



National & Chapter Forum

April 13, 2018

INTRODUCTION

It's Friday the 13th, but there's nothing scary about this issue of the Forum – we have lots of good news to share with you today!

In this *Forum*, see:

1. Annual meeting
2. Photo contest is back!
3. The online Wild Store is live
4. Staff update
5. SOCR compilation
6. Members-Only site
7. Best-of Journal (BOJ)
8. Quick reminders

* **Remember:** while the *Forum* is sent to chapter officers, it is intended for all members. Please share with your chapter! *

1. ANNUAL MEETING – August 18

The 2018 Wild Ones Annual Meeting is Saturday, August 18. To enable all chapters near and far to participate, this year's meeting will be a webinar-only event. We will not be holding chapter training and breakout sessions at the meeting this year. What does this mean to chapters?

- You will not have to budget to send representatives to the meeting. Consider how your chapter might use that travel savings this year – is there something you have postponed purchasing? A speaker you've wanted to secure? Perhaps half could be donated in support of a *Best of 2018 Journal*?
- All interested members can participate since no travel is involved. This makes it easier to share information with all chapter members, and to get live feedback from more members as well.
- Chapter members can get together and participate as a group. Have a potluck lunch at a park beforehand, hold chapter training or a meeting before or after the meeting, do a craft project with seed pods or host a yard tour afterward – your imagination is the limit, so make it fun!

Results of the Board of Directors election will be announced at the meeting, and new Directors will be introduced. National president Janice Hand will present the Wild Ones annual report and discuss plans for the rest of 2018 into 2019. Please plan to take part in this very important webinar!

2. PHOTO CONTEST IS BACK!

This popular program is back and seeking your amazing photographs! Look for rules and timing on our website by May 1. Submission and voting will take place via the Members-Only website, so participants need to ensure they have registered their email for online use. Here's how:

- Click the green Member Login button on our main page (www.wildones.org)
- Click “Register Password for Member Here” and follow the instructions.

This is your chance to have your photo featured in a future issue of the Journal, on our website, or maybe even in a brochure. We’re eager to show the world why it’s great to be Wild! Entries are due by June 22, so don’t delay... get out, enjoy the weather, and snap some photos!

3. THE ONLINE WILD STORE IS LIVE

The online Wild Store is now ready for business! Am I crazy to launch the site on Friday the 13th? Probably, but I’m so excited to share our new merchandise with you, I’m doing it anyway.

<https://wildstore.wildones.org> is the link to the new store. Exciting products await, including infant and youth clothing, a fun new selection of hats, a butterfly garden banner, hoodies, and even a ladies’ fleece! Of course, old favorites such as the ladies’ v-neck logo tees, yard signs, “Roots” apparel, and books are still available.

The new store is better integrated with our website, so merchandise and memberships can all be purchased at once. In the past, Wild Ones was stuck paying PayPal credit card processing fees, reducing the actual donation for every store transaction. Now, PayPal fees are built into pricing. You may see some odd dollar amounts, but this means Wild Ones is saving much-needed funds for programs.

Instead of adding the shipping cost to each individual item, the store now adds a postage and handling fee per order – saving you money, because adding an item shouldn’t add a whole new shipping and handling charge. Shoppers pay the true cost of postage, and only one handling fee per order, no matter how large. Grab a terry-lined ladies’ visor, because surely someday spring will arrive! Splurge on that onesie or t-shirt for your grandchild! Your postage won’t change much, and you won’t incur an additional handling fee.

4. STAFF UPDATE

Staff emails are changing to a first-name format the last week of April. You will be able to reach me at elaine@wildones.org, and Stephanie at stephanie@wildones.org. Don’t worry, messages to our current addresses will be forwarded to us, but this will make it easier to know for sure who you are contacting.

On Monday, April 30, Janet Rothe will join the national office as our new Membership Manager. Janet comes with a strong marketing background gained through 30 years of experience at Jansport, Mills Fleet Farm, and Citizens First Credit Union. She will be responsible for chapter and member communications, membership and donor reporting, and chapter training, as well as overseeing the member database. Thank you for your patience during this staff training and transition period.

5. SOCR COMPILATION

The compilation of all individual SOCR reports is now available on the Members Only site under National Reports/CHAPTER Reports. Is this document huge? Yes! Is that a good thing? Yes! The document, “2017 SOCR Compiled.docx”, is full of ideas and details each chapter can use to plan new programs, reach new people, and grow in members.

In addition to a centralized location for sharing successful programs and activities, the SOCR also serves as a handy reference. Looking for a speaker about bees or fresh ideas for your chapter's conference? Here's how:

- Download the SOCR and click "Find" (the binoculars icon in the upper right on the Home tab)
- Enter a key word (like "speaker" or "bees" or "conference") in the search box to find references to those words in the document.

We are working with volunteers to create a summary of Best Practices based on the SOCR compilation. Once you see this 100-page information goldmine, you will understand why this summary is scheduled to be released in stages. The target date for the first part, Yard Tours, is mid-August.

6. MEMBERS ONLY SITE

As requested by chapters during the January Confabs, all administrative actions are again visible in the online Member Database.

Why: Chapters requested these records so they would know when members changed their contact info.

What this means: When you review your chapter's membership, all actions - not just renewals and new members - will show up. Please keep this in mind if you use this list to send thanks to renewing members.

How to best use the online database: There are options for Sort Date and Sort By which change how the information is listed.

Sort Date:

- "**None**" puts the list in alphabetical order - useful if you need a specific member's contact information.
- "**ActionDate**" sorts by the date of the last activity in the member record. If you want to see which members have renewed since you last logged in 7 days ago, you can sort by "ActionDate" and just look at the dates since your last login.
- "**Expire**" lists members with the closest expiration date first. This lets you see which memberships have expired in the past month so you can follow up. Remember, the database automatically sends reminders two months and one month before expiration, as well as upon expiration. Memberships are not terminated in the system until the first of the month after the expiration, giving chapters time to contact the member and ask them to renew.

Sort by:

- "**Name**" also gives an alphabetical list of members.
- "**ZIP**" sorts the member list by ZIP code. This is useful if you are looking for a member to mentor a SFE grant winner – you can search for members in the same ZIP code as the site.
- "**Status**" shows member categories. To send a year-end email to new members, thanking them and wishing them a prosperous New Year, generate that list using the "Household (New)" and other (New) listings (Limited Inc/Student, Business, Affiliate). To thank renewing members for their continued loyalty, choose the corresponding (Renewal) statuses. A listing of Business members can be selected to thank them for their partnership, or to generate a referral list for people seeking native plants.

To generate a mailing list directly from the database, you can choose a TAB-delimited Format. There are links to instructions for exporting data into Excel or to a Mail Merge.

7. BEST-OF JOURNAL (BOJ)

Chapter presidents should have received their shipment of the BOJ. Thanks to those who have already sent reimbursement for the postage to national.

The member mailing list for the BOJ was run on March 9, so you may want to give a copy to new members joining after that date.

Due to the cost of the BOJ, we suggest you do not leave a stack out at events for anyone to pick up as they walk by; brochures are more economical for this use. The BOJ is perfect for talking to interested parties one-on-one – someone who has attended meetings and is considering joining, or a local landscaping business or nursery you'd like to join your chapter. The BOJ is perfect for showcasing the quality of information Wild Ones offers, and converting lookers to joiners!

Two requests:

1. Share your success stories from using the BOJ so we can in turn share them with other chapters.
2. Keep the BOJ in mind as you plan your 2019 budget – the only way we can afford to publish this special edition *Journal* is through donations from members and chapters.

8. QUICK REMINDERS

- **“Join-renew” link for memberships.**

The “join-renew” link has changed! Memberships now go through the same shopping cart as our new online store. Please use the following link on your website, communications, and social media:
<https://wildstore.wildones.org/product-category/membership/>

Please remind members the login they use for the online store to pay via PayPal is SEPARATE from the login for the Members Only site. If they have not used our online store before, they will need to choose a login and password. This can be the same as their Members-Only email and password, but they will still have to set up both logins separately.

Thank you for your patience and help with communicating another change in how to renew online!

- **Board of Directors elections**

Voting for additions to our Board of Directors will begin June 20 and will close August 4. Watch your email, the website, and the Summer *Journal* for details! Voting will take place via the Members-Only site.

Thank you for taking the time to read this and share it with your members. Every day we take baby steps toward our goal of an even stronger national organization dedicated to promoting the use of native plants. Thank you for putting on your tennis shoes and walking beside us on this journey!

Wildly yours,
Elaine