

The Chapter Budget, Membership Dues and YOU

Shey Lowman, Membership Co-Chair

I find the impact of membership dues so confusing; I thought an explanation about why we ask you to send your dues directly to the chapter might help us all. You may not know that ALL your dues go to national Wild Ones; the chapter does not keep them. Through your dues you are a member of both national Wild Ones and our local Rock River Valley Chapter. You receive the chapter monthly newsletter and the national Wild Ones Journal, which is published 5 times a year. To add to the confusion you receive email and snail mail dues reminders from both of us.

This is how the membership renewal process works. First, your renewal date is printed at the top of your newsletter label and on The Journal. Three months prior to your renewal date you will receive an email from national Wild Ones about your upcoming renewal. Two months prior you will receive a snail mail renewal notice from us with a renewal form filled out and a return envelope for your convenience. Then at one and a half months, national Wild Ones will snail mail you a reminder postcard.

So why is it important for you to send your membership dues directly to the chapter? It will ensure that you don't miss any notices or newsletters from us. There are times when national Wild Ones gets behind and the updating of the national membership database, which we share, can be delayed. So unless you send your dues directly to us, we don't know that you have renewed.

So what is the impact of membership dues on the chapter? The chapter's annual budget is approximately \$25,400, which includes meeting room rent, speaker fees, printing and mailing the newsletter and plant sale brochures, paying sales tax, buying plants for the plant sales, etc. National Wild Ones reimburses the chapter on a quarterly basis, currently 30% of membership dues paid during the quarter or 8% of our budget. Last year this was just under \$2,000. As recently as 2010 national Wild Ones needed help and we were asked to return our dues reimbursement to them, which we keep in mind each year as we plan our annual budget.

This is a summary of the 2014 Rock River Valley Chapter Budget.

Income

Plant sales	\$ 20,400
Merchandise	\$ 2,000
30% of dues	\$ 2,000
Donations to chapter	\$ 1,000

Expenses

Plant sales	\$ 15,000
Meeting expenses	\$ 2,100
Speaker fees	\$ 1,600
Plant sale brochures	\$ 1,500
Postage	\$ 1,400
Newsletters	\$ 1,200
Merchandise	\$ 1,000
Sales tax	\$ 950
Community donations	\$ 400
Supplies	\$ 150
Totals	\$ 25,400

Totals \$ 25,400

As you can see from the charts below 80% of our income is from our annual plant sales and 59% of our expenses.

