

**Mingo Swamp Friends Quarterly Meeting
October 10, 2017**

Present: Amanda Mossman, President; Leroy Romine, Vice President; Bruce Beck, Secretary; Sharon Beck, Treasurer; John Karel, member, Jessica Reker, member; Amy Walker, KYKZ Radio; Ben Mense, Refuge manager; Debbie Koenigs, Refuge Ranger; Casey Bryan, Pathways trainee

Call to Order: President Amanda Mossman called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m., in the Mingo NWR Visitor Center.

Minutes of the July 18 Annual Meeting were read by secretary Bruce Beck. Motion by Leroy Romine, second by Jessica Reker, to approve them as read. Minutes approved.

Financial report: A summary of the income and expenses through September was given by Treasurer Sharon Beck.

Checking Account: Discussion followed on how to manage the \$16,000+ in the Friends' checking account. Ideas included ways to earn interest such as a C.D. or funding a project on the refuge. Mense will come up with a list of projects to present at the next meeting.

Committee Reports

Facebook and Website Report by Amanda Mossman.

Bookstore Report by Amanda Mossman. Amanda has ordered many new items for the bookstore this past month, including hoodies as appropriate for the coming fall and winter.

Photo Contest Report by Bruce Beck.

Photo Contest Summary						
INCOME						
Category	# Participants	# Photos	Entry Fees	Donations	Memberships	Total Income
Youth	6	10	\$50			
Adults	14	41	\$205		\$15	
Bank Donations				\$800		
Totals	20	51	\$255	\$800	\$15	\$1070
EXPENSES						
	Shipping	Supplies	Premiums Paid			
Youth			\$165			
Adults			\$250			
Total Expenses	?	?	\$415			
Balance						(\$655)

Four banks and one individual were very generous as donors to the contest – Commerce Bank, First Midwest Bank, Sterling Bank, The Bank of Missouri, and Matt Funke. The current balance will be used to promote next year's contest, to move the photo display, and to improve the display hardware.

Judging was done on August 18th by Paul Davis of the Poplar Bluff Daily American Republic, Mark Pelton of the Missouri Department of Conservation, Friends member John Stanard, and Ben Mense of Mingo NWR. The Greater Poplar Bluff Area Chamber of Commerce came to the Visitor Center on September 6 for an official ribbon-cutting to open the display at Mingo. The photos were displayed in the Visitor Center through September. Casey Bryan took the display to the Cape Girardeau Conservation Nature Center where the photos will be displayed through October. The display is to be at the Depot Art Museum in Sikeston through November, the Poplar Bluff Public Library in January, in Puxico (schools, First Midwest Bank) in February, and the Powder Valley Conservation Nature Center in April. We might be able to display the photos in Puxico during the Puxico Christmas tours in December. We would like suggestions for other venues in March, May, June, and July.

Pavestones Report by Bruce Beck. A pavestone from Ray and Betty Greenlee in memory of the Beauchamps has been modified to fit the character limit per line. Pavestones from the stock of pavestones at Mingo is more than sufficient for many more engravings. The Beauchamp pavestone should be delivered from Christian Memorials in Dexter soon. Improvements to the display at the overlook are being planned.

Old Business

Partnership Agreement: Amanda will be updating the annual cooperative agreement between the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Mingo Swamp Friends. The agreement includes a list of Swamp Friends activities, membership, and finances.

Ag Expo 2018: The Friends have paid the booth fee for Poplar Bluff's Ag Expo 2018 on January 19 and 20. We have the same booth space reserved as for 2017.

New Business

Greater Poplar Bluff Area Chamber of Commerce membership: It was agreed that membership be renewed in the Chamber for another year. The Friends should make use of the Chamber's offer of newspaper and radio ads and discounts at Office Depot.

Credit Card Reader for the Bookstore: Jessica Reker stated that many customers at the bookstore are wanting to pay by credit/debit card. The bookstore could make many more sales if credit cards and debit cards were accepted for payment. She has been studying the availability and costs of credit card readers. Amanda spoke of the Friends investigating this last year. The officers will study the feasibility, costs and returns of a credit card reader and report at the next meeting. A major concern is the poor wi-fi reception at the front desk.

Student Conservation Association (SCA) volunteer: Jessica, Debbie and Ben recommend that another SCA volunteer be requested for the coming year after Jessica leaves. The volunteer could help tend the bookstore and promote membership in Mingo Swamp Friends.

Membership Promotion: Amy Walker, now working for KWKZ Radio in Cape Girardeau, has offered to work with us on promotions and will meet with Bruce at Mingo on October 16.

Staff Report

Refuge Manager Ben Mense reported the following:

- Two new staff members are at Mingo. Martrel Jones has come from the Savannah NWR to work in maintenance. Casey Bryan has come from Crab Orchard NWR for refuge manager training.
- The refuge budget remains the same through December 8, thanks to Congress' continuing resolution.
- The Fort Campbell Warrior Transition Brigade deer hunt (formerly Wounded Warrior or HOOAH) will be November 6-8. John Stanard has donated funds for the soldiers' hunting licenses. Brad Pendley is managing the program on the refuge.
- Staff has 75 acres of wheat and milo food plots and is mowing across the refuge, especially along Ditch 2 at Rock House Marsh moist soil unit.
- Hunting season has begun – archery, youth, Wounded Warrior, managed and muzzleloader hunts are all scheduled

Refuge Ranger Debbie Koenigs reported the following:

- Casey and Jessica will give a presentation on bats on November 17th.
- Hikes to Sweet Cabin are planned for October 21 and 28.
- A paddle trip is planned for October 24 at Flat Banks, by reservation only. All are welcome. Kayaks and canoes are available.
- School field trip days are scheduled for Mingo on October 25 and twice in November.
- Debbie is working on a Mingo history exhibit.
- The Friends' fishing gear has been loaned out about once a month. There was discussion about the best fishing sites on the refuge, and whether the Binford Unit could be deepened.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, January 9, 2018 at 6:30 p.m. at the Mingo NWR Visitor Center.

Motion to adjourn: Motion by Reker. Second by Romine. Motion passed. Adjourned at 7:50 pm

Bruce Beck, Secretary