



www.blackwaterheritagetrail.org



Trail Lines

A publication of the

**BLACKWATER HERITAGE TRAIL
CITIZEN SUPPORT ORGANIZATION**

September 2008



BLACKWATER HERITAGE TRAIL TO HOST 3RD ANNUAL BLACKWATER BICYCLE FESTIVAL

Inside this issue:

McConnell - Wantz
Century Ride 2006

Park Update

Spring Bird Walk

2008 Election
State of Officers

Membership Information

2007 Officers

President

Mack Thetford

Vice President

Peggi Smith

Treasurer

John Ducker

Secretary

Mike Wolfe

Board of Directors

Jean Callis (1 yr)

Vernon Compton (1 yr)

Elaine Dinwiddie (2 yr)

Patricia D'Asaro (2 yr)

Brett Williams (2 yr)

Charles Morgan (2 yr)

2 Get ready all you bicycle enthusiasts! The third Annual Blackwater Bicycle Festival will take place Oct 11, 2008-the 2nd Saturday in October-from 9 am to 3 pm at the Blackwater Heritage Trail Visitor Center in Milton. The Blackwater Heritage Trail CSO hosts this event annually on the 2nd Saturday in October with the purpose of bringing together bicycle lovers and promoting and showcasing the Blackwater Heritage Trail. This year, we're hoping to build on the huge success

that we had at last year's festival, and as usual, there will be a wide variety of vintage, unique, and creative cycles to see and test ride. We are anticipating and encouraging folks to bring out their garage creations, unicycles, 4 wheel cycles, vintage, antiques, low riders, muscle bikes and more, so if you've got a unique cycle or bike of your own, bring it with you and add to the fun!

Trophies will be awarded for various categories of cycles and bikes. Kids will espe-

cially enjoy the Bicycle Parade starting at the Visitor's Center. Arrive early for a good spot if you would like to sell parts and/or bikes at the swap meet. Free door prizes will be given away all day long so be sure to sign in and get a ticket when you arrive. Chance drawing tickets can be purchased for chances to win a new bicycle. Purchase your tickets before the event at the Visitor's Center and all day during the Festival. Looking forward to seeing you and your bike there!

Blackwater Heritage State Trail CSO 2008/2009 Events Calendar

2008

September 6 th	Dog Walk	6 p.m.
September 27 th	National Public Lands Day	TBA
October 4 th	Fall Birding Walk	8 a.m.
October 11 th	Bicycle Festival	9 a.m. - 3 p.m.
October 18 th	McConnell-Wantz Century Ride	8 a.m.

2009

February 21 st	Children's Mardi Gras	10-12 a.m.
April 5 th	Easter Egg Hunt	2-4 p.m.



Blackwater Heritage State Trail Updates



10th Annual McConnell - Wantz Century Ride 2008

The Fenner McConnell – Matt Wantz Memorial Blackwater Century Ride will take place on October 18, 2008. The ride starts at 8 AM at the Milton Community Center @ 5629 Byrom Street. The riders will have choices of riding 42, 65 or 100 mile routes, with an 18 mile route available for those not into long distances.

Randy Bullock of the WFW (West Florida Wheelmen) bike club is the organizer of this 10 annual ride that will start at the Milton Community Center, and continue along portions of the Blackwater Heritage State Trail and into the Blackwater State Forest.

Travel is mostly along country roads avoiding as much traffic as possible. More information and registration details are available at West Florida Wheelmen website.



www.wfw-pensacola.com



The Blackwater Heritage State Trail Visitor Center Park Update

Progress has been slow but some improvements have been made to the lot adjacent to the BHST visitor center on Alabama St.. The play ground was completed at the end of May but remained closed until it could be inspected by a certified inspector. The inspection was completed and passed in mid June and two picnic tables were added. The tables provide a shaded resting spot for adults who come to watch their children enjoy the new

equipment. There are an additional eight tables and two grills to be installed in the park area over the next few months.

In the not so distant future we will be adding a parking area, amphitheater seating, and a storage building for trail maintenance equipment. A contractor has been hired to remove the old structure from the property and build the new storage facility. The other items mentioned are awaiting approval due to state budget con-

cerns. The security fence has been completed and we are anxiously awaiting the contractor's arrival. A barrier of native plants will separate the public use area from the maintenance storage facility and a mortise split rail fence will be erected around the gravel parking area. The finishing touches will be native flower plots around the park with interpretive plaques to help visitors identify them. Stay tuned!



The Office of Greenways & Trails works directly with local communities, developers, private landowners and state and federal agencies to facilitate the establishment of the statewide system of greenways and trails.

Spring Bird Walk Gives Locals a Peek into Spring Migration on the Heritage Trail

On a cloudy morning this past May, members of the Blackwater Heritage Trail and a number of local citizens, were lead down the trail in search of birds making their way north for the breeding season. Our enthusiastic guide from the Francis Weston Audubon Society, Ms. Peggy Baker, immediately began pointing out songbirds, such as the Carolina wren, before we even left the equestrian parking lot. It took the rest of us a few moments to get our eyes and ears tuned, but once we got away from the noise of cars pass-

ing on Munson Highway, a veritable festival of brightly colored birds greeted us on the trail. In a few short hours we counted upwards of 30 different species of birds including summer tanagers, indigo buntings, white-eyed vireos, orchard orioles, brown thrashers, and even a red-tailed hawk. These bird species rely on natural areas and corridors, like the Heritage Trail, to provide food, shelter, and a place to rest on their long journeys north for the summer and south for the winter. For those who had never watched or identified birds before,

Ms. Baker was patient and knowledgeable about each bird's call, plumage, and distinguishing characteristics. She even brought along a recorder programmed with each species' call and song. By playing a song, she was able to bring many of the more territorial birds closer for our inspection and wonderment. For those of you that missed the bird walk this past Spring, keep your eyes open for fliers and newspaper announcements for the Fall migration walk we're planning in September. The date and time are yet to be determined.



Heritage Trail Volunteer Opportunities:

- Visitor Center hosts
- Trees and flower planting and management
- Help with Trail Speaker Programs
- Bird surveys
- Grant writers
- Web site design and management

Contact Peggi, (850) 983-5338 to learn more.

Blackwater Heritage Trail 2008 Elections

Slate of Officers

President	Peggi Smith
Vice President	Brett Williams
Treasurer	John Ducker
Secretary	Justin Jones
Directors:	
Vernon Compton	Mack Thetford
Walt Schumann	Mike Davis
Jean Callis	Phyllis Garrett
Elaine Dinwiddie	

Election of officers and members of the Board of Directors will take place 30 September 2008 at the regular board meeting of the Blackwater Heritage Trail, Inc. All members are encouraged to attend and participate in the election of officers and directors. Meetings begin at 6:30 at the Blackwater Heritage State Trail Visitor Center on Alabama street. Nominations will be accepted from the floor and refreshments will be served.



**BLACKWATER HERITAGE TRAIL
CITIZEN SUPPORT ORGANIZATION**

P.O. Box 4292
Milton, FL 32572

Phone: 850-983-5338
Email: Gerard.greco@dep.state.fl.us

PRESORTED
STANDARD
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
MILTON, FL
PERMIT NO. 78



SEE YOU ON THE TRAIL !

Membership Information www.blackwaterheritagetrail.org

Members and volunteers can do many things including greet visitors, conduct tours, help rangers remove exotic plants or maintain the natural beauty of the trail.

Groups can adopt trails, portions of a park or even an entire park. Students can participate in internship programs or bring a group to a park to provide community service.

Memberships in the Blackwater Heritage Trail, Inc are available in the following categories:

Individual	\$ 15
Family	\$ 20
Club/Group	\$ 50
Business	\$ 75
Corporation	\$100

**BECOME A PART OF THE CITIZEN SUPPORT ORGANIZATION FOR THE
BLACKWATER HERITAGE STATE TRAIL**

**Become a Member of the nonprofit Blackwater Heritage Trail
Call Peggi Smith @ 850-983-5338**



Look for Swamp Sunflower Plants (*Helianthus angustifolia*) along the trail over the next few months. This is a tall wildflower that grows in moist areas. This plant is attractive to bees, butterflies and/or birds. In your garden it will require consistently moist soil which makes it suitable for bogs and water gardens. This plant is also resistant to deer.