



trail tales



Loxahatchee Chapter, Florida Trail Association

Volume 27, Issue 6: Bi-monthly Publication

November/December 2017

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 Okeehoelee 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!!

Big "O"

Join us for another six days of hiking on the dikes of Lake Okeechobee on November 19th through the 24th. This will be the 26th Big "O", the longest running continuous event in the FTA. Once again, our home base will be



at the KOA Kampground in Okeechobee. Attendees may camp at the KOA, where our campsites are \$40/nite/site (2 tents can share a site) or rent a Kabin/Kottage (Kabin/Kottages should be rented directly through the KOA) or stay offsite at a local motel.

There will be six days of hiking around or near Lake Okeechobee. Camping and afternoon activities will be centered at the KOA Kampground in Okeechobee, FL with shared daily transportation from the campgrounds to the beginning of each day's hike. We will start our activities at Port Mayaca on Sunday, November 19th at 8:00 a.m. Paul Cummings (22 complete Big "O" hikes) and continuous supporter of the Big "O" will be there to officially start this 26th edition.

Get your application on our website at <http://www.loxfltrail.org>. (Click on the "Big O" link under events). The cost for advanced registration is only \$10. In addition to registering to attend, you may also order a commemorative T-shirt with the application (orders placed by Nov. 3). As we get closer to the event, we'll also publish the list of proposed daily hikes for specific days on the website.

Volunteering

After finding and joining the FTA online, I decided to attend my first chapter meeting. At that meeting I was intrigued by Bea Rogers report on trail maintenance and accepted her invitation to join the weekday maintenance crew.



My introduction to trail maintenance was in the north end of LOX Slough. The water was knee deep in places and we were doing some trail relocation to move the trail on to some higher ground. I was struck by the beauty of this place: wild palms, huge oak trees, cypress strands all very shady, and the trail overgrown with vines. All this was staged in one of nature's water wonderlands. There were, and still are, lots of moss at the base of trees, damage from feral hogs rooting in and near the trail, and the appearance of the wetlands seemingly to extend as far as I could see. I stopped and took a couple of photos which are still among my favorites of the entire trail. Well, that day hooked me on the Ocean to Lake Hiking trail and I have been doing trail maintenance there whenever I'm available. I'll never forget Bea showing me where the hogs had rubbed on a tree and the insect eating plant "sun dew" along with Dean Drake explaining the area history and detailed descriptions of the trees, shrubs and other plants along the trail. That was and remains a special day for me.

Since then, there have been a number of other volunteer opportunities for the chapter, some of which I've decided to undertake. Most special to me, however, is that Shannon, my wife who is not a devoted hiker, has also become a volunteer for the chapter. We now both find ourselves busy with volunteer opportunities in the FTA. I could go on for a while on the opportunities we've had and enjoyed, but what I'd really like is for those of you who are interested to consider volunteering. This holds true for all our members, whether you are one of the approximately one hundred new members since I've joined, or you are a seasoned member. As you find yourself on the trail or at other chapter activities, ask about these opportunities and you will find yourself involved in nurturing your friendships and building new ones.

Roy Moore, Your Chapter Chair

Chapter Officers

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Monthly Activity Calendar

November/December

<i>Date</i>	<i>Description</i>
11/4	JOHN PRINCE PARK WALK. Circle around the park for approximately an hour before heading out for breakfast at TooJays in Lake Worth. Contact: Paul Cummings, 561-596-4423. Public/Leisure.
11/5	HIKE IN JONATHAN DICKINSON STATE PARK. Meet at the front gate at 8:00 a.m. Bring plenty of water for this 7 to 12 mile hike. Lunch afterward at the Dune Dog Café. Contact: Mary Miller, 561-213-2189. Public/Moderate.
11/6	MONTHLY CHAPTER MEETING. Program to be announced. Refreshments at 7:00 p.m. Program at 7:30 p.m. Contact: Margaret Brabham, 561-324-3543. Public/Leisure.
11/11	TRAIL MAINTENANCE. Details will be announced at the monthly chapter meeting. Contact: Fred Davis, 561-585-6386. Public/Leisure-Moderate.
11/18	OKEEHHEELER PARK WALK. Take an hour's stroll in this beautiful park. Have breakfast afterward at Pete's Place. 7:30 a.m. Contact: Margaret Brabham, 561-324-3543. Public/Leisure.
11/19-24	THE 26TH ANNUAL BIG "O" HIKE. Walk the dike around the lake for a day or two or all six days. See page 1 of this newsletter for details and visit our chapter website (http://loxfltrail.org) for an application form. Contact: Roy Moore, 561-422-2189. Public/Moderate.
11/25	HIKE ON THE APOXEE WILDERNESS TRAIL. This is a monthly hike starting at 8:00 a.m. If you haven't been on this trail before, now is your opportunity. Meet at the trailhead for a semi-rigorous 9 mile trek. Plenty of water is a must. Contact: Joe Rosenberg, 561-859-1954. Public/Moderate.
11/26	WALK IN THE ROYAL PALM BEACH NATURAL AREA. This property is located within a development of homes to offer residents a natural area to roam. Hike about an hour then join fellow hikers for breakfast. 7:30 a.m. Contact: Alan Collins, 561-586-0486. Public/Leisure.
12/2	JOHN PRINCE PARK WALK. If you're new to the Loxahatchee chapter, this is a good walk to meet people. Hike an hour then head out for breakfast at TooJays in Lake Worth. Contact: Paul Cummings, 561-596-4423. Public/Leisure.
12/3	HIKE IN JONATHAN DICKINSON STATE PARK. This is a fairly rigorous outing (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.
12/4	MONTHLY CHAPTER MEETING. Bring cookies for the cookie exchange and socialize with members and guests of the Loxahatchee Chapter. Social: 7:00 p.m., Program at 7:30 p.m. Topic to be announced. Contact: Margaret Brabham, 561-324-3543. Public/Leisure.
12/09	HOLIDAY PARTY. 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. River Pavilion, Riverbend Park. Meat, dressing, potatoes & gravy will be provided. You bring a side dish. Lots of opportunities for recreation before or after the meal are available. Contact: Roy Moore, 561-422-2189. Members & guests/Leisure.
12/10	GREEN CAY BIRD STROLL. 7AM Green Cay bird stroll. Paul 561-596-4423 Public/Leisure
12/16	OKEEHHEELER PARK WALK. Enjoy your surroundings as you hike around 4 miles in the park. 7:30 a.m. Breakfast afterward at Pete's Place. Contact: Margaret Brabham, 561-324-3543. Public/Leisure.
12/17	WAKODAHATCHEE BIRD STROLL. 7AM. Paul 561-596-4423. Public/Leisure.
12/23	HIKE ON THE APOXEE WILDERNESS TRAIL. Joe Rosenberg will take you through Apoxee off Jog Rd. on an approximate 9 mile hike. 8:00 a.m. Plenty of water a must. Contact: 561-859-1954. Public/Moderate.
12/30	OKEEHHEELER PARK CLIP AND WALK Contact Paul 561-596-4423. Public/Leisure-Moderate.

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

