

Notes From the President



John Graham

Dear Friends,
1908 – 2008
Let us look back
100 years — a
century — and
think about our
nation and some
of the things
that shaped us as we are today.

The Wright brothers set records for man and the flying machine. The model T brought auto transportation to the general population; the telegraph; the telephone; the Victrola brought music into our everyday lives; Vitagraph added a new dimension - movie theatres; skyscrapers, filled with people, towering 700 feet in the air; adventurous sports car enthusiasts raced from New York to Paris across the continents' some 20,000 miles; the American-built Thomas Flyer won the race.

The Great White Fleet of 16 battleships completed its 43,000-mile goodwill tour around the world.

We were a nation of 90,000,000 people with the highest per capita income in the world. The sleeping giant of America seemed fully awake and moving briskly into the 20th century.

1908 was also the year of the “first ever” Governors’ Conference on the Conservation of Natural Resources. President Teddy Roosevelt brought together his cabinet, members of Congress, industrialists, labor leaders, and scientists. The conferees totaled 350, the only woman being Sarah S. Platt-Decker, president of the General Federation of Women’s Clubs.

“We have become great because of the lavish use of our resources and we have just reason to be proud of our growth” was Teddy Roosevelt’s opening of the Conference. He continued, “But the time has come to inquire seriously what will happen when our forests are gone, when the coal, iron, the oil and the gas are exhausted.”

It was his concern that the earth was being stripped and depleted. The warning voice of the President rang clearly: “We must handle the water, the wood, the grasses – so that we will hand them on to our children and our children’s children in better and not worse shape than we got them.”

What was the message then? What is the message today, one century later?

This President-Conservationist is telling us to “use less” of our natural gifts and to conserve and preserve our precious resources.

Today, 2008, we are a nation of 300,000,000. In the past one hundred years some North Carolinians heeded these words beginning in 1915 when Mt. Mitchell become our first named state park and so began our state park system.

Today we have a vibrant Division of Parks and Recreation, a growing 35-year-old Friends of State Parks, concerned public officials in the administration and N.C. General Assembly who support the “New Parks for a New Century” blueprint that the partnership of Parks, friends, naturalists, conservationists and concerned citizens have drafted.

Can we meet the challenges that were placed before us in 1908?

Will it be enough?

“Use less, conserve more, preserve the natural wonders and beauty of our planet Earth, passing the heritage of Mother Nature on to generations not yet born.”

Perhaps in so doing we will have stumbled onto a pathway to Peace in our Time.

John E. Graham
President



In Memoriam

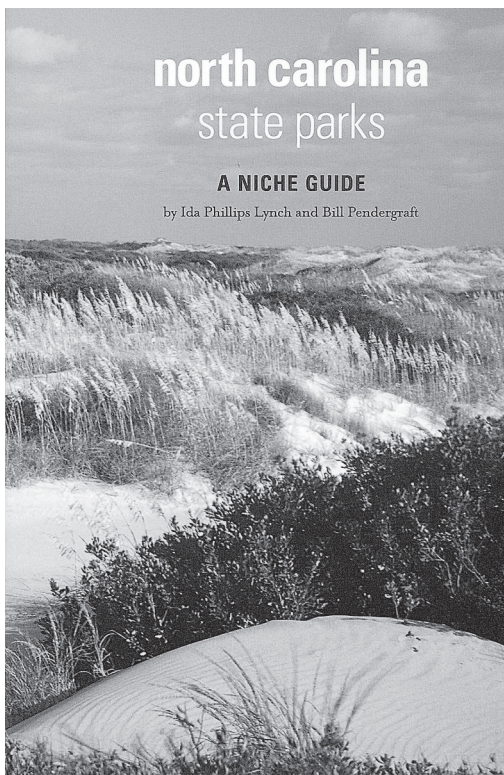
December was a sad month for environmentalists in that we lost two long-time friends.

Bob Conner, past president and one of the founders of Friends of State Parks, was also the first president of the Conservation Council of North Carolina. In addition, Bob served as president of the Catesby Bird Club and the Piedmont Appalachian Trail Hikers, as well as being a member of the Guilford County Advisory Board for Environmental Quality and the North West Preservation Committee.

Dave Martin was both an artist and a physicist. As president of CCNC during the 1970's, he led the organization in its fight against the expansion of commercial nuclear power plants. Afterwards, he also served as a leader of the South River Association, fighting against stream channelization and the destruction of wildlife habitat.

The Conner and Martin families have suggested that memorial gifts may be made to environmental organizations supported by the two leaders.

A Spectacular New Book



Friends of State Parks is pleased to be able to add *North Carolina State Parks: A Niche Guide* to our publication offerings. For many of us *State Parks of North Carolina*, written by the late Walter C. Biggs, Jr. and James F. Parnell and published by John Blair Publisher in 1989 has been our Bible and guide in visits to the parks of our state, ranging from ancient Mount Mitchell to the wind-scoured dunes of Jockey's Ridge. But, with the additions and expansions of the Parks system, it became outdated. The authors granted the publication rights of this superbly researched book to FSP who cooperated with Niche Press to produce this essential companion for visitors to the parks.

North Carolina State Parks includes the latest information on parks (including such recent additions as Hickory Nut Gorge and Chimney Rock) and some truly magnificent color photographs.

North Carolina State Parks will be available at a standard members' price of \$12 + \$2 S&H but is offered until May 1st at the special introductory price of \$10 + \$2 S&H.

Call for Continued Courage

by Alice Zawadzki

Bravo to you citizens and legislators, park advocates and committed state servants.

Bravo for all the work, visible and virtual, that you did to preserve the headwaters of the Haw River on your journey to protect its entire watershed in the new Haw River State Park. When the citizens and leaders work together, all kinds of good things happen.

At the January Board meeting at Rolling View on the receded shores of Falls Lake, we learned a wonderful, hopeful story. Citizens and legislators in the Triad united, posting yard signs, creating a web site, hiring lawyers, working with the media, negotiating with land owners and state agencies and untold other venues, and managed to stop a development that would have sucked up 100,000 gallons of water from the Haw each day for 7 years, to irrigate the golf course. My heart rejoiced.

Driving from downtown Raleigh to Rolling View was a downer. More and more woods have been demolished and land contours mutilated by the continued onslaught of out-of-area developers who lack the ethic and appreciation for the beauties of our wonderful state.

A few weeks ago at a church Wednesday night dinner, I found myself sharing stories of Raleigh in 1969 when I moved here as a newlywed. Then the Colony Theatre on Six Forks and Millbrook Road was the end of the world for Raleigh. That North Carolina was so green and tree-filled with forests and farms and clean air. Developers were local with values that preserved the landscape, the trees, and the topography. In the 70s, only one developer clear-cut the landscape on Six Forks Road.

The beginning of the end came in 1994 when Money magazine chose the Triangle area as the best place to live in the US. Now we see the results: six road-kills on one trip to Chapel Hill; clear-cuts along every thoroughfare; six lanes where there were two; lakes levels eight feet down; Piedmont hills chopped off horizontally and vertically; planned communities that look like moonscapes with the name "Preserve."

We must have the courage to act responsibly. Elect government officials who will put "responsible" as the adjective that goes along with growth. We must demand contiguous preserves along all our creek corridors accessible to critters and citizens; walkable communities with affordable housing with local schools and basic services; accessible, convenient mass-transit stops; zero run-off, zero chop-off of hill-tops, and zero clear-cuts; community

and family farming as part of the "preserves" instead of acres of grass to mow. We need visions and visionaries, courageous citizens and officials. The Haw River folks did it; so can we.



FSP members show their support
Photo: Bob Sowa

New Members

The first month of 2008 has seen an unusual surge in memberships. We welcome -

David Craft, Laura Krug, Cory Chubb, Danny & Lenny Bernstein, Andrew Benbow, Edward Olsen, E. Diane Camp, Tammy Hurt, William S. Brown, Michael Wofford, Julia Jones, Raymond Norris, John Boesch, Walter Ziemer, Claudia & Mike Nix, Helen M Smith, Violet Goodson, Karl M Odom, Ed & Martha Allred, Andy Whitaker and Carol Moore

- as new Friends of State Parks.

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Please send me:

- North Carolina State Parks Map Guide @ \$19.95 (\$15) + \$3 S&H = \$22.95 ea
- Guide to the Snakes of North Carolina @ \$10 (\$8) + \$2 S&H = \$12.00 ea
- Exploring the Geology do the Carolinas @ \$19.95 (\$15) + \$2.50 S&H = \$22.45 ea
- North Carolina State Parks @ \$14.95 (\$10 before 5/1) + \$2 S&H = \$16.95

Note: FSP members prices in parentheses

Name: _____

Address: _____

City & Zip: _____

Meetings

On January 26th the FSP board, on short notice, moved the meeting location from Lake Jordan to Rolling View Community Center on Falls Lake. The change was necessary since the Lake Jordan construction, running behind schedule, was not available. We tried to notify all members that we thought might attend. To any who were inconvenienced we extend our apologies.



Photo: Bob Sowa

At Falls Lake we enjoyed the hospitality of Superintendent Scott Kershner and his staff and appreciated their accommodating us at such short notice although it was a shock to see the depleted level of the lake, more than eight feet below its norm.

The next meeting will be held at Lake Waccamaw April 26th starting at 10 am. All members are welcome.