“ODYSSA“ TALK HIGHLIGHTS FALL PICNIC

Although some sporadic rain pelted the Gorges State Park picnic shelter, it did not dampen the enthusiasm of the 65 attendees of the FTC Fall Picnic on September 8th. After unloading supplies, food, etc., the initial “wave” of arrivals followed Steve Pagano, Board Member and Manager of Gorges Park, to the new Gorges Visitor Center for a tour of the facilities. Steve gave a very informative tour of the new facility which contains park offices, classroom and auditorium spaces, and several displays that highlight various features unique to the mountain environment – such as the amount of rain that falls each year! He also pointed out the tremendous views that can be seen from the windows and decks of the building.

When the second tour group headed to the Visitor Center, Les Storm and Jerry Harvey began to prepare the hamburgers and hotdogs for the picnic – under the protective cover of the Foothills Trail tent! Although a brief rain shower made the cooking a challenge, the two of them successfully prepared the main food items for the group. Thanks Jerry and Les! In addition to the grilled burgers and dogs there were plenty of delicious side items that had been brought by the members who attended. Thanks to all who brought something!!

The highlight of the first-ever Fall Picnic was, of course, a presentation by Jennifer Pharr Davis - AT trailname “Odyssea". As her father, Yorke Pharr, looked on, she recounted the trials and extreme exertion that were necessary to accomplish hiking the entire Appalachian Trail in just 46 days! Although her husband, Brew Davis, was not present, she made it plain that he played a huge role in helping her accomplish her record-breaking journey. She also delivered a message of what has motivated her and what she hopes will motivate others to get out and enjoy the natural world by hiking in it. As an expectant mother-to-be, she also revealed how she is having to adapt to changes in her life, and how she is looking forward to meeting those challenges. Those who were lucky enough to attend the picnic thoroughly enjoyed her company and her presentation!!
The Executive Director of the Foothills Trail Conference, Heyward Douglass, accepts a check for $1,000 from Dennis Yount, Site Manager of the Johnson Controls Seneca Plant. Johnson Controls, a worldwide technology and manufacturing company, as part of their environmental stewardship program called Blue Sky, has donated money for several years to the Foothills Trail Conference to help them maintain the Foothills Trail. The popular, 77-mile, hiking trail runs between Oconee State Park and Table Rock State Park, crossing the Jocassee Gorges and over Sassafras Mountain, South Carolina’s highest peak. The grant this year will be used to purchase new maintenance tools.

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Johnson Controls Donation

Sassafras Mountain Press Conference

Dozens of environmental supporters were in attendance, despite periodic rain showers, to hear South Carolina’s senior Senator, Lindsay Graham, make remarks announcing improvements that are planned for the summit of Sassafras Mountain, the highest point in South Carolina, and a trailhead for the Foothills Trail. Some of the improvements had already taken place, such as the newly paved road from Rocky Bottom to the parking lot near the summit, and a viewing platform constructed by SC DNR.

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Additional information on the project will be presented at the annual meeting during the Saturday social hour.

FTC Board Nominations - 2012

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2012 Annual Meeting Picture Show

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Membership Levels:

☐ Oconee Individual $20
☐ Oconee Family $30
☐ Table Rock $50
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☐ Additional Contribution $_______

Name:__________________________________________________

(Please include any changes to the following below)
Address:_________________________________________________
______________________________________________________
______________________________________________________

Phone:__________________________________________________
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Approx. years of membership________________________________
Age group: 20-30 31-40 41-50 51-60 61-70 71-80 81-90 91-100
I am interested in volunteering. I have the following skills to offer:
_________________________________________________________________________________

Thank you for renewing your membership to the FTC!

Please mail this form with your membership and/or contribution to:
Foothills Trail Conference
Membership Renewal
PO Box 3041
Greenville, SC 29602

You may also renew online at www.foothillstrail.org and click “Join Today”.

Foothills Trail Conference 38th Annual Meeting
Registration Form
Oconee State Park November 2, 3, and 4, 2012
Deadline for Registration is October 23, 2012

Participants:______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

Address: __________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________

Telephone:_________________________________________________________________________________
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Please indicate the number of people in your party below.

__Check to register for the entire weekend.  __I can only attend Saturday Evening
(includes meal and activities)
__Adults $30 per person  __Adults $20 per person
__Children (12 and under) $10  __Children (12 and under) $5
__Family $80  __Family $50
__College Student $20  __College Student $12
__Scouts $10  __Scouts $7

Total Amount Enclosed $

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- "The Appalachian Trail Guru" – Backpacker Magazine
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Oconee State Park
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FTC Annual Meeting Schedule

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3:00 p.m.  Volunteers gather to help set up
6:00-9:00 p.m.  Friday Night Social Hour.  Light potluck supper and Presentation featuring the “Woods Women”

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8:00 a.m.  Breakfast in Dining Room
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6:00 p.m.  Hunting Camp BBQ will cater a delicious BBQ supper.
7:00 p.m.  Annual Meeting Special Guest Speaker, Winton Porter (See enclosed bio and background).
Business Meeting - John Park, FTC Board Chairman
Door Prizes

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#5—Oconee Family Nature Walk. Learn about plants and animals on an easy walk around Oconee State Park with Dr. Rocky Nation, naturalist and professor at Southern Wesleyan University. Bring a drink and a magnifying glass and/or binoculars. Meet at Oconee State Park lodge. 9:30-11 a.m.

#6—Fall Color Hike. Join Master Naturalist and Foothills Trail Conference member Steve Marlowe on a moderate 5-mile walk of gorgeous fall colors on the Foothills Trail from Whitewater Falls to Sloan Bridge. Shuttle required. Bring lunch, snacks and plenty of water. Meet at Oconee State Park lodge. 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

#7—Yellow Branch Falls. Plinio Beres, river ranger with the U.S. Forest Service, will lead this moderate 3-mile round-trip walk to one of the prettiest cascades in Upstate South Carolina. This out-and-back trail leads hikers to the base of a spectacular 50-foot vertical cascade. On the way, the trail passes through groves of dignified hardwoods and crosses meandering creek bottoms. Bring lunch, snacks and plenty of water. Meet at Oconee State Park lodge. 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

#8—Gorges State Park Visitors Center Tour. Visit the beautiful new Visitors Center at Gorges State Park with one of the area’s most breathtaking views of the Jocassee Gorges region. Gorges State Park Ranger Kevin Bischof will give a guided tour of the new center and some of the nearby areas in the North Carolina state park. Meet at Gorges State Park at 10:30 a.m. The Grassy Ridge entrance of Gorges State Park is about 8 miles from Upper Whitewater Falls on NC 281.

#9—Maintenance Hikes. Help out with upkeep on the Foothills Trail with Foothills Trail Conference board members Les Storm and Jack Hudish and others. There may be more than one maintenance hike, so plenty of strong backs are needed! Bring gloves, a favorite tool, lunch and plenty to drink. Meet at Oconee State Park lodge. 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Sunday

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#11—Tamassee Knob. Join Bobbie Wilhite, Foothills Trail Conference board member, on this moderate to strenuous round-trip hike of about three hours on the Tamassee Knob Trail within Oconee State Park. The Tamassee Knob Trail features a number of scenic overlooks. Meet at Oconee State Park lodge. Bring lunch and water. 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
FOOTHILLS TRAIL CONFERENCE  

ANNUAL MEETING 2012 HIKES AND OUTINGS!!

Friday

#1—Sloan Bridge to Ellicott’s Rock on Fork Mountain Trail. Enjoy the colors of fall along the mystical Chattooga River and explore the Ellicott’s Rock area with Cathy Reas Foster, Foothills Trail Conference board member. The hike begins on the Chattooga River Trail at Burrells Ford with a stop at Spoon Auger Falls before connecting to the Foothills Trail that leads up river to Ellicott’s Rock. After lunch and adventures finding the rock, hikers will take the Fork Mt. Spur Trail and finish at Sloan Bridge. Shuttle required. This 12-mile hike is rated very strenuous with an elevation gain of 3,000 ft. Bring lunch, snacks, water, hiking shoes, and a camera! Meet Cathy at Sloan Bridge at 8:30 a.m.

#2—Lee Falls Hike. This hike will begin by assembling at the parking lot in Oconee State Park below the Ranger’s office and store at noon on Friday, November 2, 2012. We will carpool to the trailhead for a 1.6 mile hike one way, (3.2 round trip). This is an out and back hike. This hike is rated difficult because of the first two crossings of a fairly large stream, Tamassee Creek and particularly for the last ¼ mile to the falls which is steep and scrambling over boulders and trees. The majority of the hike is an easy walk through 4 meadows and some forest walking. This 90’ waterfall is one of the most spectacular in the Upstate and one of my top favorites. The flowers are always great while still in season. Be prepared for wet feet and beautiful pictures. Led by Dan Whitten.

Saturday

#3—Upper Whitewater Falls to Lower Whitewater Falls and Bad Creek. Join Master Naturalist and Foothills Trail Conference board member Dan Whitten on this strenuous 6-mile walk that will start at Upper Whitewater Falls and continue to Lower Whitewater Falls, finishing at Duke Energy’s Bad Creek Hydro Project. Shuttle required. Bring water and lunch. Meet at Oconee State Park lodge 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

#4—Bartram Trail Hike to Rabun Bald. John Ray, Foothills Trail Conference member, will lead a hike on the Georgia section of the Bartram Trail from Beegum Gap (3,600 feet) to the summit of Rabun Bald, at 4,696 feet Georgia’s second highest mountain and the highest in a semi-primitive state. The hike will follow the old fire tower road to the summit in 1.6 miles and return the same way. Outstanding views of three states are available from the observation tower. The drive from Oconee State Park to the trailhead is more than an hour. This hike is limited to 15 people or three cars because of parking limitations at Beegum Gap. Wear hiking shoes and bring lunch, water, camera and binoculars. This hike will be strenuous. Meet at Oconee State Park lodge 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

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**JOHNSON CONTROLS DONATION**

Pictured left to right are Ken Hunt and Mary Williams of Johnson Controls. Jerry Harvey, Mike Despeaux, Joe McCall and Heyward Douglass of the Foothills Trail Conference. Dennis Yount of Johnson Controls.

**SASSAFRAS MOUNTAIN PRESS CONFERENCE**

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“ODYSSA“ TALK HIGHLIGHTS FALL PICNIC

Although some sporadic rain pelted the Gorges State Park picnic shelter, it did not dampen the enthusiasm of the 65 attendees of the FTC Fall Picnic on September 8th. After unloading supplies, food, etc., the initial “wave” of arrivals followed Steve Pagano, Board Member and Manager of Gorges Park, to the new Gorges Visitor Center for a tour of the facilities. Steve gave a very informative tour of the new facility which contains park offices, classroom and auditorium spaces, and several displays that highlight various features unique to the mountain environment – such as the amount of rain that falls each year!! He also pointed out the tremendous views that can be seen from the windows and decks of the building.

When the second tour group headed to the Visitor Center, Les Storm and Jerry Harvey began to prepare the hamburgers and hotdogs for the picnic – under the protective cover of the Foothills Trail tent! Although a brief rain shower made the cooking a challenge, the two of them successfully prepared the main food items for the group. Thanks Jerry and Les!! In addition to the grilled burgers and dogs there were plenty of delicious side items that had been brought by the members who attended. Thanks to all who brought something!!

The highlight of the first-ever Fall Picnic was, of course, a presentation by Jennifer Pharr Davis - AT trailname “Odyssa“. As her father, Yorke Pharr, looked on, she recounted the trials and extreme exertion that were necessary to accomplish hiking the entire Appalachian Trail in just 46 days! Although her husband, Brew Davis, was not present, she made it plain that he played a huge role in helping her accomplish her record-breaking journey. She also delivered a message of what has motivated her and what she hopes will motivate others to get out and enjoy the natural world by hiking in it. As an expectant mother-to-be, she also revealed how she is having to adapt to changes in her life, and how she is looking forward to meeting those challenges. Those who were lucky enough to attend the picnic thoroughly enjoyed her company and her presentation!!