



## Friends of Rocky Fork State Park

P.O. Box 1, Flag Pond, TN 37657

Website: [www.rockyforkfriends.org](http://www.rockyforkfriends.org)

Email: [rockyforkfriends@gmail.com](mailto:rockyforkfriends@gmail.com)

Autumn shows us that change can be beautiful, every leaf is like a flower. There is an abundance of leaves in Rocky Fork State Park to delight you. Warm sun, cool days, bugs have gone away, perfect time to enjoy our favorite park!

### Park News

*RFSP Manager Tim Pharis*

Thinking ahead, way ahead but will be here before you know it, **May of 2025 will be the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the soft opening of Rocky Fork State Park.** Putting on our party thinking hats now.

The TN Arts Commission approved the 2024 grant that we use for the **Upper East TN Fiddlers Convention** and now includes our year round **Folk School classes**. The classes so far have all sold out – pottery, basket weaving, maple syrup collection and making, stone wall building, blacksmithing, and more. There has been much enthusiasm in the community for these classes, we will keep scheduling and thinking of new classes.

I was asked and recently presented at the **TN State Park Managers Conference** on the All Terrain Wheelchair. There is a plan for all TN State Parks to eventually have these wheelchairs available for use. Thanks to the FRFSP for their work with the Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation to write, receive and donate the wheelchair, one of the first in TN State Parks. Our experience will help guide other parks in the future.

RFSP All Terrain Wheelchair reservations can now be made on <https://calendly.com/rockyfork/wheelchair>

We continue to add new programs and hikes at the park, including the Folk School series. Watch the RFSP Facebook page and check out the RFSP website.

### Upcoming Events

#### September 30

Bat Road Race

#### October 9

FRF Board Meeting

RFSP Ranger Station 6 pm

#### October 21

**Haunted Halloween Storytelling**

At the park 5 to 9 PM

#### December 4

**Annual Member Meeting**  
and Board Elections

Erwin Town Hall 6 PM

In addition, check out the Rocky Fork State Park website for Park sponsored hikes and activities:

[Rocky Fork State Park — Tennessee State Parks \(tnstateparks.com\)](http://Rocky Fork State Park — Tennessee State Parks (tnstateparks.com)) or

their Facebook page

[@RockyForkStateParkTn](https://www.facebook.com/RockyForkStateParkTn)

### Falling for Fall at the Park



## Park Insights

RFSP Rangers Jeff Sweeney and Cory Franklin

### Featured Park Events

The popular Full Moon hikes continue monthly and sell out quickly. Shifting to Autumn, the first of Fall Flora and Foliage Hike Sept 24.

Folk School classes continue to be popular and sell out quickly.

Check out **Rocky Fork's Facebook page** regularly to see what we have coming up, and feel free to offer your suggestions as well!

### Trail Ways

Several Trail Maintenance days (June 3, July 21 & 28, August 3) were scheduled over the summer with Friends Members volunteering.

Reintroducing litter pickups with 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the Month Cleanup Days focusing along the road and parking areas. However some people just love getting in the creek on a hot day! Come join us and stay dry as it gets colder! Signup on RFSP Events website.

## Member News and Events

The Friends of Rocky Fork State Park support the Park and Park staff with projects and funding.

New Friends merchandise which premiered at the Meet The Mountains festival are two **Radim Schreiber Firefly metal prints** chosen by FRSP to capture the beauty of the amazing fireflies in the park. They are ready-to-hang and available in 2 sizes 6x9" @ \$65 and 11x14" @ \$120. They will be available to see and purchase or order at the FRFSP Annual Meeting on Monday, December 4.

The latest **kiosk** at the base of the Whitehouse Cliffs Trail was completed this summer. There's a trail map with park info on the front. On the back is a history and photos of the trail construction featuring the volunteers (many who are Friends) who built the trail.

**When you gotta go...** The Friends coordinated with Park Ranger Jeff and a team from BWxT/NFS led by Board Member Andrea Bowman on their \$500 community project to build a **new privy at the Flint Creek Primitive Campsite**. A new design that will be 'nicer' to use and maintain was selected with the FRFSP purchasing and building the base and the NFS team purchasing and building the top of the privy.

## Our Mission

Support and assist Rocky Fork State Park management and staff to protect, preserve, promote, and enhance Rocky Fork State Park. (Non Profit 501-C3)

### 2023 Board of Directors

John Beudet – Vice President  
Andrea Bowman  
Luke Carter  
Bob Fuller  
Emily Goepel  
Carrie Hovey –President  
Lisa Hazlett  
Joe Morris  
Lotta Murray – Secretary  
Teresa Pickett - Treasurer  
Roger Rice

### New Friends Merchandise



**Radim Schreiber** Firefly Metal Prints  
Ready to hang (2 designs, 2 sizes)



**All Terrain Wheelchair Update:** The FRFSP Grant Committee submitted our midyear report to the Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation on the donation and implementation of the **All Terrain Wheelchair** at the park.

Averaging one reservation a week to start and reviewing survey results, the Park is seeing increased usage as the year progresses. Two suggestions resulted in the addition of a cup/bottle holder and an adaptive backpack. Additional informational material is being produced and will be distributed, as well as expanded social media which has proven to be the most successful outreach method.

## Member News and Events

Friends Board Member, Lisa Hazlett, once again coordinated the **Bear Track Trail Race** in the park on June 24. Over 40 participants this year, this is a great event on the State of Franklin Track Club calendar. Thanks to Ricky and Cynthia Waldrop who provide snacks and drinks for the Bear Track and Bat Road races each year.

Race winner Will Harlan poses below with John Beaudet's carved bear.



The **Meet The Mountains Festival** in August was held at a new location, Winged Deer Park. It turned out to be a great place for featuring outdoor activities. We had one of the more popular booths featuring Rangers Jeff, Cory and Connor with animal pelts and the Blue Ghost All Terrain Wheelchair.

Shared lots of information about the park and signed people up for 2 guided hikes that weekend, one up Whitehouse Cliffs and one out to the Flint Creek Battlesite, a great introduction for people who had never been to the park before.

### **AS ALWAYS – SHOUT OUT AND THANK YOU TO OUR VOLUNTEERS !!**

We couldn't do what we do without our Friends members who take the time to volunteer in the Park, planning and participating in events and at our booth at festivals.

### **Making it's way around the park...**



## Meet The Mountains



## Upcoming Events

**Autumn is off to a running start** with the **The Bat 5 Miler Road Race** – up Rocky Fork Road, coordinated by Board Member Lisa Hazlett and the State of Franklin Track Club. Saturday, September 30<sup>th</sup>. Sign up at [State of Franklin Track Club based in NE TN / SW VA \(runtricity.org\)](http://State of Franklin Track Club based in NE TN / SW VA (runtricity.org))

Ready for a **spooky good time**? This year a **RFSP Haunted Halloween Storytelling** will be focused on families, kids ages 5 and up. Saturday, October 21<sup>st</sup> from 5 to 9 PM starting at the Interpretive Firepit Center at the park. Come in costume, come for the treats and kick off your Halloween activities with us.

Sign up on the RFSP website and **let us know if you would like to volunteer for this event** – it is ***sure to be fun for all!***

## TENNESSEE STATE FRIENDS CONFERENCE

The FRFSP will participate in the annual TN State Friends Conference on Nov 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> at Pickwick Landing State Park this year. We will share news and accomplishments for the year and report on progress made in our 2023 plan developed jointly with RFSP at the beginning of the year.

This year we've been asked to **present to conference attendees** on the use of this quarterly newsletter to keep membership informed of upcoming events, volunteer opportunities, recognitions, donations, accomplishments, etc.

**If you have thoughts about the newsletter, please send an email as we would love to be able to include your feedback:**

[rockyforkfriends@gmail.com](mailto:rockyforkfriends@gmail.com)

## ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Monday, December 4 at 6:00 PM is the Annual FRFSP Member Meeting. We'll recap the year, celebrate achievements, elect Board Members, share plans for 2024 and 2025. There will be delicious snacks. FRFSP/RFSP Merchandise will be available to purchase for all you holiday shoppers! Location: Erwin Town Hall, 211 N. Main St, Erwin. Note: The Nomination Committee will provide information on Board nominees via email to all members on or around November 20.

## Board and Member Meetings

Board meetings are held at the Rocky Fork Ranger Station, 280 Jennie Moore Road, Flag Pond, 37657. Meetings are open to all members and the public.

Get ready for some scary fun!



Campfire Ghost Stories,  
Scavenger Hunt, Treats  
And Surprises!!

**Volunteer Reminder:**  
**Logging your hours helps the park!** Proof we are invested in RFSP is important for grant funding, justifying needs to TN State Parks and securing donations and other types of support.

**SAVE THE DATE !!**



**Monday, December 4, 2023  
6:00 PM**

**Friends of Rocky Fork  
Annual Membership Meeting  
Board Elections**

**Erwin Town Hall  
211 N. Main Street,  
Erwin TN**

Find info on the Friends website  
[www.rockyforkfriends.org](http://www.rockyforkfriends.org)