

Hidden Valleys, Inc
Annual Meeting-May 21st, 2014

Sugar River Pizza
700 Railroad Street
New Glarus, Wisconsin

The meeting was called to order by President Bernie Arena at 11:00 a. m. Board members present: Bernie Arena, Sandy Williams, Kersten Rocksvold, Joe Fisher, Grant Loy, Donna Douglas, Ron Benish, Don Seep, Bob Scallon, Bob Boyle, and Harvey Kubly. Absent and excused, Gail Muller, Marie Sersch, Bob Thomas. Sales representatives present were Carol Larson, Lon Arbegust and Randy Kirking. Guests present were Karen Rocksvold, Susan Seep, Teri McCarthy, Nellie Schmitz from Next Level, Tierra Jackson from Next Level, Steve Marsolek from Lacrosse Graphics, Sarah Klavas from the Wisconsin Dept of Tourism, and Patrick Reinsma from the Wisconsin Dept of Tourism.

Ron Benish made a motion to accept the minutes of the April 16th meeting and was seconded by Harvey Kubly. Motion carried.

President's Report:

- ✓ Bernie requested that board members submit "County Contacts" updates to Office Manager, Sandy Williams immediately.
- ✓ Hidden Valleys does not have a Green County Sales Rep and we are still searching for a Sales Rep.
- ✓ Nominations for Hidden Valleys Board officers will be voted on at the June meeting.
- ✓ Our Wisconsin Ag Tourism Association (WATA) partner is growing and they supported the Limited Liability Law recently passed by the Wisconsin legislature. This relieves agricultural related businesses such as farm tours, corn mazes, etc. from personal liability.
- ✓ Driftless Destinations is included in the "Fun In Wisconsin" and "Go Guide" publications. They are expanding to Crawford County. Bernie informed us that Vernon County's Tourism chairman is Karen Dahl.
- ✓ Bernie announced that she will be contacting several counties that may be interested in joining Hidden Valleys-Sauk, La Crosse, and Trempeleau counties.
- ✓ Summer schedule locations include: June 18-Stonefield Village in Grant County. July 16-Barn 23 in Iowa County and August 20 Lafayette County location to be announced.
- ✓ Shows that Hidden Valleys attended the past year were reviewed by Bernie. They included Chicago Boat, Sport & Travel, Lake Geneva Boat Show, Eastern Iowa Sports Show, Governor's Conference on Tourism, the Milwaukee Sport Show, Rockford RV Show, and the Monroe County Economic Development Conference.
- ✓ Hidden Valleys is now allowed to have space in the Ad Lit display rack at the Kieler Visitor Center for our publication at no charge. Thanks to sales rep Randy Kirking for keeping this stocked.

Bernie expressed thanks to Green County Tourism Coordinator, Noreen Rueckert, HV Board members, Donna Douglas, and Harvey Kubly for hosting the Annual Meeting in New Glarus today.

President Bernie recognized and thanked board member Grant Loy for his years of representing Grant County. He will no longer be on the HV Board. She recognized Francis Hynek for his years of service. Also thanked were the following board members: Joe Fisher, Ron Benish, Bob Thomas, Marie Sersch. Harvey Kubly, Donna Douglas, Kersten Rocksvold, Gerald Heiman, Sandy Williams and Don Seep for their support. Bob Scallon and Bob Boyle were welcomed as new board members. Recognition was given to Sales Representatives, Lon Arbegust, Randy Kirking, and Carol Larson by Bernie.

Special thanks to Next Level Design team members Nellie Schmitz & Tierra Jackson, for re-designing the 2014 Hidden Valleys publication. Steve Marsolek of LaCrosse Graphics was also cited for his work with Hidden Valleys.

New Business

Office Manager, Sandy Williams surprised the Hidden Valleys Board with the appearance of Wisconsin Department of Tourism Industry & Marketing Supervisor, Sarah Klavas and Regional Tourism Specialist, Patrick Reinsma. Sarah gave a Power Point presentation on statistics for the nine county Hidden Valleys region. Sarah gave an overview of the performance and impact of tourism in Wisconsin in 2013. Total tourism business sales amounted to 17.5 billion dollars in 2013. She stated that 1 in every 13 jobs in the state is accredited to the tourism industry. Each of us would have to pay an additional \$590 taxes in the absence of state and local revenue generated by tourism in Wisconsin.

Sarah pointed out several findings: there is a lack of directional signage for visitors, / people are “traveling with a purpose,” / and “pet travel” is to be recognized. She commented that “do what you do so well that visitors will want to see it again and bring their friends!”

Sarah passed out the Wisconsin Department of Tourism Marketing Resources reference guide. Patrick and Sarah answered questions from Board members. It was a great presentation that was informative and fun!

Office Manager Report

The storage space that Hidden Valleys rented in Richland Center has been cleaned out by Sandy, Lon Arbegust, and a past board member Bob Holets. Sandy brought past issues of Hidden Valleys for distribution to anyone. Sales brochures and contracts were made available for pick up at the meeting.

Harvey Kubly made a motion to adjourn and was seconded by Don Seep.

Board members and guests enjoyed lunch at the Sugar River Pizza.

Donna Douglas, Secretary

Next meeting June 18th at Stonefield Village, Grant County