



Friends of Florida State Parks E-Newsletter

FRIENDS NEWS

February 2011 Edition

Governor Scott pledges not to close any Florida parks

Governor Rick Scott toured the state's Department of Environmental Protection offices Friday and emerged with a book on Florida parks and a vow to not close any of them.

Scott, who ended his hour long building tour praising "all these great parks," which attract 20 millions visitors a year, ended talk of park closures.

No, we have beautiful parks," Scott said. "As you know, we've gotten two

gold medals for our parks. I think we have 20 million-plus visitors. So, no, we've got great parks, and we've got to make sure we preserve them and take care of them."

Scott's comments followed his budget staff making a similar declaration to the House Agriculture and Natural Resources Appropriations panel earlier this week.

But Florida's budget is a long way from balanced. The final budget will be set by the Florida Legislature and their difficult task to balance the budget is just beginning.

We at Friends of Florida State Parks are encouraged that the Governor understands the State Parks contribution to the economy. We encourage you to share your personal experience with your favorite park by going to www.lovemystateparks.org and sharing your stories and photos. We will make certain they are shared with our state leaders.

Share your Stories & Photos:
www.lovemystateparks.org

Friends of Florida State Parks helps Cool eco-Volunteer Science Program... Plants Florida Middle School Students in Parks!

www.eco-volunteerusa.org

Volunteer USA Foundation has launched a unique 'green' education course for middle school students in partnership with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), the Department of Education (DOE) and Friends of Florida State Parks.

This fun, eco-VolunteerUSATM opportunity, made possible with the support of Walmart Foundation, brings Florida State Parks to life in the classroom. Teachers receive at no-cost a show-stopping full color "monster" invasive exotic plant poster with lesson plans on the back. The lessons are also available on DOE's Just for Teachers' website at www.fldoe.org/JustForTeachers/Instructional_Resources.asp.

Eco-VolunteerUSA staff helps to arrange a state park field trip for classes, where teachers put into practice the "Science Investigation" lesson.

Students help the park by removing invasive exotic plants which threaten Florida's natural lands and native wildlife habitat.

Participating students:

- Earn the designation "eco-Volunteer"
- Receive a free pass to visit any Florida State Park with their family
- Meet community service requirement passed in 2010 by the Florida legislature for 7th graders

What a terrific opportunity for park-based Citizen Support Organizations too! Transportation funds for school field trips are extremely limited. Over 200 middle schools are located 30 miles from a Florida State Park. Local Friends & Alliance groups can help sponsor a local school's field trip for as little as \$200-\$300.



To learn more contact
Christine.Small@volunteerusafund.org

Congratulations to the 2011 Winners of Florida State Parks Annual Photo Contest



*Cape Florida Lighthouse by Iouri Dovnarovich
Bill Baggs Cape Florida State Park, Key Biscayne, FL*

Nature-based photography is one of the fastest growing activities in America. In Florida, that holds true. Each month, between 40 and 200 photos are entered into the monthly Photo Contest online. Visitors to the site vote for the winner. Each of the 12 monthly winners is eligible for the Annual Contest.

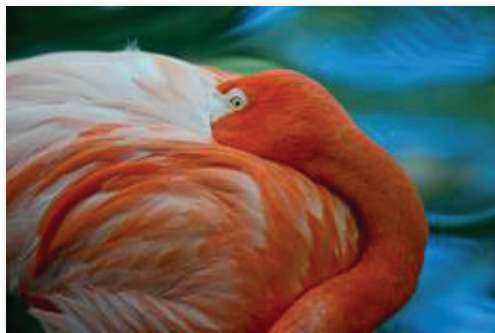
The winners of the 2011 Photo Contest are:

Iouri Dovnarovich,
First Place Winner

Joseph Spoto,
Second Place Winner

Jean Clark,
Third Place Winner

Marsha Baker,
Honorable Mention



*Flamingo by Joseph Spoto
Ellie Schiller Homosassa Springs Wildlife State Park,
Homosassa, FL*

The contest was judged by a panel of professional photographers:



*Bobcat by Jean Clark
Ellie Schiller Homosassa Springs Wildlife State Park,
Homosassa, FL*

Lynn Berreiter, Kevin Kolczynski and John Moran. Of her judging experience, Ms. Berreiter said: "Being a nature photographer, it is always a joy to see other folks' visions of nature. It was an honor to be asked to judge such a wonderful contest."

The prizes were either a two-night stay at a cabin in any Florida State Park that offers cabin accommodations or hotel accommodations near a Florida State Park. Florida State Parks partnered with the Friends of Florida State Parks to provide the prizes.



*Rainbow Springs by Marsha Baker
Rainbow Springs State Park, Dunnellon, FL*

Learn more about the Photo Contest online at www.floridastateparks.org/thingstodo/photocontest.cfm

2011 Volunteer Appreciation Events

February 5, 2011

District 4

Oscar Scherer State Park

February 26, 2011

District 3

Lake Kissimmee State Park

March 12, 2011

District 2

Stephen Foster Folk Culture
Center State Park

March 19, 2011

District 1

Florida Caverns State Park

March 26, 2011

District 5

Hugh Taylor Birch State Park

FUN FACTS

- In 1935, the year the Florida Park Service was born, Social Security was enacted and US unemployment was at 20%. The Civilian Conservation Corps enrollment peaked at 502,000 in 2,514 camps - most of these in state parks. The Corps built much infrastructure that we still see in our Florida State Parks today.
- Florida boasts the first and only two-time Gold Medal winner honoring the nation's best state park service.
- With access to more than 8,000 miles of land-based trails and nearly 4,000 miles of water trails, Florida residents and visitors have much to explore.

Canoe Country

by Irene DeLaby

Canoe trips remain a challenge to the will, a delight to the imagination and a balm to the soul. Days in a canoe bring life in a new dimension. In calm waters we glide between earth and heaven. My years in the Canoe country gave me the chance to travel lakes and rivers used by primitive man for centuries. Moving from one waterway to the next is done by portaging. You learn to carry a lightly packed backpack in addition to the canoe over trails used in ages past.

Shortly after I retired from 28 years of teaching, a friend of mine joined me in purchasing land in canoe country; living on a waterway means it was necessary to have a canoe. We had a 17 ft. square stern and a small 3 hp motor. We could carry three people and two packs of supplies for traveling.

When canoeing at early morning



hours with many mosquitoes and headed out for fishing, there is a good method to use. Simply carry the canoe on shoulders, walk into the water until the canoe is afloat. This eliminates the mosquitoes and gives you an early start on fishing!

The land we purchased in canoe country was land once sacred to the Ojibwa people. Their rock paintings, called pictographs represent a worldview we will never see. Their very magic in the pictographs is mysterious and a view of the early world of wilderness. Canoe Country travelers; wonder what the pictographs portray! An award-winning book written by Michael Furtman of Northern Minnesota

presents a comprehensive guide to Canoe country pictographs. I read the book entitled Magic in the Rocks, Canoe country Pictographs.

The land we purchased is near North Hegman and South Hegman Lakes. The pictograph site may well be the best in the area and most easily visited in Canoe country. They are located on a dome of black granite painted on pinkish granite framed by black stains and lichen. We do not understand the illustration but are a real part of Ojibwa lore.



Irene DeLaby is one of the founders of Friends of Florida State Parks and long time volunteer.

FFSP Awards Jammin in the Hammock best event of the year!

Jammin' at the Hammock Bluegrass Festival unites volunteers, staff, Friends of Collier-Seminole, staff and volunteers from other state parks and natural areas, and community personnel. This event



provides recreational, cultural, and educational activities for all ages. The festival is well organized and

depends on a strong committee structure to assure its success. In 2010, one thousand fifty two tickets were sold with a net profit of \$7,729.93, an increase over its previous two years. These funds are used to fund park projects such as the Nature Trail Boardwalk Repair, interpretive programs such as the Adventure Series Canoe Trips and Night Hikes, repairs to buildings and machinery, and to purchase office supplies.



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State Parks, Inc

Friends of Florida State Parks, Inc.

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