

Friends of Rocky Fork State Park

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New faces, new wheels, new programs and events ... summer in Rocky Fork State Park will be **incredible, exciting, fun-filled and outstanding!**

Park News

RFSP Manager Tim Pharis

The 5th Upper East TN Fiddlers Convention was a great success with added dancing, classes and expanded prizes. Thanks to all who attended or supported the event. We've already started planning for next year!

Our Firefly Lottery entries increased from 8000 last year to 15,000 this year. The Blue Ghost and the Synchronous fireflies put on quite a show for attendees. Thanks to Friends Members who volunteer and help park staff on the lottery nights.

The All Terrain Wheelchair, affectionately named "Blue Ghost" has been received and is Enhancing Accessibility to Nature at Rocky Fork State Park.

Our new Park Ranger is an old friend to the park, Cory Franklin joined us as of May and we look forward to programs he will bring based on his experiences at Sycamore Shoals State Park and his love for Rocky Fork.

Our Seasonal Interpretive Ranger this year is Connor Breeden. He's a Parks and Recreation student at ETSU. Originally from Cookeville Tennessee, he grew up visiting Burgess Falls, Cummins Falls SP and Rock Island SP. He worked as a seasonal conservation worker at Burgess and also did his Eagle Scout projects there.

You may have heard of a land purchase by the park. Additional land bordering on Rte 352 will eventually be the site for a Visitors Center. Architecture renderings and lots of planning to be done.



Upcoming Events

August 14 & October 9

FRF Board Meetings

RFSP Ranger Station 6 pm

June 24

Bear Track Trail Run

At the park 9 AM Start

August 18 & 19

Meet the Mountains Festival

Winged Deer Park, Johnson City

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)

"Blue Ghost" All Terrain Wheelchair



Spring Green in the Park



Photo Credit: Radim Schreiber

Park Insights

RFSP Ranger Jeff Sweeney

Featured Park Events

The popular Full Moon hikes continue monthly. In addition to hikes to the Battlefield, to Headwaters, to the AT, and Sunrise hikes to Whitehouse Cliffs, you may be interested in some newer hikes - Tree Identification and using Technology in Nature.

Folk School classes continue to be popular and sell out quickly. Bark Basketry and Stone Wall Building were the latest.

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

The **Flint Mountain Trail** closer to the Rocky Fork Creek crossing has been newly graded. Friends of Rocky Fork contributed to the grading project in addition to a generous donation, a grant and park funds that has greatly improved the trail.

Member News and Events

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

New Friends merchandise is available on the Friends website or at events. The popular **Bear Paw** design on stickers and t-shirts in short and long sleeves, and a glow-in-the dark Will Kuhn **Firefly** t-shirt in Adult and Youth sizes.

Thanks to Park Manager Tim, Friends Members were treated to our own special night of firefly viewing in the park. Welcoming some new members, we hosted a **Friends Members Social and Firefly Viewing** on June 3rd. Campfire snacks and drinks at the Ranger Station prior to heading up to the Park for the fireflies. It was a rainy wet evening but the fireflies were still amazing! Many of us got to try out our glow-in-the-dark t-shirts!



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



Bear Paw – Long & Short Sleeves
Adult & Youth Sizes
And stickers too!

Will Kuhn Firefly Glow-in-the-Dark
Adult & Youth Sizes



Member News and Events

Friends supported and everyone had fun at the **5th Upper East Tennessee Fiddlers Convention** and **The Erwin Outdoor Festival**. Volunteering at the festivals is a great way to share information about the Park, meet people, sign up new members, renew memberships and sell merchandise to support projects at the park.



Meeting a Park Ranger and touching animal pelts always attracts visitors to the Rocky Fork booth!!



A new FUNdraising idea was presented by previous Friends Board Member, **Peggy Cantrell**, offering yoga for donations for a different local nonprofit each month. Partnering with the Blue Ridge Paddling Taphouse in Erwin, **Yoga on Tap** held their first fundraiser benefiting Friends of Rocky Fork State Park. Twenty people showed up for yoga, while others visited the taphouse. BRP offered a free ½ pint to yoga participants and donated \$1 per pint that night. FRFSP netted \$289 and 2 new memberships!

Thanks to Mason and Brannon Schmidt of Blue Ridge Paddling (BRP) for sharing this amazing location with us

5th Fiddlers Convention



Erwin Outdoor Festival John's Fabulous Carved Bear!



Yoga On Tap – Beautiful Location! Blue Ridge Paddling – Erwin



Upcoming summer events include:

The **Bear Track Trail Run** at the park on Saturday, June 24. To sign up, visit [State of Franklin Track Club based in NE TN / SW VA \(runtrcities.org\)](http://State of Franklin Track Club based in NE TN / SW VA (runtrcities.org))

Meet the Mountains at **Winged Deer Park** in Johnson City on August 18 & 19. Lots of great outdoor opportunities at this festival! Two guided hikes will be held at Rocky Fork State Park on Sunday, August 20 as part of the festival. One up Whitehouse Cliffs trail and one to the Flint Creek Battlefield. Sign up on the festival website [About | Meet The Mountains Festival | Johnson City \(mtmfest.org\)](#) or at the Friends booth at the festival.

THANK YOU TO OUR VOLUNTEERS !!

As always, great big **THANKS** to our Friends members who take the time to volunteer in the Park, at events and at our booth at festivals!

Logging Your Hours Helps The Park! Proof we are invested in Rocky Fork is important for grant funding, justifying needs to TN State Parks and securing other types of support.

All Terrain Wheelchair in the Park

The All Terrain Wheelchair arrived, donated by the Friends to Rocky Fork State Park. Reservations are picking up. There is no charge to use the wheelchair at the park, We'll provide data to the Reeve Foundation throughout the year as individuals make use of this exciting new feature in the park.

Park Kiosks and Benches

The second Friends-built **Kiosk** has been installed at the base of the Whitehouse Cliffs Trail. Information about what hikers will see on the trail will be posted on one side, recognition and photos of the volunteers building the trail that was completed in 2019 will be posted on the other side.

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.

Bear Track Trail Race (2022)



Friends donation of the All Terrain WheelChair!



The Donor Corner

Acknowledgement, Thanks and Recognition of Donors

Fidelity Charity Grant:

- \$1000 Christopher Milburn Family
- \$100 Daniel & Margaret Schneider

Saw Whet Owl:

- Gordon & Mae Moughon
- Tony & Renee Messina
- Linda Good

Salamander:

- Joe Morris
- Denise Brown

Memorial Donation

In memory of Katharine Tilson Murray