



Friends of State Parks

Supporting the State Parks of North Carolina since 1973

Spring 2011

PO Box 37655
Raleigh, NC 27627
Web www.ncfsp.org

From the President

by David Pearson

On April 30th we met at Singletary Lake State Park for our spring Board of Directors meeting. Some of the issues we discussed included the January State Parks conference, plans for a John Graham memorial, the Junior Ranger program, various grants and their status, and upcoming festivals at state parks

By far the most important item of our meeting was a presentation by Elizabeth Bizer. Elizabeth is a State Park supporter and also works as a lobbyist in Raleigh. She volunteered to speak to our group and educate us about pending legislation that is likely to affect North Carolina State Parks in this current legislative session.

We heard that Representatives Killian and Hall have introduced a bill which will all but eliminate the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund and use the land transfer tax to fund construction projects for low income housing.

House Bill 574 and its companion bill, Senate Bill 462 are identical and call for 50% of the current land transfer tax to be deposited to the NC Housing Trust Fund, while 37% would go to PARTF and 13% to the Natural Heritage Trust Fund. This compares to the current legislation which allocates 75% to PARTF and 25% to Natural Heritage Trust Fund.

As you may know, the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund has made a significant impact on North Carolina's State Parks. PARTF has also positively impacted your community (PARTF has funded projects in 99 of 100 counties). You can see which projects in the Green Book, available at www.landfortomorrow.org. Additionally, PARTF dollars have helped our state's economy.

According to the Trust for Public Land's study, for every \$1 invested there is a return of \$4.

In 1993 and 1995 the citizens of North Carolina mandated that our Park System be adequately funded. Changing the current land transfer tax now will ultimately mandate new taxes as North Carolina's citizens will demand funding for their State Park system. It is important to note that without PARTF North Carolina is ranked 48th in the nation for funding of State Parks.

Elizabeth also spoke of a new bill, Senate Bill 677, which would essentially combine the four conservation trust fund board of trustees, advisory committees and authorities into one 15 member commission called the Conservation Trust Fund Commission, thus eliminating the Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund Advisory Committee, The Natural Heritage Trust Fund Board of Trustees, The Clean Water Management Trust Fund Board of Trustees and the North Carolina Parks and Recreation Authority. This bill would replace most of the commission positions currently filled with public citizens and fill them with mostly staff personnel virtually eliminating any balance of power that currently exists with public citizens involved as trustees, committees and authorities.

If you would like to get a copy of these Bills and sponsors or follow their readings, you can at <http://www.ncga.state.nc.us> Also, if you do not have the contact information for your state senator or representative handy refer to the following website <http://www.ncga.state.nc.us/GIS/Representation/Representation.html> or contact the General Assembly call center (919) 733-4111 and they will transfer your call.

Please take the time to stay informed about current legislation that will affect our parks.

FSP Board Visits Singletary Lake and Carvers Creek

by Jane Hunt

Singletary Lake State Park is located near the bottom of North Carolina in Bladen Lakes State Forest. It is a unique park because it is only open for group camping. Swimming, canoeing, hiking, volleyball, campfires, and starry skies can be found in what District Superintendent Angelia Allcox said is “a nice, peaceful and quiet area and that’s the way we like it.”

The Lake itself is one of a series of lakes, elliptical in shape, which dot the east coast. N.C. boasts 17 of these natural lakes called Carolina Bays. Singletary is the deepest one, though only 12’ when it’s at peak level. It has no springs or streams feeding into it and its depth depends on rainfall. Great mystery hangs over the formation of these lakes; are they from meteor showers? The remains of ocean hollows from 10,000 years ago? Or dinosaurs holes? The answer is just not known. Many cypress trees, some as old as 400 years and dripping with Spanish moss surround the lake which has a shoreline of four miles.

The State first became interested in the lakes when the Legislature, in 1911, established “land now covered by the waters of any of the lakes of the state shall not be privately owned”. In 1929 legislation deemed lakes larger than 50 acres belonged to the State. Cotton, turpentine, pitch and tar from the long leaf pines, and lumber were produced on small farms. In 1936 the federal government purchased the land for \$4.51 per acre and the CCC constructed many of the buildings which still exist today. The property was given to the State in 1954. Some of the special features are the sandy land on which only very tough plants can grow, Turkey Oaks and saw grass and the long leaf pine with its special bird the Red-cockaded Woodpecker. “This place is as close as you get to a desert in North Carolina”.

Carvers Creek, just North of Fayetteville, will be the 36th State Park in North Carolina when it opens in December of 2011. An old farm which belonged to the James Stillman Rockefeller family and contains the main house which was built in 1939, a pond, farmlands, grist mill complete with water wheel, pavilion which looks like a wonderful place to dance and it has a huge swing, and a spring house which used to keep food cool.

The main house boasts former guests such as Presidents Roosevelt, Eisenhower, and Truman, and is now listed on the Historic Register. It is currently being repaired and refreshed under the very able supervision and sweat of Janet Pearson, the Park Superintendent...

When Rockefeller died at 102, he had willed the land to the Nature Conservancy. They held the land for several years, repaired the dam which had sprung a leak and then in 2008 transferred it to the State.

The view from the house looking out over the pond with a slight breeze on a warm day is very refreshing and peaceful. Though it is nowhere as large as Merchants Mill Pond, the back area looks like it with the big old cypress trees growing in the water where snakes and turtles must abound. There is a path around most of the pond and on it you will have a chance to see the tree which Rockefeller used to climb and sit up in the branches and read. Slightly off the trail, under a power line you can find three kinds of carnivorous plants, beautiful bracken and cinnamon ferns, and all different ages of long leaf pine; the baby which looks like a short stalk with a crew cut, the adolescent with its many tufts and the old stately one with its flat top almost out of view, Somewhere there must be Red-cockaded Woodpecker holes there....



*Ranger Lane Garner leads FSP Board on a hike at Singletary Lake State Park
Photo by Dorothy Graham*

Introducing Friends Groups

Twenty three state parks now have friends groups or associations to support them. The FSP website and this newsletter can help us all stay connected. Groups can also use Facebook to share news of activities, and are encouraged to send a representative to FSP quarterly board meetings, or if that is not possible to send an email update of their activities and issues. Check the FSP website at www.ncfsp.org/Locals.html for local groups and send newsletter items to dorothyg@ncfsp.org.

Local Friends Groups & Contacts:

Crowders Mtn - Don Clapp, Kings Mountain NC	donclapp@gmail.com
Dismal Swamp - Michele Aydlett, South Mills NC	michele.aydlett@gmail.com
Eno River Association – Holly Reid, Durham NC	association@enoriver.org
Friends of West Point (Eno) – Josie McNeil, Durham NC	westpointfriends@aol.com
BW Wells Assoc. (Falls Lake) – John Pelosi. Wake Forest	cbockhahn4@earthlink.net
Fort Macon – Tom Kelly, Emerald Isle NC	tomkelly@ec.rr.com
Goose Creek – Cathy Brown, Bath NC	brown99@gotricounty.com
Gorges – Tom Thomas, Pisgah Forest	tthomas262@yahoo.com
Hammocks Beach - David Pearson, Swansboro NC	davidp@ncfsp.org
Haw River - David Craft, Greensboro NC	chsyhkr@gmail.com
Hickory Nut Gorge – Diana Richards, Lake Lure NC	wolfeyes20201@bellsouth.net
High Country State Parks – Pat Beaver,	pat.beaver@gmail.com
Jockeys Ridge – Mark Dunlevy, Nags Head NC	mrdunlevy@charter.net
Lake James – Jim Powers, Morganton NC	powerscaton@bellsouth.net
Lake Waccamaw - Cathy Neilson, Lake Waccamaw NC	friendslwsp2002@yahoo.com
Mayo River – David Baker, Madison NC	dbbaker8@gmail.com
Merchants Millpond – Dennis Helms, Gatesville NC	dennishelms@embarqmail.com
Mount Jefferson – Jay Wild, Jefferson,NC	jowild@skybest.com
Mountains to Sea Trail – Kate Dixon, Raleigh NC	kdixon@ncmst.org
Pettigrew – Mitchell Patrick, Creswell NC	mitchellmtw@yahoo.com
Sauratown Mtns – Jay Young, Greensboro NC	jayyoung@triad.rr.com
South Mountains - Walt Gravley, Morganton, NC	wwgravley@yahoo.com
The Umstead Coalition – Jean Spooner, Raleigh NC	info@umsteadcoalition.org

We encourage you to save this list for future reference. If there are corrections to be made, please email dorothyg@ncfsp.org . The Friends of State Parks Board meets quarterly, usually on the last Saturday of the month, January, April, July, and October. Meeting locations are always at a state park alternating between east, west and the piedmont. We encourage you to join FSP and attend board meetings and keep us informed of your activities. A membership form is on the back page.

Parks Activities and Parks Volunteers

Information on Parks events for each month is more accessible than ever if you go the NCFSP.org website and click on the interactive map link.

Check these out:

Elk Knob State Natural Area work days on Saturdays June 4th to November 10th. For work days at other parks, check <http://ncfsp.org/volunteer.html>; for park festivals, go to <http://ncfsp.org/FunEvents.html>.

New River Celebration Day, Saturday, July 23, 2011. Join us from 10:00am - 4:00pm for a day of stewardship and recreational fun at the US 221 Access area

The Great American Campout at **South Mountains State Park** on Saturday June 25th Sponsored by GROW chapter, NC Wildlife Association. Details at www.grow-nc.com

Eno River Festival, July 2, 3, 4 at West Point on the Eno.

FSP Sends Congratulations To:

North Carolina State Parks System, one of four finalists for the **National Gold Medal Award for Excellence in Parks and Recreation Management**

Michele Aydlett, recipient of the Order of the Long Leaf Pine. Michele founded the **Friends of Dismal Swamp State Park**, advocates tirelessly for the entire state parks system and is a member of the N.C. Environmental Education Advisory Council.

Eagle Scout Kyle Kittelberger who has been working for several years with Ranger Brian Bockhahn to improve visitors' experience at **Falls Lake State Recreation Area**. Kyle recently received a President's Environmental Youth Award at the Plant Earth celebration to recognize his contribution.

Ian Fraher of Greensboro who became the 20th hiker to complete the entire **Mountains-to-Sea State Trail** after a through-hike lasting a bit over two months.

Tucker LaPrade, English instructor at UNC-CH, for receiving a public service award from the university's Center for Public Service. Tucker's freshman Service Learning Class researched four aspects of the **Eno River State Park** and developed audios that can be used to guide visitors through the park.

Joey Davenport who was presented a Governor's Medallion Award for Volunteer Service at the State Capitol. Despite constant surgeries and treatment for brain and spine cancer, Joey found time to volunteer several days a week over the past couple years to help keep things running at **Pettigrew State Park**.

The teams that built educational visitor centers at **Fort Macon and Raven Rock state parks** to whom the State Building Commission presented "awards for excellence in project implementation." The commission recognized designers and contractors for the facilities, as well as the state parks system's design and development program. The facilities were supported by the N.C. Parks and Recreation Trust Fund, the major funding source for state park capital improvements and land acquisition.



Photo of Singletary Lake by Dorothy Graham

Park Gifts and Park Improvements

The Sandhills Area Land Trust, in partnership with Friends of State Parks, donated \$11,000 to **Weymouth Woods Historic Nature Preserve** for improvements to the Bridle trails. Labor will be provided by park staff and volunteers. Presenting a check to Park Superintendent Scott Hartley is Candace Williams of the land trust and Bob Sowa of FSP.



Chimney Rock State Park has reopened its renovated Outcroppings Trail giving hiking access to the rock spire and upper-elevation attractions including Devil's Head, the Opera Box and the Skyline trail to Exclamation Point—the highest peak in the Park at 2,480 feet.

Girl Scouts Coastal Pines Chapter sent 52 volunteers to **Eno River State Park** recently for their **Second Annual Eno Excursion**. Each worked on a park stewardship project such as grass seeding, cleanup and trail work.

The Junior Ranger Program offers access to fun outdoor learning for young people ages 6 to 12. All parks offer the program, and colorful patches representing a unique aspect of each park are awarded. A newsletter "Turtle Tracks and Turkey Tails" is mailed to those who complete the program. The Junior Ranger activity guide book can be downloaded at the State Parks website www.ncparks.gov prior to visiting the park. State parks and FSP thank **Great Outdoor Provision Co.** for their support of JURA.



*Photo of Mill, Long Valley Farm
Carvers Creek State Park
by Dorothy Graham*

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P.O. Box 37655, Raleigh, NC 27627

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Visit the Website: www.ncfsp.org
Email: fsp@ncfsp.org



Yes! I want to be a Friend of State Parks!

Just fill out the form, clip and mail with your check to:
Friends of State Parks, PO Box 37655, Raleigh, NC 27627

_____ Student	\$10.00	_____ Donor	\$50.00
_____ Senior Citizen...	\$10.00	_____ Organization	\$35.00
_____ Single	\$15.00	_____ Family	\$20.00
_____ Patron	\$100.00 (or more)		

Name _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Eno Festival July 2, 3, and 4th.

The Eno River Festival is our biggest event of the year and generates more new members than any other. We need staff for the FSP booth all 3 days (7/2-4); volunteers get in free to enjoy all the music, crafts, food, and interesting people. Contact Jim Richardson at jimr@ncfsp.org to volunteer.

FRIENDS OF STATE PARKS - OFFICERS and DIRECTORS

Official organization address: P.O. Box 37655, Raleigh, NC 27627
Website: www.ncfsp.org

Executive Committee

President - David Pearson, Swansboro
Vice-president - Jim Richardson, Raleigh
Vice-president - Bob Sowa, Cary
Secretary - Alec Whittaker, Raleigh
Treasurer - Betty Martin, Raleigh

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At Large Board Members

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Jean Donnan, Winston-Salem, NC
Dorothy Graham, Durham, NC
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Next Board Meeting

Saturday, July 30 - 10 a.m.
Stone Mountain State Park