The overall Great Friend to Families winner in 2012 was Appalachian District Health Department social worker Trish Lanier.

The **Baby Fair** offers information booths from nonprofits and businesses on local resources for families, car seat checks, kids activities, as well as family-oriented rummage and consignment. The fall **Pumpkin Party** features kids activities and a sale.

In honor of the tenth anniversary of The Playhouse, we held a **Grown-Ups Party** in September 2012 to raise funds to create an endowment for the museum. In November, we also hosted the **Birthday Bash Week** of special activities and included five days of free admission used by 260 nonmember visitors.

"[The best things about The Playhouse are] support, smiles, a warm fun place when the weather is yucky."**—survey comment**

Goals for 2013

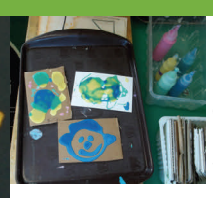
Increase Science and Art Programs

We would like to add more special workshops and classes that extend the learning in our exhibits such as invention workshops and nature exploration.

Create New Rotating Exhibits

New exhibits draw on local talent, stretch donor dollars, and keep our small space fresh for our many repeat visitors. Here is our "to-do" list pending funding:

- **Ball Run and Ramps and Balls** exhibit would allow kids to explore gravity while practicingproblem solving and teamwork.
- **A Puppet Theater** complete with a mirror so kids may see their own plays.
- **Build It, Move It**: a larger construction exhibit that would develop problem-solving skills by encouraging kids to build simple machines and vehicles that move using gravity.
- **Camping Exhibit** for the Romp and Stomp space would promote cooperative play, creativity, and language development when it is too wet or cold to really camp.



Complete Phase Three of Child's Discovery Garden

- Add weatherproof percussion instruments.
- Build "Evaporative art stations" where kids will be able to paint with water on slate easels.
- Add more pulleys and other opportunities for kids to build and manipulate the outdoor environment.

Pictured from top: a boy shows of his "floam" creation, examining a turtle x-ray in the Vet Clinic, dancing with scarves to live banjo music, and salt paint pictures.

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Reaching Out to L Income & At-Risk

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Pictured from top: Playhou exhibit.

with developmental delays. More than 25% of Playhouse members receive scholarships. In Fiscal Year 2011/2012, we gave away 54 free memberships.

Passes and memberships are also available to social service agencies. Preschool interventionists and therapists use agency memberships to work one-on-one with children tackling developmental delays in an enriched play environment that offers many friendly cognitive, motor, and social challenges.

The Playhouse facility is also used afterhours monthly for foster respite care offered by Department of Social Services and the Church of the Holy Cross. Parent to Parent uses the facility monthly to provide childcare during their monthly support and education meeting for families with special needs children. A support group for parents of children with sensory processing challenges also meets here once a month.

We providea free lending library of parenting books and kits. In our most recent survey of visitors, 79% reported using these parenting resources.

2012 Highlights

Establishment of Playhouse Endowment

In recognition of our ten year anniversary, the Playhouse board made a fundraising push to achieve the long term goal of establishing an endowment with the North Carolina Community Foundations. This is a long-term investment in the future financial stability of the museum.

Facilities and Exhibits

- Installed a green roofed "Gnome Home" constructed with funds from an Appalachian State University Greek Week Grant. This play cabin was hand-built from locally sourced locust and hemlock and features a planted green roof, pretend kitchen area, a loft, and a pulley.
- Added an indoor pretend garden to the baby/toddler area in the Meadow Room.
- Added "wood cookies" to the outdoor play area that children can use for building, imaginative play, and gross motor exercise.

Programming

The Children's Playhouse was open for over 1,800 hours of open play in 2012. Over 9,700 visitors explored our art, constructive play,

"You have built an amazing refuge for children and a strong, enduring community. We miss you. You and your program have made a lasting impression on my life and the lives of my children."

—email from a former member whose family had used The Playhouse frequently while the father was stationed in Iraq.

Pictured from top: Gnome Home with planted roof, operating the Gnome Home pulley, and watering the flowers