

The Times They Are A-Changin’

Brad Andres January 3, 2021 :

I think we all hope that Bob Dylan’s words, *The Times They Are A-Changin’*, will ring true for 2021. As you are acutely aware, 2020 presented us with numerous challenges, as a society and a local non-profit. Despite having to cancel or postpone many of our in-person programs and events, our staff, members and community adapted to a virtual platform for presentations and communications. School and after-school programs, general meetings and other community presentations were given from our makeshift offices at home. I applaud the presenters and audiences who tuned in to make the virtual delivery work!

Although most programs were delivered virtually, Dina Baker, Heather Schwartz and volunteers were able to provide some socially-distanced, in-person programs to families at the Evergreen Nature Center (ENC), pods of students, and outdoor visitors to Evergreen Lake as part of the Wildlife Watch program. We certainly all look forward to resuming some semblance of a “normal” schedule in 2021.

Your support of our education programs in 2020 reflected your commitment to the vision and mission of Evergreen Audubon. Despite the year’s challenges, we set donation records for the Virtual Bash, the Alternative Gift Fair, Wreath Sales, and Colorado Gives Day. Clearly, you have all adapted to the virtual world! We also received a very generous donation from the estate of Fran Enright, and our Payroll Protection Program loan was forgiven. Thanks to Kathy Madison, Lisa Wald, Marilyn Rhodes, Rachel Hutchison, and everyone else who worked to make these fund-raising endeavors successful. Thanks to everyone who supported Evergreen Audubon in 2020.

There will be some changes, however, in 2021. Dina has decided not to return to her position as ENC Director, and Heather will not continue on as Nature Educator. As you may be aware, Denver Parks and Recreation has also increased their involvement in the management of their properties at Evergreen Lake, including the Warming Hut. Our agreement with Evergreen Park and Recreation District (EPRD) will now need to be approved annually by Denver to operate the ENC. EPRD board and staff continue to be supportive of our arrangement at Evergreen Lake, and our agreement for 2021 is under review in Denver. We thank Dina and Heather for their contribution to Evergreen Audubon.

Despite these challenges, the Board is already working to adjust the director position to better serve the communities that reside in the Evergreen Audubon “service” area, which is defined as a set of zip codes assigned to us by National Audubon. Essentially, the area stretches from Fairplay to Georgetown to western Golden to Morrison. The Board has already started discussing ways that we can take more of our programming to “the people” by expanding programming throughout the year and across a wider space. We are also working to make that space more inclusive and have launched an effort to develop a strategy to increase the diversity, equity, and inclusion of Evergreen Audubon’s programming. This will include the physical space at the ENC as well as what and how we design and deliver programs. As we increase and

widen our educational reach, inclusivity and diversity, we remained committed to our communities, local chapter, and the ENC, which has become a recognized and well-loved amenity for residents and visitors to Evergreen Lake.

Our members are the life blood of Evergreen Audubon. Your support keeps our mission going and your thoughts and ideas are very important to help guide us as we move forward. To this end, we would appreciate hearing your thoughts on the future direction of our educational programming. We plan to take time at the January general meeting to have an open discussion of this topic. Also, I welcome any thoughts you would like to send me personally (president@evergreenaudubon.org). After your input and further Board deliberations, we hope to advertise for the Director position by the end of January so we are ready for the spring season.

Thanks again for your continued support, and I look forward to a successful 2021.

Sincerely, Brad Andres