



trail tales



Loxahatchee Chapter, Florida Trail Association

Volume 26, Issue 1: Bi-monthly Publication

January/February 2016

CHAPTER MEETINGS

First Monday of every month

*Topics of interest to hikers,
outdoor enthusiasts and
naturists held at:*

OKEEHEELEE NATURE CENTER

Social 7:00 p.m.
Program 7:30 p.m.

*Located in Okechee Park on
Forest Hill Blvd. east of the
turnpike. Follow the main park
road for about a mile, turn left
at the Nature Center sign and
continue to the building.*

EVERYONE IS WELCOME

Happy Hiking!!



Looking Back at the Big "O" 2015

By Roy and Shannon Moore

It was a special week begun in light rain, a nice cool day for hiking. We ended the first day at J&S Fish Camp where relaxation and good times prevailed to the extent that we decided to reverse day two's direction and end there again.

Hikers registered from five different states and those registered from Florida had homes ranging from Pensacola to Miami. They ranged in age from 13 to 80. Some carried cameras costing thousands of dollars and others had cameras picked up for a few dollars from thrift shops.

Some wore Columbia shirts and others old T-shirts. Some walked all the routes and others watched them hike or listened to their stories. Hiking speed ranged from a little over 2 mph to 4 mph. Some stayed in tents, some in nearby hotels, some in RVs, and a few slept in their cars. Some had titanium hiking sticks; others had hand-carved wooden ones; some had none. Some had loaded backpacks with water bladders. Others carried a water bottle knap sack strung over their shoulder. Some talked a lot, others listened, and some walked alone for times of quiet reflection. A few canceled before the hike began and others joined us on the last day.

Most everyone showed up for happy hour every afternoon and a few had blister stories to share. Gordon Johnson, who has participated in every Big "O" and named the event, personally hiked in near the end point and greeted every hiker who was finishing on the 6th day. Some went for breakfast at 5:00 a.m. some had a breakfast bar as they were shuttled to the day's beginning point. Those with talent put on a great show to wind up the Thanksgiving celebration.

As your leaders for this event, Shannon and I are especially grateful for all the Loxahatchee Chapter members and others who supported the hike: Daisy Palmer-opening day treats; Paul Cummings-storing and transporting many supplies and leading the Wimp Walk; Margaret Brabham for organizing the Thanksgiving celebration and being a sweep; Rick Byrnes, Mary Miller and Scott Lunsford all sweeps. A particular thanks to Scott Lunsford who led the discussion to organize shuttle cars for every day's hike and furnished his own car as part of the shuttling operation every day. Dave Williams, Gene Cox, Phoebe Dowdy, Larry Myers and Gail Baldwin, and probably others, also assisted with shuttle operations. Special events happen because special people step up and help. Our sincere thanks go to those who came and enjoyed the Big "O". Hope to see you all back next year.

Chapter Meetings & Events

Monthly Meeting

January 4, February 1

Programs to Be Announced

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Dave Cook's Wednesday Hikes

January 13: Spend the morning exploring southeastern Martin County. Meet at 7:30 a.m. at the Jupiter Lighthouse. Lunch to follow. Public/Leisure.

February 10: Walk in Pine Glades Natural Area. Meet at 7:30 am. Seven miles west of I-95 on Indiantown Rd. Early lunch to follow. Public/Leisure.

Contact Dave at 561- 743-8642.

Scott Lunsford's Upcoming Beginners Backpacking Activity

January 16/17: We will backpack on Saturday in to the DuPuis WMA Loop 4 OTLHT primitive campsite and spend the night. On Sunday we will hike out and then head to the Seminole Inn for the Sunday lunch buffet! Public/Moderate. Contact Scott at 561-441-1251.

Sherry Cummings' Wetland Walks

January 17: Green Cay Wetlands, 7:00 a.m., Public/Leisure.

February 21: Wakodahatchee Wetlands, 7:00 a.m. Public/Leisure. Contact Sherry at 561-963-9906.

Backpacking Activity Report

By John Fenner

On Saturday, November 7th, Loxahatchee Chapter trail guides, Scott Lunsford and Mary Miller, led a group of backpackers on the annual Backpacking 101 overnight camping trip. This occurred on the Ocean to Lake Hiking Trail (OTLHT) between Riverbend County Park and Jonathan Dickinson State Park, where it ended on Sunday, November 8th.

The activity was a precursor to the six-day OTLHT backpacking event, and the kind of trip that Florida's mild winter weather makes possible for outdoor enthusiasts. That hike is scheduled for February 13-18.

Comments such as the following indicate the trip was worth the effort:

- Janet: "Great group of people, and I learned a lot."
- Rosa: "My first backpacking experience, and it was so much fun..."
- Katie: "I had an awesome time on my first overnight hike..."

The group consisted of 20 backpackers with varying levels of experience. "Although this was offered as a beginners backpacking event, all levels of experience were welcomed and encouraged to participate." said Scott. "We hoped to give backpacking newcomers a relatively easy introduction to backpacking and primitive camping."

The OTLHT is a spur trail leading from the Atlantic Ocean to the Florida National Scenic Trail at Port Mayaca on Lake Okeechobee.

Information about the trail and the activities it supports are available on our Web site at loxfltrail.org.

Chapter Officers

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Bea Rogers, 561-644-0777, bznest22@bellsouth.net

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Lake Okeechobee: Paul Cummings, 561-963-9906, cummingsps@att.net

Ocean to Lake: Bea Rogers, 561-644-0777, bznest22@bellsouth.net

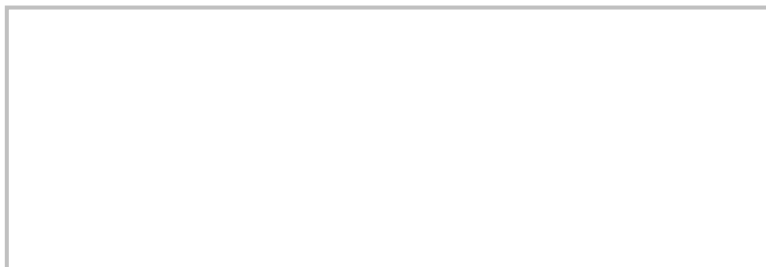
Monthly Activity Calendar

January/February

Date	Description
1/1	HICKORY HAMMOCK HIKE. Bea Rogers says you should start off the New Year on the right foot with a holiday hike in a beautiful setting. You can take the shorter hike at around 5 miles or the longer one at about 9 miles. 9:00 a.m. Contact: 561-644-0777 for directions. Public/Leisure-Moderate.
1/2	JOHN PRINCE PARK WALK. Take a stroll in the park with your hiking companions. Choose your pace and distance. Breakfast afterward at TooJays. 7:30 a.m. Contact: Paul Cummings, 561-963-9906. Public/Leisure.
1/3	HIKE IN JONATHAN DICKINSON STATE PARK. Bring plenty of water for this 7 to 12 mile hike. Meet at the front gate of the park at 8:00 a.m. Lunch afterward at the Dune Dog Café. Contact: Mary Miller, 561-213-2189. Public/Moderate.
1/4	MONTHLY CHAPTER MEETING. Members and guests can socialize while indulging in refreshments at 7:00 p.m. The program is to be announced and begins at 7:30 p.m. Contact: Margaret Brabham, 561-324-3543. Public/Leisure.
1/9	TRAIL MAINTENANCE. To be announced. Contact: Fred Davis, 561-585-6386.
1/10	FT. PIERCE HIKES. Alan Collins has scouted out some hiking trails in Ft. Pierce. If you want to experience new adventures, here's your chance. Contact: 561-586-0486 for details. Public/Leisure.
1/16	OKEEHEELEE PARK WALK. Daisy Palmer always varies the route taken in this expansive park. Walk and then have breakfast at Pete's Place. 7:30 a.m. Contact: 561-439-5780. Public/Leisure.
1/23	HIKE IN APOXEE. Joe Rosenberg will lead you through around 9 miles in this urban wilderness off Jog Rd. 8:00 a.m. Bring plenty of water. Contact: 561-859-1954. Public/Moderate.
1/24	PONDHAWK NATURAL AREA WALK. For all south county hikers, this natural area is located in your neck of the woods – Boca Raton. 7:30 a.m. Breakfast afterward. Contact: Alan Collins, 561-586-0486. Public/Leisure.
1/30	OKEEHEELEE CLIP & WALK. Do a little light maintenance on the trails in Okeeheelee Park. Meet at the Nature Center at 7:30 a.m. Contact: Paul Cummings, 561-963-9906. Public/Leisure.
2/1	MONTHLY CHAPTER MEETING. Social: 7:00 p.m. Program: 7:30 p.m. Topic to be announced. Contact: Margaret Brabham, 561-324-3543. Public/Leisure.
2/6	JOHN PRINCE PARK WALK. Enjoy the pleasure of strolling in the park before you head out to breakfast at TooJays. 7:30 a.m. Contact: Paul Cummings, 561-963-9906. Public/Leisure.
2/7	HIKE IN JONATHAN DICKINSON STATE PARK. Challenge yourself to a good long hike (around 7 to 12 miles) in JDSP. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the front gate. Bring lots of water. Lunch at the Dune Dog Café afterward. Contact: Mary Miller, 561-213-2189. Public/Moderate.
2/13-18	2016 OCEAN TO LAKE HIKING TRAIL BACKPACKING EVENT. This annual six-day, 62-mile backpacking hike is a moderate to strenuous activity for experienced backpackers only. Contact Fred Davis, 561-585-6386, for complete details.
2/20	OKEEHEELEE PARK WALK. Hike around 4 miles taking in the beauty of the park. 7:30 a.m. Breakfast afterward at Pete's Place. Contact: Daisy Palmer, 561-439-5780. Public/Leisure.
2/27	HIKE IN APOXEE/GRASSY WATERS. Joe Rosenberg will take you through Apoxee and then on to the Owahee Trail, east, in Grassy Waters for an approximate 14 mile hike. Plenty of water is a must. Contact: 561-859-1954. Public/Moderate-Strenuous.
2/28	WINDING WATERS HIKE. This trail is located in Dyer Park off Haverhill Rd. Join Alan Collins at 7:30 a.m. Breakfast afterward. Contact: 561-586-0486. Public/Leisure.

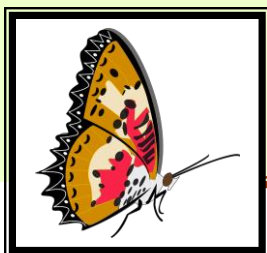
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Ocean to Lake Hiking Trail Day Hikes

To accompany the OTLHT backpacking event, several day hikes of the trails will be offered. The hikes will mirror the route taken by the overnight backpackers. Information can be found at the Meetup site at [http://www.meetup.com/Florida-Trail-Association-Loxahatchee Chapter-PBCounty](http://www.meetup.com/Florida-Trail-Association-Loxahatchee-Chapter-PBCounty). Or you can call Scott Lunsford at 561-441-1251.



*For all FTA information: www.floridatrail.org
Chapter Web site: <http://loxfltrail.org/>*