

# Friends of Rocky Fork State Park

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

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

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Settling in for a long winter's nap... or checking out the winter wonderland of Rocky Fork State Park!!

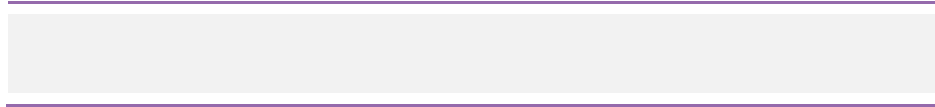
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## Park News

*from RFSP Park Manager Tim Pharis*

During the past 2 years, all TN State Parks have noticed a HUGE uptick in visitation coupled with a strained budget as millions in State funds were directed towards fighting Covid-19. This helped to propel a surge to have State Parks become more self-sufficient. Despite any future catastrophes/budget deficits/pending apocalypses we want to be available for the people who need Rocky Fork State Park. The park can't be certain this will happen while relying 100% on government funds. So, RFSP has been tasked with a lofty goal of reaching \$3000 in donations. All state parks in TN are launching a **donation campaign starting Jan 1st to Jan 31st**. Go to [tnstateparks.com/vote](http://tnstateparks.com/vote) and select **Rocky Fork State Park** to vote and donate. Even just \$1 will help, every \$1 equals 1 vote. All donation funds will be used at the park to which it was donated (not to any general state-controlled fund). Also, it will be used for public projects, such as trail repair and educational programs. Visit Rocky Fork's Facebook or website to learn more and lend a much-needed hand to your favorite State Park.

And Alas! after nearly 6 years of nomadic life, RFSP finally has a **Ranger Station!** Come see us at 280 Jennie Moore Rd, right outside the main park. We will be staffed with volunteers and are in the midst of stocking up our gift shop. Hours will be minimal and sporadic in the beginning but will become much more regular as we learn the best times to staff this amazing, historic home repurposed as our Ranger Station. We also are still seeking anyone to add to our list of Ranger Station Volunteers.



## Upcoming Events

### February 14

FRF Board Meeting  
Flag Pond School 6 pm

### April 11

FRF Board Meeting  
Flag Pond School 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)

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## The 'rock house' Ranger Station First official building in the park!



## Trail Ways

Rocky Fork State Park's trails form an inner loop through the **Rocky Fork Tract** but if you really want to see the extent of this great place you should explore the outer loop of connecting trails through the other 8000 acres that are now part of Cherokee National Forest.

Here's a first one with some options to try:

. Half-a-mile in from the Rocky Fork Trailhead take the Whiteoak Flats Trail to the right.

. Two miles from the trailhead continue to the left at the junction, you're now on the Headwaters Trail.

. Three miles from the trailhead, where Headwaters Trail meets Blockstand Creek Trail to the left, instead, take the old logging road to the right, which continues following Rocky Fork Creek. The next two miles is through mature forest as beautiful as anyplace else around as you hike to the actual headwaters of Rocky Fork Creek. The creek eventually dwindles to a trickle and the trail climbs away for ½ mile further to another old logging road on the far ridge of Rocky Fork where **views to the west are spectacular**.

. At this point you can (1) retrace your steps back, or (2) go left two miles or so to the Appalachian Trail at a place called "The Ball Ground," or (3) go right three miles or so to the Birchfield Trail near the "lake," passing Lower Higgins Creek Trail along the way.

(Note: The latter two make for a long day hike so be sure you are ready for that and have a good map. Trails Illustrated #782, French Broad/Nolichucky River shows it pretty well.)



"Hidden Lake"

Distance: Varies   Climbs: Varies   Moderate/Strenuous

## Member News

**The Friends of Rocky Fork Annual Meeting** was held on Saturday, December 11<sup>th</sup>. The agenda included accomplishments for 2021, review of finances, committee reports, update from Park Ranger Tim Pharis, ratification of a by-law amendment, and membership election of the 2022 Board of Directors. There was a fun auction with some amazing items donated by Holyfield Cabins, USA Raft and Engle's Roadside Restaurant that raised \$395 at the close of the meeting.



Photo Credit: John Beaudet

## Our Mission

Support and assist Rocky Fork State Park management and staff to protect, preserve, promote, and enhance Rocky Fork State Park, including coordinating with other organizations responsible for Rocky Fork watershed as it affects Rocky Fork State Park. (Non Profit 501-C3)

## 2022 Board of Directors

John Beaudet (new)  
Dennis Bokemeier  
Jim Bowman  
Peggy Cantrell  
Luke Carter  
Emily Goepel (new)  
Chuck Holyfield - Treasurer  
Carrie Hovey – Vice President  
Carley Lester  
Lotta Murray – Secretary (new)  
Teresa Pickett (new)  
Carl Ramsey  
Walt Ray  
Roger Rice (new)  
Nathan Wilson - President



**Thank you** to outgoing Board Members [Marie Rice](#), [Ricky Waldrop](#), whose terms expired at the end of 2021, for their outstanding dedication and efforts on behalf of the FRF and RFSP.

**Congratulations and Welcome to new Board Members:**

John Beudet, Emily Goepel, Lotta Murray, Teresa Pickett, and Roger Rice

Elections of 2022 officers were held at the January 10 meeting:

President – Nathan Wilson

Vice President – Carrie Hovey

Treasurer – Chuck Holyfield

Secretary – Lotta Murray

As always, Friends members and the public are welcome to attend the FRF Board meetings.

Over the winter the Board will be working closely with the park to identify projects for members to be involved in during 2022. Watch for communications in the future via email, the Friends website and Facebook page and our Spring Newsletter.

**Events**

The **Bat Race** was held on October 23rd at the park. 24 runners and 8 walkers enjoyed beautiful weather and a fun event.

Congratulations to winners: Derek Gibson and Tammy Shadden!



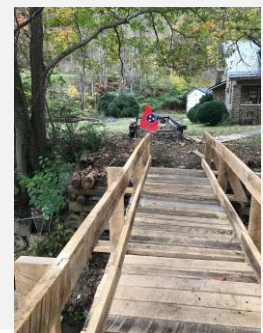
On October 30, the rock house **Ranger Station** was **officially opened** with a special event and **homecoming for the largest white pine cookie** ever felled in the United States. The 353 year old tree was cut in the Rocky Fork Tract in 1948. Friends helped rebuild a foot bridge, rehab the interior of the rock house and bring the 'Cookie' into its new home.

**Friends of Rocky Fork Kiosk**  
Remember to check out our Kiosk when visiting the park!

The Tree Cookie comes home!



The 'rock house' Ranger Station



## Member Opportunity

Do you have an interest in becoming a **trail adopter**?

The Trail Committee will be signing up new and renewing adopters, conducting annual safety training (about 2 hours) and getting you started on this important assignment for the Park. Find out more by contacting John Beaudet or Van Hovey through the Friends of Rocky Fork email [rockyforkfriends@gmail.com](mailto:rockyforkfriends@gmail.com)

## Member Renewal

**Thank you to our members** for your support!!

With the change in the calendar year, now is the time to **renew your Friends of Rocky Fork membership**. Membership monies support our Mission (on the cover page) in the form of funding and purchases for park needs outside of their budget, programs, matching grants, volunteer work, and more.

*Please make sure we have **your current email address** so we can send you information and newsletters.*

Renewals can be done (1) via the Friends website [www.rockyforkfriends.org](http://www.rockyforkfriends.org) or (2) by mailing the member form included in the email with this newsletter to FRSP, P.O. Box 1, Flag Pond, TN 37657

<b>Individual Membership</b>	<b>\$25</b>
<b>Family Membership</b>	<b>\$40</b>
<b>Student Membership</b>	<b>\$10</b>

## Board and Member Meetings

Board meetings will be held every other month (February/April/June/ August/October in addition to the annual meeting in December and officer elections in January). Board meetings are always open to all members.

Have ideas for future newsletters? Send to [rockyforkfriends@gmail.com](mailto:rockyforkfriends@gmail.com)

## Friends of Rocky Fork Kiosk

Remember to check out our Kiosk when visiting the park!



Current Membership:  
97 Members

Know someone who loves  
the park as much as we do?

Invite them to become a  
member in 2022!!



**Kudos** - This photo taken from the White Oak Flats Overlook by former RFSP Ranger, now Sycamore Shoals Ranger, Cory Franklin was recently chosen as the cover for the Erwin Record 2022 Calendar.