

Friends:

The Mingo Swamp Friends spring quarterly meeting will be tomorrow evening, May 6, at 6 pm in the new Visitors Center.

The exhibits are now installed and the center is essentially complete. It is almost magical. Come see and help plan all the new activities we'll have!

Below are the minutes of the March 11 quarterly meeting.

Bruce Beck, Secretary

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**Minutes of the Mingo Swamp Friends Quarterly Meeting  
March 11, 2014**

President Sharon Tuschoff called to order the Quarterly Meeting of Mingo Swamp Friends at 6:30 pm in the meeting room of the new Visitors Center.

**ATTENDANCE**

In attendance were eleven Friends members and three Mingo Refuge staff .

Bruce Beck  
Gary Beacham  
Bill Brennan  
Ray Dickenson  
Betty Greenlee  
Ray Greenlee  
Virgeal Harp  
Leroy Romine  
John Stanard  
Sharon Tuschoff  
Brad Watkins  
Ben Mense, Refuge Manager  
Lindsey Landowski, Assistant Refuge Manager  
Peter Rea, Visitors Services Park Ranger

**SECRETARY'S REPORT**

The minutes of the November 12, 2013 Quarterly Meeting were read by secretary Beck. **Motion** to approve the minutes with corrections was made by Brad Watkins. Second by Ray Greenlee. Passed.

**TREASURER'S REPORT**

Gary Beacham read the following treasurer's report.

<b>Mingo Swamp Friends FINANCIAL REPORT October 1, 2013 through January 31, 2014</b>	
<b>Balance October 1, 2013</b>	<b>\$14,426.75</b>
<b>Deposits</b>	
John Stanard – for Wounded Warriors Project	60.00
Family Membership – Nancy Vines	40.00
Book Store purchases	527.70
Travelers Publishing – for Photo Contest	75.00

<b>Total Deposits</b>		<b>\$702.70</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Photo Contest winners		135.00
Book Store Purchases		
November	1572.39	
December	707.51	
January	74.15	
Total Book Store Purchases		2353.05
<b>Total Debits</b>		<b>\$2,489.05</b>
<b>Balance September 30, 2013</b>		<b>\$12,640.40</b>

<b>Photo Contest Account</b>	
<b>Beginning Bank Balance</b>	<b>\$182.15</b>
Outstanding award checks	125.00
<b>Deposits</b>	
Travelers Publishing	75.00
<b>Total Deposits</b>	<b>\$75.00</b>
<b>Total Available</b>	<b>\$382.15</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	
Photo Contest awards	135.00
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$135.00</b>
<b>Ending Balance</b>	<b>\$382.15/\$517.15</b>

Submitted by Gary Beacham, Treasurer  
March 11, 2014

**Motion** to approve the treasurer's report made by Brad Watson. Second by Bill Brennan. Passed.

**Discussion regarding the finances:**

Peter Rea said that a total of \$5,000.00 has been spent on book store purchases by March 1 as required by the Every Day Grant from Toyota Corporation. However, we are still awaiting several vouchers for the sales. Peter will take photos of the book store as soon as it is stocked and ready for business. The photos will be sent to Toyota to help verify the use of the grant and show appreciation for the grant.

Rea said also that he would contact the three photo contest award winners who have not yet cashed the award checks to determine whether they had received the checks and would cash them.

Sharon Tuschoff said that she has filed the annual non-profit organization tax report with the Internal Revenue Service.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

Tuschoff passed around a certificate of gratitude to the Mingo Swamp Friends from the **Wounded Warrior Project** for support of the Wounded Warrior deer hunt last October. The staff and Friends members expressed the desire to sponsor the program for four wounded warriors this coming fall.

A report from the **National Wildlife Refuge Association** was passed around. Consideration of the Association's request for membership and membership dues was tabled indefinitely.

There was discussion of the need for **insurance for the Book Store**. Ben Mense said that he would check with other refuge friends groups on the need and type of coverage that might be recommended.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Book Store**

Rea reported that he had priced a laptop computer through Best Buy. The laptop plus Microsoft Office and virus protection software comes to \$330.00.

QuickBooks Premium software for non-profits will cost an additional \$400.00. As a non-profit entity we may get a 20% discount on the software.

Group discussion recommended buying a new printer for about \$150.00 in order to have wireless capacity and save on the expense of printer cartridges

**Motion** by Beck, second by Watkins that the Book Store Committee be authorized to buy a laptop, software and printer for \$1,000 total. If the expense should be greater, there will need to be approval by the Executive Board. Motion passed unanimously.

Sharon will be checking with two local insurance offices for costs of insurance for bookstore inventory. It is requested that the book store committee give a dollar amount of the inventory.

### **Pavestones**

Ben Mense described where the pave stones could be placed – in front of the overlook just west of the Visitors Center. If additional space should be needed in the future the pave stones could be placed along the trail leading to the overlook west of the building. The refuge employees will prepare the site. Brand Watkins recommended the unscreened <3/8-inch ballast as the base and volunteered his assistance.

Eighteen pave stones have been purchased so far. The pave stones have been paid for. Gary Beacham will check on how many of the pave stone engravings have been paid for.

It was agreed that the pave stones be placed together tightly.

### **Photo Contest**

Rea showed bookmarks designed by Gretchen Pendley with details of the 2014 Photo Contest. These can be made available at the Visitors Center, in schools, businesses and public places in order to promote the contest. Rea will look into printing costs.

Members of the group suggested a number of publications and organizations that the staff could use to advertise and promote the photo contest.

### **STAFF REPORTS**

#### **Refuge Manager Ben Mense reported:**

##### **Visitors Center Opening**

The staff has moved into the administrative side of the new Visitors Center. Details are still being worked on by the contractor's workers. It is anticipated that their work may be completed by the beginning of April. The exhibit contractor is scheduled to begin installing the exhibits on April 7 and complete the work in two to three weeks. This means that the Visitors Center should be open to the public in early to mid May.

The Open House is tentatively planned for a Saturday in May, beginning with a brief ribbon-cutting ceremony at 9:00 am, followed by day-long open house and activities. The Friends should be on hand to help and may provide cake and cookies. The staff has items such as water bottles and posters to use as door prizes. They are planning to buy magnets with information on the hours the visitors center will be open.

Another, more elaborate, week-long Open House is planned for October during National Refuge Week.

The "Battling Buck" display has been remounted by the staff for central placement in the display area of the Visitors Center.

##### **Temporary Ranger to Be Hired.**

**Assistant refuge manager Lindsey Landowski** reported that the Fish and Wildlife Service is advertising to hire a temporary ranger to work from May through the summer and fall with the following responsibilities:

- 1) writing a volunteer handbook
- 2) planning and directing volunteer activities, including an on-line database
- 3) developing and giving educational presentations
- 4) promoting the refuge
- 5) helping tend the front desk

Lindsey asked that Mingo Swamp Friends seek donations for the family fishing day and the national refuge grand opening.

### **YCC Volunteers and Interns**

There will be Youth Conservation Corps volunteers and college interns working on the refuge again this summer.

### **Ozark Highlands Road Work**

The road contractor plans to resume work on April 1. Two bridges have yet to be built, plus paving the hill sections. Rabbit Ridge entrance may be closed much of the time until completion of the road work. Completion is expected in early summer.

### **Spillway Construction**

Construction of the new spillway is not expected until 2015.

### **Two-way traffic**

Mense believes that traffic around Pool 5 can be made two-way in order to accommodate hunters.

### **Expansion of Hunting on the Refuge**

Expansion of bow hunting into the area from Ditch 4 to Ditch 6, and Duck hunting in Pool 7 will not be official until printing in the Federal Register on March 17. The federal shut-down last year caused significant delay in final approval of the recommendation.

### **Refuge Clean-up Scheduled for April 5<sup>th</sup>**

Volunteers are needed to help with the clean-up and supervision. Meet at the Maintenance Shop at 8:30 am.

### **Refuge Ranger Peter Rea reported:**

#### **Swamp Saturday schedule:**

- March 22 – Missouri's Bluebirds, includes making bluebird nest boxes
- April 12 – Wildflower Walk
- May 10 – Beginners Bird Walk
- June 7 – Family Fishing Day
- July 12 – Tree Identification

✓ For the June 7 Family Fishing Day volunteers are needed. The Friends may be asked also to provide food for the participants.

✓ When the new Visitors Center is open there will be much more need for volunteers.

There was discussion on paving the boardwalk extension into Rock House Marsh. This would be an opportunity for the Friends to fund the improvement.

### **NEXT MEETING**

The next Quarterly Meeting of Mingo Swamp Friends will be Tuesday, May 6 at 6:00 pm in the new Visitors Center.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn made by Brad, second by Ray Greenlee. Motion passed. Adjourned at 8:07 pm.

Bruce Beck, Secretary