



PARK CELEBRATES 100-YEAR ANNIVERSARY WITH RIVERFEST/TRIATHLON

Perfect weather coupled with a great reason to celebrate met happily at Lake James State Park Sept. 17 with the 13th annual Catawba RiverFest. To make the day even more festive, McDowell Trails Association put on its Lake James Triathlon earlier in the day. In addition, the statewide 100-year anniversary of North Carolina State Parks was honored on its yearlong tour of the 40 parks and recreation areas within the Tar Heel State.

Boosted by more than 100 race participants and their raucous cheering squads, the early crowds at RiverFest were bigger than usual for the event which is sponsored by Lake James State Park, Catawba Valley Heritage Alliance and the Friends of Lake James State Park.

"It was a beautiful day to come to the park and celebrate all of the accomplishments we've achieved as a state when it comes to providing recreational opportunities for the people of North Carolina and preserving the incredible diversity and natural wonders that are

protected within the park system," said Park Superintendent Nora Coffey. "We've come a long way in 100 years and we're grateful to all of the friends and neighbors who came to RiverFest to help us celebrate and inspire the next 100 years."

The Friends of Lake James State Park is committed to being there to support

message on the importance of Lake James State Park to the quality of life of this region."

With live music, great food, ranger-led boat tours and kayak demos, there was a great vibe throughout the day under the beautiful September sunshine; and

lots to look forward to in future Catawba RiverFest celebrations.

Special thanks to all of the event sponsors and partners who donated time, money, goods and/or services, including McDowell Trails Association, River-Keeper Foundation, Catawba Valley Heritage Alliance, Duke Energy, Crescent Communities, Burke County, McDowell Early College,

Appalachian Mountain Sports, CBS Sports, Codex Sound, Good Wood Pizza, CC's Hot Dogs, and musical acts: Strictly Clean and Decent and Alan Darveaux with Slight Departure. Also, a big thanks to all of our exhibitors park staff and volunteers.



the park every step of the way. Friends group volunteers manned the iconic "tin shed" display, encouraging folks to take advantage of the wide variety of outdoor activities available and get involved with the park. "Most of the year our group works behind-the-scenes," said Friends president Eric Jenkins. "RiverFest is our opportunity to get out in front and spread our

If you would like to receive our monthly programs list, contact us at lake.james@ncparks.gov. In an effort to reduce idle waiting time before programs begin, please make an effort to arrive a few minutes early before the start times listed. Thank you.

FALL COLORS HIKE – SUNDAY, NOV. 6

There is no better time to hike in the mountains of North Carolina than the fall, and with that, arguably no better time to hike at Lake James State Park. So come out and do it! Meet Park Ranger Kevin Bischof at the Catawba River Area to enjoy the park in its fall glory. Along the way you will discover how the leaves got their beautiful fall colors, and what happened to the summer green we grew used to seeing for the last couple of months. Wondering what types of trees bring your favorite autumn reds, or which trees bring brown and yellow to the color wheel so many love about fall? In addition to the color change, tree ID will be discussed along the hike. Meet at the Office of the Catawba River Area at 1 p.m.



AUTUMN BIRD HIKE – WEDNESDAY, NOV. 9

Bird migration is winding down and time is short to go watch the spectacle. The Holly Discovery Trail is a great place to see lots of species in a morning. Join Ranger Earl Weaver for an exciting morning. We'll start at 8:30 a.m. from the Holly Discovery Trail parking lot, just after you cross the bridge in the Paddy's Creek Area. Bring binoculars and a field guide if you have them.

FALL COLORS BOAT TOUR – WEDNESDAY, NOV. 9

This might be your last chance to experience the fall foliage season before winter takes a firm grip and what better way to enjoy it than by boating around beautiful Lake James. Join Ranger Clay Veasey aboard the park patrol boat as we seek out the reds, golds, purples, and oranges of autumn. Only eight spaces are available and pre-registration is required. Call the park office at 828-584-7728 to save your spot. Meet at the East Picnic Shelter at 9:45 a.m. for a briefing and prompt 10 o'clock departure.

OVERMOUNTAIN VICTORY TRAIL HIKE – FRIDAY, VETERAN'S DAY, NOV. 11

In the darkest days of the American Revolution a rag-tag band of frontiersmen set out in pursuit of a roving army of British Loyalists intent on bringing the untamed South to heel. The chase took place across hundreds of miles and four states, culminating in the Battle of King's Mountain in South Carolina. Part of that journey took place along the Catawba River in what is now Lake James State Park. Retrace the steps of those American heroes with Park Ranger Jamie Cameron as we hike a 1-mile section of the Overmountain Victory Trail. Meet at the Holly Discovery Trail parking lot (near the Paddy's Creek Bridge) in the Paddy's Creek Area at 4 p.m.

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AMAZING EAGLES – SUNDAY, NOV. 13

Easily the nation's most iconic and easily identified birds (at least the adults), the bald eagle is the cherished symbol of our great country, but what do you know about its life cycle and habits? Lake James hosts a healthy population of eagles throughout the year – including a nest site that has been active for more than a decade. Join Ranger Jamie Cameron on a quest to spot one of these majestic birds at one of several lookout points within Lake James State Park. Learn about the inspiring comeback of eagle populations, how to identify them and how they fit into the ecosystem. Bring binoculars if you have them and dress for the weather. Meet at the Catawba River Area office building at 2 p.m.

WATERFOWL WATCH BOAT TOUR – SUNDAY, NOV. 13

Many species of waterfowl, including ducks, grebes, loons and cormorants spend the winter months on Lake James and now you have an opportunity to observe them in their element. Ranger Earl Weaver will be your captain and guide aboard the park patrol boat as we search for birds. The weather could be blustery, so be sure to dress warmly if you are one of the eight lucky participants. Registration is required and available on a first-come, first-served basis. Call the park office at 828-584-7728 to reserve your spot. Meet your captain at the Paddy's Creek Area, East Picnic Shelter at 1:45 p.m. for a briefing prior to departure promptly at 2 o'clock.

**100 MILE CHALLENGE HIKE – SATURDAY, NOV. 19**

100 miles ... can you do it? Many North Carolina Park visitors are trying to do just that, hike 100 miles in 2017 to celebrate NC Parks' centennial. Meet Ranger Kevin Bischof as he leads a hike in late Fall to discover the leaves after they have fallen for the year. The 4-mile moderate hike will trek around the Mill's Creek trail and return on the Paddy's Creek trail. Meet at 10 a.m. in the Paddy's Creek Area of the park near the East Picnic Shelter.

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“WALK LIKE A DUCK” BIRDWATCHING HIKE – SATURDAY, NOV. 19

Many species of waterfowl, including ducks, grebes, loons and cormorants spend the winter months on Lake James and now you have an opportunity to observe them in their element. Ranger Clay Veasey will be your guide as we hike the Paddy's Creek Trail in search of waterbirds. The weather could be blustery, so be sure to dress warmly if the forecast demands it. Meet at the Paddy's Creek Area bathhouse breezeway at 1 p.m.

GOBBLE! GOBBLE! WILD TURKEY STORY TIME AND CRAFTS – THURSDAY, NOV. 24

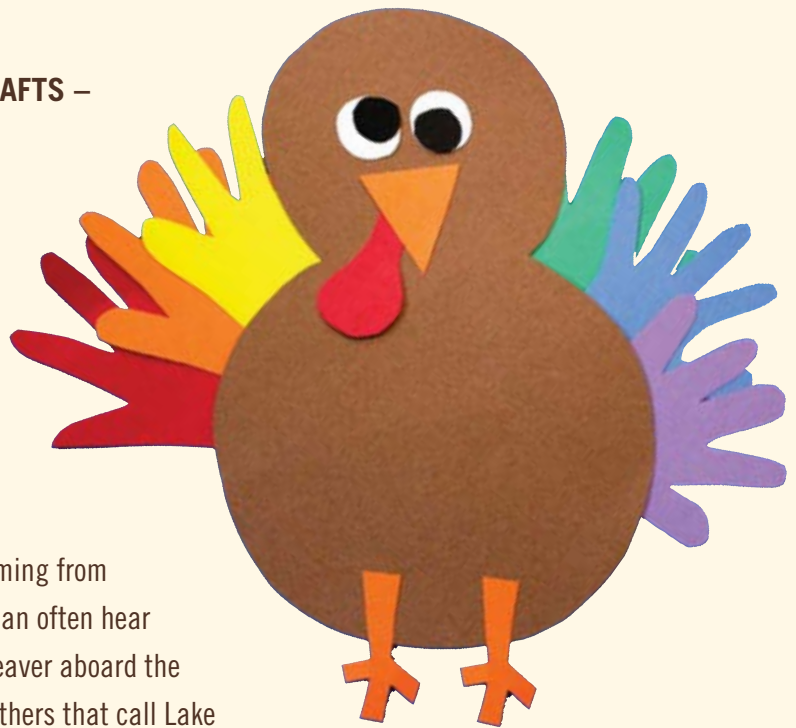
Before the family comes over and the food is ready, visit Lake James State Park for story time and turkey day crafts. Join Park Supt. Nora Coffey in the basement of the Catawba River Area office at 10 a.m. Please register by calling the park office at (828) 584-7728.

LOONS OF LAKE JAMES BOAT TOUR – SUNDAY, DEC. 4

Lake James is a wintering spot for dozens of common loons coming from their northern nesting territories. On quiet, still mornings you can often hear their iconic cries echoing across the water. Join Ranger Earl Weaver aboard the park's patrol boat in search of these graceful waterbirds and others that call Lake James home during the winter. Registration is required and only the first eight respondents will get to enjoy this unique opportunity. Meet at the East Picnic Shelter at Paddy's Creek Area at 1:45 p.m. for a briefing and prompt 2 p.m. departure. To register, call the park office at 828-584-7728.

TREES MAGNIFIED – SUNDAY, DEC. 4

Come experience nature in a new way, a magnified way! Nature Magnified is a new program series at Lake James that will be introducing kids to the natural world in a different way. Undoubtedly you've strolled along the trails of lake and experienced the beauty Lake James has to offer, but have you ever seen the natural world magnified? Come join Ranger Kevin Bischof as he leads a group along the trails of Lake James to explore the trees of the forest at a different level. The park will supply the magnifying loupes, all you have to do is bring the kids and a sense of exploration. Magnification will turn your walk in the woods into a whole new experience. Because the park has a limited number of magnifying loupes, please call ahead of time to reserve your spot. Reservations can be made by calling the park office at 828-584-7728. This program can be used for the Junior Ranger program and will meet at 1 p.m. at the Holly Discovery Trail parking lot in the Paddy's Creek Area of the park.

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ANIMALS IN WINTER – SATURDAY, DEC. 10

Bald eagles? Yes. Otters? Sure. Black bears? Yup. Bobcats? You betcha. Lake James and the land surrounding it are a paradise for wildlife. Winter is an excellent time to hit the woods and search for critters that can be easier to see now than any other season. Join Ranger Jamie Cameron for a hike on the Paddy's Creek Trail, with plenty of views of the lake and great habitat for birds and animals. Meet at the Paddy's Creek Area bathhouse breezeway at 10 a.m.

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DISCOVER THE HOLLY DISCOVERY TRAIL – SUNDAY, DEC. 11

The Holly Discovery Trail is a national award-winning interpretive experience geared for young folks and parents who are seeking outdoor opportunities for their children. The trail also wends its way through a beautiful riparian forest near Paddy's Creek that's full of wildlife. Ranger Jamie Cameron will lead the way around the .75-mile loop trail to point out birds, trees and anything else of interest. Meet at the Holly Discovery Trail parking lot in the Paddy's Creek Area at 10 a.m.



LONG ARM CEMETERY TOUR – SUNDAY, DEC. 11

It has been many years since members of the public have had the opportunity to visit the historic cemetery on Long Arm Peninsula. Before the area became part of Lake James State Park in 2005 it was long held in private ownership. As new park facilities are developed to access and enjoy this beautiful area, the park staff is excited to provide a rare opportunity to walk among the tombstones. Meet Ranger Clay Veasey at the Paddy's Creek Area bathhouse breezeway at 11 a.m. and we'll caravan to the cemetery from there.

WINTER BIRD HIKE – FRIDAY, DEC. 16

It may come as a surprise to some, but birdwatching during the winter can be excellent. With all of the winged visitors from the north, we might see as many as 30 different types of birds in little more than an hour. Join Ranger Earl Weaver for a walk around the Holly Discovery Trail to see what kind of surprises we might turn up. Meet at the Holly Discovery Trail parking lot at 8:30 a.m.

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WINTER PLANT HIKE – SATURDAY, DEC. 17

The holiday season is upon us and the leaves have fallen off the trees. Many folks think there isn't a lot of green left to see when they hike in the winter landscape, but they're in for a surprise. Join Park Ranger Kevin Bischof as he hikes along the Holly Discovery Trail in search of the plants that hold their green coloration even through the winter. The hike is approximately .75 miles in length. Please meet at the Holly Discovery Trailhead located in the Paddy's Creek Area at 1 p.m.

ANIMAL TRACK ORNAMENTS – WEDNESDAY, DEC. 21

Join Park Supt. Nora Coffey to learn about different animal tracks and signs that can be found around Lake James and make your own animal track ornaments to take home. Come prepared for both indoor and outdoor activities. Meet at the Catawba River Area office at 10 a.m. Please call the park office at (828) 584-7728 for program registration.

LAST CHANCE BIRD HIKE – SATURDAY, DEC. 31

It's the last day of 2016. Are you missing any birds on your annual list? Ranger Jamie Cameron will lead this ornithological expedition around the Mill's Creek Loop to see and identify winter birds. Hermit thrushes, brown creepers, hairy woodpeckers and blue-headed vireos will be among our target species. Bring binoculars and a field guide if you have them and be sure to dress for the weather on the New Year's Eve adventure. We'll meet at the Paddy's Creek Area bathhouse breezeway at 10 a.m.

NATURE NOTES

The march of the seasons is undeniable and evidence is all around us. Fall and winter are fantastic times to visit Lake James State Park, with air temperatures just perfect for hiking in the woods, birds and animals active throughout the daytime as they search for food and open vistas of the lake and surrounding mountains everywhere you look.



One of the best kept secrets at the park is the view at sunrise from the Paddy's Creek Bridge. Sometime this winter try to make it to the Paddy's

Creek Area gate just as it opens at 7 a.m. Park at the pull-off just past the bridge and walk back onto the catwalk facing the lake for an unforgettable start to the morning.

It's always interesting to take note of the different tree species as they prepare for winter. Some, like sweet gums, tulip poplars and sourwoods turn colors and drop their leaves early in the fall. Others, like oaks and beech trees hold their leaves long into the coldest months. Evergreens such as pines, hemlocks and cedars stay green throughout the year, as do American holly trees. Even in their dormancy, trees provide food and shelter for wildlife. American goldfinches will feast on seeds they find in the spikey pods of sweet gum and sycamore. Pine siskins and purple finches will scour the cones of pine trees for seeds while ruby-crowned kinglets and blue-headed vireos wait for the sun to warm tiny flies and other insects that shelter in the needles. Of course, acorns are the fast-food of the forest and critters gather from far and wide under oaks that are dropping these energy-packed nuts. White-tailed deer, black bears, wild turkeys, gray squirrels, wood ducks and a host of others take advantage of the bounty during years when the acorn crop is abundant.

The park rangers at Lake James have scheduled an extensive list of outdoor programs (see page 2) designed to educate and experience this fantastic season for viewing wildlife and enjoy the best of what our area has to offer. See you out on the trail!

WHO WE ARE

A group formed in 2010, made up of dedicated people work together to help Lake James State Park meet its mission of providing opportunities for public enjoyment and education while still protecting the natural beauty and historic integrity of the State Park.

BOARD MEMBERS

Eric Jenkins - President

Robert Hunter - Vice President

Mike Sewell - Secretary

Paul Braun - Member at Large

Annette Bryant - Membership Coordinator

Randall Conley - Member at Large

George Milner - Member at Large

Greg Norell - Member at Large

Molly Sandfoss - Member at Large

Alan Scholl - Member at Large

Jeff Stark - Member at Large

Jim Williams - Member at Large

To contact the Friends of Lake James State Park Group please email info@lakejamesstatepark.org

YEAR-ROUND CAMPING



In the nearly 30-year history of Lake James State Park, the camping season has run from March through the end of November. All that is about to change as the park and its 83 campsites become available year round effective immediately.

Cold weather campers can choose from the walk-in sites at the Catawba River Area, the drive-in sites at Paddy's Creek and the boat-in sites on Long Arm Peninsula.

Camping during the winter months can be rewarding and challenging. Prospective overnighers are encouraged to keep a close eye on the weather forecast and choose their days wisely. Conditions at campsites directly on the shoreline of Lake James will be blustery and colder than protected sites away from the water.

"We feel there is enough of a demand for these sites during the winter to open up our campgrounds year round," said Park Superintendent Nora Coffey. "The weather is often beautiful here through the holidays. Now folks can take advantage of it and enjoy the park with a new experience."

FAMILIAR FACE: LINDA LAKE



Anyone who visits Lake James State Park when the Paddy's Creek Area swim beach is open (May – September) knows the bathhouse breezeway can be a hopping place. Weekend and holiday crowds gather under the archway to purchase swim bands, grab a cold drink or an ice cream, rent a canoe or gather with family before hitting the beach.

In the thick of it all is the familiar face of concessions stand manager Linda Lake. No

matter how hectic things get at her windows, Linda keeps her cool as she attends to the needs of as many as 5,000 people a day. In addition to selling snacks and drinks, swim bands and renting canoes, kayaks and paddleboards, Linda is an invaluable source of park information for visitors searching for the right trail or the perfect campsite.

Originally from Melbourne, FL, Linda moved to western North Carolina 20 years ago and has worked all of that time with Burke County Schools in the Freedom High School cafeteria. The 2016 swim beach season marked her 5th summer at Lake James State Park and she has no intention of stopping anytime soon.

"I just love it here," she said. "I love the park and all of the trails and the people who work here. Sometimes it can be difficult to accommodate people when it's really busy and the lines are long, but most of the time they're understanding and patient."

The concession stand has closed for the year, but you can be sure Linda is already looking forward to next season. "The worst part about working here is when the season ends," she admitted. "I just can't wait to come back."

FRIENDS OF LAKE JAMES STATE PARK



You're forgiven if you looked out on Paddy's Creek Oct. 1 and feared a Viking invasion. The colorful craft participating in the inaugural Lake James Dragon Boat Festival spent the day racing for a good cause. Hosted by the Healing Dragons of Lake James, the festival drew 11 teams of 20 paddlers and hundreds of spectators to the swim beach. Proceeds from the event went to Blue Ridge Health Care.



Alan Darveaux helped us promote RiverFest and entertained the crowd at the Historic Morganton Festival on September 10th.

FRIENDS OF LAKE JAMES STATE PARK

LJSP TRAILS



CATAWBA RIVER AREA:

Fishing Pier Trail (0.3 mile, easy)
Fox Den Loop Trail (2.25 miles, moderate)
Lake Channel Overlook Trail (1.5 miles, moderate)
Sandy Cliff Overlook Trail (0.5 mile, easy)

PADDY'S CREEK AREA:

Holly Discovery Trail (0.75 mile, easy)
Mill's Creek Trail (3.6 miles, moderate)
Overmountain Victory Trail (2.0 mile, moderate)
Paddy's Creek Trail (2.0 miles, moderate)
Tindo beginners' mountain bike trail (4.0 miles)
Wimba intermediate mountain bike trail (11.25 miles)

PARK GENERAL INFO

- Gate hours during November are 7 a.m. until 8 p.m. Hours for December are 7 a.m. until 7 p.m.
- Paddy's Creek Area swim beach is closed for the season
- The concessions stand and boat rentals are closed for the season



The Friends of Lake James State Park shared a booth with the McDowell Trails Association at this year's Mountain Glory Festival in Marion. Pictured here L-R are: FLJSP Board Member Mike Sewell, Ranger Kevin Bischof, and Lake James State Park Chief Life Guard Courtney Austin.

Photo by Annette Bryant.

FRIENDS OF LAKE JAMES STATE PARK

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Do you have an interest in Lake James State Park? Whether you enjoy hiking the trails, swimming at the beach or just picnicking with your family, there is some part of the park for everyone.

Join the Friends of Lake James State Park group and learn about all the opportunities to help make the park a better place for everyone to enjoy. The Friends of Lake James State Park focus on working together to help Lake James State Park meet its mission of providing opportunities for public enjoyment and education while still protecting the natural beauty and historic integrity of the State Park.

There are a variety of opportunities to get involved from trail work days, to volunteering at RiverFest and other festivals. Become a member of Friends of Lake James State Park, and know that you are helping to preserve the natural beauty and historic resources of Lake James for generations to come.

FRIENDS CONTRIBUTIONS

The Friends of Lake James State Park is proud to support the hardworking staff at Lake James State Park and contribute wherever we can to help improve park operations and offer new recreational opportunities to visitors. If you think these efforts are meaningful, please consider joining our group using the form at the bottom of this page.

- Boat Camping Project; partially funded, purchased equipment including rebar driver and auger
- Stand-up Paddleboards; purchased two for rental fleet and one for lifeguard use
- Funded instructor for Waterfront Safety training for lifeguards
- Linville Overlook picnic area
- Assisted with Overmountain Victory Trail 2 construction
- Holly Discovery Trail; partially funded and dedicated, annual funding for upkeep
- Park of the Year celebration
- Sponsored night rides on mountain bike trails
- RiverFest Sponsor

HOW TO JOIN THE FRIENDS OF LAKE JAMES STATE PARK GROUP

Become a member of Friends of Lake James State Park, and know that you are helping to preserve the natural beauty and historic resources of Lake James for generations to come.

For more information please visit www.lakejamesstatepark.org or email info@lakejamesstatepark.org.

FRIENDS OF LAKE JAMES STATE PARK - MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Be a Friend of Lake James State Park

Select class of annual membership:

- ☐ Individual \$10
- ☐ Family \$25
- ☐ Corporate \$50
- ☐ Patron/Industry \$100 - \$999 \$_____
- ☐ Lifetime \$1000 (or more) \$ _____
- ☐ I would like to be contacted about volunteer opportunities with the Friends of Lake James State Park

Where did you hear about us? _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____

Phone _____

Return to:
Friends of Lake James State Park, Inc.
P.O. Box 1327
Nebo, NC 28761

Friends of Lake James State Park, Inc. is a registered 501(c)3 charitable organization. Receipt of membership will be supplied upon request.