

FRIENDS OF THE HOMOSASSA SPRINGS WILDLIFE PARK
C/O THE ELLIE SCHILLER HOMOSASSA WILDLIFE PARK
STATEMENT OF GOALS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS
FISCAL YEAR: MARCH 2009

ESTIMATED VOLUNTEER HOURS:

TOTAL MEMBERSHIPS: 619

Summary of accomplishments:

- The Friends have leased the Café at the West Entrance of the Park, which includes the Hippo Shack and the ice cream carts. The past year has been busy staffing, purchasing equipment, licensing, insuring and preparing menus. The Café has been named Wildside Café.
- The Felburn Wildlife Care building has been completed.
- The Friends have implemented a Scholarship Program where they sponsor the tuition for three candidates to attend the Florida Master Naturalist Program.
- Five Custom-made Outreach/Interpretive carts have been designed and purchased. The carts are stocked with skulls, claws, paw prints and other items collected from bears, foxes, bobcats, deer and wolves. The carts have been an educational success with the guests and volunteers .
- A new floating dock and ladder has been purchased and installed for the divers that clean the windows at the fishbowl.
- Royal Caribbean Cruise LTD nominated the Homosassa Park as the “Environmental Ship of the Year” and donated \$10,000.
- The Friends created an incentive Program for participants of the Halloween Haunted Tram event, offering 1st, 2nd and 3rd place cash prizes for the spookiest spots.
- A new pavilion and safety fencing was installed for guests to use near the tram road. An asphalt path was installed out to the pavilion for wheelchair accessibility.
- The Friends worked hard with the County to implement a recycle program. The County declined to participate in the program, so recycle garbage cans have been purchased and the recycling is done by volunteers. Solar trash cans are available for unrecyclable trash.
- The Friends have sold many Memorial Benches this year and hope to continue to improve on this program.
- The Friends purchased a new Storage Shed to be used for Outreach/interpretive storage.
- Many miscellaneous items have been requested and donated by local businesses. Some of the items include Free Cable service, 300 gallon fish tank, closed circuit television and video equipment.
- A 500 gallon tank/display for a very large alligator snapping turtle, had been purchased.
- A few Sub-Committees have been established to handle some of the larger projects the Board is working on. Some of the Sub-Committees include a Membership committee and a Wildside Café Committee.

- All bridges including the Hippo bridge have been replaced throughout the Park, with matching PIP funds.
- A new Tracking Station has been installed in the new Felburn Wildlife Care Building. This can track Manatees and Whooping Cranes.
- All the concrete areas around the West Entrance have been replaced with a decorative (stone) patterned concrete and made ADA compliant.
- The Parking lot next to the West Entrance/Café has been removed and replaced with a picnic area. Picnic tables with Umbrellas have been installed for guests to enjoy.

- Expanded walkways near wolf exhibit and panther exhibit for Interpretive carts and guests to overlook habitats.
- A new Spoonbill Aviary has been built.
- The floor of the Hippo Shack has been replaced with a concrete slab.
- New Red Wolf exhibit with night-houses has been completed
- The electrical at the CEC and Garden of the Springs has been upgraded and many new decorations have been purchased to add to the Celebration of Lights event.

Summary of Goals:

- MISSION STATEMENT: To help conserve, support and enhance the wildlife and other resources of the Ellie Schiller Homosassa Springs Wildlife Park and to expand public interest in the heritage of natural environment it represents.
- Replace the last bridge by the Garden of the Springs
- Replace the A/C and Air Handler in the West Entrance Building
- Order new strollers for the Park.
- Replace all old carpeting and install new tile inside administration office and West entrance.
- Install new planter boxes outside west Entrance and Hwy 19, removing all brick work.
- Have observatory Scraped and painted
- Replace otter, mew (for birds of prey) and whooping crane exhibits. Estimated cost \$235,000
- Purchase golf cart for Wildside Cafe
- Modify membership application limiting types of membership at next annual meeting.
- Replace old asphalt behind Café with Concrete slab.
- Cover outside storage enclosure, behind Café, with matching siding.
- Purchase Walk in cooler.
- Approve 3 new Scholarship Awards for the Master naturalist program
- Prepare for the Annual D-2 Volunteer Appreciation Week end for March 2010.
- Purchase a storage/seating bench for the picnic area to store the large umbrellas.
- The Wolf exhibit needs landscaping material that is durable and will not wash away. Perennial Peanut or other product to be purchased.
- Find vendor to make Wildside Café Shirts (for use and sale).
- Install heater inside of the in-ground manatee pool.
- Install radio at the snack bar for communication in the Park.
- Add new 220 electric lines for A/C in the manatee pool ozonizer room.
- Update/replace Friends Website.