

# HEARTLINE

No. 3

Jul. – Sept., 2009

**Heartland Chapter, Florida Trail Association,  
Serving Polk, Hardee, Highlands and Desoto Counties**

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## **FROM THE CHAIR:**

Where have the last two years gone? It seems like yesterday our FTA Heartland Chapter elections were held and Andrew and Eileen were elected as your leaders. Fast forward and now two years later and you have chosen myself and Melissa Bruneau as Chair and Vice Chair. We thank you for your confidence and faith in us. We are both excited and are looking forward to a busy two years. We will strive to continue our past leader's goals toward education, growth and good fellowship. Our chapter has many good members whose hard work and love for the outdoors is evident in the many miles of hiking trails throughout the Counties covered by our chapter. Andrew and Eileen's hard work educating the public about FTA and in passing out hundreds of flyers and pamphlets is bearing fruit through the increased numbers participating in activities. Thank you both for your dedication and hard work.

The lazy days of summer are now upon us. This means our trail improvement hikes will be few until the cool days of fall appear again. In the meantime we will be having some fun events for all age levels to enjoy. Upcoming events are: Ice Cream Social, our annual Camping Trip to NC, some short hikes, bike rides and kayaking. We invite everyone to COME OUT AND PLAY!

LOOK FOR IT..... Melissa and I plan on the return of our annual auction and/or swap meet. This will be discussed in more detail at our next meeting. So, start gathering your no longer wanted "slightly used" items now. Also, it will not be limited to camping gear only.

See you in the woods.

Betty Piper, Chair  
Melissa Bruneau, Vice Chair  
FTA Heartland Chapter



**CONTACT PERSONS:** (Area Code 863 unless listed)

Chair: Betty Piper 293-3053 or bpiper2005@aol.com  
Co-chair: Melissa Bruneau (407) 460-1388 or melissabruneau@yahoo.com  
Treasurer: Monika Hoerl 858-3106  
Secretary: Liane Plumhoff 646-2398 or lplum@verizon.net  
Activity Chair: Maureen Jones 293-5036 or maureenjo@juno.com  
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Newsletter Editor: Teresa Newgent (813) 882-9558 or newgt@msn.com  
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Section Leader/Tenoroc: Monika Hoerl 858-3106  
Section Leader/Lake Kissimmee State Park: Betty Piper 293-3053 or bpiper2005@aol.com  
Section Leader/Tiger Creek: George Horvath 294-5019  
Section Leader/Kissimmee River: Jim Hernandez 452-6650 or patjim83@embarqmail.com  
Section Leader/Willingham: Bob Hummel 471-1814  
Section Leader/Green Swamp East: Bob Yost 644-5448 or bobalinks2@aol.com

**ACTIVITIES:** (If you have trouble reaching the contact person listed in the activity description, please contact Maureen Jones. If you can't reach her, please contact Betty Piper. Contact information for both is listed above.)

Sat. – Sat. Jul. 11-18, 2009

Camping Trip to North Carolina at Appletree Group Camp in the Nantahala National Forest near Andrews. Tent camping is in a separate section of the campground from the section for RVs needing water & electricity. Members only - Moderate  
Contact: Nancy Needs at nanspath@aol.com

Sat. Jul. 25, 2009

Chapter Appreciation Dinner – Olive Garden at 405 Cypress Gardens Blvd., Winter Haven. Meet at 4:00 p.m. for social time with dinner at 4:30 p.m. Phone # (863) 294-6641. Public - Leisure  
Contact: Betty Piper at 863-293-3053

Sat. Aug. 1, 2009

Day hike - Lakeland Highlands Scrub, Lakeland  
Directions: Off of C.R. 540A turn south onto Lakeland Highlands Road, which turns into an unpaved road. The parking area is on the right at the dead end.  
Description: One of the last remaining remnants of the Lakeland Ridge where one can view dwarf scrub oaks, adapted to the sandy soils. The site is home to rare plant species and wildlife such as: gopher tortoises, Florida scrub-jay and indigo snakes. Public – Leisure  
Contact: Bob Yost at 863-644-5448 or [Bobalinks2@aol.com](mailto:Bobalinks2@aol.com)

## **ACTIVITIES Cont.**

Sat. Aug. 8, 2009

Short hike and Ice Cream Social - Tenoroc Fish Management Area, Lakeland  
Hike followed by home made ice cream. Public - Leisure  
Contact: Monika Hoerl at 863-858-3106

Sat. Aug. 15, 2009

Day Hike at Withlacoochee River Park  
Hike a 5.4-mile loop through cypress and oak hammocks. Located in Dade City on Rt. 98. Meet at Gator Creek Park entrance on Rt. 98 in Lakeland to carpool or meet at the park. Public - Leisure  
Contact: Monika Hoerl at 863-858-3106

Sat. Aug. 29, 2009

Sept. Chapter Meeting at Alderman's Ford Park, Hwy. 39 South of Hwy. 60  
Game first, then Sept. Chapter Meeting late in Aug., due to the 1<sup>st</sup> weekend in Sept. being Labor Day weekend, then for pot luck lunch, bring a dish to share as follows: last names beginning with A – H bring a main dish, I – Q bring a dessert, and R – Z bring a salad. Public - Leisure  
Contact: Betty Piper at 863-293-3053 or [bpiper2005@aol.com](mailto:bpiper2005@aol.com)

Sat. Sept. 12, 2009

Bike Ride on Van Fleet Trail  
Start at Green Pond Rd. and ride North approximately 10 miles one way. Public - Leisure  
Contact: Eileen Valachovic at 863-956-2145 or [eileenvalachovic@verizon.net](mailto:eileenvalachovic@verizon.net)

## **OUR CHAPTER'S NEW WEBSITE ADDRESS**

Our chapter's new website address is [www.heartland.floridatrail.org](http://www.heartland.floridatrail.org) and our online photo gallery can be found at [www.fta-heartland.smugmug.com](http://www.fta-heartland.smugmug.com). For directions for uploading photos to smugmug, please email David Waldrop at [david\\_lwfl@yahoo.com](mailto:david_lwfl@yahoo.com).

## **WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!!!**

The officers and current members of the Heartland Chapter of the Florida Trail Association are pleased to welcome the following new members, who are listed in alphabetical order by last name(s):

Natalie Linder, Winter Haven  
Lorri Miller, Lakeland  
Tamara & Robert Neale, Sebring

Jo Ann Payton, Winter Haven  
Jeanette Watson, Lakeland

All members are appreciated and we thank you for your membership.

## **RECAP OF LAST QUARTER'S ACTIVITIES**

### **Sat., April 25, 2009 – Paddling at Weedon Island**

Six paddlers participated in the paddle at Weedon Island. We had good weather including a breeze to help keep us cooled down. We saw mullet jumping and sting rays. We paddled away from the trail to a sandy beach for lunch, which was very nice. It gave us a chance to get out of our kayaks and stretch our legs, as well as eat lunch. Teresa Newgent

### **Sat., May 9, 2009 – Moonlight Hike at Tenoroc**

Eighteen members participated in the moonlight hike. We had excellent food and a great variety brought in for our potluck dinner. We had a lovely hike with the moon finally coming up near the end of our hike and the temperature was perfect. Monika Hoerl/Teresa Newgent

### **Sat., May 30, 2009 – Paddling at Ft. DeSoto**

There were 11 paddlers at Ft. Desoto, which is a beautiful park. We met near the kayak rental kiosk and paddled to the “back” side of the North Beach of Ft. Desoto. The “Gulf” side is the side that the Gulf of Mexico is on. When we arrived at North Beach, we took a break by getting out of our kayaks and eating lunch or a snack if we wanted, and two of the shortest sit on top kayakers in the group were taken from the back side of the beach to the Gulf side and various paddlers paddled the kayakers out into the waves and surfed back. It looked like fun. On the way back to the put in spot, we saw 2 dolphins frolicking in the water. It was quite warm that day, but there was a breeze on the water that kept us cooler than it would've been without it. Teresa Newgent

### **Sat., June 20, 2009 – Hike and Bike at Highlands Hammock State Park**

Nine members participated in the hike and bike at the park. The bike trail was 8.3 miles, but we didn't do quite all of it because, we suspect, part of the trail was under water. A good bit of the trail would be considered “off road biking”. We saw a deer run across the trail in front of us, 2 rabbits, a gopher turtle, and a woodpecker. When we finally got to the asphalt part of the trail, we stopped at 2 trails and hiked, after which we decided that was enough hiking because the mosquitoes were so thick. We ate lunch together at the Hammock Inn and Restaurant, some ordering at the restaurant and some eating the lunch they brought at the outdoor tables at the restaurant. Teresa Newgent

## **WHAT TO BRING ON A DAY HIKE**

Water or other beverage (at least 2 quarts)	Sunglasses and hat
Insect repellent	Sunscreen
Small first aid kit	Personal ID
Snacks and/or lunch, depending on length of hike	Rain gear, if needed
Sit upon or folding stool for lunch on the trail	
Plastic bag & at least 1 glove, if desired, to pick up & bring trash out	
Be sure to tell someone at home where you are going and when you expect to return!	

### Florida Trail Association Mission Statement

The mission of the Florida Trail Association is to develop, maintain, promote, and protect a continuous public hiking trail the length of the state of Florida, called the Florida National Scenic Trail, and other loop and side trails, together called the Florida Trail System; and to educate the public by teaching appreciation for and conservation of the natural beauty of Florida; and to provide opportunities to hike and camp.

There are certain risks, which are inherent in any hike or other Florida Trail Association Activity. Each FTA member, guest, or non-member hiker agrees to accept personal responsibility for his or her safety and the safety of minors accompanying such persons. The Association cannot ensure the safety of any participant on hikes or activities. When participating in Association activities, each person agrees to hold harmless and free from all blame the activity leaders and the Florida Trail Association... it's officers and members... for any accident, injury or illness, which may be sustained from participating in Association activities.