

Firefly 2013 Afterburn Report



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Appendix:

Appendix A: Survey Response Summary Graphics interspersed with a little interpretation.

Did you go to Firefly 2013?

How many times have you been to Firefly?

How old are you?

Which Fireflies have you been to?

Do you feel you were adequately prepared?

How did you hear about Firefly?

Did you read a survival guide before the event?

Did you volunteer at Firefly this year?

Why didn't you volunteer?

How many hours did you spend volunteering for Firefly before the event?

How many hours did you spend volunteering for Firefly at the event?

How many hours did you spend volunteering for Firefly after the event?

What did you volunteer for?

Was your car blocked in during the event? If so, did you use the contact information listed on the parking permit to find the owner/driver of the car that was blocking you in?

Opinion rating scales

Muddiness

Website

Ticketing System

Compared to other years, Firefly 2013 was...

Size

Safety

Art Grant Pieces

Signs, Maps, Event Guides

[Portapotties](#)
[Parking](#)
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[I interacted with Medical \(Blue Dot\) and...](#)
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[Next year I am..](#)

1. Welcome and Introduction

Welcome to the Afterburn Report for Firefly Arts Collective's 2013 festival. This expanded format incorporates results and analysis of a community survey conducted after the 2013 event.

This report was largely written by Ike Feitler, with influences from the Firefly 2012 Afterburn report and the Afterburn reports of Transformus and Burning Man. The section on ticketing was contributed by Forest Handford, and Doug Ruuska, Jered Floyd, and other members of the Board of Directors also contributed text and edits to this report. Thanks also to Board Member Rachel Boyce for help with the analysis of the survey results.

2. Organization

2.1 Legal Status

Firefly Arts Collective, Incorporated is a volunteer-run non-profit corporation incorporated in the State of Massachusetts. In 2011, Firefly Arts Collective, Incorporated received retroactive 501(c)(3) non-profit status dating back to the Corporation's inception in 2005. As a nonprofit, our event is volunteer driven and only a small number of vendors receive payment.

2.2 Board of Directors

As of the Firefly event in 2013, the Board of Directors of Firefly Arts Collective consisted of nine members: Blake Courtney, Ike Feitler, Forest Handford, Jen Hill, Rachael Holmes, Pecan Johnson, Steve Kosinski, Jon MacLeod, and Doug Ruuska.

For the purposes of registration with the State, Steve Kosinski was the President, Jen Hill was the Clerk, and Rachael Holmes was the Treasurer.

As of this Report, the Board of Directors consists of:
Rachel Boyce, Jesse Campbell, Sadiya Carr, Blake Courtney, Ike Feitler, Jered Floyd, Forest Handford, Chuck Ingersoll, Pecan Johnson, Liz LaManche, Doug Ruuska and Dan Snyder.

For the purposes of registration with the State, Ike Feitler is the current President, Jered Floyd is the Clerk, and Chuck Ingersoll is the Treasurer.

Burnout and turnover of Board Members is a constant concern.

2.3 Bylaws

On September 15th, 2013, The Board of Directors adopted new bylaws, amended from an older version of the bylaws. Firefly Arts Collective's Bylaws can be found here: <http://fireflyartscollective.org/firefly-bylaws/>

2.4 Mission Statement and Aspirations

From the bylaws: "Our mission is to foster a collaborative environment and community for participatory arts, encouraging people to express their creativity, and challenging them to extend their concept of both community and art."

Firefly has aspired to follow the example of the Burning Man Ten Principles: http://www.burningman.com/whatisburningman/about_burningman/principles.html

2.4 Leadership

The Firefly 2012 event was built and managed by 37 Core Leaders and Co-leads running 18 cores, and by the Firefly Arts Collective Board of Directors. For Firefly 2013, there were 17 cores with 35 Core leaders and co-leaders (See [Section 5](#) on Cores). Before, during and after the event, these cores and their leaders put in a lot of time and effort to make the event happen. At the event itself, thousands of hours of shifts of volunteer labor across all of the cores were filled by participants.

2.5 Communications

Firefly communications take place over email and other media. Official announcements are emailed out to an announcement list, and there's a discussion list too, called Fireflyblink. There's also a [Facebook Group](#).

Official event information, announcements, and links to lots of other information, like this document, and the 2012 Afterburn report can also be found on our website: FireflyArtsCollective.org.

Firefly Arts Collective maintains its website on a "Virtual Private Server", which also hosts many Firefly-related email lists using "mailman" software, and provides many email aliases as well.

2.6 Planning

Planning the Firefly event is conducted by the Board of Directors and the Firefly Planning Committee. The Planning Committee consists of members of an email list, including all of the members of the Board of Directors. Membership of the planning committee email list is administered by members of the Board of Directors at their discretion. Other members of the email list include current Core Leaders, various past Core leaders, past Board members, and volunteers.

3. Financial, Legal, and Insurance

3.1 Financials

3.1.1 Event Revenue and Expense Summary

Amounts are rounded to the nearest dollar and are current as of 2014/1/29

2013 Cash Received:

(a) Ticket Sales	72,251
(b) Other Deposits	525
(c) Loan or Other Cash Injection or Interest	50
Total Recieved 2013	72,826

2013 Expenses Paid Out:

Gate/Art/ThemeCamps	6,026
Ticketing	1,232
(b) Art Grant	7,936
(c) Uncategorized Expenses	79
(d) Ranger Expenses	4,047
(e) Greeter Expenses	373
(f) DPW Expenses	3,910
(g) Bug/Temple Build Expenses	2,112
(h) Transportation Expenses	2,809
(i) Insurance	5,592
(j) Event Land Rent/ Land Improvement	7,970
(l) Infrastructure	6,798
(m) Land Maintenance / LNT	1,893
(n) Interest	0
(o) State Filing	69

(p) Fee	102
(q) Other Expenses [Specify each]	146
Fire and Safety Core	401
Work Weekends	1,531
Meetings	907
Kitchen/Caffeine Core	596
Somerville Open Studios	2,295
Sign Core	1,561
Website	5,325
Ticket Refund	2,250
Blue Dots	301
(r) Donation to another organization	880
Total Paid Out 2013	\$67,144

2013 Cash Remaining:

Total Revenue after Expenses 2013	\$5,682
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3.1.2 Firefly Assets

In general, each year there has been a Firefly event, ticket revenues have exceeded expenses paid out and The Board of Directors has been accumulating the extra money in a bank account. The money in the bank account serves as a reserve, or “War Chest” in case unforeseen emergencies require it to be spent, but primarily, the goal of accumulating money in the bank account is to devote it to future organizational development, such as in the form of buying land or other real estate for Firefly Arts Collective. As of this report, Firefly Arts Collective has \$64,704 in the bank.

Firefly Arts Collective also owns an assortment of physical goods that are used to run the event, such as two-way radios, sign materials, folding tables, quonset hut/tent structures, a small trailer, a few generators, and more. These goods are stored at the residences of various Board members and Core Leaders.

3.2 Legal

As Firefly has grown, we have become increasingly concerned with legal and liability issues. Firefly Arts Collective must make sure to operate within legal bounds to insure that the event continues.

Firefly Arts Collective has been receiving Pro-Bono legal advice from a law firm, via the Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts program of the Arts and Business Council (<http://www.artsandbusinesscouncil.org/programs/volunteer-lawyers-for-the-arts.html>). The Board of Directors is grateful for this assistance. The Volunteer Lawyers

for the Arts program has helped the Board of Directors resolve questions around insurance and liability, as well as refining the waiver that we require of participants in our event.

3.3 Event and Board Insurance

In 2013, Firefly Arts Collective purchased two types of insurance. One was Event insurance, which we acquire each year, and one was Directors and Officer's insurance.

3.3.1 Event Insurance

Each year, Firefly purchases event insurance. Without event insurance, Firefly does not happen. It is an absolute must to produce the event. The Board of Directors is not willing to assume the risks of running the event without insurance, nor is it willing to impose risks on the volunteers and the landowner without being covered by insurance. Buying an insurance policy in good faith may mean that the Board is required to restrict some things from the event, such as forms of interactive art that might be viewed as "rides".

3.3.2 Directors and Officers Insurance

Directors and Officers insurance was purchased this year for the first time. This type of insurance is standard to organizations like Firefly Arts Collective and helps to protect the personal assets of the board (who are all volunteers) from any legal action taken against the organization.

4. Execution

4.1 Timeline

2013

February 17th: Art Grant application instruction sent out

March 1-March 22: Ticket registration period

March 17th: Art Grant applications due

March 27: Ticket Lottery winners announced

April 8: Art Grant recipients announced

April 18: Core Meeting

April 28: Town Hall Meeting

May 4-5: Firefly participation in Somerville Open Studios

June 8-9: Work Weekend 1

June 9: Deadline for ticket art submissions

June 13: Pre-Firefly Core Meeting

June 15-16 Work Weekend 2

June 22-23 Work Weekend 3

June 29-30: Work Weekend 4

July 2nd: Early Arrival for Firefly 2013 begins
July 3rd-7th: Firefly 2013
July 3rd: Firefly 2013 begins
July 5th: Bug Burn postponed due to rain
July 6th: The Bug and Temple both burn
July 7th: Exodus, Firefly 2013 ends.

October 10th: Ticket Committee meeting
October 24th: Organizational Development meeting

4.2 Ticket Sales and Process

Firefly 2013 was the largest Firefly event to date. This year, the goal was to offer about 825 tickets (an increase of 75 tickets from 2012). During the course of the ticketing process, there were a total 1,261 opportunities to purchase tickets (an increase of 107 from 2012). Though only 849 were available to sell in total, if a person signed up for a ticket and did not pay for it, their name was removed from the list (without receiving a ticket), and the next person on the waitlist was given the opportunity to buy a ticket, this meant that there were always ONLY 849 tickets available for purchase.

Of those 1,261 potential tickets offered, 250 were not paid for (a decrease of 28 from 2012) and 162 were refunded (an increase of 75 from 2012). This left a total of 849 tickets distributed for Firefly 2013. This represents an increase of more than 60 tickets from the 2012 event.

The ticket system was essentially the same as 2012. After the 2012 event the ticket core invited the community to meet with the ticket committee to discuss process improvements. In that meeting, Ticket Core made a few refinements based on lessons learned in 2012. The biggest change was dumping PayPal in favor of WePay for accepting electronic payments for tickets. Ticket Core also replaced the Google sign-up with WePay. This reduced privacy concerns from last year and nobody opted for the "alternate" registration.

Another change Ticket Core made was to have first and last name be separate. In 2012, the Gate Core had found that the ticket list ordered by first name was cumbersome and asked if it could be switch to have it sorted by last name. This year the gate got a list in ticket order and last name order.

Demand further outpaced supply in 2013. 1283 people signed up during the three week initial registration (an increase of 373 from 2012). In 2012, there were only 17 people on the wait-list when the event began. In 2013, there were 315 people on the wait-list, despite an increase in tickets. This year Ticket Core was able to get further through the wait-list by verifying if people on the wait-list were still interested in tickets. This strategy allowed Ticket Core to get through 665 on the wait-list (217 more people than in 2012). All people from initial registration got an

opportunity to buy tickets this year, but some did not get the chance until the very last day of ticket sales.

There were cases of duplicate registrations , where a person signed up multiple times. The majority of these registrations appear to be accidental. An example is that some people signed up as individuals but had friends include them in their group. There were also cases of people who paid too much, or paid for people who had not yet gotten a ticket number. The people who paid too much were refunded.

It is important to note the distinction between a "ticket" and a "ticket buying opportunity". Being selected in the lottery does not grant a person a ticket, just the opportunity to buy a ticket. There are no "free" tickets to Firefly; no tickets paid for out of Firefly Arts Collective's funds. Firefly Board of Directors members all pay for their own tickets, and Firefly Core Leaders and co-leaders all pay for their own tickets. Art grant recipients pay for their own tickets, and the cost of a ticket is not considered as part of their proposed art grant budgets. Individual people may pay for the tickets of other people as gifts, but all tickets to Firefly are paid for.

As in previous years, the board set aside a set amount of ticket buying opportunities to allocate to specific people who were unable to obtain ticket opportunities through the lottery. In 2013, 7 art grant recipients who didn't get opportunities in the lottery were granted the opportunity to buy a ticket. 1 ticket was donated to a raffle for to raise funds for FIGMENT Boston, paid for by donations from Board members. Each board member was allowed to give opportunities to two people of their choosing, plus a ticket opportunity for their significant other. Each core lead was allowed to allocate one ticket opportunity to a person of their choosing allowing 20 people to get tickets from core leads.

10% of tickets in 2013 were "discretionary tickets". In order to receive a discretionary ticket, an individual needed to be nominated (or voted for) by four board members. Recipients of discretionary tickets included rangers, core leaders, DPW volunteers, former board members, and theme camp leaders. The goal with discretionary tickets is to make sure essential volunteers for Firefly will get tickets, but it's important to note that popularity, favoritism, and unquantifiable credibility and sweat equity also play a role in who gets tickets outside of the lottery mechanism.

Because language matters to people, in the future, Ticket Core will probably call these ticket opportunities by different names. Opportunities allocated by Board of Directors members and Core Leaders might be called "Privilege tickets", and tickets allocated by nomination of Board members might be called "Spartacus" tickets.

Ticket Core invited the community to meet to do a postmortem of tickets for 2013 and to plan 2014. Ticket Core would like to automate more of the system in the future. Ticket Core estimates that around 200-300 volunteer hours were spent on tickets this year.

4.3 Event Numbers

849 tickets were sold; see above for a breakdown of ticket types.

4.3.1 Medical Numbers:

10 medical volunteers

28 eight-hour shifts

Patients seen:

7/3 - 1 patient

7/4 - 10 patients

7/5 - 7 patients

7/6 - 21 patients

Chief complaints:

Splinters: 3

Foot injuries: 11

Cuts/abrasions: 10

Sprains/strains: 2

Burns: 2

Tick checks: 7

Altered mental status/syncope: 6

Head injury: 1

Medication request: 1

Dressing change: 1

Bug spray in eye: 1

Joint dislocation: 1

Cellulitis: 1

Bug in ear: 1

4.4 2013 Art Grants

The Firefly website contains more thorough information about recipients

<http://fireflyartscollective.org/art-grants/2013-art-grants/>

...but here's a list of the titles and artists:

- Angler Fish by Dorothy Bassett
- Angry Poodle Stomach by Michael DeLisle
- Black Ops R&D by Seth Hardy
- DangerStarOne by Justin Mattarocchia
- Flower Power by Carl Gruesz
- Full of Hot Air by Clarence "Sparr" Risher
- Get Inked: Stamp Quest by David Joseph Clarke
- Gnome Mini Golf by Rob Byrd
- Ground is Lava by Drew Van Zandt
- Kinetic Puppet Mobile by Sam Perry

- Laser Harp by Drew Van Zandt
- Life Drawing by Emily Lawrence
- Light Bright! by Anni Gale
- Luminous Labyrinth by Renee Furr
- Observation Deck by Erin Cheek
- Pandora's Cat by Alana Rivera
- Paper Cross PLAY by Sadiya Carr
- Path to the Universe by Jason Sumner
- Shadow Camp by Ellyn Stokes
- Staring Contest by Gearhead Liz
- Super Sprites by Carl Gruesz
- The Rainboat by Courtney Jane Brown
- The Sound Wheel by Ange Sarno
- Video Bleep by Nick Colangelo

4.5 2013 Listing of placed art

At this time, our records do not allow us to easily record placed art installations that were not funded through art grants, nor spontaneous art installations or performances.

4.6 2013 Theme camps

As usual, theme camps did lots of nice things at Firefly 2013. They played music, served food and drink, hosted craft events, contests, classes, fire spinning, and more.

An incomplete list of the names of placed Theme Camps present at Firefly 2013, also not including non-placed Theme Camps that self-identified:

Bananas & Blow-Ups; Bears Love Techno; Bring-a-Cup; Cabana Hammock; Camp Far, Far Away; Camp Lamp; Camp mU; Corporation Camp; Diode; Fern Gully; Firefly University; Ground is Lava; Hall of Arkham; Jurassic Pork (aka Meat Camp); Kids Camp; Princess Camp; Produce Camp; Sharkbanana; Sit 'n' Sip; The Universe; Virtuality; Fluffer Sorority

5. Firefly Cores

5.1 Art and Theme Camp Placement Core (Mapping)

Core leads: Pecan, Kendra P., Danielle M., Terry D.

Board liaison: Pecan

Description and responsibilities:

- Register theme camps prior to placement, including the main members names & contact info, a description of the camp and if they will be having sound, fire, fire art, propane and/or

electricity.

- Help find places for people to put art and theme camps
- Rope/tape off areas that have been chosen for art or theme camps
- Work with mapping person to map art installations and theme camps
- Trail Signs
- Developing map for event

Firefly 2013 notes:

- Art tours were new for 2013, and fun. Will expand this offering.
- For 2014, hope to get volunteers to help develop further up-hill camping sites.

5.2 Art Grant Core

Core leads: Laura T.

Board liaison: Doug Ruuska

Description and responsibilities:

- Announce Art Grants submission prior to event
- Manage collection of Art Grant submissions and obtain signed contracts from recipients
- Check in with Art Grant recipients at the event to ensure they have their pieces up in time.
- Helps to coordinate one or two art walks during the event (maybe make a make-shift map)
- Arranges & makes sure Art Grants are photographed & documented well
- Submits photos to Firefly Art Grant Photo Gallery

Firefly 2013 notes: Tough timelines and art grant recipients who didn't show up made this a rough year for Art Grants, but there was still lots of art!

5.3 Blue Dot/Medical Core

Core leads: Nick C.

Board liaison: Rachael Holmes

Description and responsibilities:

- Volunteer first aid at the event.

Firefly 2013 notes: Things went pretty well, but more protocols for handling serious situations are needed and are being developed.

5.4 Bug Core

Core leads: Joed P., Jack G.

Board liaison: Jen Hill

Description and responsibilities:

- Build the bug!

Firefly 2013 notes: The rain was bad, but there were green fireballs! It would be nice if the bug could be enjoyed for an extra day, i.e., if Firefly was one day longer.

5.5 Fire and Safety Core

Core leads: Chooch, Adrian C.

Board liaison: Blake Courtney

Description and responsibilities:

- Fire (fire pits, fire art, and fire spinners/dancers), Propane, and Electric safety.
- Collect information about fire pits, fire art, electricity, and propane use before the event. All must register with Fire Core before event.
- Educate participants about increased fire risk this year & requirements for water & extinguishers for Fire pits, tiki torches, candles, and fire art.
- Fire and Safety meeting for Fire Conclave

Firefly 2013 notes: There weren't any problems with the fire spinners or fire art, but there were still some problems with unattended fire pits, including in Chooch's own camp. Next year, Fire Core's responsibilities will be somehow split between Fire Art (flame effects) and Fire spinners.

5.6 Gate Core

Core leads: Jacob F., Courtney B.

Board liaison: Ike Feitler

Description and responsibilities:

- Coordinate early arrivals
- Manage road access before event, including verifying all vehicles are out of the woods by 11:30am before Firefly officially starts and locking the gate.
- 1st contact at Firefly.
- Coordinating Gate volunteer shifts.
- Matching state issued ID to master ticket list
- Verifying age and giving under 21 or over 21 wristbands
- Obtaining a signed waiver from everyone 18 and over.
- Give art ticket to participant
- Manage traffic
- Close off and monitor the road during arrival and Exodus
- Exit Gate (Exodus) help with directing traffic and load-out, help pack up Gate Station and send people home with leftover trash and recycling (MOOP)
- Note: Gate and Greeters merge to become Exodus at the end of Firefly

Firefly 2013 notes: Need to resolve issues with ticket list lookups, make sure to have adequate supplies of batteries/lights for night time.

5.7 Greeter Core

Core leads: Jenn Z., Anne L.

Board liaison: Ike Feitler

Description and responsibilities:

- Coordinating greeter volunteer shifts
- Welcome to event, dole out hugs & consensual spankings, gongs, & rainbows along with info about LNT & other rules of the event.
- Educate about volunteering
- Help participants transition from the "real world" to the "Firefly World"

- Exit Greeters (Exodus) help with directing traffic and load-out, help pack up Greeter's Station and send people home with leftover trash and recycling (MOOP)
- Note: Gate and Greeters merge to become Exodus at the end of Firefly

Firefly 2013 notes: The order for 2014 needs to be Gate, Greeters, and then Parking. Some greeters were less sober than they should have been.

5.8 Infrastructure Core

Core leads: Shane "Ozx" D., Jesse C., Tarn S., Matt F.

Board liaison: Steve Kosinski, Blake Courtney

Description and responsibilities:

- Attend all work weekends & determine infrastructure needs for the event.
- Responsible for projects necessary to make Firefly happen and to keep it running
- Setting up Ranger and Kitchen structures
- Gathering wood for the communal fire pits and the greeters station
- During the event, responsible for checking trails & bridges and make sure areas aren't getting too muddy
- Stocking the porta-potties with toilet paper and hand sanitizer

Firefly 2013 notes: The mud was bad and the ATVs were a problem.

5.9 Kitchen/Caffeine Core

Core leads: Terry D.

Board liaison: Forest Handford

Description and responsibilities:

- Organizing, setting up, maintaining and breaking down the Quonset hut
- Coordinate volunteers to cover throughout the event
- Providing Coffee, Tea, and hot water and associated supplies
- Overseeing communal kitchen area

Firefly 2013 notes: The kitchen should move to the woods, or have a coffee cart and/or there should be more art in the field.

5.10 LNT Core

Core leads: Groundhog, Bob R.

Board liaison: Doug Ruuska

Description and responsibilities:

- MOOP
- Post LNT signs
- Encourage people to take recycling and trash away from site
- At end of Firefly, sweep through the entire site to ensure there is no MOOP left behind
- Members of this cleanup crew are permitted to spend an extra day

Firefly 2013 notes: Mud, poop, too much work, not enough volunteers. LNT is very hard to do.

5.11 Parking Core

Core leads: Rhonda F., Brian D.

Board liaison: Doug Ruuska

Description and responsibilities:

- Determining parking needs and maintenance and/or improvements that will be necessary to accommodate parking for the event.
- Marking off driving routes and parking spaces
- Coordinate parking volunteer shifts

Firefly 2013 notes: Mud was bad and parking was at it's upper limit. For 2014 will work to find ways to reduce the number of vehicles coming to the event.

5.12 Ranger Core

Core leads: Ken M, Pretzel

Board liaison: Forest Handford

Description and responsibilities:

- Is the most visible point of contact for those with questions or concerns about Firefly and Firefly Culture. They are a crew of organized, approachable participants linked by radios that monitor the event, respond to unexpected situations, help to resolve conflict if it arises, and are there to get distressed participants the help he or she may need.
- The Ranger Core sets up the infrastructure so that trained Event participants can serve Ranger shifts. The Rangers are not a group of sheep dogs separate from the Event. Our ranks include Fireflies of every stripe.
- Safety - Rangers on shift monitor the event and make sure no undue hazards exist. They work with the Fire and Safety Core.
- First Aid -The medical subcore of Rangers, the Blue Dots, provide advice and help with First Aid. They also respond to serious medical incidents and coordinate with local EMS if need be.
- Conflict mediation: The Rangers help participants to resolve conflicts. Dealing with disputes, unexpected situations, emergency situations
- Communication: Keeps in radio communication with board members throughout the event.

Firefly 2013 notes: As usual, there are never enough volunteers. Incident handling protocols are being refined between the Rangers, Medical, Sanctuary, and the Board.

5.13 Sign/Info/Event Calendar Core

Core leads: Diana P., Ian L.

Board liaison: Ike Feitler

Description and responsibilities:

- Will set up info/event signs at various locations
- Check in at daily board meeting every day to see what info and/or volunteer needs should be updated on the signs located in various places throughout the event.

- Check in with Khaki (lead Ranger) to see if there are any updates

Firefly 2013 notes: Sign core was successful, but needed more help/volunteers, and was too stressful. Maybe there does not need to be as many signs.

5.14 Sound Core

Core leads: Nick B.

Board liaison: Blake Courtney

Description and responsibilities:

- Coordinate the location & layout of sound camps & require any sound camps to register prior to event.
- Deal with/soothe any neighbors with regard to sound issues
- Sound meter testing

Firefly 2013 notes: 2013 was a great year for Sound Core.

5.15 Stage Core

Core leads: Jeremy A.

Board liaison: Steve Kosinski

Description and responsibilities

- Schedule programming for the new-in 2013 open stage

Firefly 2013 notes: Great first year for the stage, given the weather.

5.16 Volunteer Core

Core leads: Carolyn F.

Board liaison: Jen Hill

Description and responsibilities:

- Promote volunteering, educate people about volunteering
- Connecting volunteers to where they are needed based on past experience or skills/knowledge they have to offer.
- Send emails to theme camp leaders to encourage members of camps to volunteer
- Solicit floater volunteers (Gnomes)
- Coordinate with Core Co-leaders and make report at daily meeting during Firefly
- Works with Sign/info Core to post volunteer needs during event.

Firefly 2013 notes: The core went pretty well, but could use more night-time volunteers. In general, the Gnomes were helpful and had fun doing it.

5.17 Work Weekend Core

Core leads: Jen H., Julia S. Jessica W., Ampersandy

Board liaison: Jen Hill

Description and responsibilities:

- Coordinating Work Weekend volunteers and facilitating email contacts for carpooling and ride situations.
- Checking in volunteers at Work Weekends
- Working closely with all Core Co-Leaders to create task lists, organize quick meetings during the work weekends for updates from Cores and to make sure we are maximizing our volunteer resources
- Making rounds through the site in between meetings to answer questions and assist as needed

Firefly 2013 notes: Very successful - lots of work got done during the work weekends.

6. Feedback

After Firefly 2013, a survey was implemented via a Google Form:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1q7UtX5zC0PP2EdQu-aqYVuOVgYksEU-7kZ_y1J2QYdY/edit

The results for the non-free-response sections of the report are presented graphically with a little bit of interpretation in Appendix A.

For the free-response sections of the survey, the range of the responses is presented below, paraphrased, and without regard to the frequency of those responses. Lots of comments and kinds of feedback were repeated by lots of individuals. A lot contradictory feedback was received.

6.1 What can the community/organization do to make Firefly better?

Trails, mud, transportation, parking, weather:

More trail lighting

Trail improvements, better mud management - ranging from "Pave the trails!" to "mulch" or

"gravel", "mats", "sawdust", "longer boardwalks"

More self-reliance/responsibility for transportation

More accessibility for people with disabilities

More ATVs on the trails to transport people's stuff

Fewer ATVs on the trails to churn up the mud

Make "Zip-carts" an official core

Stop coming up with more things for volunteers to do and jobs to fill

Permanent ice truck

Encourage carpooling

Make it be less work to get things up the hill

Have a weather machine

Move to a site with drive-in camping

Portapotties:

More frequent Portapotty servicing

Put portapotties in the woods

Transparency and democracy:

Increased transparency in the planning process

More democracy in planning process

Make sure veterans have access to tickets.

Transparency in the discretionary ticketing process

Event size:

Grow the event, grow other events - more opportunities for people to "Burn"
Shrink the event, it was better when it was smaller

Art:

More fire art
More art
Spend more money on art, even at the expense of portapotties

Sanctuary:

Make sanctuary more focused on psychological issues than relationship issues
Put sanctuary in the woods

The pool in the stream/the shrines:

Keep camps away from the pool in the stream
Keep camps away from the shrines

Email/Information:

More useful information over email and the website, meetups.
Less email
Print event guides

Volunteering:

Reward people for volunteering, like first crack at tickets the next year
Make volunteering easier
Train volunteers more
Make a way to remind volunteers when their shifts are

The Temple:

Make the temple more flammable
More "spirituality stuff to connect with"

The Community:

Make Boston Burners less cliqueish, make it easier to make friends

The event itself:

Make sound camps turn down the bass after 4AM
More veggies, less meat
Live music camp was too loud
More dance floors and play spaces for kinky people
Make the event longer

6.2 What should the organization/community keep doing?

Burning stuff

Sound camps/sound camp control

For the most part, there was enough trail lighting

Participating in stuff, volunteering

Keep focusing on art

Keep scouting new locations

Keep having ice

Good organization

Keep the same size

Keep close to the 10 Principles of Burning Man

The trail lighting was good this year

Better art

Rocking

Keep the ranger station in the woods

Rangers are great

Keep the event in the woods

Keep the social meeting spots like the stage and the kitchen

Interactive installations

Keep putting emphasis on consent

Keep talking about stuff in public dialogues

Moop bags from greeters were nice

Steam Bath

Nice website improvements

Keep improving relationship with Bethel

6.3 What should the organization/community absolutely stop doing?

Being so noisy late at night

Using email

Complaining about things on email

Complaining about people on email

Kowtowing to people who complain

Sexual coercion and assault

Stop leaving poop in the woods

Stop making the event safer and less free

Stop having the Board be secretive

Stop using the ATVs as much

Stop using the gnomes

Stop regulating body paint and sparkles

Stop Miss Firefly being such an immature/sexist/unentertaining event
Stop putting up with Nyancat

6.4 What steps (if any) would you like taken to make Firefly safer?

Body armor, safety belts, cushions and padding everywhere and my mom being there to yell at people

Nothing, What's safety, Firefly is too safe. A zoo

I feel/felt very safe at Firefly, keep doing what you're doing.

More planning for rain

Plastic mesh mats might cause foot damage

More trail lighting. More trail maintenance

Kill all the ticks

Sanctuary is good

Sanctuary in the woods not in the field

Increased awareness of Ranger and Sanctuary resources

Distribute information from MAPS/erowid.org

Emphasize self-reliance and self-responsibility and knowing limits more

Keep doing the ice truck for food safety

Fire safety core can't have an unattended fire pit on fire in their own camp.

Safety check on large art pieces. The hot air balloon almost bashed someone.

Make Firefly smaller

Increase accountability by making all participants get one or more references

Have a better community process for dealing with allegations of sexual misbehavior

Make counseling/training on relationship/sexual assault issues more available and easy to find

Consent messages in the portapotties were good, keep doing that

Bad erotica reading, especially when too loud, might make people feel unsafe in a way that techno doesn't

6.5 How did the addition of hired security affect your event?

Whiney emails

Not at all/didn't notice them (vast majority of responses)

They were nice and made gate shifts better

Bad communication about it on the email list

It was bad that one time they went into the event without escort when they weren't supposed to.

Conceptually bad, but no actual impact

6.6 Any other thoughts?

Great event (lots)

Grateful/thankful.

Parking is a big issue. Gear trucks would help. I hate the no-reentry rule, no space for people to get away if they need to

Felt like this year was less self-reliant

Glad that feedback is sought

Concerned that the Board is more concerned with throwing the event year-to-year sustainably than throwing a "Burn"

Hate the new ticketing system, but at least it cuts down on less responsible friends asking more responsible friends for tickets.

I want a Firefly Museum!

It was dramatically bad to have a camp by the pool in the stream.

I want to personally thank the Blue Dots, Rangers, and DPW.

I love you.

This survey has some design flaws that will skew the data you collect. Get some help next time designing the survey.

Likert-scale questions should have an odd number of possible responses so that "neutral" can be indicated.

Remember that mostly "squeaky wheels" will be the ones responding to this survey; don't let the complainers get you down.

A tentative calendar before the official calendar would help avoid scheduling conflicts between big events like Miss Firefly and Bring-a-Cup events.

We didn't need the ice.

The ice was great!

Trading cards for radical individuals

The Firefly organization reeks of inbreeding, which deters me getting involved.

Firefly faces a choice of being a more full-blow regional burn or shrinking back to something smaller and I don't think it can shrink back.

Rangering takes too much time.

I won't be back because of the noise levels and distance to the portapotties. Not much that can be done about that without moving to a different site.

Have the temple burn in the morning like at 5AM or something

Puns and ALL CAPS responses:

Moar volunteers! Less volunteers!

SPACE MADNESS!

A++++++ WOULD FIREFLY AGAIN

THE GREETERS DIDN'T GIVE ME AN ART TICKET!

7. Concerns

7.1 Mud

The mud made Firefly a lot more difficult for a lot of people than it's been since 2009 or 2006 (on different land). Firefly needs to be able to function even when it's as muddy as it was in 2013. Dramatically reducing use of the Polarises might help avoid churning up the trails when it's muddy, and other mud-mitigating land improvements might be possible during the work weekends and during the event during 2014. Hauling gear without the polarises will be difficult if it's too muddy for AWD cars to get up the trail, but perhaps everyone should be prepared to haul all of their gear at least a mile horizontally and five hundred feet vertically, using only their own human power. Unfortunately, this makes participation at Firefly inaccessible to a lot of people, or extremely difficult.

7.2 Fire Safety

There haven't been any major problems with Fire Safety so far, but it's important to keep taking it seriously, and as Flame Effect (propane poofers, etc) art becomes more common, it's important to have more rigorous safety in place for that. Making sure that Fire pits are always attended will continue to be important, and may be an issue for Placement Core to consider.

7.3 Medical and Sanctuary

As alluded to elsewhere, there needs to be better coordination for medical and psychological emergencies at Firefly. At Firefly 2013, an emergency led to evacuation of one participant by ambulance, and Vermont State Troopers entered the Firefly site to examine the situation. This situation worked out well enough, but could probably have been avoided with a more robust internal system in place.

On a positive note, medical volunteers successfully provided aid to a lot of Firefly participants in 2013, and sanctuary volunteers did the same.

7.4 Involuntary Dosing and other Violations of Consent

Some of the feedback received expressed concern that some participants may have been intoxicated without their knowledge at the event. The Board has also independently received reports from participants stating the same. The Board has also received disclosures that other violations of consent may have taken place at past Firefly events, including sexual assault. The Firefly Board takes these issues very seriously and has been working to develop a Code of Conduct, new reporting procedures and action procedures for 2014.

7.5 Harassment policy and procedures

Firefly is an event where participants take risks. Some risks, like exposure to the weather, are self-imposed and there is little that the Board feels that it can or should do to mitigate those risks for the participants. On the other hand, the Board doesn't want participants to pose a lot of risks to each other. Because the Board continues to receive reports of unacceptable interpersonal behaviors, a subcommittee has been working on drafting a code of conduct, a harassment policy, and procedural guidelines that the Board can use to deal with cases where it may want to investigate a report of bad behavior, and/or to ban someone from participating in the Firefly event.

7.6 Event Security

Due to previous suggestions, good policy, the growing size of the event, and a spirit of experimenting with new ways to run things, Firefly hired an independent company to provide security staff for Firefly 2013. These personnel were to stay at the Gate to Firefly, only go beyond the Gate when accompanied by a Ranger or a Board Member, and only then in the event of a situation that our volunteer Rangers were unable or unwilling to deal with.

For the most part, these hired personnel were unnoticed by participants at the event, and they abided by the condition that they remain outside the Gate. In at least one instance, though, a security person entered Firefly without accompaniment when they weren't supposed to. They just walked around and were escorted out, but it was clear that for security people used to working at music festivals in Vermont, it was very boring for these volunteers to just sit at Firefly's Gate not doing anything, with the woods so full of life.

The announcement of the presence of these security personnel was also made with less grace than would have been ideal.

The Firefly Board has not yet made a decision about hiring professional security personnel for 2014.

7.7 Volunteer Workload

Firefly as it's been for the past few years really requires a lot from its participants as volunteers. Gate, Greeters, and Parking cores must all staff shifts with volunteers for nearly the entire duration of the event, 5 days in 2013. Rangers cover the entire duration of the event with shifts, as do medical volunteers. DPW volunteers don't usually work shifts so far, but put in a lot of work before and after the event, as well as during it too.

That's a lot of hours of volunteer labor, and a risk to the success of the event.

7.8 Leave No Trace

People leave some traces, and it's not really that bad, but Leave No Trace core needs more volunteers to help it clean up and deal with trash after the event.

7.9 Parking and Transportation

The land that Firefly has been on since 2009 may be getting a bit dense in terms of camping, but it's definitely at the limit in terms of space for parking participants' cars and trucks. To be able to safely get cars in and out in the event of more very rainy years, it's important to try to reduce the number of cars at the event.

7.10 Tickets and Inclusion

If Firefly events go well, Firefly gets more popular. If the event stays on the same land or just chooses to remain the same size, or even to get smaller, this means that proportionately fewer people who want tickets get tickets, and the event gradually becomes less "radically inclusive" to newcomers to the community.

7.11 Transparency and Community Involvement

The Board is hoping to be a bit more transparent about things in 2014, with more frequent and thorough published meeting minutes. The Board also hopes that some of the information in this document will shine some light on how things work, and answer at least some questions that people have.

In general, though, Firefly is a social organization, and not a democracy. Board Members are occasionally solicited, but are selected by existing members of the Board, in the hopes that it's easy for them to achieve consensus on most decisions. The planning committee and core leaders are also selected by the Board.

In practice, a lot of the time, the person in charge of something involved in Firefly is the first person to volunteer to be responsible for it, and most of the time, it's someone who's at least a little bit competent in that area. Most or all current Board members spent time working volunteer shifts before becoming core leaders or co-leaders, or becoming otherwise more involved in planning things for Firefly and doing things at Firefly, before joining the Board.

Community members with an interest in having a say about how things run should get to know people and demonstrate an ability to communicate and work well with the people who are currently running things.

8. Future Organizational Development

Forest Handford, a member of the Board of Directors, has been elected to the position of Director of Organizational Development. An organizational development subcommittee was created that had an open community meeting in the Fall of 2013. At the meeting it was decided we should focus on creating a temporary public facing location to hold events and display art.

Since the meeting the committee has decided to call the location Firefly Flywheel. Sadiya Carr has become the lead for the location search. Rachel Boyce is leading a curation subcommittee. For more information, or to get involved, contact Forest, Rachel, or Sadiya.

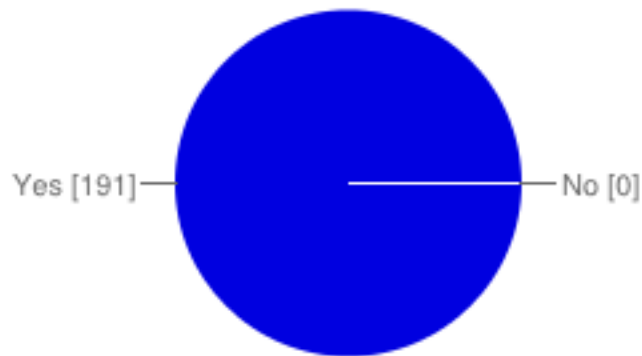
9. Conclusions

The Firefly Arts Collective will continue to hold Firefly events in July for the foreseeable future, learning as it goes, and hopes to foster more opportunities for participatory arts in other ways too.

Appendix:

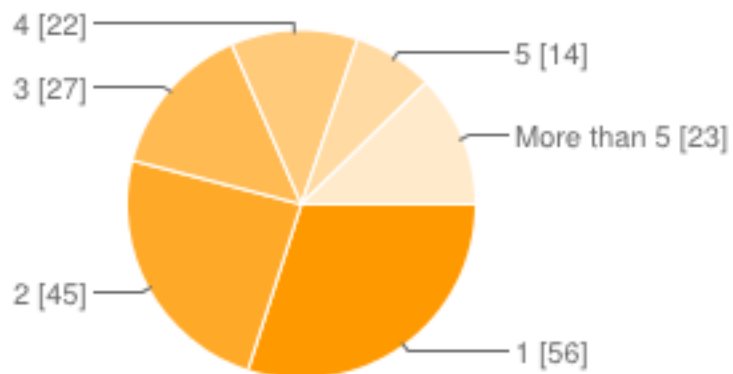
Appendix A: Survey Response Summary Graphics interspersed with a little interpretation.

Did you go to Firefly 2013?



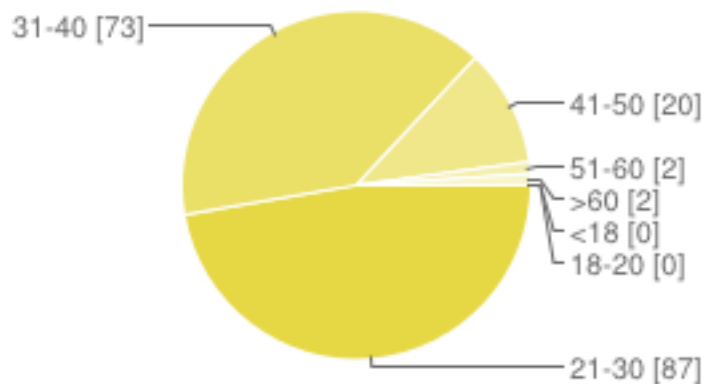
191 people filled out this survey, and they all claim to have gone to Firefly 2013.

How many times have you been to Firefly?



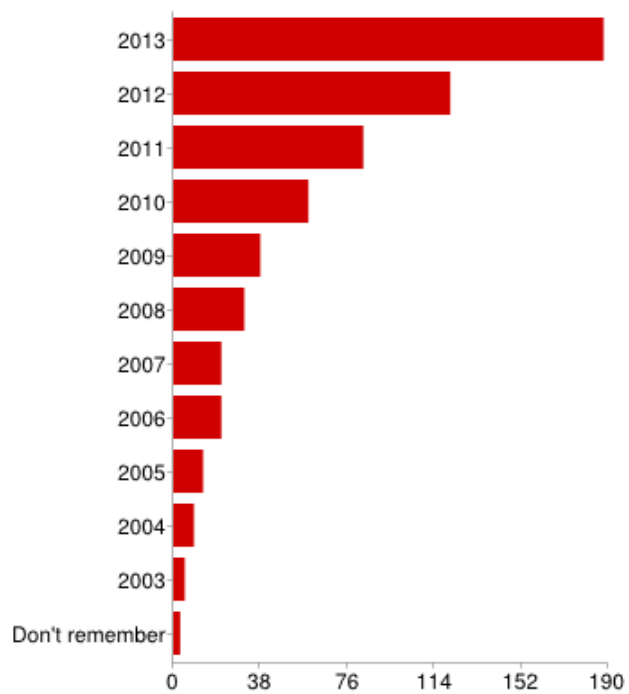
Mostly veterans, but lots of new people.

How old are you?

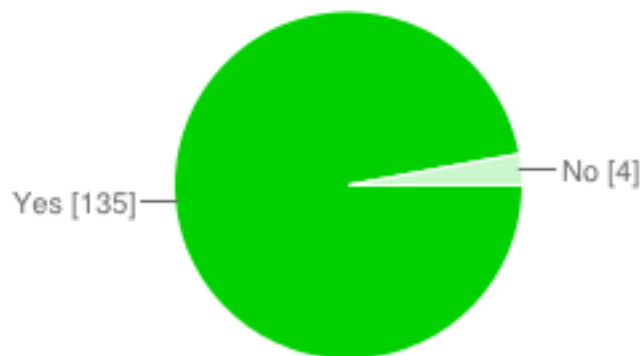


Firefly is quite popular with the 20-40 demographic?

Which Fireflies have you been to?

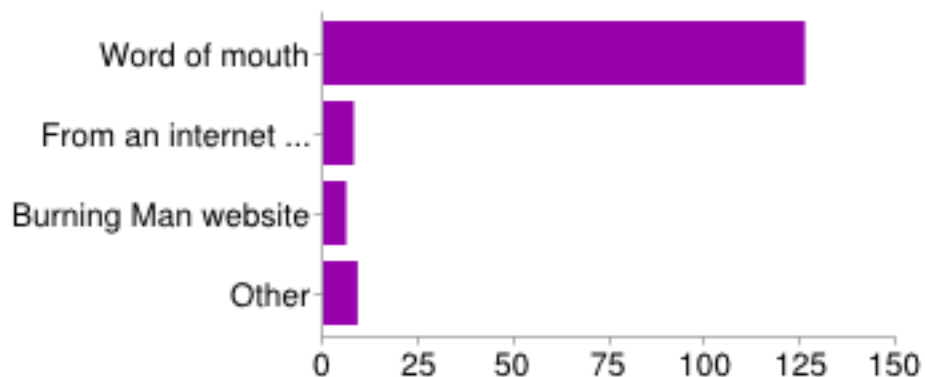


Do you feel you were adequately prepared?



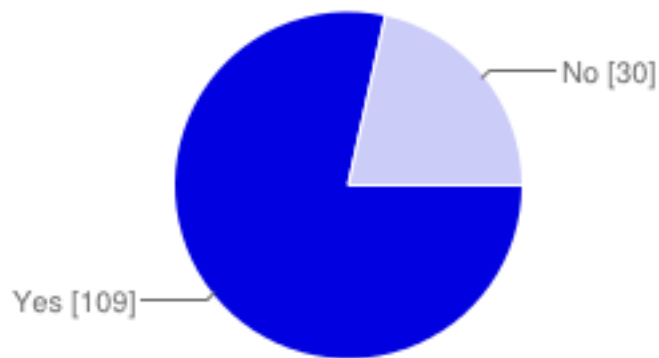
This question was intended for first time participants but definitely answered by lots of people who weren't. And we don't know if the 4 people who felt unprepared were first-timers or not.

How did you hear about Firefly?



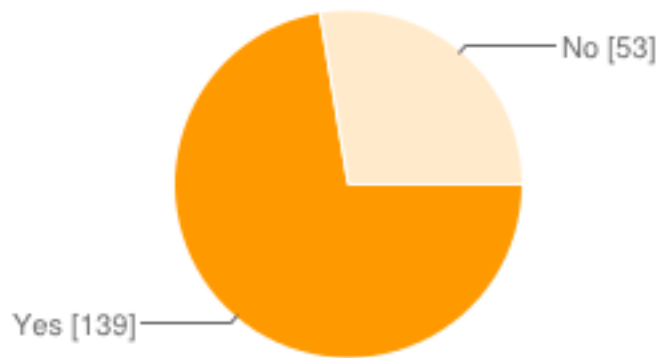
Again, intended for first-timers but responded to by more than that. But it's still interesting to know that some people do find out about Firefly from the internet, the Burning Man website, and "other".

Did you read a survival guide before the event?



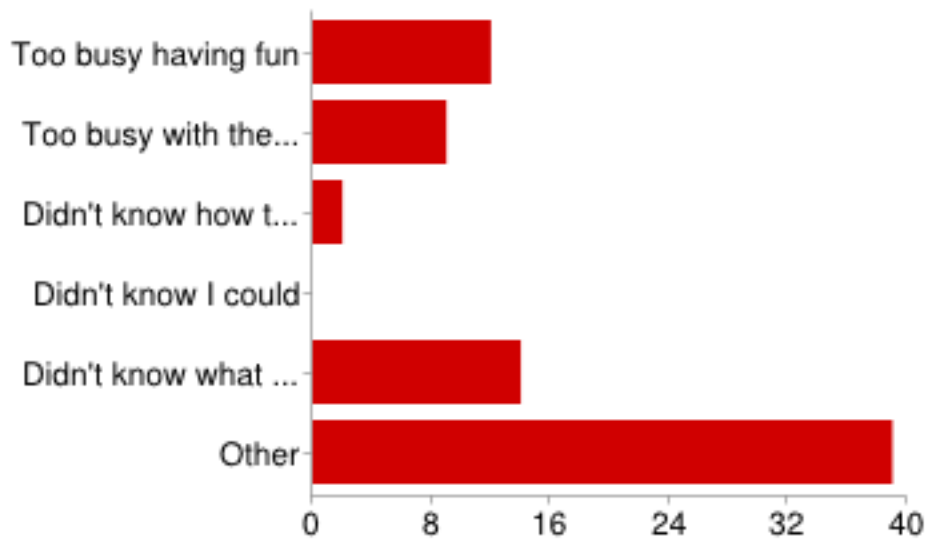
It's difficult to interpret this result. Maybe it's encouraging that even some veterans read a survival guide, but maybe it's discouraging that there were probably also some new people who didn't.

Did you volunteer at Firefly this year?



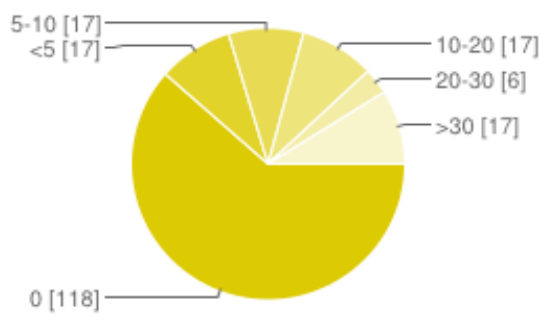
People engaged enough to be volunteers are also mostly engaged enough to fill out this survey? Tricky to interpret because it's tricky to account for selection bias here.

Why didn't you volunteer?

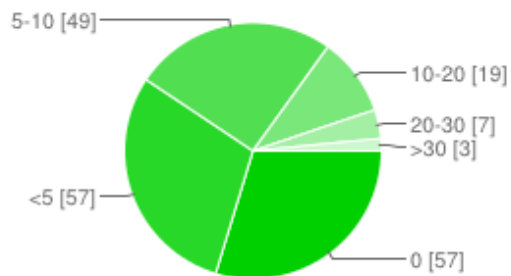


“Too busy with the...” is “Too busy with theme camp stuff”. No idea what “Other” here could mean to the plurality that selected that option.

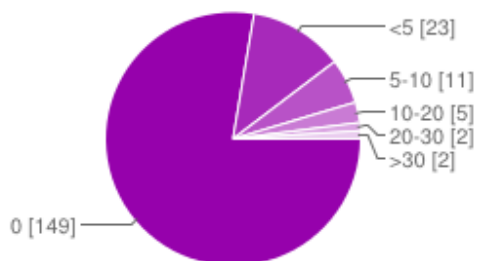
How many hours did you spend volunteering for Firefly before the event?



How many hours did you spend volunteering for Firefly at the event?

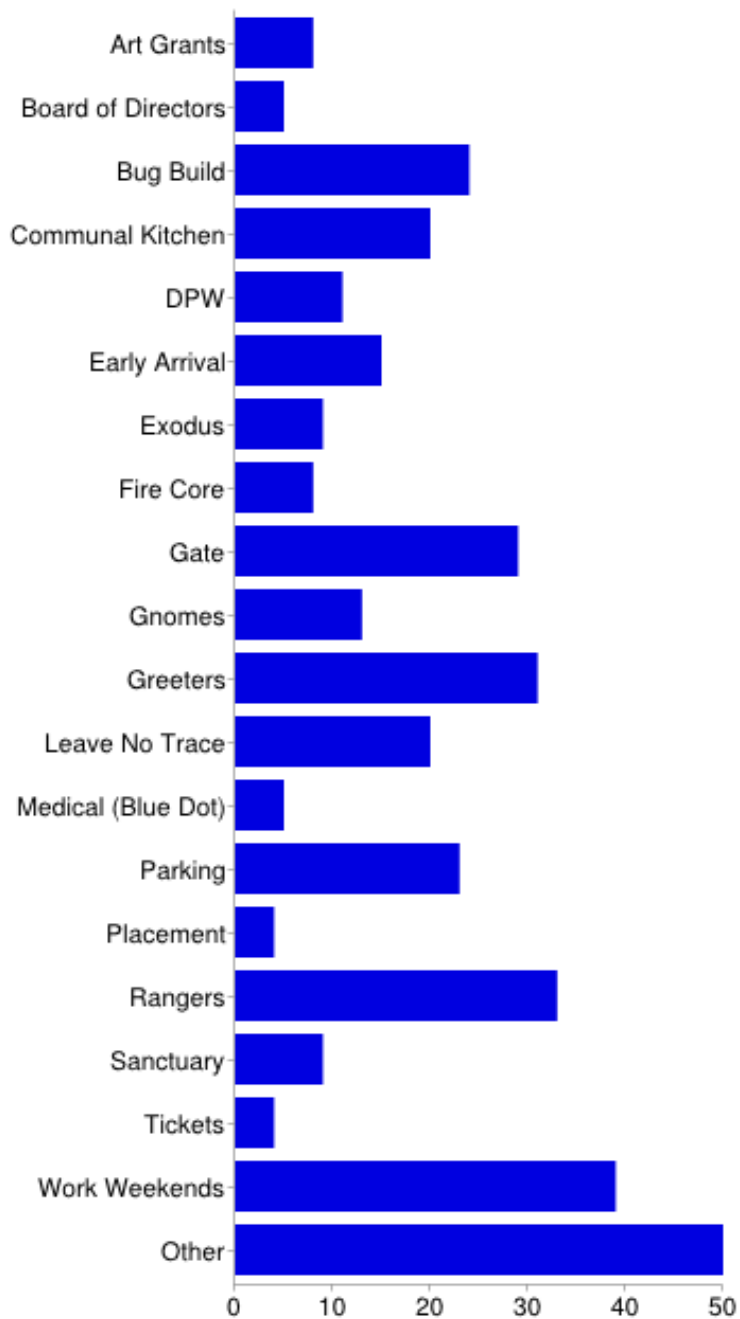


How many hours did you spend volunteering for Firefly after the event?



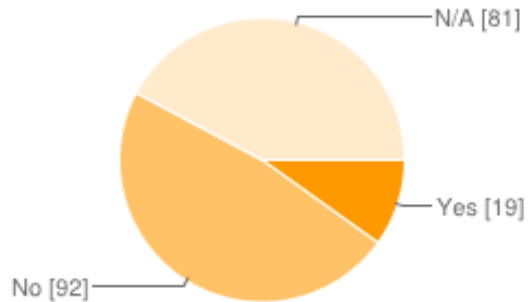
Wow, some people put in a lot of time!

What did you volunteer for?



Very curious what "Other" means here. Probably theme camp activities?

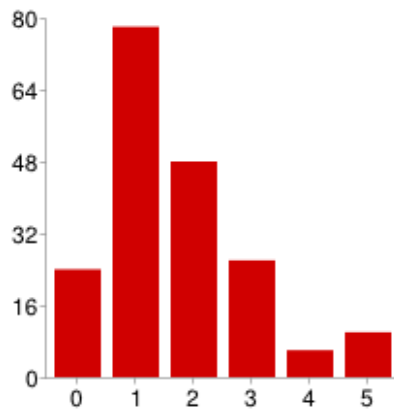
Was your car blocked in during the event? If so, did you use the contact information listed on the parking permit to find the owner/driver of the car that was blocking you in?



Opinion rating scales

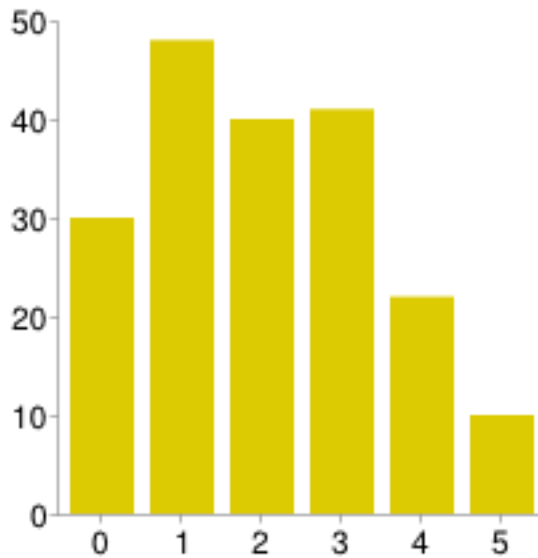
It's difficult to interpret a lot of these responses, but some are clear indicators of something.

Muddiness



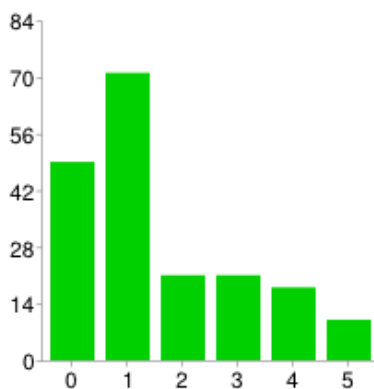
0 is "Too muddy", 5 is "Not Muddy enough". It seems that a lot of people didn't like how much mud there was.

Website



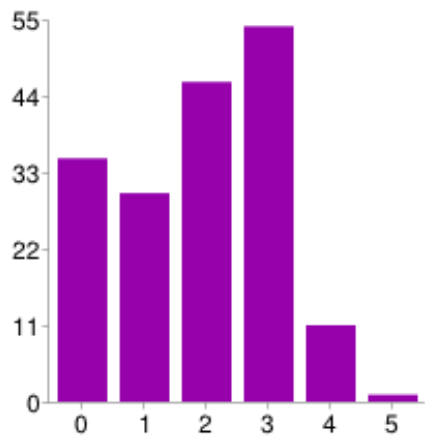
0 is “great”, 5 is “what website?”. Pretty mixed. We know that the website still could use a lot of improvement, but it’s good that some people did find it useful as it was last year.

Ticketing System



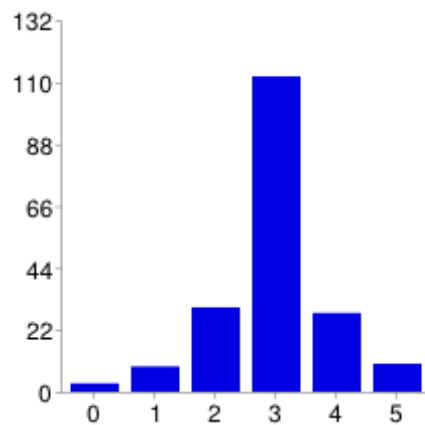
0 is works for me, 5 is we should change it. People like it pretty well?

Compared to other years, Firefly 2013 was...



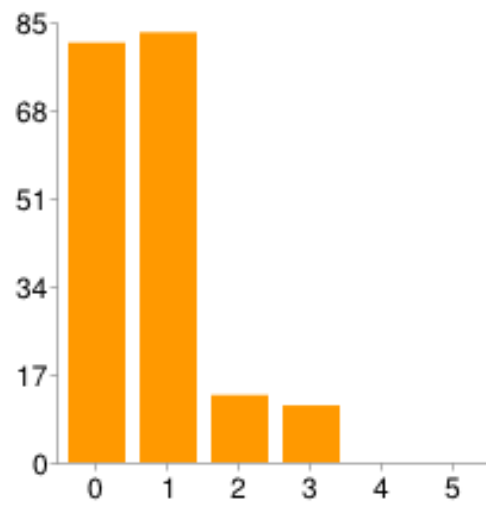
0 is much better, 5 is much worse.

Size



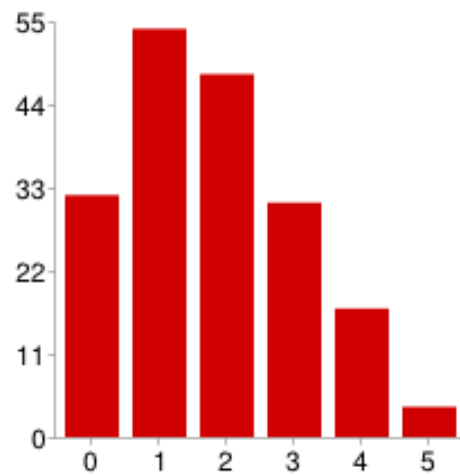
0 is too big, 5 is not big enough. Most people see to feel Firefly is the right size, and there's no clear majority of people who think it should be bigger or smaller.

Safety



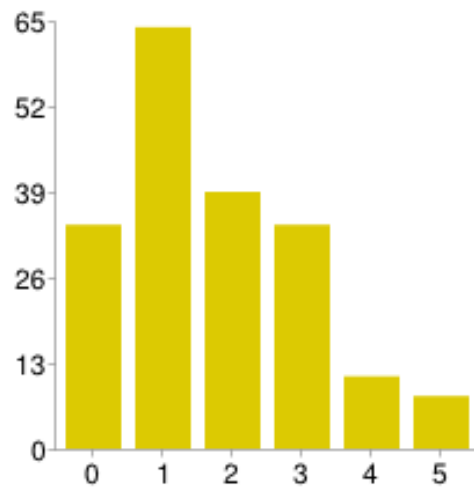
0 is felt safe, 5 is felt unsafe.

Art Grant Pieces



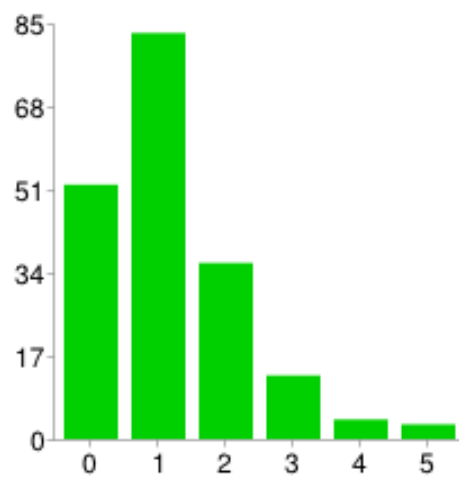
0 is "found them", 5 is "could not find them".

Signs, Maps, Event Guides



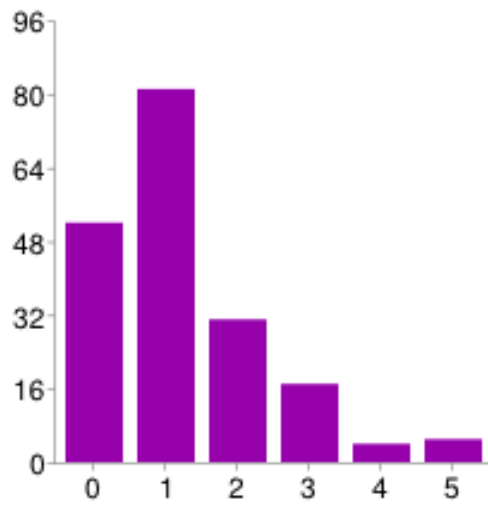
0 is "Great, lots of info", 5 is "There were signs?"

Portapotties



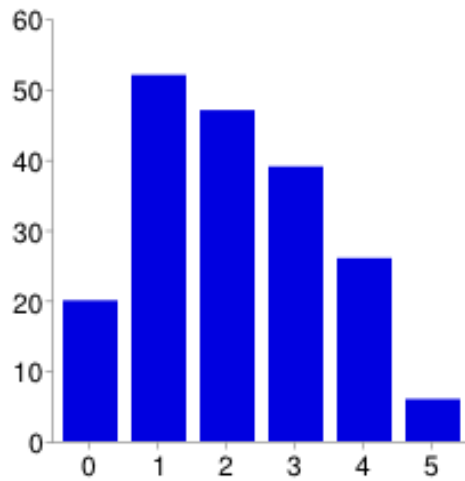
0 is "Clean", 5 is "Gross".

Parking



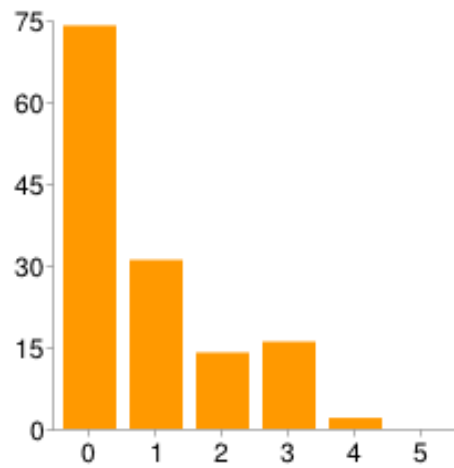
0 is "Parking worked". 5 is "Had difficulties" (with the mud).

Trail Lighting



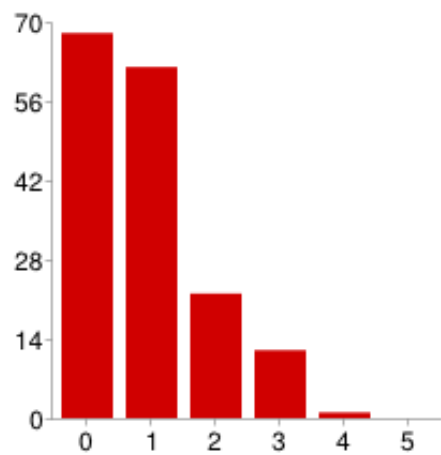
0 is "Great", 5 is "needs work"

I interacted with Medical (Blue Dot) and...



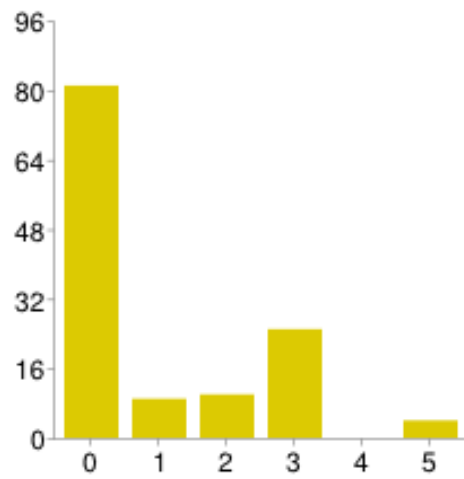
0 is “They were so helpful”, 5 is “Could use improvement”.

I interacted with Rangers and...



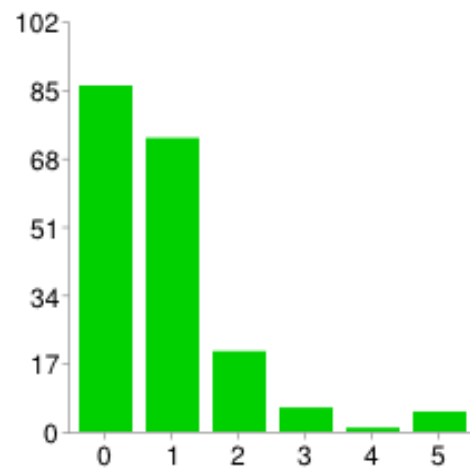
0 is “They were so helpful”, 5 is “Could use improvement”.

I interacted with Sanctuary and...



0 is "They were so helpful", 5 is "Could use improvement".

Next year I am..



0 is "Totally going back", 5 is "Probably won't return".