

**Communications Board Report – Val Thorpe
June, 2018**

Events

In the first half of 2018, GSWA held 20 public events. Most recently was our Music Festival – Great Swamp, Great Music! Yes, it happened! It was a successful (albeit soggy) day. Our inaugural music festival fundraiser took place on Sunday, June 10, 2018 (with the initial timeframe of 1:00-5:00 PM that turned into 1:40-5:40 PM) at Hartley Farms Polo Field in Harding Township. Although the rain was consistent, it was gentle, and the mood of the approximately 350 festival goers did not appear to be dampened. The big tent provided shelter for a large portion of our attendees, while others braved it out with rain jackets and umbrellas.

Wade Kirby, the event MC, did a great job of ramping up the audience and sharing stage announcements while weaving in our mission. Jeff Webb kicked off the festival with a rousing version of “Who’ll Stop the Rain” and kept the music flowing in between acts as the four bands took turns on stage. Each band played approximately 45 minutes, with 20 minutes allotted for the stage changeout. Children played with the beach balls on the field right up until the ice cream truck arrived, food vendors were busy feeding the crowd throughout the afternoon, merchandise vendors all stated that they were happy with their sales, free potable water was available thanks to the water buffalo delivered onsite by NJ American Water, and beer and wine flowed steadily until the end from the antique fire truck loaned to us by Washington House. Every vendor without exception said they would happily return next year. Hartley Farms Polo Field was the perfect location for this event – thank you Nic Platt for making that happen, and for offering it up again for 2019!

Festival details:

- Financials are still being finalized. Currently we believe the net profit is approximately \$18,000 (double our goal)

- 15 sponsors secured (\$19,150) – Top 4:
 - Peapack-Gladstone Bank - \$5000
 - Normandy Real Estate Partners - \$5000
 - Adrienne and Dillard Kirby - \$2500
 - Atlantic Health - \$2000

- Attendees
 - Still confirming, approximately 350
 - 88 attendees purchased tickets at the gate

- Volunteers
 - 55 awesome volunteers worked in the rain at various timeframes
 - 8 “Explorers” (Junior police ages 14-17) and 2 police officers patrolled the parking area to assure attendees made their way to the registration tables
 - Every GSWA staff member was on-hand and gave 100% effort towards the event
 - Volunteers working 4 hours or longer received lunch vouchers for the food vendors

- 4 local bands + guitarist/singer
 - The Gammon Brothers
 - Hub Hollow
 - Not Enough Jeffs
 - Stomp Box
 - David Webb (played between bands)
- 2 food vendors (a third cancelled the day prior due to a licensing issue)
 - Minuteman – Bernardsville
 - Café Beethoven – Chatham (donated the profit of the volunteer meals back to GSWA)
- NJ American Water – donated 1400 gallons of potable water and 5000 cups
- Alcohol
 - Washington House of Basking Ridge donated the firetruck/beer tap for the day
 - Wine Traders of Chatham gave us deep discounts for the wine we purchased and sold, donated 3 cases of wine, and secured free cups for the beer
- 4 local merchandise vendors + 2 sponsor tables
 - Back to Nature (Basking Ridge) Plants and honey
 - Secret Garden (Madison) Goat soap and lotions
 - Patricia & Paul (Summit) Olive oils and vinegars
 - Crafts by Alice (Morris Plains) Painted glass, twisted wire trees, and more
 - Peapack-Gladstone Bank (Sponsor)
 - Atlantic Health (Sponsor)
- Free Face Painting – Hazel England’s daughter, Isabel DeVito, delighted the children by painting nature-themed designs on their faces and arms.
- Photography – David Kramer of Kramer Images in Florham Park donated his time and talent to photograph the event (\$800 value.) David took hundreds of fantastic photos that will be available for viewing on our website shortly.
- A debrief was held with the staff on June 12. Another will take place with the committee shortly. “What worked” and “lessons learned” have been captured. A standard operating procedure will be created and used as a template going forward. Board input is welcome.

Staffing/Administrative Updates

Drew University student, Alexandra Koeck, began her internship with us on May 21. Alexandra will work one full or two half days per week in a marketing capacity, assisting Val and Kristina. Responsibilities will include market research, social media, promotional design, blogging, mailings, and ad hoc projects.

Chairman Appeal 2018

A letter from board chairman, Nic Platt, was sent to 752 households on June 4 with the theme, “protect what you love.” The response has been favorable thus far. More to follow on the final tallies.

Constant Contact – Blast emails

Our email list in Constant Contact will get a nice boost from the tickets purchased for the music festival. More to follow once all of the data has been entered and uploaded.

Press - GSWA in the news

- **Insider NJ** – Online – 5/30/18
<https://www.insidernj.com/press-release/great-swamp-watershed-association-hold-inaugural-great-swamp-great-music-festival-fundraiser-june-10-2018-morristown-new-jersey/>
- **Observer Tribune** – Print – 6/7/18 Page 1, bottom – Music Festival
Nic Platt submitted a 1964 photo of a helicopter with Stewart Udall (US Secretary of the Interior) Helen Fenske, and Gov. Richard Hughes landing on the Hartley Farms Polo Field.
- **NJ Hills Media** is crafting a spread about the music festival for the “Happenings in the Hills” section to appear in the June 14, 2018 edition. The article will include several photos and details of the event.

Website – at-a-glance (Website Launch Date – 4/22/17)

In the last 28 days, the Great Swamp Great Music Festival page received 2,466 pageviews. (That’s a lot!) Traffic on our website increased tremendously.

Month	Sessions	Sessions Increase	Users	Users Increase	Pageviews	Pageviews Increase	Returning Visitor	New Visitor
Jun, 2018	25,713	5486	18,351	3,900	47,166	8,979	13%	87%
Apr, 2018	20,227	3,956	14,451	3,078	38,187	6,921	14%	86%
Feb, 2018	16,271	3,002	11,373	2,023	31,266	5,995	14%	86%
Dec, 2017	13,269	3,408	9,350	2,424	25,271	5,936	31%	69%
Oct, 2017	9,861	3,122	6,926	2,027	19,335	5,906	31%	69%
Aug, 2017	6,739	2,299	4,899	1,673	13,429	4,167	29%	71%
Jun, 2017	4,440		3,226		9,262		30%	70%

Social Media

Aside from the great publicity we received and financial success of the music festival, it also helped boost our website and social media presence. It created a built-in opportunity to reach more people through post sharing and the general buzz around the event. We also created a contest where anyone who shared our music festival post on Facebook or Twitter was entered in a contest to win two tickets. There were two lucky winners (compliments of Matt and Agi Krauser, who donated the tickets they received as sponsors back to GSWA.)

As always, we continue to encourage **staff, board members and advisory council members to post, and share our pages, and to ask friends and colleagues to like and follow us.** To date:

Facebook: Page Likes – 2584 (up 37) / Followers – 2559 (up 37) – larger than normal increases

Instagram: Followers – 8628 (up 114) / **Twitter:** Followers –2270 (up 1)