



Shenandoah National Park Association

Annual Narrative Report

2022 Fiscal Year

(January 1, 2022 - December 31, 2022)

Fiscal year 2022 was the best year ever for SNPA. Not only did SNPA have a record year in sales, but the Board of Directors took a bold step and purchased a commercial building near Luray for a new SNPA office/warehouse.

Sales totaled \$2,237,609, an increase of 3.33% for the year. SNPA was able to open both *Park Stores* for the season on March 18, 2022 and remain open through Thanksgiving weekend. Byrd Visitor Center remained opened five days a week during December.

SNPA moved into the new office/warehouse on May 16-19, and has enjoyed every minute in the new space. There is more than double the storage space and known to have access to great internet. These are the two things SNPA really needed to be more efficient and hopefully more successful.

The Association was also excited to provide a great location for a live camera that would give a constant view of the mountain skyline. Both Skyland and Big Meadows is in view from the new office/warehouse, so it was perfect to place a camera on the roof attached to the chimney. A second camera was purchased to place on top of the Byrd Visitor Center for a live view of Big Meadows.

Sadly SNPA lost one of our devoted Board Members, Clark Dixon. Clark passed away on December 7, 2022. Clark had served on the Board for eight years and was Board President for four years and served on many of the Association committees. He will be sorely missed.

Below is a brief listing of some of the significant activities of the Association during the year.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The members of the SNPA Board of Directors during fiscal year 2022:

Polly deButts, Arlington, VA
Bill King, Luray, VA
Jack Price, Sperryville, VA
Bill Henry, Stanardsville, VA
Diana Wright, McLean, VA
Dick Hostelley, Stanley, VA

Clark Dixon, Ranson, WV
Doug Kavolius, Stuarts Draft, VA
Chris Anderson, Luray, VA
Rose Ann Smythe, Luray, VA
Bill Reid, Luray, VA

Associates

Dixon Freeland, Luray, VA
Judy Russell, Luray, VA

Officers of the Board for 2022 were:

Rose Ann Smythe, President/Chairman of the Board
Clark Dixon, Vice-President
Chris Anderson, Secretary
Diana Wright, Treasurer

Roy Wood, Shenandoah National Park Chief of Interpretation served as the Board Park Liaison.

MEETINGS OF THE SNPA BOARD

Scheduled Quarterly Board Meetings:

- Saturday, March 26, 2022 Spring meeting was held at Stanley Baptist Church.
- Saturday, June 25, 2022. Summer meeting was held at the new SNPA office/warehouse.
- Saturday, August 27, 2022. Fall meeting was at SNPA office/warehouse.
- Saturday, December 3, 2022. Winter meeting was held at SNPA office/warehouse.

SNPA STAFF FOR THE 2022 SEASON

SNPA Office Staff

Greta Miller, Executive Director
Rachel Burner, Director of Sales & Marketing
Debbie Judd, Office Clerk

SNPA Visitor Center Sales Staff

Karen Taylor, Byrd Visitor Center
Lauren Wells – Dickey Ridge Visitor Center
Lara Ellis - Byrd Visitor Center (part-time)
Tom Varney - Dickey Ridge Visitor Center (part-time)
Terri Painter - Byrd Visitor Center (part-time)
Margaret Williams – Byrd Visitor Center (part-time)
Lillian Dean – Dickey Ridge Visitor Center (part-time)
Lexi Vile – Warehouse (summer)
Shari Yordy – intermittent sales staff
Megan Williams – intermittent sales staff

BUSINESS OPERATIONS

SNPA sales for Fiscal Year 2022 totaled \$2,237,609, up 3.33% (+ \$72,023) above Fiscal Year 2021 record year. Compared to the previous year, Byrd Visitor Center had a 1.48% increase in sales and Dickey Ridge had an increase of 5.71% in sales. Sales at Cedar Creek/Belle Grove

National Historic Park were up 769.41% compared to 2021 but that was due to being closed during 2021 and only having a few wholesale orders.

As part of the post-covid precautions, the plexi glass panels remained up at the sales counters for the entire year. The exhibit areas at both visitor centers reopened during 2022, but the Park was updating both visitor center auditorium’s so they were not open to the public.

The Association has three main categories of sales: Publications, Audio Visuals, Apparel. Then there are four smaller categories that contribute to our total sales figures. There are then another four categories that are “other income”. Below is a breakdown of all the categories showing the amount of income from each and the number of sales items each category had:

Category	Sales	# sold
Publications	206,784	18,611
Audio Visual	1,367,417	211,689
Apparel	648,479	23,761
Safety (bug spray)	7,575	939
Stamps	743	149
Food (winter months)	1,899	1,454
Cedar Creek sales	4,712	150
	2,237,609	256,753

Of that income, the Association spent \$1,092,055 to purchase inventory to sell during the year.

SNPA had three outlets plus its mail order and wholesale program in operation during the fiscal year. Following is a summary of the sales.

--- Harry F. Byrd, Sr., Visitor Center (BVC)

Byrd Visitor Center was open all twelve months of the year in 2022. The visitor center was open on weekends, weather permitting, during January, February, and part of March. The visitor center opened on Friday, March 18 on a seven-day week schedule, 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. On June 4 the visitor center was open until 6:00 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays. On November 6 the visitor center returned to the seven-day week schedule and discontinued the extended hours on Fridays and Saturdays. After Thanksgiving, the Park kept the visitor center open through December on the five-day week schedule and was closed on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Unfortunately, an ice store on December 13 caused the Park to close throughout the remaining month of December.

Sales at the Byrd Visitor Center was a record \$1,366,327.37. This includes sales tax, membership, and donation roundup. Sales had an increase of \$19,919.34 (1.48%) compared to the same period of the previous fiscal year. Visitation at Byrd was up 28.65% (70,509 visitors) for the year and the number of customer transactions was up .74% (364 customers). The average sale per visitor was \$4.32, down from the 2021 average of \$5.47. Byrd was open 299 days compared to 272 in 2021.

--- **Dickey Ridge Visitor Center (DRVC)**

Dickey Ridge Visitor Center opened on Friday, March 18, 2022 on a five-day week, Fridays through Tuesdays, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. through May 10, 2022. On May 13, they were open seven-day week with extended hours on Fridays and Saturdays through November 5. On November 6 Dickey Ridge returned to a five-day week schedule through Sunday, November 28.

Dickey Ridge also saw an increase in sales for the year. A total of \$957,706.87 with an increase of \$51,770.85 (5.71%) compared to the same period of the previous fiscal year. In 2022 Dickey Ridge was open 232 days of the year compared to 234 days in 2021. Visitation at Dickey Ridge was up 325.36% (103,093 visitors) for the year and the number of customers was up 236.47% (23,491 customers). Dickey Ridge had a \$6.72 average sale per visitor, compared to \$8.40 average in 2020.

--- **Cedar Creek/Belle Grove Visitor Center**

Cedar Creek Visitor Center opened on May 7, 2022 on a 5-day schedule for the season. SNPA had a few wholesale orders from the Park's partner sites. Sales for the year totaled \$4,932.99 which was great since the store was not open at all in 2021.

--- **Mail Sales / Wholesales**

Mail sale orders were down 8.4% in 2022, that was due to a decrease in both on-line orders and wholesale orders. Sales totaled \$51,289 compared to \$56,016 in 2021.

Other Business

Brown, Edwards & Company conducted the annual audit of the Association's finances and business affairs at the end of the fiscal year. All the reports were submitted to the firm and the auditor came to the office on February 22 to finish the annual audit for fiscal year 2021. Jim Fries from Brown, Edwards & Company presented the financial report at the March Board of Directors meeting.

Board Treasurer, Diane Wright came to the office and reviewed each month's activity of the SNPA accounts during 2022.

The SNPA Board met virtually on January 6, 2022 to complete the Executive Director evaluation and to review the results of the Board Member Evaluation. The Board President shared the results of the Executive Director evaluation with Miller on January 27.

On February 14 the Strategic Plan committee met at the Luray Chamber Office to finalize the draft to present to the Board.

The Annual Public Lands Alliance (PLA) Convention and Trade Show was held in St. Louis, MO on March 6-10, 2022. Board President Rose Ann Smythe, Executive Director Greta Miller, Director of Sales Rachel Burner, and Chief of Interpretation Roy Wood attended the conference. The Trade Show was great and SNPA placed a number of orders and found some new products to add to the stores.

Greta and Rachel participated in many of the virtual PLA Town Hall meetings and webinars that were held during 2022. This platform was used to help members share experiences and keep abreast of changes/issues that affects cooperating associations.

March 18, 2022 both visitor centers opened for the core season. Byrd went to a 7-day a week operation and Dickey Ridge went to a 5-day a week operation. On May 13 Dickey Ridge went to a 7-day a week operation. On June 3 both visitor centers was open until 6:00 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays through November

On March 26 after the Board Meeting in Stanley, members met at the new office/warehouse to eat lunch and get a tour of the new space.

In June the SNPA Board approved the purchase of a 2021 Ford Edge for \$34,950.00. The 2005 Ford Escape was sold to Carmax for \$3,000.

On Sunday, August 21 a special program was presented in the auditorium for the Night Sky Festival. Executive Director Miller and SNPA employee Karen Taylor went up to keep the *Park Store* open.

The Association was pleased to be able to hold two resource seminars planned in 2022. *Basic Night Sky Photography* was presented on Friday, August 26 and *Painting in the Park* was presented on Tuesday, November 1. We had a total of 24 participants. Unfortunately, we had to cancel two other seminars that had been scheduled. One on *Ferns in SNP* that we did not get enough participants registered. A second seminar by long time SNPA Board Member and seminar instructor, Jack Price, was canceled because of his move to Georgia. Not having Jack here in the area to give seminars is a great loss, but SNPA appreciates all the seminars he has presented as a volunteer for so many years.

On Wednesday, December 7 SNPA Board Member Clark Dixon passed away. The Board had held it's December meeting on Saturday, December 3 and knew that he had fallen in November and was in serious condition. Rose Ann had been able to visit him in the hospital just two days before his passing. A service was conducted on December 21 and SNPA Board members Rose Ann, Bill Reid, Judy Russell and Executive Director Greta Miller was in attendance. Rose Ann gave a beautiful eulogy during the service.

On Friday, December 9 SNPA Liaison Roy Wood brought the new Deputy Superintendent, Raquel Montez to the office to see the new space and to meet the Executive Director. Raquel is a 10-year NS employee that comes to Shenandoah from Manassas National Battlefield.

On October 13 an ice storm caused the park to close the visitor centers for two days. Another ice storm on December 13, caused the park to be shut down for the remaining of the year including the Byrd Visitor Center.

On October 29 SNPA Board Member Bill Henry picked up some books and literature and set up a SNPA table at the Children of Shenandoah event in Elkton, VA.

Everything is still on hold regarding the Educational Center Committee. The committee met with Train Architects on January 14, 2022 at Big Meadows to walk over the new site

considering. Train will complete Phase 1 of putting together their recommendations and price estimates on the locations that the group is interested in pursuing.

Due to a record year, SNPA was able to put away \$8,000 into the PLA Convention fund (used to pay travel for SNPA participants); \$4,000 into the SNPA Vehicle Replacement Fund; and \$100,000 in the SNPA Emergency Reserve Funds.

SNPA OFFICE/WAREHOUSE

The SNPA Board of Directors took a bold step in February and approved the purchase of a commercial building just outside of Luray for a SNPA new office/warehouse. This started in January when Executive Director Greta Miller met the realtor at a commercial building that was up for sale. Greta knew that it was built by an electrician, so it should have great electrical service, and that Comcast had rented the building for years, so internet service should be great. What a building! On February 8 the Board had a virtual meeting to approve a request to pay for an inspection of the building. After much discussion, a motion was made to purchase the building. An offer for the building was made. The realtor brought back a counter offer and the Board approved the purchase price. SNPA paid for the property in full making sure to not have to take out a mortgage and worry in years down the road that reduced sales or a government shutdown may make it hard to make payments. SNPA had a record year in 2021 and had excess funds that were used to make the purchase. On Friday, March 18, the building was purchased and keys were turned over to SNPA. Then the work began.

While empty, the entire interior was painted. Two mini splits heat/air systems was installed in the two back warehouse rooms. Carpet in the four offices were replaced. Front room tile was cleaned and waxed. Comcast installed internet and phones. Security system was installed. All lighting was changed to LED lights. All door locks were replaced. A motor was installed to the garage door. Greta had a local carpenter do numerous work including moving a front counter into the back, building a mobile computer work station for the warehouse, installing a small kitchen area, install a large lockable mailbox, and numerous other small jobs. We also had three of the toilets replaced and found folding/rolling tables for the conference room. Ordered a large screen tv and computer to set up the conference room. Cameras were purchased and placed on the two front corners of the building, one on the back door, and one on the garage door. Also placed cameras inside the front office looking toward the front door and in the back room looking toward the back door. On Monday, May 16 Lambert Moving starting moving furniture and inventory. SNPA staff packed the inventory and marked the boxes, so once shelving was moved, it was easy to put inventory back in place. By Friday, everything was in order and we were back in business.

SNPA also purchased three new Dell computers from Costco and worked with Vision Technology Group to set them up and copy all files to them. SNPA set up an account with VTG to handle all our computer, internet servicing along with servicing our security cameras.

Within months, SNPA was working with the Park to purchase and install a dome camera on the roof of the new building to have a live webcam pointing toward the ridgeline of the Park.

SALES PRODUCTS

With the record year in sales, SNPA staff was busy working to keep inventory on hand, and to keep the stores stocked. Most of the year seemed like October with lots of visitors making lots of purchases.

We continued working with *Wish Designs* to create our annual wildflower tee. For 2022 we chose the yellow star grass as the wildflower. The yellow flower looked spectacular on the charcoal tee and sales were great for this tee.

SNPA worked with *Wild Tribute* in 2022 to bring in a few new items. Added the Boho tee and the MV Bear tee along with a magnet, sticker, and ornament of the MV Bear. SNPA also brought in the MV Bear tee in children's sizes. Two new hats were produced by Wild Tribute – MV Bear and Gradient Bear designs.

SNPA met with Alyssa Black of Drawn to Ecology at the conference in Washington, DC in 2020 to do some custom artwork for sales products. But with the pandemic, this project was put on hold. In 2022, SNPA began working with Alyssa and starting seeing sketches of work. SNPA continued working with Alyssa throughout the year and hope to bring in a few products in 2023.

SNPA worked hard to keep popular items in stock – which included: national park puzzles, ornaments, magnets, mugs, mini blocks, and silicone cups.

SNPA MEMBERSHIP

SNPA had planned a SNPA Membership Day in 2020 to celebrate the 70th anniversary of SNPA. Unfortunately SNPA had to cancel the event due to the pandemic. So on Saturday, September 17, 2022 SNPA celebrated their 72th anniversary with a special SNPA Membership Day held at the Luray VFW.

SNPA had nearly 100 members attend the days event. There were several presentations during the morning, a catered lunch was served at noon, and special guided hikes in the park was scheduled for the afternoon. The Park brought the Mobile Visitor Center down and set it up for members to see how it works. This is a very special project that SNPA funded. Rob and Ann Simpson did a presentation on wildflowers in the park and was available to do some book signing. SNPA had copies of the newly revised *Wildflowers of Shenandoah* book as well as other books that the Simpson authored for sale. SNPA also sold the logo apparel which is only available to members.

At the end of December 2022, SNPA had over 1,200 members. During the year, members received the Board member election ballots; membership renewal notices; and monthly eblasts of special events/happenings.

Delaware North at Shenandoah, Inc., local attraction Luray Caverns, and a local outfitter continued providing SNPA members special discounts. Members could reserve rooms at Big Meadows or Skyland at a 30% discount (with a few restrictions) and could receive 20% discount on food service, horseback riding, and purchases from the gift shops. Members could receive \$6.00 discounts on tours at the world-famous Luray Caverns in Luray, Virginia and 10% discount from Appalachian Outfitters store in Luray.

SNPA STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT PLAN

After a full review with the help of a facilitator in 2021 and continued discussions in 2022, on August 27, the SNPA Board of Directors approved the revised SNPA Strategic Management Plan.

The three goals are:

- Maximize SNPA's Aid to Shenandoah National Park's Interpretive and Educational Programs
- Promote SNPA Membership
- Ensure SNPA Operates as a High-Performance, Accountable Non-Profit Organization.

This document provides guidance to the Board for future operations and has an action plan to implement each of the goals. The Board will continue to review the plan each year.

AID TO NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

With such a great sales year, the SNPA Board of Directors were pleased to be able to provide an increase donation as their Aid to NPS. In March SNPA budgeted \$125,000 in direct support, and at the December Board meeting, an additional \$125,000 was approved. These funds are placed in the SNPA Interpretive Account for the Park to use in fiscal year 2023 or to hold in reserves for future projects. The Association did contribute all the funds it received through the donation roundup at the cash registers, which total \$20,954.88. These funds were put in the account towards the Education Center project. Final numbers for direct financial aid totaled \$458,834 and programmed services totaled \$398,500 for a total aid of \$857,334 for 2022. Cumulative total of direct aid to the park since the Association began in 1950 totals \$4,777,392.

The following is a summary of what funds were spent in 2022 from the donations SNPA provided in 2021.

The annual *SNP Wildflower* Weekend returned after being cancelled for two years due to the pandemic. The event was held May 14-15, 2022 and had great attendance. The wildflower art contest was held, and SNPA provided the prizes to the youth that participated. (1,565.79)

Provided discretionary funds to purchased interpretive aids and supplies for the Interpretive program. Provided support for the purchase of books, maps, and other supplies. (\$404.69)

Funded the reprint of 15,000 *Junior Ranger booklets* and 4,000 *Junior Ranger pencils*. (\$12,785.00)

Funded the purchase of a Cannon camera, 3 Mac mini computers, and a large media storage device to assist the Media office. (\$11,281.69)

Funded a SNP Volunteer Recognition dinner in September 2022 and provided a few VIP supplies. (\$1,874.65)

Provided funding to Park Archives by purchasing miscellaneous supplies. (30.00)

Purchased two dome cameras and paid for installation. One on top of the new SNPA office/warehouse and one on the top of the Byrd Visitor Center. SNPA also funds the monthly hosting fees. (\$11,603.65)

SNPA purchased a Yeti solar generator for the mobile visitor center. (\$ 5,399.75)

SNPA funded the expenses for Chief of Interpretation Roy Wood to attend the PLA Conference and Trade Show. This expense is immeasurable, when considering the new products SNPA finds and gets approval for selling in the stores. This conference also provides great workshop sessions on ways to work with cooperating associations and learn about new projects other parks are developing with the associations. (\$1,025.35)

In addition to the support above, SNPA provided Association staff valued at \$183,491 to assist in staffing the visitor center information desks and handling sales at the *Park Stores*.

The Association also does the cash register roundup program and at the end of the year donate the receipts to the Interpretive Fund for the Education Center project. For 2022 a total of \$20,954.88 was collected and donated.

SNPA manages funds provided by the SNP Trust and the National Park Foundation to support the education program. SNPA uses the funds to pay the monthly rent for the Studio that is used by education staff to hold the virtual distance learning programs and the monthly expense to Comcast for the Studio internet service. SNPA also received a grant from the National Environmental Education & Training Foundation (NEEF) in July for \$26,300. Part of the funds were spent in 2022 to buy 6 iPads for students to use for the project plus \$12,000 to the park to cover the staff working on the project. The rest of the funds will be expended in 2023.

The Shenandoah National Park Trust held it's first *Show Your Love* event on Saturday, April 23. Executive Director Miller served on the planning committee and SNPA contributed \$500 toward the expenses. The day was filled with work projects for volunteers to complete to help clean up the Park.

As a special note, Tim Taglauer, Deputy Chief of Interpretation and Education retired on October 31, 2022 after many years at Shenandoah. Tim has worked closely with the Association especially on seminars, teacher workshops, special projects.

SNPA FUTURE PLANS

- Continue to transfer funds into the SNPA Emergency Reserve Account
- Continue to increase sales and increase Aid to NPS each year
- Review SNPA Strategic Plan annually
- Increase use of Constant Contact e-blasts to SNPA members.
- Continue to add products, press releases and other information to the website
- Participate in the PLA Conference in Portland, OR in March 2023.
- Plan to schedule seminar results and evaluations and make plans for next years program
- Continue exploration to consider possibility of building an educational facility for interpretive school programs and SNPA seminars.
- Get prices to replace roof on the new SNPA office/warehouse