



Friends of State Parks

Supporting the State Parks of North Carolina Since 1973

Spring 2014

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

Message from the President

David Pearson

We are in the Forever Business... Forever supporting, promoting and advocating for State Parks.

Forty years ago a few friends got together and organized a nonprofit "Friends Group" dedicated to the understanding, enjoyment, and protection of North Carolina's State Parks. They had a vision of building Friends of State Parks, Inc. into an organization that would support, promote, and advocate for North Carolina State Parks. By all accounts they were successful!

However, as our State Parks system turns 100 years old and we look to the future, Friends of State Parks must grow in order to fulfill its mission. We need more local groups, members, volunteers, and donors. We need to build a stronger organization to forever protect these unique natural resources we all love. The State Park system of today is not the system it was forty years ago and it will continue to change into the future. We recognize our organization has to change to continue the mission and vision of our founders.

With this in mind, FSP's Board of Directors has been very busy since January developing a Strategic Plan and visioning process. We met with Betsy Bennett (former Director of the Museum of Natural Sciences), Bill Ross (former Secretary of DENR and PARTF Board member) and key members of the Division staff for a workshop to develop a future vision for Friends of State Parks.

Initially, there were six areas considered for visioning: funding, advocacy, culture, programs, member engagement and administration. From there the process developed a Vision Statement, a Mission Statement, a set of Values, a set of two year Priorities, and a Summary of Workshop Outcomes.

One of the main priorities over the next two years is Centennial Planning. FSP member Elizabeth Biser was appointed the Chairman of our Centennial Planning Committee. Elizabeth and several board members have met with various partners to discuss NC State Parks 100 year anniversary celebration. Three main efforts were

considered: statewide events, local events, and a capital campaign.

On April 26, 2014 Friends of State Parks met at Kerr Lake for a notable meeting. The FSP board voted to evaluate and hire a professional capital campaign consulting firm. The purpose of hiring a consultant is to assess our ability to run a large capital campaign and to receive advice on setting our goals and initiating fundraising. The board also voted to use the NC Community Foundation as the fiscal agent to handle the financial side of the capital campaign by providing first an endowment fund that would handle long term investments and then a gift fund that could be used for more immediate projects such as the capital projects envisioned for the Centennial.

Another important item in the future vision is structuring FSP as a true umbrella organization with local chapters and affiliates. The board heard from Bob Saunders of the Brooks Pierce law firm who discussed various non-profit structures under IRS reporting requirements. The vision is to engage and support local groups by providing them with tax exempt status, insurance, accounting services, and tax compliance. Established local groups will have the option of affiliating and partnering with FSP to participate with capital projects and Centennial events.

As the vision moves to action FSP needs to be properly staffed. The board recognizes this and voted to authorize the executive committee to develop a job description and a contract for an executive director.

Perhaps the April meeting at Kerr Lake will go down in State Park history as a turning point for Friends of State Parks. Going from a volunteer managed nonprofit to a staff managed nonprofit will allow our organization to grow. Being properly organized, staffed, and engaged in a successful capital campaign will allow FSP to support, promote and advocate for State Parks in ways we can only imagine.

(Message from the President continued on page 4)

Board Meeting Highlights

by Mary Penny Kelley

The quarterly Board of Directors meeting was held April 26 at Kerr Lake State Recreational Area. After David Pearson opened the meeting, Bryce Fleming gave a historical and geographical overview of Kerr Lake and its development. The meeting then turned to three key speakers who educated the Board on different aspects of contracting for services and establishing the Friends of State Parks as an umbrella organization poised to support the Centennial Celebration of the North Carolina Parks System. First, the Board heard from Betsy Bennett of Capital Development who talked about her experience in running a capital campaign to build new museum buildings. Next, the Board heard from Beth Jenkins of the NC Community Foundation who talked about setting up endowment and gift funds as a responsible way to manage funds raised for Centennial purposes and beyond. Lastly, the Board heard from Bob Saunders of the Brooks Pierce law firm who discussed various non-profit structures under IRS reporting requirements. After the key presentations, the Board took up several significant votes and approved action as follows:

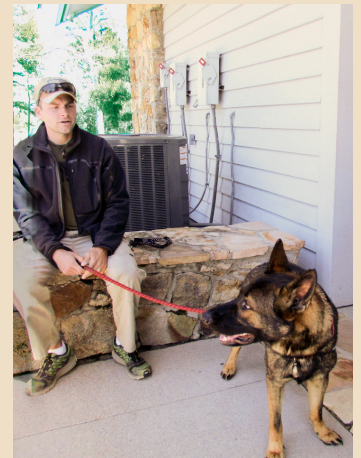
- Adopted a resolution and authorization, after procedural review by the Executive Committee and Bylaws Chair for compliance with the Bylaws in respect to funds held by the Treasurer, of one \$10,000 payment in order to contract with the NC Community Foundation to establish an endowment fund.
- Adopted a resolution and authorization, after procedural review by the Executive Committee and Bylaws Chair for compliance with the Bylaws in respect to funds held by the Treasurer, of one \$10,000 payment in order to contract with the NC Community Foundation to establish a gift fund.
- Adopted a new policy and procedure for the Grants Disbursements Committee.



Superintendent Bryce Fleming gives a historical and geographical lesson on the creation of Kerr Lake State Recreation Area during a Board meeting hosted there.
photo by Bob Sowa

- Adopted the 'Priorities: Two-Year Vision' in concept allowing the Executive Committee and Committee Chairs to wordsmith the whole document as necessary and re-circulate for further consideration and adoption by the Board at the July meeting.
- Authorized the Executive Committee to develop a job description and contract for an Executive Director not to exceed \$40,000/year including expenses, in consultation with the Board that may occur by electronic means.
- Authorized the Executive Committee to assess at least 3 consultants and hire a fundraising consultant at initial cost of approximately \$25,000 for campaign study and campaign costs not to exceed 5% of funds raised.

Aside from the votes, significant action occurred in the leadership of committees. First, Dorothy Graham resigned her positions as Editor of the Newsletter and Chair of the Junior Ranger/Youth In Parks - Environmental Education (YIP-EE) for personal reasons. The Board gave her a warm round of applause for all her efforts and support of the Newsletter and Junior Ranger/YIP-EE programs. She will remain a Vice President on the Board and continue to guide Friends of State Parks as it prepares for the Centennial Celebration. Second, President Pearson appointed Cyndy Weeks as the new chair of the Junior Ranger/YIP-EE committee. The Board will look for a volunteer to become the editor of the newsletter. Third, President Pearson created an ad hoc committee to coordinate Centennial planning and appointed Elizabeth Biser as its chair.



The stars of one of our last newsletter feature stories, Jason and Bear, hung around for a meet and greet with Board members.
photo by Bob Sowa

A copy of the meeting minutes will be posted to the FSP website www.ncfsp.org after the Board reviews and approves them on July 26.

Legislative Update

By Elizabeth Biser

The 2014 session of the General Assembly began May 14 in Raleigh. This is a “short” session year, the purpose of which is to allow legislators to make adjustments to the two-year budget, adopted last year. However, even with restrictions on what can be introduced during the short session, other policy issues are often considered.

Legislative leaders have signaled their intent to make the “short” session truly short. However, they will have a number of issues to take up this session, including addressing the recent coal ash spill, tweaks to last year’s

tax reform package, and several education issues—most significantly a desire to increase teacher salaries. They do have an incentive to get through these issues quickly, as legislators are facing re-election in 2014, or are running for higher office.

I’ll be following the budget process closely on behalf of Friends of State Parks, especially as it relates to the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund. The Governor’s budget has proposed no change to the Fund, which would leave the total amount for FY 2014-15 at \$13M. The Senate and House will now go to work on their versions of the budget, with hopes of adopting adjustments in advance of the beginning of the new fiscal year on July 1.

Junior Ranger Earth Day

by Carol Wills

Education Manager Sean Higgins had this to say about Junior Ranger Earth Day, which was held on April 23 at Umstead Park in Raleigh: “When we decided to hold an Earth Day event on a Wednesday in a remote section of the park, the big question was, ‘Are people going to come?’”

Higgins needn’t have worried. Nearly 200 enthusiastic kids, parents and teachers showed up to take part in the festivities. As Higgins noted, “Many made a point to tell us how much they enjoyed the event, that they never knew the park’s group camps existed, and that they were excited to begin working on the Junior Ranger program.” It was the perfect celebration of the partnership between Great Outdoor Provision Co. and Friends of State Parks.

The festivities began with a table set up to allow each child to make a personalized “tree cookie” name tag to wear around his or her neck. FSP members Jim Richardson, Dorothy Graham, Bob Sowa and Carol Wills assisted the children where needed. At a campsite close by, FSP members Mary Fletcher, Jane Hunt and Cyndy Weeks supervised the children’s making s’mores—a delicious treat for this afternoon in the woods. Ranger Erica Tunison and AmeriCorps member Bree Kerwin created a wildlife touch table and scavenger hunt, which the children entered into with great gusto. AmeriCorps members Erin Harrison and Brittany Hurtado ran an animal grossology station with owl-puke tossing and scat-matching games. AmeriCorps member Kate Boysen ran a build-a-boat table down by the lake where children created their own boats made of recycled materials. John Millsaps ran a Great Outdoor Provision Company welcome booth. Maggie Bailey from

Plant It Forward let the children plant river birch and black locust tree seedlings in pots to take home.

One of the most popular activities was fishing. Rangers Emily Abernathy and Education Specialist Brian Bockhahn ran fishing on the lake. Several of the children actually caught fish, which were then returned to the lake. One proud child kept saying, “This is my first fish!”

As Sean Higgins says, “Our Junior Ranger program started 10 years ago, thanks to a nudge from Friends of State Parks. It now reaches thousands every year from Mount Mitchell to Fort Fisher.”

Each child made a “tree cookie” into a name tag at Junior Ranger’s Earth Day Celebration



A pair of budding Junior Rangers learning about Earth Day



Junior Rangers learning about local wildlife during Earth Day

YIP-EE Grant Funds Environmental Field Trip at Hanging Rock State Park

By Cyndy Weeks, Mary Fletcher and Dorothy Graham

5th Grade teachers and their students from Old Town Elementary school explored Hanging Rock State Park in April. Their excursion was made possible through a YIP-EE grant which promotes outdoor education at our State Parks and is especially influential for students who otherwise have little access to the outdoors.

Quote from the lead teacher

“Thank you for helping us provide an amazing opportunity to our students. Thanks for the ease of applying and receiving the grant money. The kids learned so much on this trip and many experienced their first waterfall. I hope this trip instills a want in many of them to go back to Hanging Rock or another state park. Thanks again. You’ve made a difference in the life of a child.” Kelley Gerstenmier

Quotes from students

“I got closer to nature and I love the mountains the view and the whole place, wild life, how many years trees live and how I saw my first waterfall.”

“I did not know that throwing a banana peel was bad, but now I know.”

“I learned that owls eat the whole chicken wing and the bone. Owls don’t turn there head around 360 degrees.”

“It was very fun. My favorite thing was the water fall and the bird stations. I will come again. “

“I learned skins of some animals, learned how to age trees, see difference between an eagle and an owl, learn littering was bad. My favorite thing was watching at a waterfall.”

“Thanks to you my parents did not have to pay and they already have to pay the bills. Anyway thank you very much.”

(Message from the President continued from page 1)

The 100 year anniversary of our State Park system is a milestone event in our history. This is an opportunity for us to step up and make a difference. Just like forty years ago our founders had a vision that made a difference. Maybe 100 years from now our successors will look back on 2014 and the choices we make and recognize we continued the vision.

After all we are forever supporting, promoting and advocating for State Parks.

Kerr Lake History and Unique Features

by Jane Hunt

The Roanoke River flows for 410 miles from the Appalachian mountains in Virginia, through the Piedmont to the Albemarle Sound in North Carolina. Native Americans living in the area were Occaneechee and today it is still home for the Haliwa-Saponi people. Early European colonists began to settle in the region in the 1700s, farming in the rich soil, and later industry developed along the river. Frequent floods caused much damage and often destroyed crops and flooded the industrial areas.

In 1940, the worst flood in history, caused so much damage that Congress directed the Corps of Engineers to solve the problem. The result was the construction of the Buggs Island Dam in 1947, an enormous undertaking which employed 2100 men who worked three shifts around the clock for about 4 years before it was finished. (By current standards, it is rumored, that today it would take that long to get permission to build a bathhouse.) The dam created a body of water which is now called Kerr Lake in North Carolina and Buggs Island Lake in Virginia. Virginians did not want to name it after a North Carolina Senator and North Carolinians did not care to name it after an 18th century Virginia pioneer. Two thirds of the Lake is located in Virginia and North Carolina has the other third.

The Lake has 800 miles of shoreline upon which lakeside homes have been built, fishing has become a major pastime and many visitors come to the area for recreation. Such an economic boon to the area, and it now must be protected from hydrilla and the newest threat of coal ash from the Dan River which flows into the Roanoke. Special events include a Triathlon, Sailing Regattas, Fireworks displays on the 4th of July and Fishing Tournaments. Get up there soon and enjoy the fresh breezes off the blue water and the stars in the clear night sky.



Sailing on Kerr Lake is a perfect pastime for residents and visitors to the area. *photo by Bob Sowa*

Coyotes, Construction and Canoeing - Friends of State Parks grants support many activities

By Alec Whittaker

A combination of more available funding for FSP and tight budgets for the Parks Department have made the FSP grants program more needed, more available and significantly larger in the first quarter of 2014. From taxidermy to wall-building to support of festivals, FSP grants are helping to improve the North Carolina State Parks experience.

- Using a grant jointly funded by the Eno River Association and Friends of State Parks, Eno River State Park has added the lifelike display of a coyote, an animal increasingly common in our state.
- Morrow Mountain State Park will rebuild a dry stacked stone wall that once served proudly at the entrance to the park. The native argillite, quarried in the park, was used by the Civilian Construction Corps to build the wall in 1940. The result will be more than just building a wall; this is building an organization of volunteers as Friends of Morrow Mountain contribute both funding and physical effort to the restoration. FSP funds will match those raised by Friends of Crowders Mountain State Park to support the annual festival at that “State Park of the Year.”



- Hammocks Beach State Park’s Paddle Festival, partially funded by an FSP grant, will offer North Carolina citizens the opportunity to get out on the water in what may be an international event supported by the American Canoe Association and involving the British Canoe Union.



Three-quarters of 2014 still remain and the Friends of State Parks Grants Disbursement Committee expect to have the opportunity to support more activities in our Naturally Wonderful North Carolina State Parks.

Newsletter Editor Needed

If you enjoy reading our newsletter and would like to become more involved in its creation and production, please consider applying for the Newsletter Editor position. The position is currently unpaid and requires approximately 40 hours of work each quarter with the bulk of the work prior to publication dates in February, May, August, and November.

The Editor takes the following actions:

- Prepares an outline of each newsletter
- Assigns articles to writers and photographers
- Assembles the completed articles and photos in sequence
- Submits the content to the President, Vice Presidents

and Communications Chair for review

- Submits the content to the publisher for layout and printing
- Proofreads the publisher’s draft and finalizes the publication
- Assists with mailing preparation
- Submits the invoice for printing to Treasurer for payment

If you are interested, please send an e-mail describing your background and qualifications to Mary Penny Kelley, Communications Chair at maryk@ncfsp.org You may also call Mary Penny to discuss the position at (919) 827-1088 ext. 805.

Friends of State Parks

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___ 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: _____

2014 Board Meetings

April 26	11 a.m.	Kerr Lake State Recreation Area
July 26	10 a.m.	South Mountains State Park
October 25	11 a.m.	Lake Norman State Park

Eno Festival

July 4 - 5, 2014

FRIENDS OF STATE PARKS OFFICERS and DIRECTORS

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