

2009 Report to Park Friends of Great Smoky Mountains National Park

Folks looking back 100 years from now will surely note 2009 as a year filled with success for Great Smoky Mountains National Park!

The 75th Anniversary celebration got underway in January with two events that engineered the “kick-off” to the celebration. The City of Pigeon Forge hosted its annual Wilderness Wildlife Week, and held the first-ever paid event during the weeklong educational and experiential symposium. The “Smokies Then & Now” dessert and coffee reception drew more than 150 attendees who viewed photography exhibits by Thompson Photo of Knoxville and Ken Jenkins of Gatlinburg containing past and present images from the Park juxtaposed against one another. Local bluegrass entertainers Keith Watson and Ruth Barber of Boogertown Gap entertained the crowd. All proceeds from the event benefitted Friends of the Smokies.

Just one short week later, the Friends’ annual Evergreen Ball at the Knoxville Convention Center celebrated the start of the 75th anniversary year. A special park memories section of the silent auction focused on historical offerings, and the guests were treated to a special recorded greeting by the Park’s official 75th Anniversary Ambassador, Dolly Parton. One of the highlights of the evening was the sale of Robert A. Tino’s original “Finding the Way”, which was the official 75th Anniversary artistic print.



Kevin & Irene Anton purchased 'Finding the Way' for \$14,000. Kevin was a passenger on US Airways Flight 1549 which went down in the Hudson River on January 15, 2009, just eight days prior to the Ball.

Of all of the memories from the 75th anniversary year, perhaps Dolly’s participation will be remembered best. An authentic Smokies treasure herself, Dolly is also the region’s #1 export! Her support throughout the celebration drew international attention to this important milestone.



Dolly penned eight heartfelt songs about her love for these mountains, recorded them onto a CD, and allowed all of the proceeds to go to Friends of the Smokies' *Trails Forever* program. This limited-edition CD titled "Sha-Kon-O-Hey! Land of Blue Smoke" achieved more than \$137,000 in sales in 2009. The songs were also performed onstage at Dollywood by the cast of a musical bearing the same name. Dolly graciously agreed to appear for a special V.I.P. performance debut of "Sha-Kon-O-Hey!" on May 8, 2009, and allowed the event to benefit Friends of the Smokies. She performed a few of her best-loved hits before the musical got rolling, and then hosted a reception at her Dollywood museum. She even agreed to pose for photos with Friends' most-generous patrons that evening! Revenue generated by the CD and the "Sha-Kon-O-Hey!" premiere will approach \$400,000 when all copies of the CD have sold and all tallies are counted.

*Superintendent & Mrs. Dale Ditmanson
with Dolly Parton at the premiere of
"Sha-Kon-O-Hey! Land of Blue Smoke".*



Other highlights from the 75th Anniversary year included the Governors Proclamation event on April 29th, which drew several hundred dignitaries and Park supporters. Friends of the Smokies catered lunch in the Clingman's Dome parking lot following the ceremony. During the official anniversary weekend in June, Friends sponsored the Knoxville Symphony Orchestra performance in Cades Cove with Senator Lamar Alexander graciously agreeing to play a few selections on piano for the crowd as he did when he was Tennessee's governor in 1984. Finally, the September 2, 2009 rededication of Great Smoky Mountains National Park at Newfound Gap was a tremendous event, with a performance by Dolly Parton to stir the crowd.



Eastern Band Principal Chief Michell Hicks with Tennessee Governor Phil Bredesen and Superintendent Dale Ditmanson on April 29, 2009.

Since planning for the Park's 75th Anniversary began earnestly in 2007, Friends of the Smokies has played a vital role in the process as outlined below:

- developing the celebration website
- participating in community planning meetings
- approving the 75th anniversary community events
- recruiting sponsors (see Page 5) to help cover costs associated with the celebration
- cultivating the relationship with Dolly's team to facilitate her involvement
- working with Park staff to obtain display materials for the 75th Anniversary Ambassadors' use
- reinforcing with media personnel the importance of the celebration and the ongoing needs in Great Smoky Mountains National Park

Along with the construction of the Park's first fully partner-funded building, the new Oconaluftee Visitor Center, for which Friends of the Smokies is providing \$500,000 in exhibitry, the signature fundraising project for the Park's 75th Anniversary celebration is the Friends' *Trails Forever* program. Throughout 2009, Friends of the Smokies continued to work towards meeting the \$2.3 million challenge grant from the Aslan Foundation of Knoxville to establish a \$4 million endowment to fund a third, permanent trail maintenance work crew in Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Improvements began in 2008 through the *Trails Now* pilot phase of the program, and continued in 2009 with more than 10.5 miles of trail rebuilt or rehabilitated. To-date, the following trails have been impacted by *Trails Forever*:

- Baskins Creek
- Forney Ridge
- Hemphill Bald
- Jake's Creek
- Mingus Creek
- Miry Ridge
- Newton Bald
- Panther Creek
- Ramsey Cascades
- Twentymile Cascades



Students from New York University participated in an Alternative Spring Break program and worked on the Trails Forever crew!

Amidst the hustle and bustle of the 75th Anniversary celebration, normal Park activities continued, and the celebration itself brought increased visitation. Below is a list of projects that Friends of Great Smoky Mountains National Park funded in 2009 to benefit this immense national treasure.

Whatever you love about the Smokies, Friends of the Smokies does something to support it!

Projects Funded by Friends of Great Smoky Mountains National Park
Calendar Year 2009

Special Events

The 75 th Anniversary of Great Smoky Mountains National Park	\$108,267.41
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support provided from 2007 to 2009 for the Park's 75th Anniversary celebration totals \$163,654.34, and includes funding for exhibitry and displays for use by the 75th Anniversary Ambassadors, as well as production expenses for events like the performance by the Knoxville Symphony Orchestra in Cades Cove. 	
Sponsorship of 'Run for Clean Air'	\$ 500.00
National Trails Day	\$ 4,222.00

Resource Education

Remount Sugarlands VC Exhibit specimens; update exhibits; provide botanical signs	\$ 9,904.23
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The exhibits at Sugarlands focus on the Park's natural resources and history. Specimens have deteriorated, and signage needs to be replaced to maintain fresh content that is visually appealing to enhance visitors' learning experiences. 	
Expand Parks as Classrooms Program Curriculum	\$200,167.11
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A \$1 million multi-year grant from Toyota is helping to fund an expansion of the Parks as Classrooms curriculum in Great Smoky Mountains National Park. 	
Science Translator for Curriculum Development (Toyota grant-funded position)	\$ 48,600.00
Teacher-Ranger-Teacher Program	\$ 10,983.07
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A program which provides wonderful educational opportunities by allowing local teachers to have the chance to work as seasonal park rangers during their summer months, and then return to the classroom to impart their newfound knowledge of the Park's treasures to area students. 	
Parks as Classrooms Education Program	\$ 98,277.98
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Education rangers work with teachers to provide in-Park curriculum-based lessons for K-8 students from communities bordering the Park (in TN and NC). Rangers use the Park as an outdoor classroom. Since its beginning, Parks as Classrooms has reached 100,000+ students (18,000+ in 2008 alone). 	
North Carolina Teacher Workshops	\$ 22,232.77
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The North Carolina GlaxoSmithKline Foundation's grant for science teacher enrichment workshops provides opportunities for educators to learn research and data collection methods that they can take back to their classrooms, and impart their newfound knowledge of the wonder of the Smokies to their students. 	
Great Smoky Mountains Institute at Tremont Support	\$191,676.07
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tremont provides in-depth environmental education to up to 6,000 people, primarily students, each year. Tuition covers most of the food, lodging, and instructor costs. However, to keep the experience affordable, the Park provides additional support through Friends of the Smokies and the Great Smoky Mountains Association while Tremont develops strategies to become self-sustaining. 	
Oconaluftee Visitor Center Exhibits	\$190,000.00

(Possible federal Centennial Challenge match- \$190,000)

- The Oconaluftee Visitor Center is the major North Carolina park visitor stopping place. The exhibits there focus on the Park's cultural history from pre-Cherokee through logging and the establishment of the area as a national park. Plans are underway for the construction of a new visitor center, complete with new exhibits, and areas to house portions of the Park's vast collection of cultural history artifacts.

Burroughs Wellcome Seasonal Intern for Purchase Knob \$ 6,647.74

Resource Management & Science

All Taxa Biodiversity Inventory Support \$ 32,220.00

- Discover Life In America (DLIA) is a non-profit organization managing the Park's All Taxa Biodiversity Inventory, a massive and unique science project seeking to discover and document every living species in Great Smoky Mountains National Park, the most biologically diverse park in the country. Funding from Friends of the Smokies and the Great Smoky Mountains Association supports scores of scientists involved in this research, and provides for project administration.

Appalachian Bear Rescue Support (2009 & 2010 funding paid in same calendar year) \$ 20,050.00

- The non-profit Appalachian Bear Rescue Center in Townsend cares for orphaned and injured black bears in a "hands off" setting that leaves them wild enough to be released again into their natural habitat. The Rescue Center provides the chance to save bears that would otherwise have no chance.

Hemlock Woolly Adelgid Control \$100,004.92

- The non-native hemlock woolly adelgid, an aphid-like insect, arrived in the Smokies in 2002 and now poses a serious threat to up to 74,000 acres of hemlock trees. In other places across the U.S., hemlock mortality from this predatory insect has been over 80% within 3-5 years. This funding supports the salary and material costs of a crew of forestry technicians who help preserve selected hemlock stands through application of soap sprays and injection of systemic pesticides. This crew also releases two species of predator beetles that are reared at the Lindsay Young Beneficial Insects Laboratory at U.T. (funded in-part by Friends of the Smokies) as a biological control and monitors the treatment results. Targeted treatment areas will be expanded through the support of Friends of the Smokies, with a goal of saving more trees.

Balsam Woolly Adelgid Control \$ 2,500.00

- Since 1962, the balsam woolly adelgid, an exotic predatory European insect, has killed 91% of the Park's naturally-occurring stands of high-elevation Fraser firs. The Park and U.T. planted 600 seedlings at Purchase Knob in 1995. While some of these trees have been attacked by the balsam woolly adelgid, they are treated to preserve samples of the trees' genetic material, which is important for species preservation.

Brook Trout Restoration \$ 6,506.46

- Funding for a fisheries scholarship intern and support for programs promoting the return of the Park's native brook trout species.

Elk Bugle Corps Volunteer Support \$ 174.53

Scientific instruments & materials for Purchase Knob. \$ 523.93

Facility Management & Backcountry

Purchase Knob Maintenance/Utilities \$ 23,689.44

- Provides interior custodial services, utilities, road maintenance, and mowing of the meadows.

Purchase Knob Internet Access for Non-Governmental Researchers. \$ 604.45

Cataloochee Amenities \$ 17,275.02

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The only restrooms in Cataloochee are inside the campground. In recent years, increased visitation, partly attracted by the elk restoration project supported by Friends of the Smokies, prompted the Park to contract for rental and service of portable facilities at both ends of the Valley. They are well received by visitors and mitigate a serious sanitation problem. Long-term plans for Cataloochee call for permanent restrooms, but the funding and utility infrastructure are not available. 	\$ 3,608.27
Townsend Wye Amenities	\$ 3,608.27
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ As in Cataloochee, heavy visitation in summer and lack of permanent restroom facilities is an issue. Beginning in 2006, the Park rented a number of portable restrooms for visitor comfort. 	
Roaring Fork Amenities	\$ 29,187.25
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The trailheads to Rainbow Falls and Trillium Gap Trails are far from utility service and permanent restroom facilities. For several years, the Park has provided portable restrooms to serve visitors along the Roaring Fork Motor Nature Trail. Bear-proof trash receptacles included. 	
Trails Now 2008	\$ 27,700.00
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Friends of the Smokies has received a generous \$2 million challenge grant from the Aslan Foundation of Knoxville to establish the <i>Trails Forever</i> endowment to fund a new, permanent trail maintenance work crew to maintain the more than 800+ miles of hiking trails in Great Smoky Mountains National Park. <i>Trails Now</i> is the pilot phase of the program, which allows the crew to get busy making improvements to trails like Jakes Creek, Baskins Creek, Forney Ridge, and Ramsey Cascade while we work to fund the endowment. 	
Trails Forever Endowment Funding	\$224,532.19
Mt. Collins Shelter Rehab	\$ 10,000.00
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The backcountry shelters along the Appalachian Trail inside Great Smoky Mountains National Park have undergone extensive renovations at a rate of one per year thanks to volunteer help from the A.T. Maintainers and funding provided in-part by the Richard Haiman National Parks Foundation. 	
Donation Box Signage Design & Fabrication for Installation at Newfound Gap Median	\$ 1,465.40
 Other	
Relationship-building with Alcoa Foundation via support for Icelandic national park.	\$ 677.05
Superintendent's Discretionary Fund	\$ 5,335.99
Employee & Alumni Association Scholarship Awards	\$ 2,000.00
 Totals	 \$1,399,533.28

Sponsors of the 75th Anniversary of Great Smoky Mountains National Park



Friends of the Smokies wishes to thank these businesses and individuals for their generous contributions to our 75th Anniversary celebration this year.

A Special Thanks to Our 75th Anniversary Ambassador Dolly Parton and all the folks at Dollywood!

<p>Clingman's Dome Level Lyndhurst Foundation</p> <p>Mt. Cammerer Level AAA of East Tennessee Harrah's Cherokee Casino Jean Ogle/TAD Enterprises City of Gatlinburg City of Pigeon Forge City of Sevierville Sevier County Smoky Mountain Convention & Visitors Bureau State of North Carolina Department of Commerce Tennessee Department of Tourist Development</p> <p>Mt. LeConte Level Robert A. Tino Gallery, Inc. Jan & Judy Morton Linda Ogle</p> <p>Chimney Tops Level Baker, Donelson, Bearman, Caldwell & Berkowitz, PC Hard Rock Café Gatlinburg Danny & Liz King Knockville Garden Club Tanger Outlet Center at Five Oaks Greg A. Vital</p> <p>Cataloochee Valley Level Cataloochee Reunion Clayton Bank & Trust Cliff Dwellers Gallery Covenant Health Carl Falk Home Federal Bank Knockville Garden Club</p>	<p>Newfound Gap Level Mr. & Mrs. William Y. Carroll Cooke County Partnership Pete and Cindi DeBusk Mr. & Mrs. Dale Dimanson Mr. & Mrs. Bobby Ely Experience Your Smokies Blount County Mr. & Mrs. Chuck Hendrics Knox County Mast General Store Pigeon Forge Primary School Mr. & Mrs. Clayton Sharp Mr. & Mrs. Geoff Wolpert Old Mill Square Pigeon Forge Department of Tourism Pigeon River Restaurant Associates</p> <p>Cades Cove Level Apple Valley Comfort Inn Clarion Inn Willow River Country Tonic Theatre Greystone Lodge at the Aquarium Teresa Pennington</p>	<p>Sugarlands Level Byron & Paula Begley Burchfiel-Kile Enterprises Dr. & Mrs. Henry Calaway, Jr. Mr. & Mrs. Sam H. Curtis Graham County NC Travel & Tourism Authority Great Smoky Mountains Heritage Center Haywood County NC Tourism Development Authority Mr. and Mrs. Charles Maynard Pinnacle Performance Partners Smoky Mountain Marketing Group Town of Bryson City</p> <p><i>Friends of the Smokies would also like to thank the following businesses for their gift-in-kind advertising & service support throughout the 2009 75th Anniversary celebration of Great Smoky Mountains National Park:</i></p> <p>BDS Infotast Ruth Barber & Keith Watson Blue Smoke Coffee Davis, Newman, Payne Great Smoky Mountains Association Ken Jenkins Knoxville News Sentinel Bill May Studios pinpoint HD Media Signmaster Tennessee Smokies Baseball Tennessee Valley Fair WBIR-TV Channel 10 WDVX Radio</p>
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Friends of Great Smoky Mountains National Park is an independent 501(c)(3) non-profit organization which assists the National Park Service in its mission to preserve and protect Great Smoky Mountains National Park by raising funds and public awareness and providing volunteers for needed projects. Since its founding in 1993 by a group of concerned citizens, Friends of the Smokies has raised almost \$26 million in support of Park needs.

