<https://www.nachusagrasslands.org/friends-annual-meeting-2022.html>). Note that these and other hyperlinks don't always work on the PDFs uploaded to the Friends website – request a personal copy if you want one.

- [2021-2022 Treasurer's Report](#)
- [2021-2022 Endowment Balances and Distributions](#)
- [Revenue and Distributions Designations](#)
- [Cash Flow Model](#)
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- [2022 Board Candidates](#)
- [Friends of Nachusa Grasslands Final SAS Report FY21](#)
- [Friends of Nachusa Grasslands Final Audit Report FY21](#)
- [A Prairie Calling Newsletter](#)
- [Social Media Report – Team Members and Website Statistics](#)
- [Social Media Report – Facebook and MailChimp \*Prairie\*-Updates](#)
- [Social Media Report – Instagram, Twitter, Blog, and Friday Science](#)
- [Potential Scientific Research Topics at Nachusa Grasslands](#)
- [Friends of Nachusa Grasslands Donor Communication Strategy](#)
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- [Friends of Nachusa Grasslands Whistleblower Policy](#)

**Opening:** Vice President Mike Saxton called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m.

- Bernie Buchholz noted that Friends is starting its 15<sup>th</sup> year, as the organization was founded in 2008.
- He reviewed our mission: to build endowments that will help defray the cost of natural areas management, staff and operating expenses; conduct and encourage stewardship; support education and scientific activity; and fund land acquisition at the preserve.
- Recruiting and developing volunteers remain our most challenging goal.
- For details on our goals, see the [Mission and Leadership](#) page on the Friends website.

- Bernie also stated that the Friends Bylaws establish that we are a strong Board-led organization. The voting members elect the Board of Directors, and then the Board makes all the decisions affecting the group by a majority vote, after listening to the views expressed by the members.

**Quorum:** A quorum (10% of the 50 potential voting members) was established.

- Friends of Nachusa Grasslands Voting Member Description from Bylaws: Any person may become a voting member who has either (i) been a volunteer at the Preserve for the full calendar year prior to the Annual Meeting, has contributed at least forty (40) hours during that year and has paid the annual dues; or (ii) been a volunteer at the Preserve for at least three (3) years of the preceding ten (10) years with a minimum contribution of forty (40) hours in each of those years and has paid the annual dues.
- The members have decided that a donation of any amount qualifies as dues.

**2021 Annual Meeting Minutes:** The 2021 minutes were approved as presented.

**Board of Directors Election:** The membership unanimously elected Mike Carr and Heather Herakovich to additional two-year terms (2022-2024).

- Descriptions of their involvement at Nachusa is provided in the “2022 Board Candidates” document on the Annual Meeting web page.
- Charles Larry continues to serve his two-year term (2021-2023).

**Election of Officers by Board of Directors:** The Board elected the following officers for one-year terms: President: Bernie Buchholz; Vice President: Mike Saxton; Vice President: Mary Vieregg; Treasurer: Mark Jordan; and Secretary: Mary Meier.

- Note that Mark Jordan has notified Friends that he will soon be transitioning out of his role. In August 2022, the Board of Directors appointed Eric Kingery as his replacement.
- Thank you to Mark for his faithful service for the past three years.

**Cash Flow Model:** To help members and supporters better understand the sources and utilization of Friends income and the role of the Board of Directors in directing the money to the appropriate funds, the Friends of Nachusa Grasslands Cash Flow Model was discussed.

**Friends of Nachusa Grasslands Treasurer's Report 2021-2022:** Bernie presented a revenue / disbursements / expenditures report covering July 1, 2021, to June 30, 2022, as well as the proposed budget for July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2023.

- Bernie pointed out key details and highlights of the Treasurer's report, which is appended to the end of these minutes.
- He mentioned that Friends is in a unique position, as we don't have to establish a target income goal to stay in business. As we are an all-volunteer organization with expenses of about 4% of our budget, almost all of our revenue can go toward science grants and endowments. Mary M. said that she has included this information on various donation-related web pages and encouraged everyone to share that very impressive statistic with others.

**2021-2022 Revenue and Disbursements (unaudited):**

- We started the year with \$37,919 and ended with \$130,020 in our checking account.
- Total revenue from all sources was \$771,900, including cash donations, CRP payments, endowment income, grants, Amazon Smile proceeds, and t-shirt revenue.
- Disbursements of \$677,371 in support of our mission were made to the Friends Endowment for Nachusa Grasslands managed by the Community Foundation of Northern Illinois, the Friends Endowment for Nachusa Science, managed by the Community Foundation of Northern Illinois, the Nachusa Grasslands Stewardship Endowment, managed by The Nature Conservancy, Land Protection Fund, science grants, symposium, Nachusa operations via TNC, stewardship, other organizations, and t-shirt expenses.
- Expenses of \$24,265 included government fees, auditing fees, insurance, and development. The development category includes expenses related to fundraising, donor acknowledgments, various publications, the annual meeting, and the Prairie Potluck.

**2022-2023 Proposed Budget:** Bernie reviewed the proposed budget, which is included in the Treasurer's Report.

- Income of \$849,000 and disbursements/expenditures of \$875,650 are projected.
- The budget was approved by the Board of Directors.

**Grants Received:** Friends worked on several grant projects last year:

- **Hamill Family Foundation:** We are in the third and final year of our current Hamill Family Foundation (HFF) challenge grant program, and we hope to extend it for future years. Friends received \$200,000 in grants from the Hamill Family Foundation in 2021-2022. The various HFF challenges were discussed later in the meeting.
- **TAWANI Foundation:** We are in the first year of a very stringent matching challenge for scientific research funding. Our first installment of \$20,000 plus a \$5,000 gift were received in June 2022.
- **Illinois Clean Energy Foundation (ICE):** In 2021-2022, we received a total of \$26,000 for our most recent Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation's Community Stewardship Challenge Grant Program. The current project is located at Stone Barn Savanna and is being coordinated by Mike Carr. Proceeds are used to purchase herbicide.
- **John R. Flanagan Charitable Foundation:** Friends received a \$25,000 unrestricted grant from this private foundation.
- **Etnyre Foundation:** In 2022, Friends was awarded \$4,810 from the Etnyre Foundation for the purchase of community science monitoring equipment that Friends then gave to The Nature Conservancy. Thank you to Elizabeth Bach for assisting us in the grant application.

**Endowment Balances and Distributions:** Friends has three Endowments, all with permanent principal.

- Each of the endowments follows very similar investment strategies.

- Annual distributions are 4-to-5% of each endowment balance, based on historical multi-year balances. Distributions will continue to grow as the principal increases.
- The Nachusa Grasslands Stewardship Endowment was set up in 2009 through an agreement with The Nature Conservancy (TNC). The June 30, 2022, preliminary balance was \$812,365, and the 2021-2022 fiscal year distribution was \$30,687, which TNC paid to itself for Nachusa operation expenses.
- The Friends Endowment for Nachusa Grasslands, held and managed by the Community Foundation of Northern Illinois (CFNIL), was established in 2014 at the request of donors who prefer local control of their gifts. The June 30, 2022, balance before investment results was \$2,528,187, and the 2021-2022 fiscal year distribution was \$89,243. The distribution increased to about \$97,000 for 2022-2023.
- The Friends Endowment for Nachusa Science, held and managed by CFNIL, was established in 2020. As of June 30, 2022, the balance before investment results was \$239,147, and the 2021-2022 distribution was \$4,108.

### **Current Financial Objectives:**

- **Operating Endowments** – The Friends Endowment for Nachusa Grasslands managed by the Community Foundation of Northern Illinois (CFNIL) and the Nachusa Grasslands Stewardship Endowment managed by The Nature Conservancy (TNC): Increase the combined balance to \$5 million, which will generate \$200,000+ annually for Nachusa operations.
- **Science Endowment** – The Friends Endowment for Nachusa Science managed by CFNIL: Increase balance to \$1 million, which will generate \$40,000 annually for science grants.
- Bernie noted that our combined endowment goal of \$6 million may be achievable in about three years if current fundraising results continue.
- **Land Protection Fund:** Add \$50,000/year. Annually fund 5% of land acquisition cost (assumes 5% of 100 acres @\$10,000/acre) when assistance is requested by TNC. As of now, TNC has not asked for any contributions from Friends. We hope to provide part of the match required by the foundations that fund the bulk of Nachusa acquisitions. Our gift would act as seed money to encourage contributions by others, thereby maintaining land acquisition momentum. This money is in a separate savings passbook account, so it is liquid.

**Cash Flow Designations:** Because (1) the two CFNIL endowments generate dramatically higher returns than the TNC endowment and (2) the CFNIL distributions are controlled by Friends, the Board has adopted the following policy:

- After donor designations are honored and expenses are paid, all remaining revenue will be directed to either the CFNIL endowments or to the Land Protection Fund. All CRP receipts will also go to the CFNIL endowments.
- We intend that revenue will be allocated to the two CFNIL endowments and the Land Protection Fund such that progress toward the goals for those accounts (stated above) will advance in a roughly proportional manner from year to year.
- Current year Science Grants will be funded as an expense before distributions to CFNIL endowments and the Land Protection Fund.

- The annual endowment distribution from the Friends Endowment for Nachusa Grasslands (CFNIL) will be paid to TNC for operations at NG. The distribution from the Friends Endowment for Nachusa Science (CFNIL) will be paid to Friends to fund science grants

**Audit:** In the State of Illinois, a certified audit is required if a nonprofit has annual gross revenue that exceeds \$300,000.

- Our audit for the year ending June 30, 2021, had very positive results, except for concerns about our internal controls, mainly segregation of duties, that were noted by the auditors in a letter that accompanied the Financial Statement. These issues are very common with small volunteer organizations.
- Both our Quickbooks subscription, which has greatly improved our recording and reporting efforts, and our bylaw that all checks must be signed by two authorized individuals help guard against possible financial malfeasance.

**Community Science:** Elizabeth reported on various community science projects that are taking place at Nachusa, including stream, dragonfly, frog, and butterfly monitoring. All of these efforts have been ongoing for several years and contribute to our scientific understanding of Nachusa's ecosystem.

- Mary Vieregg, RiverWatch coordinator, said that four Nachusa waterways were sampled in 2022. She mentioned that the team might find another site along Johnny Creek to monitor in addition to the current one, as the bison have had a significant negative impact on the area.
- Mike S. and Elizabeth thanked all the volunteers who participate in community science at Nachusa.
- See [Community Scientists at Nachusa Grasslands](#) for additional information.

### **Volunteer Development:**

**Volunteer Workday Leaders:** Steward leaders should sign up via SignUpGenius, using the link on the Friends website home page.

- Leadership signups are going well.
- They should not record five of their volunteer hours in Volgistics, as Mary adds two hours to each date when they lead a workday.

**Autumn on the Prairie:** Dee announced that Autumn on the Prairie will take place on September 17, 2022.

- Susan, Bill, Dee, and John Schmadeke are on the committee.
- They have decided to pare down the event by not having as many vendors, although the Discovery Tent, raptors, and Oliver's food service will be provided.
- Hiking and bison tours will be offered, similar to previous years.
- John has finalized the hike schedule, and Susan has sent out a SignUpGenius for volunteers.

**Volunteer Recruitment Video:** Mike S. shared that his proposal of creating a video was implemented by Bernie, Dee, and Greg Baker.

- See [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B09Hd6\\_Ww5g](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B09Hd6_Ww5g) for this excellent four-minute invitation to volunteer at Nachusa.
- The Friends Social Media Team has featured the video on the website home page, pinned it to the top of the Facebook page, and included the link in a *Prairie-Update* and workday email.
- Please share the link on your social media and suggest other ways to use the video.

**Volunteer Appreciation Potluck:** On October 15, TNC will host an event thanking our Nachusa volunteers.

- Activities will include a potluck lunch, hikes, and bison tours.
- Watch for an invitation in late September.

### **Hamill Family Foundation (HFF) Challenges:**

#### ***New Volunteers/New Donors – 2019-2020:***

- Goal: A combination of 150 new donors, donations from donors who last gave three years ago, and new volunteers from November 1, 2019, to October 31, 2020.
- Friends reached the goal and received \$100,000 in January 2021.

#### ***Revenue Increase – 2020-2021:***

- Goal: Increase of \$100,000 over average revenues in the preceding five years (\$326,357) from July 1, 2020, to June 30, 2021, excluding any donations from HFF.
- Friends reached the goal and received \$100,000 in January 2022.

#### ***Total Volunteer Hours – 2022:***

- Goal: 8,000 or more total volunteer hours to be logged from January 1, 2022, to December 31, 2022, including Friends Board and Officers organizational activities.
- Amount: \$100,000 payable in January 2023.
- Starting January 1, 2022, stewards and other regular volunteers have been recording their hours.
- Any Nachusa-related volunteer hours count, not just stewardship in the field.
- As of June 30, we have logged about 4,000 hours, so we are halfway to our goal.

HFF also gave Friends additional \$100,000 outright grants for three years, from January 2020 to January 2022.

- Friends is very grateful for the foundation's generous support of our mission.
- Bernie is developing a proposal for a renewal of the HFF grant.

**Volgistics Volunteer Management Software:** Stewards, leaders, and active volunteers are using this software to record their unscheduled volunteer hours.

- Please contact Dee with questions or assistance in navigating the website.
- Volunteer hours recorded in SignUpGenius should not be recorded in Volgistics.
- Each month, SignUpGenius hours for workday leaders, workday participants, tour leaders, and docents are exported to Excel and calculated. Two hours are added to workday leader times, and one hour is added to docent and tour leader times. These hours are included in our cumulative HFF Challenge totals.

- Hours served by volunteers who don't have Volgistics accounts can be reported to Dee for recording.
- Tracking hours spent on various projects will be very helpful during transitions as newer volunteers become engaged.
- Accurate totals may also be useful when applying for grants.
- In the future, the Board may adapt our goal related to total volunteer hours.

**Workdays:** Thursday and Saturday workdays continue to be offered from May to February.

- Registration via SignUpGenius is still required.
- Volunteer participation has decreased recently, perhaps because of the Covid-19 pandemic, gas prices, inflation, or the extreme summer heat.
- Ideas for increasing volunteerism are welcome.
- Stewards can consider reaching out to former regular volunteers to encourage them to become involved again, as a human connection can be very effective.
- Mike C. offered several woodland plant ID workdays during the spring as part of our Illinois Clean Energy Stewardship Project. They were very popular and resulted in volunteers identifying several species new to our plant list.
- Mike S. mentioned that new ideas can lead to great results. Dee concurred, describing the very popular Prairie Tea and Tinctures tour that Heather Baker led on August 14.

## **Annual Fundraising Results:**

### ***Total 2021-2022 Donations to Friends Recorded in Neon CRM: \$626,111***

• Undesignated	\$439,174
• Nachusa Grasslands Stewardship Endowment (TNC)	\$9,095
• Friends Endowment for Nachusa Grasslands (CFNIL)	\$64,655
• Friends Endowment for Nachusa Science (CFNIL)	\$57,469
• Friends Fund for Science	\$40,630
• Friends Land Protection Fund	\$15,088

Note that these amounts deviate slightly from what is in the Treasurer's Report, due to differences in fees deducted and recording methodology.

Decrease in Donations from 2020-2021: \$146,723 (-19%)

### ***Donation Tender Types:***

- Check/Cash Donations: 255 / \$537,681 [2020-2021 – 407 / \$746,858]
- Credit Card/E-Check/Wire/Stock-Securities Donations: 486 (many recurring) / \$88,430 [2020-2021 – \$25,996 / 306]

### ***Donors:***

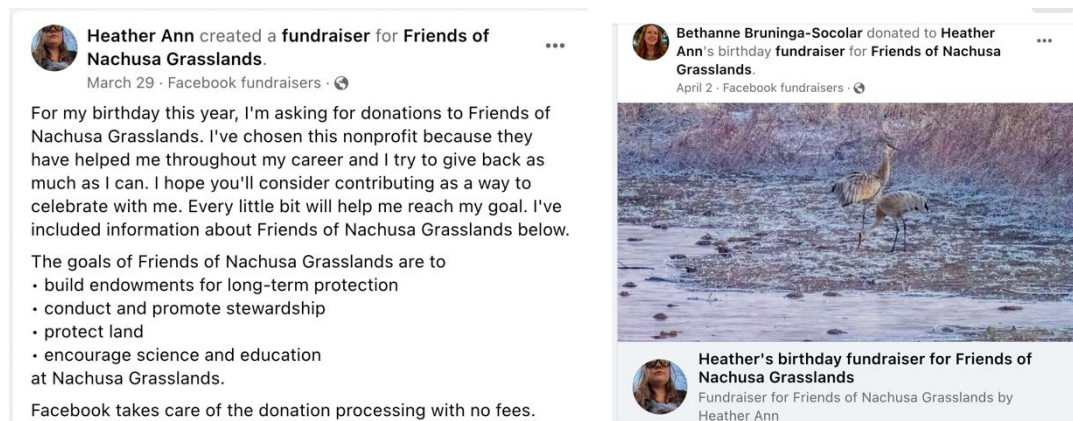
- Total Donor Households 2021-2022: 338 [2020-2021 – 348]
- New Donors 2021-2022: 63 [2020-2021 – 86]

### **Donor Tiers:**

- Restoration Benefactors – \$5,000 or more: 19 [2020-2021 – 24]
- Conservation Champions – \$1,500 to \$4,999: 20 [2020-2021 – 13]
- Supporters – \$1 to \$1,499: 299 [2020-2021 – 311]

### **Facebook Fundraising:**

- In late 2021, Friends signed up for Facebook fundraising tools.
  - Facebook sends tax acknowledgments and provides a report to Friends about a month after each campaign or donation.
  - Donor names, but not contact information, are provided in the Facebook report.
- Science Campaign: \$2,695 from 26 donors (14 new)
  - In February 2022, the Social Media Team conducted our inaugural Facebook fundraising campaign as part of the TAWANI Science Challenge.
  - With Philip Juris' permission, we featured his paintings of Nachusa and offered his book as incentives for one new donor via a drawing and also to the two highest donors.
- Birthday Fundraisers: \$105 from 4 donors (2 new)
  - Heather Herakovich set up our first Facebook birthday fundraiser.
  - If you have recorded your birthday in your Facebook profile, you will receive an invitation prior to your birthday to create a fundraiser.
  - Search for Friends of Nachusa Grasslands.
  - Default text has been set up, and you can specify your goal and other details encouraging your Facebook friends to support your cause.
  - Your Facebook friends will see your birthday fundraiser in their feed.
  - Also, if you donate to another Facebook friend's fundraiser for Friends of Nachusa Grasslands, your Facebook friends will see that you did so, which is good publicity for our organization.



- Online Donations: \$50 from 1 donor, using the “Donate” button on our Facebook page.

**Prairie Perennials:** Donors who have given to the Friends of Nachusa Grasslands in consecutive years [July 1 through June 30] at the same or a higher level: 185 [2020-2021 – 154]



**Recurring Donors:** 33 [2020-2021 – 37]

- Donors can give regularly through NeonPay, PayPal, or their employers on a monthly or other timeframe basis.
- For our online donations, the fees for checking account donations are slightly lower than credit card ones.

**Voting Members:** 50 Nachusa volunteers donated to Friends during the 2021-2022 fiscal year. [2020-2021 – 38]

**Charity Navigator and GuideStar/Candid Ratings:**

- The Charity Navigator rating for Friends of Nachusa Grasslands is now 100! We have fulfilled all the necessary requirements for the best rating possible.
- GuideStar is now called Candid, and we have a 2022 Gold Transparency rating.
- Links to both profiles are included in the Friends “Mission and Leadership” and “Donate” pages.

**Thanks to Our Nachusa Staff:** Bernie, Mary M., and others thanked Bill, Cody, Elizabeth, Susan, and Dee for their support of our organization.

**Heritage Heroes Legacy Project:**

- Heritage Heroes is a Friends initiative that encourages planned giving among Friends donors and other individuals or households.
- We expect that revenue from bequests will help us reach our financial goals, as various entities have reported that proceeds can be very substantial, averaging about \$500,000 per bequest.
- To date, 25 couples or individuals have named or are committed to naming Friends in their estate plans or as a beneficiary of life insurance or retirement accounts – an increase of 6 in the past year.
- We have set a goal of developing 40 Heritage Heroes during the next decade.

**Communications:**

**A *Prairie Calling* Newsletter:** A *Prairie Calling* (APC) is a newsletter covering various topics related to Nachusa Grasslands aimed at a popular, broad audience.

- The newsletter is snail mailed to Friends supporters and several other people interested in our organization.
- Links to digital copies are emailed to donors as well as researchers, volunteers, and crew members.
- Authors approach their subject matter in a less scientific way with an emphasis on images.
- The newsletter has received very favorable responses from recipients.
- Currently, the APC comes out three times per year: February, May, and August.
- The publication is a team effort with Charles Larry as editor-in-chief (replacing Bernie Buchholz), Dee Hudson as designer, and James Higby as editor.

- Past issues have focused on Nachusa's bees, dragonflies and damselflies, parasitic plants, oak savannas, prairie restoration, moths, winter photography, and grassland birds. The next issue is on the annual bison roundup.
- See <https://www.nachusagrasslands.org/digital-prairie-newsletter.html> for links to PDF versions of the newsletters.
- Mike S. praised the quality of the newsletters.

**Annual Report:** Our 2021-2022 Friends Annual Report theme will be related to "Plant Love Stories," focusing on plants important to our lives.

- More submissions of 25 to 700 words from Nachusa Grasslands volunteers and supporters are needed.
- Contact Bernie for details.

**Thank You Notes:** Emmylou reported that she and Marilyn Carr sent 372 handwritten thank you notes to all of our donors (once each summer to recurring donors).

- Earlier this year, Marilyn resigned from the role due to health issues – we thank her for her service and wish her well. Emmylou is considering whether she needs a new assistant.
- The cards have photos on the front and the Friends' contact information and mission statement on the back. Some notes also include additional photos.
- Turnaround time from when Mary M. sends a formal donation acknowledgment is now about 1.5 days.
- The cost is approximately \$1.60 each, more if photos are included.
- Emmylou and Marilyn were commended for their amazing timeliness and dedication to the project.

**Appreciation Books for New Donors:** Marilyn continues to mail *The Prairie – Swell and Swale* book by Torkel Korling to first-time donors.

- This year, she mailed 21 books.
- Note that we don't send them to people who give amounts under our cutoff, company matches, memorials, or appreciations, as well as those who don't provide their addresses.

**Social Media Team:** The Social Media Team consists of Dee Hudson, Mary Meier, Joy McKinney, Heather Herakovich, Erin Rowland, Eric Kingery, Chantelle Edmunds, Ron Searl, and Mary Paliga. Ron and Mary are new to the group.

- Charles Larry doesn't attend our Zoom meetings, but he continues to contribute marvelous photographs to our social media platforms.
- We welcome new members, especially ones interested in helping with our Twitter, Instagram, and Blog posts.

**Website** ([www.nachusagrasslands.org](http://www.nachusagrasslands.org)): Mary M. noted that the Friends' website receives quite a bit of traffic and is continually under development.

- In the past year, we had about 66,000 page views by 30,000 unique visitors (an increase of about 23,000 compared to last year).
- Several pages have recently been added or revised, and suggestions for new pages are welcome.

- The most popular pages are Home, Bison, Directions, and Hiking Destinations.
- Bernie thanked the team for keeping the website relevant and informative.

**Facebook:** Mary M. reported that the Friends of Nachusa Grasslands Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/Nachusa>) has about 7,000 followers, reaching about 9,500 to 10,000 users each month, as people share various posts.

- Mary M., Dee, and Charles update the page frequently with beautiful photos, workday news, blog posts, and links to other items of interest.
- We are always careful to project a good impression of what happens at Nachusa and highlight Friends involvement as appropriate.
- Charles is the administrator for the Photography at Nachusa Grasslands Facebook group (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/356617574475489/?ref=bookmarks>).
- He has about 1,575 followers who post a variety of photos of flowers, birds, and bison.

**MailChimp *Prairie-Updates* and Workday Emails:** Friends has a free MailChimp subscription.

- The *Prairie-Update* has about 1,250 subscribers.
- Mary M. is the editor. She sent 4 newsletters from September 2021 to July 2022. Open rates are about 50%.
- In mid-May 2022, Mary started using MailChimp to send workday emails to 380 recipients. The open rate is approximately 40%.
- Recipients can unsubscribe from either type of email, but very few do.

**Instagram** (Nachusa; <https://instagram.com/nachusa?igshid=aq74ny20ovk>): Dee reported that Instagram has a total of 1,779 followers.

- See the report linked to the annual meeting web page for details on our 2022-2023 goals, follower analytics, and the most popular posts.
- Job postings are the most popular.
- For the first time, Dee created some Instagram Stories to share interesting information.

**Blog** (<https://www.nachusagrasslands.org/nachusa-blog.html>): This year 7 blogs were posted, a decrease from last year.

- Dee is the blog coordinator, and James Higby is the editor.
- Varied topics included butterfly monitoring, restoration crew planting, 2021 science review, bison and grasses, turtle day celebration, the four elements, and the year in photos.
- Goals for 2022-2023 are to continue to create compelling content, creating about a dozen new blogs during the year; discover how to engage the reader so there are more comments; ask a question or ask for feedback; and investigate using Pinterest to drive blog and website content.

**Friday Science Facebook Posts:** Science posts are a great way to draw attention to all the scientific research grants that Friends funds.

- They do not occur every Friday, but whenever there's some interesting science to showcase, and Dee has time to work on them.

- More entries are desired.
- The posts are created by a collaborative effort between the scientist, Elizabeth, and Dee.

**Twitter** (@Nachusa; <https://twitter.com/nachusa>): 163 tweets were made since the last annual meeting and Twitter has gained another 149 followers, for a total of 1,631.

- Heather Herakovich and Dee Hudson manage the Twitter posts.
- Nachusa scientists often mention preserve activities and share posts.

## **Science at Nachusa:**

**Science Grant Program:** Mary V. shared that \$70,000 has been budgeted for the 2023 awards.

- Application and guideline revisions are in process, and the grant announcement will be uploaded to the Friends website and emailed to potential researchers in late August.
- Contact Mary V. if you know anyone new who might be interested in applying.
- Mary V. encouraged attendees to review the list of potential research projects posted on <https://www.nachusagrasslands.org/potential-research-topics.html> and make additional suggestions, so they can be included in future grant applications. Email suggestions to [nachusafriendsscience@gmail.com](mailto:nachusafriendsscience@gmail.com).
- The reports from the 2021 researchers are linked to their project titles on <https://www.nachusagrasslands.org/science-grants-2021.html>.
- In 2022, Friends funded 13 researchers with a total of \$66,000 in grants. For details on these projects, see <https://www.nachusagrasslands.org/science-grants-2022.html>.
- Mary V. thanked the members of the Science Committee. The decision-making process can be very challenging and time consuming for all involved. Additional committee members are welcome and should contact Mary V. if interested.
- Several people noted that the Nachusa Grasslands research program is very well-known in the scientific community and also expressed thanks for Mary V.'s and Elizabeth's continuing dedication to this effort.

**Science Symposium:** Elizabeth Bach coordinated this year's virtual Science Symposium last April.

- About 90 people registered, but fewer attended.
- Feedback was very positive.
- The next symposium is scheduled for April 22, 2023, hopefully in person at the Headquarters Barn.
- Personal interactions and development of presentation skills are enhanced when attendees can be together.

**Researchers at Nachusa:** This year Elizabeth approved 40 research permits for scientists from 16 different institutions.

- Several included large lab groups comprised of both graduate and undergraduate students.

- Nine peer-reviewed papers related to Nachusa science were published, and the fall Illinois TNC newsletter will feature Nachusa's bison herd.
- The new science space is being used quite a bit, and its equipment and furnishings are very helpful for the researchers.
- Nachusa has received a grant from The Nature Conservancy for a weather station, which will be a gateway for environmental sensors across the preserve. It should be installed in late August.

### **Administrative Items and New Business:**

**Policies:** As required by our Bylaws, the Directors and Officers acknowledged that they had all read and were in compliance with the Friends of Nachusa Grasslands Conflict of Interest Policy. Friends also has a Donor Confidentiality Policy, a Whistleblower Policy and a Document Retention Policy.

**Conservation Reserve Program (CRP):** The Federal government reimburses landowners for reserving tillable acreage for wildlife habitat and soil conservation.

- Friends currently leases 279.4 acres in four CRP contracts (139 acres of totally restored prairie; 94.6 acres of partially restored prairie, all at least overseeded with combine mix; and 45.7 acres of unrestored CRP land) from TNC for this purpose and is responsible for monitoring and managing the land.
- Mike C. administers the CRP program. He reported that the areas have been swept for noxious weeds and woody shrubs, so we are in compliance with management obligations.
- In the next three years, some of our contracts will expire, and Bill has been working with Mike to make sure we can add TNC-owned land without bison so that Friends can receive the full \$50,000 maximum allowed from the USDA.
- Bernie mentioned that working with a Federal program can be very challenging, and he thanked Mike for figuring out how to deal with the bureaucratic communications and requirements.

**Friends T-Shirt Initiative:** Heather Baker coordinates our t-shirt program.

- Her 2022 design features a badger on the front and our Friends logo on the back of each shirt.
- Friends sells the shirts at cost, so taxes do not have to be collected.
- The shirts are stored in the Barn loft and can be purchased on an honor system.
- Heather will inventory our supply prior to Autumn on the Prairie.

### **TNC-Nachusa Grasslands Updates by Bill:**

**HQ Renovation:** Modifications to the Headquarters Barn, including expanding gathering areas and remodeling the offices, are in the planning stages.

- The old seed processing area will become the break room with a kitchenette.
- Improvements will include an LCD screen, a fan, and heat, but no air conditioning.
- The offices will be larger, and a small meeting room might be constructed in the loft.
- Construction will begin once TNC finalizes the budget and Bill lines up various contractors.

**Nachusa Staff Updates:** Cody Considine is a leader of a program for The Nature Conservancy focusing on returning bison to Tribal Lands.

- He is funded by a two-year grant that enables him to spend about 80% of his time on the project and 20% on Nachusa-related tasks.
- Phil Nagorny is our Land Steward, and Molly Duncan is Crew Boss. Both have been terrific staff members.
- Several of the summer crew have already left to go back to school, and more should be hired soon.

**2023 Annual Meeting:** The next Friends Annual Meeting will be held on Saturday, July 29, 2023.

**Bernie expressed kudos to everyone who volunteers at Nachusa!**

**Group Photograph:** Thank you to Dee for taking the photo below.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mary Meier, Secretary  
August 28, 2022



## Friends of Nachusa Grasslands Treasurer's Report July 2022

Budget and Actual Results:	2021-2022 Actual (Unaudited)	Percent of Actual	2021-2022 Budget	Variance	Proposed 2022-2023 Budget	Percent of Budget
Beginning Balance	59,757.02		37,919.00		130,020.49	
Revenue						
Cash Donations	243,756.84	31.2	400,000.00	-156243.16	250,000.00	31.7
CRP Annual Payments	50,000.00	6.8	50,000.00	0	50,000.00	6.3
CFNIL General Distribution	89,242.72	19.2	60,000.00	88272.72	96,000.00	12.2
CFNIL Endowment General	58,866.00				64,000.00	8.1
CFNIL Science Distribution	4,108.00				5,000.00	<1.0
CFNIL Science Endowment	39,970.26				40,000.00	5.1
Nachusa Grasslands Stewardship Endowment (TNC)	7,400.00	1			10,000.00	1.3
Friends Fund For Science	11,300.00	1.5			12,000.00	1.5
Fund for Land Protection	4,000.00	<1.0			10,000.00	1.3
Grant Income	261,810.00	33.9	210,000.00	51,800.00	250,000.00	31.7
Amazon Smile Income	98.71	<1.0	100	-1.29	100	<1.0
T-Shirt Income	1,403.00	<1.0	200	1203	1,500.00	<1.0
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>771,899.53</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>720,300.00</b>	<b>91,623.72</b>	<b>788,600.00</b>	<b>100</b>
Disbursements						
In Direct Support of Our Mission Statement						
Gifts to TNC Nachusa Endowment	6,179.00	<1.0	25,000.00	-18,821.00	15,000.00	1.7
Gifts to CFNIL Nachusa Endowment	287,350.00	41	350,250.00	-65,900.00	330,000.00	37.6
Gift to CNFIL Science Endowment	141,650.00	20.2	150,000.00	-8,350.00	210,000.00	23.9
Fund for Land Protection	40,024.19	5.5	50,000.00	-9975.81	50,000.00	5.7
Science Grants	66,394.19	9.5	70,000.00	-3605.81	70,000.00	8
Science Symposium					2,000.00	<1.0
Nachusa Operations via TNC	89,247.72	12.7	42,000.00	47247.72	100,000.00	11.4
Nachusa Operations via TNC Yellow House Stewardship	36,906.00	5.3	3,000.00	33,906.00	12,000.00	1.4
Grants to Other Organizations	4,000.00	<1.0	3,000.00	1,000.00	5,000.00	<1.0
T-Shirt Expenses	3,619.72	<1.0	1,000.00	2619.72	4,000.00	<1.0
Other	2000.45	<1.0	1,000.00	1000.45	1,000.00	<1.0
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>677,371.27</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>695,250.00</b>	<b>-17878.73</b>	<b>849,000.00</b>	<b>97</b>
Expenses						
Banking Fees	30.5	<1.0	100	-69.5	100	<1.0
Government Fees	28	<1.0	50	-22	50	<1.0
Auditing Fees	6,650.00	<1.0	7,500.00	-850	8,000.00	<1.0
Insurance	2,357.00	<1.0	2,400.00	-43	2,500.00	<1.0
Development	15,199.29	2.2	15,000.00	100.29	16,000.00	1.8
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>24,264.79</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>25,050.00</b>	<b>-785.21</b>	<b>26,650.00</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Total Disbursements</b>	<b>701,636.06</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>720,300.00</b>	<b>-18663.94</b>	<b>875,650.00</b>	<b>100</b>
Ending Cash Balance	130,020.49				42970.49	