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# WAKULLA RIVERFRONT

Friends of Wakulla Springs State Park [www.wakullasprings.org](http://www.wakullasprings.org)

Summer/Fall 2017

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## No Time to Relax?



*Photo: Bob Thompson*

Summer months are lazy months for visitors and creatures at Wakulla Springs. All anticipate the cooler weather sometime later this year.

We've been busy planning events for you to enjoy and relax at the park at the waterfront, trails, the river, the Lodge.

You may notice new interpretive exhibits along the walk from the lodge.

Together with park management a decision was made to discontinue the annual Wildlife Festival. In its place there will be two large events, one in January the other in March. These are very different, and add excitement to the Valentines, Annual Meeting, and 5K Run ones that will be returning. Details for all events (some of which require advance tickets) can be found on the next page and our website [www.wakullasprings.org](http://www.wakullasprings.org)

### Call for Board Members and Volunteers

We are a citizens support organization for Wakulla Springs State Park. Together with park management, the needs to maintain the park are discussed and agreed on by our Board of Directors.

**If you, too, have a deep concern for the park please consider becoming a board member.** We are particularly in need of volunteers with an understanding of essential business concepts like budgeting, motivation, and leadership. Also for people with communications skills who can recruit prospective members, prospective donors, and sponsors for upcoming projects. Board meetings are held the first Wednesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at the park.

## The Member Events at Wakulla Springs

Being a member brings a few benefits. Two of them are the Beach Bash in October and the other the Annual Membership Meeting in February. The others are an understanding that membership involves advocating to preserve, protect, and restore the park's natural and cultural resources. Our members cultivate community support for the park by providing information, interpretation and smiling faces.

So get out your calendar and plan to attend and to encourage others to attend *YOUR* events.



### **Annual Fall Beach Bash:**

Sunday, October 22: Membership for 2018 may be renewed, new members welcome. Arrive at waterfront visitor center to board the river cruiser at 5:15. Bring a covered dish and libations and enjoy meeting other members after the boat ride.

### **NEW: Wakulla Winter Fest (a luncheon concert):**

Saturday, January 27, 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. A public fundraiser with a tasty barbecue lunch (vegetarians are considered as well), and ice cream social with music provided in the tent and Azalea picnic shelter. Wakulla Beer by First Magnitude Brewing Company. \$45 per person, advance tickets at [www.wakullasprings.org](http://www.wakullasprings.org). Limited to 100 participants.

### **Sweethearts Forever:**

Saturday, February 10. 4:30 p.m.: A public fundraiser. The romantic evening begins with chocolates, wine and roses before boarding your special river boat cruise. \$99 per couple includes membership in Friends of Wakulla Springs, dinner at the Lodge (gratuities not included). Advance tickets at [www.wakullasprings.org](http://www.wakullasprings.org). Limited to 30 couples (whatever that means to you).

### **Annual Membership Gathering:**

Sunday, February 18, The Lodge and Cherokee Sink. 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Begin with a tram ride to Cherokee Sink and return to renew your membership, eat heavy hors d'oeuvres, listen to Ernest Toole. Elect new board of directors and then cruise on a cool winter afternoon.

### **NEW: Classic Car and Bike Show:**

Saturday, March 24 11 a.m.-3 p.m. A public fun(d)raiser. The return to the park of exquisitely restored vehicles. Food vendors, other displays and raffles. This is a family event near the playground, access to the beach and river boat cruises. Park admission applies.

### **Sinkhole de Mayo:**

Saturday, May 5 — **Full details will be announced later this year.**

**Annual 5K Run:** Saturday, May 15 8 a.m.

## We're Thankful for Grant Money

With generous funding from the Florida Department of State, Division of Historic Preservation, and the collaboration with the Aucilla Research Institute in Monticello, FL, the archaeological investigations and installation of two exhibits were completed this spring.

The archaeology will continue at the park for several years, concluding the research into the Second Spanish Period next spring, but also beginning a Paleoindian and Pleistocene (14,000 years ago) investigation entitled *Wakulla Springs-Mysterious Waters (Land and Underwater Connections)*. Funding for these projects to the Aucilla Research Institute is again provided by the state's Division of Historic Preservation. Watch for field laboratory work in the bathhouse concession area in the fall and spring.



Two of the exhibits are installed along the walkway paralleling the river. One interprets the archaeology at the park, the other shows the age of artifacts discovered, including mastodons.

At Wakulla Spring and its karst river basin called the Wakulla River exists a well-preserved record of Pleistocene fauna, flora, and ancient Paleoindian activity.

We cannot wait to see what is discovered. Dr. Jim Dunbar is again in charge of these projects.

The third exhibit along the pathway will be ready early spring 2018. It builds on the historic research of the Second Spanish period between 1783-1818. Because of the archaeology at the park we want to expand the interpretation of the human history of this area beyond Ed Ball's 1930s period.

Funding in the amount of \$2,000 to research, design and install a third panel was received recently from the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR). The working title for the exhibit panel is "Toward Statehood." We thank DAR and hope everyone will come to the unveiling in 2018.



For many years, clues to past activities on park property have been diligently taken from the woods and placed on a World War II barracks pad between the Lodge and the Administration Building. The incredible underwater observatory sits along with ploughs, air conditioning blowers, road grader, planer and saws.

We have applied for another grant from the state for a temporary canopy to cover these items while a conservator will come to evaluate and provide a plan to save these 20th-century artifacts. If funded, money will be available in the fall next year.

## Don't Have Time to Visit the Park?

The Friends of Wakulla Springs State Park are pleased to bring you the one and only "GATORCAM." A unique view of the beautiful Wakulla Springs waterway and wildlife. You may

see a number of wild animals, fish and birds. If you catch it at the right time, you'll see the tour boat floating by. Your park is just a click away at <http://wakullasprings.org/gatorcam-2/> (or go to our webpage and click on the logo).



**Next time you see the raindrops at the spring on your home computer, please thank these folks who made this live viewing possible:**

Rodger Lewis – Velocity Online Technical Equipment

Rob Gelhardt – Gelhardt Graphics Design & Website

Patricia Wilbur – Biological Scientist II

Sean McGlynn – Science Advisor, Friends of Wakulla Springs State Park

Cal Jamison – Friends of Wakulla Springs State Park

Peter Scalco – Park Manager

Jake Hines – Assistant Park Manager

Scott Taranto – Wakulla Springs Lodge



### **The World Comes to the Wakulla Springs**

River cruises are world-famous, as is The Lodge, and indeed this deep and mysterious spring. We rely on donations on the boats to maintain many of these antique vessels so that visitors from all over the world can enjoy being on the Wakulla River.

Jim Stevenson wrote a short Letter to the Editor in the Tallahassee Democrat:

Retired FSU Professor Dr. Bob Deyle has been conducting an informal survey to learn the home countries of park visitors at Wakulla Springs State Park. He is a volunteer tour boat operator every Thursday.

At the beginning of the tour he asks who has traveled the farthest to reach the park. In 18 months, he has listed 41 countries of origin on his boat including Romania, Taiwan and Uruguay. The natural values of our state parks are good for Florida.

# It's All About the Water

## We Cannot Live Without It (Keep It Clean)

The park has ambitious ambassadors who monitor the water, interact with agencies whose job it is to know more and more about where our Wakulla Spring water originates. There are dozens of volunteers who also take care of the uplands in and around the park. Time is soon upon us for these events. **Please contact Jackie Turner, volunteer coordinator at 561-7861 to sign up.** Thank you.



And if you want to see the river early in the morning, the park arranges this a few times each year. The next **Early Boat Tour** is Saturday, **Aug. 25**, departing at 8 a.m. (Regular tour boats usually leave after 9 in the morning). This is not a Friends event.

The most astonishing activity might be counting chimney swifts. This year's **Swift Night Out** happens on **Sept. 9**, 7:30 p.m. During Swift Night Out, people all over the country stand beneath chimneys to watch and count chimney swifts enter their roost. The Lodge at Wakulla Springs has a large flock that roosts in one of its inactive chimneys.

Taking care of the water (salt and freshwater) is an annual event called **Coastal Cleanup**. The park volunteers will meet at 9 a.m., **Sept. 16** at the side gate to the park on Hwy. 61. Afterwards, cigarette butts and other "collectibles" will be viewable for this county wide event at Panacea's Wooley Park. Volunteers get a t-shirt and lunch. **Registration is required. Call Jackie, 561-7281.**

The park also encourages Friends and volunteers to participate in the annual **National Public Lands Day**. This year the effort to improve and protect Wakulla Springs State Park (a public land...) is Saturday, **Sept. 23**, 9 a.m. Space is limited and registration is required. Following lunch, registered participants will be welcomed to take a guided river boat tour of the Wakulla River. **Call Jackie, 561-7281.**

**And there are plenty of splish-splash swimming days ahead. Have you jumped off the tower recently? Try it. It'll renew your joie-de-vivre.**

