

**Friends of Grayson Highlands State Park
Minutes of Meeting April 16, 2012**

Present: Rhonda Walls, Harvey Thompson, Doug & Donna Niemi, Kevin & Deana Kelley
Minutes of last meeting Approved

Treasurer's Report: Balance as of April 16, 2012 \$7563.00

<u>Credits</u>		<u>Debits</u>	
\$0.00		USPS (stamps)	\$18.00
		Lowes (rebar, paint)	49.17
		Scott Paisley (arbor)	35.00
Total Credits	\$0.00	Total Debits	\$102.17

Approved as presented

Old Business

- Moe sent thank you notes to the Lawsons & Scott Paisley for their contributions towards the arbor for the Visitor Center.
- Kids in Parks Track Trail dedication will be held Saturday, May 19th for children ages 5-10. A dedication will be held in the Amphitheater in conjunction with Blue Ridge Pkwy, Nat'l Park Service and BCBS of NC. Visitors will gathering at 2:00 pm and the actual ceremony will be held at 3:00 P.M. Finger foods will be provided by the Friends of Grayson Highlands State Park. Rhonda will bring cookies. There will be games, a guided hike and kid activities during the event.

Park Manager Time

- A tornado drill was conducted with park staff to demonstrate the best places to do during severe tornado watches of occurrence.
- Harvey found the booster pumps at the residence/shop well house were running continuously due to a check valve not functioning properly. The pressure control switches & bladder tank were replaced. Continued to have problems with booster pumps not shutting off, so B&L Higgins Water System of Salem VA was contacted to help in resolving the problem. Four valves replaced at a cost of \$2,000. The booster is over 25 years old, so a replacement pump is planned.
- Overnight backpacker use was 103 in January and 139 in February.
- Harvey & Marceia attended a "Pony" meeting at the MRNA Headquarters with members of the Wilburn Ridge Pony Association to learn the status of herd number, fencing issues, gates needing to better control herds, signs to educate the public. The Pony Association requested a lock placed on the main access gate at Massie Gap to limit public access to the horse trail. GHSP has now placed a lock on the gate.
- Fifteen consignment vendors were selected to exhibit their crafts at the Visitor Center.
- Work continues on compiling the budget for 2013.
- A new shelf cabinet was installed in the office.
- Harvey assisted ten lost backpackers.
- The Easter Egg hunt was enjoyed by 40 participants (an increase of 10 from last year). All 300 eggs were found by youth who averaged nine years of age.
- Park staff completed the reconditioning of the Visitor Center floors & began construction of the merchandise display exhibits.
- Harvey assisted the wedding party planner for the Sawyer wedding.
- Jordon Blevins worked on hacking and spraying a stand of Autumn Olive within the park.
- A shipment of 695 books were received & inventoried for resale at the Visitor Center.
- Seven home school students visited the park with past interpreter Vicki Randolph for a wild flower nature program lead by Kevin Kelley.
- Merchandise for resale is currently at a 3% decrease from this time last year.

New Business

- The rain barrels need to be reattached and placed for the season.
- In honor of Earth Day, Kevin Kelley, Donna & Doug Niemi, Jeff Patrick (from Mt. Rogers Outfitters) and his church group will go into the high country and clean up and displace fire rings.
- The AT Quest for teachers will hold a class to educate on best management practices.

- Kevin is planning a volunteer hike the first Saturday of each month to have volunteers perform a specific fun work project. Projects might include removing trash around the Wise shelter and breaking up fire rings, picking up trash along the AT, etc
- Signs to inform the public about the purpose of ponies on the mountain and not just a statement to “Do Not Feed” are needed to educate the public.
- A brochure with pony safety rules will be created.

The next meeting is scheduled for May 21, 2012 7:00 p.m. at the park office.