



FRIENDS NEWSLETTER

edited by Cecile Giguere 445-1764

Washington Oaks Garden State Park

July/Aug/Sept 2008

Presidents Outlook for the 2008 -2009 Fiscal Year

I am pleased to report that the actions taken by your Board Of Directors in preparing the 2008-2009 Fiscal Budget are all long term investments and commitments that will benefit both the Park's and the Friends Futures.

Continuing as the priority project is the restoration of the Green House in the proposed Historic District. An additional \$7,000 has been set aside increasing the total deposit to \$35,000. We are currently awaiting the State's timetable to provide working drawings for the project. Once we have the drawings and permits, volunteers and staff will be able to begin the restoration. Upon completion this project will enhance and enlarge the efforts of the Plant Sales.

Expecting approval of the Proposed Historic District in the next 12 months, \$5,000 has been allocated to provide proper outdoor signage throughout the Park designating the important elements of the Historic District.

Recognizing the history and importance of the citrus groves and the sale of citrus products by the Friends, \$1,500 has been allocated to purchase a variety of mature trees to assure futures crops. A major pruning and fertilizing effort in the north grove was completed this spring.

Hoping to fulfill a need and long time dream of many Friends, \$20,000 has been committed to a renovation of the Mr. Young's Log Cabin for a Gift Shop. The major part of the renovation will be the addition of heating and air conditioning and making the Log Cabin ADA accessible externally and internally. The shop area will encompass the main room as well as an expanded area immediately adjacent. An outdoor shop with plants and garden items will be located in the lower level on the east side. The history of Mr. Young and his connection with the building will be interpreted on the interior walls. The larger area and expanded hours will provide many new opportunities for increased sales of numerous items in addition to shirts and caps. Also this will create a need for more volunteers. Are you ready to help?

Park Manager Doug Carter has shared his many challenges and opportunities for the Fiscal Year in this publication. To assist him in his mission we have pledged \$5,000 to help meet these challenges and opportunities. When Management calls, the Friends will be here to preserve, promote, protect and interpret Washington Oaks Gardens State Park.

Cudos to the Rangers and Managers for moving into their new maintenance and office building. You can now find them where the old maintenance building was, on the Log Cabin Road.

2008 Board Members

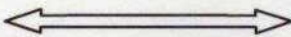
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Renee Paolini Named Florida Park Service Employee of the Year

Washington Oaks Gardens State Park and Favor-Dykes State Park Assistant Park Manager Renee Paolini was honored on May 8, 2009 at the Division of Recreation and Parks annual awards ceremony by being named Florida Park Service Employee of the Year. This is the highest honor that can be given to a Division of Recreation and Parks employee.

The Florida Park Service employee of the year is chosen from the five District Employees of the year. Renee was awarded the District 3 Employee of the year earlier this year. Florida Park Service Employees of the year are voted on by the Division Management Team in Tallahassee and at the District level. As winner of this award Renee was commended for her professional and untiring work ethics and her ability to get the job done. Renee was noted for her many accomplishments over the years including starting and cultivating one of the most successful volunteer programs in the Florida Park Service.



Park Ranger Joe Woodbury was recently promoted to Park Ranger Specialist at Washington Oaks Gardens State Park.

Joe's new role at the park will include overseeing the upkeep and maintenance of the gardens. He will work closely with the garden staff on fertilizing schedules, plant selection and garden work projects. As most of you already know, PSS Joe has already mastered the art of interpretation at the park, with his recent Statewide Interpreter of the Year Award. Joe will be involved with all aspects of the park such as interpretation, resource management and working with volunteers.

View and Vote for Joe's video of Washington Oaks Gardens State Park
Go to http://www.visitflorida.com/parks/videos/video_id.122
The more votes the video gets, the more places it shows on the website.



Adult Beginner's Saltwater Fishing Workshops held in August--

The Friends of Washington Oaks Gardens State Park will be offering Saltwater Fishing workshops at the park. A Florida Park Ranger will illustrate some of the techniques anglers use to catch fish and the importance of conservation and safety. Participants will learn to identify saltwater fish species commonly caught in this area, and will learn how to use a fishing rod & reel. Each workshop will be hands-on with participants fishing along the bank of the Intracoastal Waterway. All fishing gear will be furnished for each participant to use during the workshop, including complete rod & reel, fishing tackle and bait. Upon completion of the workshop each participant will be awarded a certificate of completion and a souvenir fishing packet to take home. Also, participants will be furnished with snacks and beverages. If desired, you may bring a bag lunch. These Saltwater Fishing Workshops are geared toward adults to teach the basics of beginning fishing skills. This workshop is open to adults, ages 18 & above and the fee is \$20.00 per workshop, per participant, which includes the park entrance fee. This is a three hour workshop and spaces are limited.

Advance registration is required by contacting the park at (386) 446-6783 or email:

Washington.Oaks.Gardens@dep.state.fl.us

The event will take place: **August 22&29 9:00-12:00**

--Kid's Saltwater Fishing Workshops to be held in August -

The Friends of Washington Oaks Gardens State Park will be offering Kid's Saltwater Fishing workshops at the park. A Florida Park Ranger will illustrate some of the techniques anglers use to catch fish and the importance of conservation and safety. Participants will learn to identify saltwater fish species commonly caught in this area, and will learn how to use a fishing rod & reel. Each workshop will be hands-on with participants fishing along the bank of the Intracoastal Waterway while applying their newly learned skills.

All fishing gear will be furnished for each participant to use during the workshop, including complete rod & reel, fishing tackle and bait. Upon completion of the workshop each participant will be awarded a certificate of completion and a souvenir fishing packet to take home. Also, participants will be furnished with snacks and beverages. If desired, you may bring a bag lunch.

These Saltwater Fishing Workshops are geared toward young adults to teach the basics of beginning fishing skills. The Friends of Washington Oaks offer these workshops to promote the recreational and educational sport of fishing to young adults.

This workshop is open for ages 8-15 years old and the fee is \$20.00 per workshop, per participant, which includes the park entrance fee. This is a four hour workshop and spaces are limited.

Advance registration is required by contacting at the park (386) 446-6783, email:

Washington.Oaks.Gardens@dep.state.fl.us

The event will take place:

August 1, 7, 8, 14, 15
9:00-12:00

MESSAGE FROM PARK MANAGER, Doug Carter

Just about everyone has been following Florida's budget situation in the media lately and most of us expected that this year would start with some trimming over last year's budget. Washington Oaks Garden State Park received it's budget allocation on July 1st and as expected we will have to do some tightening of our belts. Considering everything, Florida State Parks came out very well compared to some other state programs. Our Governor and Legislators understand how important State Parks are to our citizens and visitors and how vital they are to protecting Florida's future.

We will have to make some changes in the park this year. Our prime objective is to keep all full time employees on staff and to keep the park open and safe and to continue to provide an enjoyable experience for the visitors. We will have to eliminate our temporary employees as those funds were cut from our budget. The biggest change is that we will have to go to the honor fee at our main entrance as we have at beach side. We will close the current Ranger Station. We also were not funded for our mowing contract. So we will be mowing the Park on our own. This all means that we will have to make some adjustments in-house with the aim to keep the impact to the visiting public to a minimum.

Now more than ever it is important for us all to hold our heads up high and to be thankful for the fact that this park remains one of the jewels of the Florida Park System and it will continue to be open each and every day of the year. We will strive to do everything we can to make sure our visitors continue to enjoy this gem we call Washington Oaks Gardens State Park.

Sun Trust Offer Extended through August

To date the Friends have received \$900 from SunTrust Bank in the "My Cause" Promotion because a Friend or friend of a Friend has opened a new checking account for \$100 in SunTrust Bank. Just go to your nearest SunTrust Branch for the details. You too can make a \$100 donation to the Friends. Many Thanks to those that have!!!

Wings Over Florida Kayak Tour

Leave from the lush gardens of Washington Oaks Gardens State Park on our two person kayaks. We will be in search of the inhabitants of the coastal estuary including dolphins, manatees, turtles and an incredible variety of local and migrating birds. Cost is \$45 and includes instruction, guide and all equipment. Space is limited. Call Ripple Ecotours at (904) 347-1565 to reserve.

Dates and Times:

Jul 19, 10 am -12 pm

Jul 23, 10 am -12 pm

Jul 27, 9 am-11am

Jul 30, 9am-11 am