



1. Overview

Georgia Nature Photographers Association (GNPA) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization comprised of Regional Chapters (Chapters) governed by the GNPA bylaws and the Board of Directors of the Association (Board). Day-to-day operations will be handled by the Operating Committee of the Board, as defined in Bylaw 6.4.

This document describes the setup and operation of Regional Chapters as prescribed by the GNPA bylaws and approved by the Board. Chapters are required to follow these guidelines, the bylaws of GNPA, and any other rules promulgated by the Board.

Members of GNPA must designate a Chapter affiliation when they join GNPA. All active GNPA members, regardless of the Chapter they are associated with, may participate in any GNPA Event hosted by any Chapter or by the Board. (From GNPA Bylaw 3.6, an Event is defined as any meeting, outing, seminar, class, workshop, field trip, contest, exhibition, special project, or any other GNPA organized activity.)

Any Out of State member will be assigned to the Out of State Chapter, unless that member chooses another Chapter. Out of State members will have all the same benefits of any other GNPA member. The Out of State Chapter will be managed by the Membership Committee of the Board.

2. Chapter Leadership

Each Chapter will be guided by a Chapter Coordinator, who must be approved by the Board. The Chapter Coordinator must appoint an ex officio member to the GNPA Board, and a Chapter Bookkeeper, who must be approved by the GNPA Treasurer. The roles of each of these Chapter leadership positions are detailed below:

Chapter Coordinator: The Chapter Coordinator will be responsible for the overall operations of the Chapter, including submitting an annual budget to the Board, planning Chapter Events, approving expenditures, and managing the operations of the Chapter consistent with the bylaws of GNPA, making sure that the Chapter meets its obligations to the GNPA and to its members who have designated that Chapter as their home Chapter. The Chapter Coordinator may appoint other members or committees to assist in the operation of the Chapter, as needed. These additional assistants need not be submitted for approval by the GNPA Board.

Chapter Bookkeeper: The Chapter Bookkeeper is responsible for maintaining the Chapter checking account, maintaining any Chapter financial records, and preparing any reports required by GNPA. In addition, the Bookkeeper is responsible for writing checks as necessary.

Chapter Ex Officio GNPA Board Member: The ex officio GNPA Board member will be the Chapter's liaison with the GNPA Board. This non-voting Board position may be filled by the Chapter Coordinator, the Chapter Bookkeeper, a Chapter member already on the GNPA Board, or another Chapter member as designated by the Chapter Coordinator.

By a 2/3 vote, the GNPA Board may dismiss any Chapter Coordinator or Chapter Bookkeeper for cause at any time.

3. Chapter Events

Each Chapter must plan and conduct its own meetings and other Events.

Each Chapter must hold a minimum of six meetings per year; monthly meetings are preferred. Meetings must be open to anyone who would like to attend. Meetings make good recruiting tools for new members, and are ideal for increasing the involvement of current members.

In addition to hosting their regular meetings, Chapters are strongly encouraged to conduct other Events. Every Chapter Event, except for those regular meetings, must be submitted in writing to the Chapter Committee Chair for pre-approval by the Operating Committee. At its discretion, the Operating Committee may involve the entire Board when considering approval for a proposed Chapter Event. The Operating Committee and/or GNPA Board must approve or disapprove the written Event request within fifteen calendar days of receipt. Event and funding requests and the Operating Committee and/or GNPA Board decisions may be submitted via e-mail.

At its discretion, the Board may decide to exempt certain categories of Chapter Events from needing Operating Committee approval. These Chapter Guidelines must be modified to define those specific category exemptions before they may take effect.

Unless otherwise specifically approved by the Operating Committee, all Events are restricted to members of GNPA and must be posted on the GNPA website. All Chapter Events are open to any GNPA member from any Chapter.

Events announced on Meetup or social media, and not posted on the GNPA website, are not considered official GNPA Events and therefore not covered by GNPA insurance. These should be limited to informal meetings and other local gatherings.

Additional Club-wide Events will be organized and planned by the Board such as the Smokies Photo Weekend, the NG3C Shootout, and the Annual Expo.

4. IRS and the 501(c)(3) exemption

GNPA is a single organization comprised of Regional Chapters, and all Chapters are covered by the GNPA 501(c)(3) exemption. Donations from individuals or companies should be tax deductible. Upon request, the GNPA Board will prepare donation verification letters to donors.

5. Chapter Finances

Since GNPA is organized as a single organization, all funds are GNPA funds and are subject to the review, approval, and control of the GNPA Board. All Chapter checking accounts must be specifically authorized by and under the control of the GNPA Board. The Chapter Bookkeeper and/or Chapter Coordinator will be allowed as signatories for the Chapter checking account. The GNPA Board Treasurer will provide each Chapter Bookkeeper with an authorization letter to open a non-profit checking account using the GNPA Federal Tax ID.

If adequate funds exist in the GNPA Treasury, each Chapter will be funded as needed, per an annual Chapter budget. Additional funding requests may be made and approved throughout the year.

Each year, Chapter Coordinators will submit a proposed budget to the Board. Once approved by the Board, the Treasurer will transfer the appropriate funds to the Chapter checking account throughout the year as agreed upon in the budget. Subsequently, all Chapter expenses will be paid from the Chapter checking account.

As described in Section 3 of these Guidelines, any Chapter may conduct additional Events throughout the year. The host Chapter may request additional funds for any Event. If approved by the Operating Committee, and the Board if necessary, the GNPA Treasurer will transfer those funds for the Event to the Chapter checking account. There is no limit to the number of approved Events a Chapter may conduct.

The Operating Committee and/or GNPA Board must report its decision on funding requests to the requesting Chapter within fifteen calendar days of receiving the written request.

Any fees for any Event will ideally be collected directly by GNPA, preferably through the GNPA website. If it is necessary for the host Chapter to receive funds at the Event itself, receipts must be given to any member or guest for each transaction, with a duplicate retained by the host Chapter. Within fifteen days after the Event, all funds received must be submitted to the GNPA Treasurer, along with a full accounting report of income and expenses, including all receipts of transactions.

6. Communications and Publicity

The GNPA Board will provide and maintain the GNPA website and GNPA e-mail newsletter through the Communications Committee of the GNPA Board. Each Chapter will have its own page on the GNPA website. In addition, all announcements for Chapter Events will be incorporated into the appropriate areas on the GNPA website. The former will keep Chapter members informed, while the latter will inform all GNPA members, regardless of Chapter affiliation.

It will be the responsibility of all Chapter Coordinators (or whomever they designate) to make sure all Chapter Events are posted on the GNPA website and included in the GNPA newsletter e-mails. Submissions from each Chapter must be submitted in a timely manner and in a format prescribed by the Communications Committee.

A Meetup account will be provided to Chapters during the organizational stage to attract and communicate with members and potential members. This will be paid for by GNPA. If the Chapter wishes to continue with Meetup after the Chapter is approved and functioning, the Meetup fees must be paid for with Chapter funds. A single Meetup subscription covers two Meetup groups, so that fee should be split between two Chapters when appropriate.

While Chapters may communicate through Meetups or any other social media, only active GNPA members may participate in any GNPA Event, unless otherwise specifically approved by the Operating Committee of the GNPA Board. Regular Chapter meetings will be open to anyone, not just members.

7. Chapter Liaison

The standing Chapter Committee on the GNPA Board will be responsible for the coordination of all Chapter Events. The chair of the Chapter Committee will liaise with the Chapter Coordinators and the Operating Committee of the GNPA Board.

The Chapter Committee will work with Chapter Coordinators to reduce overlap of dates for Chapter Events, or attempt to consolidate Events, if appropriate. The Chapter Committee and Chapter Coordinators will also attempt to optimize and share the limited

potential pool of nature photography workshop leaders, speakers, judges, and teachers, while guarding against their overuse.

8. Modifying Chapter Guidelines

These Chapter Guidelines may be modified as desired by an approval vote by 2/3 of the *entire* GNPA Board.