



David Pearson

## How to Make Your Friends Group Take Flight!!!!

Mark your calendars. January 21 - 23, 2011 is the date!

Friends of State Parks will hold its first annual Friends Conference at the Outer Banks of North Carolina. Hosted by The Friends of Jockey's Ridge, the conference will take place at the Ramada Inn, Kill Devil Hills with a reception Saturday night at the Pier House located at the Hilton Garden Inn, Kitty Hawk, NC.

The detailed agenda and registration information will be available shortly but the plan is to invite all NC Park Friends group members and all park advisory committee members. Registration will be at the Ramada Inn on Friday afternoon where a buffet dinner will be held that evening. A showcase of the musical talents of some of North Carolina State Park's best performers will follow. If you are interested in participating be sure to let us know. We are looking for park staff and park friends who love to entertain. We will also have exhibits from sponsors related to environmental and conservation projects, park supporters and Friends groups. Let us know if your park or group wants a display!

The conference will open Saturday with breakfast and an overview of the day's agenda followed by a panel discussion with various park Friends groups sharing experiences aimed at highlighting the best practices of Friends and the roles they play in parks and how they can best advocate for State Parks. At lunch there will be time to get acquainted with others. Another panel is scheduled to discuss how to form and how to grow a Friends group, including what works, what has not worked, how to raise money, and how to find supporters. Another breakout session will address financial nuts and bolts for nonprofits including the tax code and financial planning.

A dinner reception planned at the Pier House at the Hilton Garden Inn where conference

attendee's will provide the opportunity to hear from some of the states highest ranking leaders.

After Sunday morning breakfast at the Ramada Inn, attendees will form small groups to discuss future goals and dreams for our parks and the system. Our conference is hosted by Friends of Jockey's Ridge and we should not forget to take a tour of their world famous park, not only known as the tallest natural sand dune system on the east coast, but also as the most visited State Park in North Carolina with 1.4 million visitors last year.

To make the conference more personal, each participating park or Friends Group is going to be asked to bring a small table centerpiece displaying the theme of their park environment and every Friends group is encouraged to bring materials to display, share or exhibit. Drawings for door prizes will be made several times during the event and items such as framed photos, certificates from businesses, Friends group T-shirts, etc. and other donations are encouraged. Also, this conference could be a great opportunity for special recognition of volunteers and staff!

If you have a spouse or guest who wants to come to the Outer Banks but chooses not to attend the conference, there will be day visits arranged to area historical and cultural sites.

I hope all parks supporters are excited and plan to attend. This will be a great opportunity to get to know other park friends from across the state, share ideas, and learn from each other all while supporting our Naturally Wonderful North Carolina State Parks!

David Pearson  
President Friends of  
State Parks



# Discovery

## Lake Waccamaw State Park

Contributed by Chris Helms, Superintendent

When Margaret McDowell called the Lake Waccamaw State Park office May 24, she knew what she had found. The McDowell family has a history of discovery. Her husband Danny together with his brother made a similar find 28 years ago - a 20-foot dugout canoe now displayed in the Lake Waccamaw Depot Museum.

Margaret and her daughter, Ashley, had found a remnant piece of a second canoe. Both were fashioned hundreds of years ago by Native Americans hewing out the burned interior of a log, evidenced by charring that's still visible.

The 13-foot, four-inch canoe section was found near the mouth of Big Creek as the McDowells were on a fishing and clamming trip. She quickly realized the significance of the discovery but actually found it hard to believe until her husband confirmed that indeed it did look like the one he had found many years earlier.

The relic was found in knee-deep water and the McDowells, fearing it might be struck by a passing boat, decided to move the canoe to a private pier. Ranger Jonathan Short and I met with Mrs. McDowell a couple of days later, photographed the canoe and confirmed it to be a dugout canoe with recognizable concave shape, charring throughout and well-defined, tapered bow.

Unfortunately the ancient vessel had shifted under the pier and several small pieces had broken off. Sandbags were used to better secure the canoe until a short-term plan could be determined.

Nathan Henry and Chris Southerly of the N.C. Office of Archaeology's Underwater Branch together with volunteer Matt Thompson went to the site to help park staff assess and relocate the canoe until such time as it might be raised for preservation and long-term display. After taking measurements and photos, Henry secured a small broken portion about nine inches long to take back to the branch lab at Fort Fisher for carbon 14 dating.

The McDowells watched as the canoe was carefully hand-loaded aboard the park's work barge for transport to a deep water destination where another dugout had been sunk after its discovery nearly 10 years ago.

At this undisclosed location, the "McDowell Canoe 2" was gently guided down to the muddy bottom and anchored with a sandbag. GPS coordinates were updated, and a metal pole was placed alongside the relic to act as an additional locator.



## The Junior Ranger Program

More than 500 children ages 6-12 have participated in the Junior Ranger Program and 150 have completed a registration form which provides contact information. The first Junior Ranger newsletter will go out to them in September.

The JURA program can be completed in one day, but more frequently takes two days. This summer Haw River State Park conducted a week-long junior ranger day camp attended by 40 children, almost twice the number originally anticipated.

The Junior Ranger program is now available in all 39 state parks. Children who complete activities tailored to each park, who complete a stewardship project and take a stewardship pledge receive a certificate and a patch. Twenty-one parks have patches specifically designed for that park; the goal is for all 39 parks to have their own unique patch. The activity booklet is now online and can be downloaded before arriving at the park. There are also booklets available at the park. Children can complete the program in multiple parks, as many as they wish.

The FSP Junior Ranger Committee met in August with Sean Higgins, Interpretation and

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# A trip to Mt. Mitchell State Park

by Jane Hunt and Mary Lou Shanklin

On the way to Mt. Mitchell State Park I stayed with some longtime friends who told me about Mt. Mitchell being declared a UNESCO BIOSPHERE RESERVE. Over the years some of the local people have been concerned and unhappy about the UNESCO site. A Biosphere Reserve is part of a network of 500 sites worldwide aimed to protect genetic resources and to support research of the major ecosystems. A reserve is set up to help conserve all plant, animal and mineral resources at a site. The reserve's purpose is also, to encourage sustainable development: reuse, recycle, replant, and avoid depletion of any biological resource in the area, to record scientific data for analysis, and to teach people about the need for reserves. How could anyone object to this?

At 6,684 feet, Mt. Mitchell is the tallest mountain east of the Rockies. How would you measure the height of a mountain? In geometry class, we worked on measuring shadows of tall objects, and calculating angles... but a mountain surrounded by other mountains does not cast a clear shadow, and I am not sure where to stand with my protractor. Impossible! If you took a long measuring tape from the base to the top peak, it really would not be a straight line. Bushes, trees, rocks and ridges would skew the accuracy.

In 1835, Elisha Mitchell, a UNC science professor, took a friend to the base of the mountain in the Cane River Valley. Each of the men had a barometric device which measured air pressure. The friend stayed at the base of the mountain and Mitchell climbed to the top measuring the pressure at specific spots along the way up and at the top. He concluded the mountain was 6,470 feet tall. Modern calculations show only a slight difference. (Mt. Washington, in New Hampshire measures 6,288 feet.) Only a few years later, Dr. Mitchell was climbing the mountain to verify his original figures, slipped on a rock at a waterfall area and drowned. His grave at the top and the name, Mt. Mitchell, honor his memory and his tremendous efforts.

When the temperature in Raleigh was 101 degrees this summer, it was 74 degrees on the top of Mt. Mitchell. A good reason to make the trip, though someone at the FSP meeting made

the remark that it was easier to fly to Wyoming than to drive to Mt. Mitchell. Be warned that it is foggy and drizzly eight days out of ten, with a climate similar to Canada. But the air is fresh, the breeze wonderful, and the fog softens the green of the trees and the colors of the many flowers in bloom. Much has been said about the pollution and adelgid bugs destroying the trees, but I was encouraged when a ranger who had not been to the top since the 80's told us how impressed he was with the new growth he saw there. Spruces which were one foot tall in the 80's were 15-20 feet tall now. He also mentioned that the weather at the summit was too severe for the adelgids. And this is not the first time the trees on the mountain have been threatened. In 1913, Governor Craig was so alarmed at the loss of trees through logging he introduced a bill in the legislature which led, two years later, to the establishment of Mt. Mitchell as North Carolina's first State Park.

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Education Program Manager with the Division, for an update on the program and to develop a plan to promote participation. According to Sean, having the activity booklet available in all the parks has significantly increased participation over the summer. Strategies were developed for distributing JURA rack cards which highlight the program and show the website for downloading the activity booklet.

Major financial support to JURA has been provided by FSP and Great Outdoor Provision.

The Junior Ranger Committee requests that members of FSP deliver rack cards to locations in their areas where parents take children, ages 6 – 12, such as after-school child care programs, children's areas in public libraries, science fairs and museums, boy and girl scout troops, home schooling associations and other appropriate locations. Please contact Dorothy Graham at 919-477-2601 or by e-mail [DABGinNC@aol.com](mailto:DABGinNC@aol.com) if you are able help promote participation in the Junior Ranger program and she will provide a supply of brochures to you for distribution.

**Friends of State Parks**  
P.O. Box 37655, Raleigh, NC 27627

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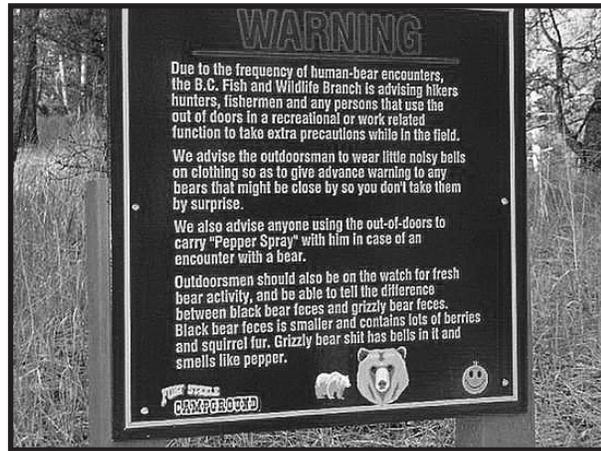
Please send me:

- North Carolina State Parks Map Guide @ \$19.95 (\$15) + \$3 S&H = \$22.95 each
- Guide to the Snakes of North Carolina @ \$10.00 (\$8) + \$2 S&H = \$12.00 each
- Exploring the Geology of the Carolinas @ \$19.95 (\$15) + \$2.50 S&H = \$22.45 each
- North Carolina State Parks: A Niche Guide @ \$14.95 (\$12) + \$2 S&H = \$16.95 each
- Jawbone Trail Cookbook @ \$10 (\$7) + \$2.50 S&H = \$12.50 each

Note: FSP members prices in parenthesis

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ City & Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_

## Things are different in Canada ...



## Next meeting

The Annual General meeting of Friends of State Parks will be held at Cliffs of the Neuse State Park on Saturday, October 30th. All are welcome.