

**Friends of Grayson Highlands State Park
Minutes of Meeting April 25, 2011**

Present: Rhonda Walls, Donna Niemi, Harvey & Moe Thompson, Kevin Kelley, Shirley Loan Babb, Deana Blevins, Evalyn Halsey
Minutes of last meeting Approved

Treasurer's Report: Balance as of April 25, 2011 \$5441.41

Credits:

Membership \$10.00

Total Credits: \$10.00

Approved as presented

Debits:

SCC (2 copies of Articles of Inc.) \$ 11.00

Wrensoft (Update Search Engine) 198.00

AAA Quality Engravers 218.00

(Wildflower labels & stakes)

Total Debits: \$427.38

Old Business

- Kevin says Wayne C. will now be able to play at the park Memorial Day weekend due to his previous engagement was cancelled. Kevin will let Moe know of changes so she can make them on the Friends' website calendar.
- Rhonda attended the VA Association for Parks Spring meeting held April 7, 8, and 9 at Claytor Lake State Park. She said the meeting was very educational and highly recommends others attend if they are able. Their next meeting will be October 25th – November 1st. Virginia Parks will be celebrating their 75th Anniversary this summer. She said it is very important that we document our volunteer hours. Also, William Wampler did not vote in favor of funding for VA State Parks. She also mentioned that sometimes grant money is available for Friends' groups to apply for funding projects.
- Rhonda continues to work with the IRS.
- Rhonda received the 75th Anniversary logo for the decoration on the cakes. We will order 4 cakes. Drinks will not be provided. They will be served during the Wayne C. Festival.
- Photos were taken from the Friends for the Happy 75th Anniversary video prior to tonight's meeting.
- There was no Earth Day Activity for 5th - 7th graders due to no approval from school board.
- The Annual Park Easter egg hunt was a great success once again with approximately 30 children participants and 20 parents. It is hard to determine how many to plan for due to changes with weather and time of year. Cost for eggs was \$110.86 (approximately 300 eggs).
- Kevin mentioned there will be a contest to name the campgrounds during the "75 days of summer." He did not have the exact dates. Names can be submitted, but not a person's name. FOGH expressed an interest in assisting with the selection of the winner.
- Kevin states request for assistance with the purchase of a new high resolution digital SLR camera for the park is on hold.
- As part of the 75th Anniversary Celebration, Park staff would like to purchase a large stuffed pony (funded by FOGH), and sell raffle tickets. The cost of the pony is \$499 and this does not include shipping. Grayson National Bank will make tickets at no cost. FOGH would like the tickets numbered. FOGH recommends \$1 per ticket for ease of handling the money. Also, winner will be responsible for pick up or shipping. Donna will look into having 2000 tickets printed in packs of 25.

Park Manager Time

Nineteen hourly employees have been hired. Orientation is scheduled for April 30th. Water samples are back and the stable area is now online with hot showers. Merchandise for resale is currently \$1,235 for April. Year to date is an increase of 18%. Amy Atwood will be posting the YouTube video from our park for the "Happy 75th Birthday." The Visitor Center and Country Store will open May 14th this year (two weeks earlier than usual). Harvey met for the Master Plan meeting on April 20th. Suggested were a more permanent residence for the Chief Ranger, possible cabins, possible restrooms at Massie Gap and trail improvements from the Visitor Center to the Office. Harvey stressed the necessity for water availability as a priority prior to considering some of these plans. One member attending the Master Plan stated he had never seen a park as well maintained as Grayson. Virginia Film Festival will be arriving by way of helicopter on Wilburn Ridge in order to consider the site for possible movie production. If selected, there could be up to 150 people to set up the staging area.

New Business

- Evalynn brought a copy of Smithsonian Magazine that had a photo of the Grayson Homestead area on page H-7 in the Heritage Culture section.
- The Friends will provide refreshments during the Wayne C. performance on Sunday, May 29th.

- On June 11th, members from Mount Rogers with others from MIT will be hiking to Elk Garden (accessing through Grayson Highlands State Park) for a special name dedication ceremony.

The next meeting is scheduled for May 16, 2011 7:00 p.m. at the park office.