

Friends of the Lost Pines State Parks
 P.O. Box 1714
 Bastrop, Texas 78602



The Pines Post

Newsletter of the Friends of the Lost Pines State Parks

September ~ October, 2010

Upcoming Events



**Annual Picnic in the Park
 Thursday, September 22
 Starting 6:00PM at
 Buescher State Park
 Picnic Pavilion**

Everyone is invited!



National Historic Landmark

LET'S GET READY TO PICNIC!!!

No I never rumbled or wrestled, but I have picnicked before. Please try to be with us at Buescher this month as we visit with old and new friends. There is no telling what the weather will be like, but the company should be fun. Let's be together, check on the weather and picnic indoors or on the patio. You are welcome to bring whatever you want to add for a picnic. We are supplying the dogs, buns & condiments.

Friends, with the pool programs becoming YMCA administered, we will need to consider other fundraising ideas. Can you help? Ideas? Time? Input? The 'Learn to Swim Program' was our largest fundraiser. If we wish to be of use to the park and the rangers, we either have to provide help or equipment as needed. We invite you to help any way you can. We hope to see you soon. God Bless You,

Jon Pollard

President

Hello Friends!

Summer is winding down, although with these high temperatures, it does not seem like fall is close on its heels. We have had a busy season in spite of the weather. Did you get a chance to come out to the pool this summer? Labor Day weekend was the last chance to take a dip and it seems many people took advantage of that opportunity.

Visitors to Bastrop lately should notice some changes. Most of the site and parking lot upgrades that were started in the fall of 2010 have been completed so we are now able to offer more accessible amenities. Additionally, the Friends purchased an ADA-compliant swing for the playground, which looks great and will allow even more children to enjoy our playground. Now, TxDot is hard at work on our roads. All this construction means we will soon be able to offer our visitors a better experience at our parks.

We also installed a new aerator in the lake, allowing the oxygen content to increase. More dissolved oxygen means healthier (and probably happier) fish. Even though lake levels are low, Bastrop is still a destination for fishing and wildlife watching.

Since August just drew to a close, we have ended the state's fiscal year. Now is the time to look back on all of our reports and numbers and see what we have accomplished for the year. Our complex volunteers contributed nearly 9,000 hours of service since September 2011. That's like having an extra 4 or 5 employees at the complex, which makes a huge difference in the projects we are able to complete and the service we are able to offer to our visitors. Thanks everyone!

Additionally, we impacted well over 4,000 people with interpretive programs both at the parks and in the community. We visited schools, fairs and other events in an effort to bring more people to our parks, and we offered guided hikes, amphitheater programs, outdoor education and much more to our visitors within the park boundaries. The more people we can get to care about our parks, the better off we will be in the future.

I hope to see you out here!

Katie Raney
Park Interpreter/Volunteer Coordinator

From Todd McClanahan, Parks Complex Superintendent

So I will bore you a bit more with the woes of the devastating drought. We hit 112 degrees for a couple of days and to date this year we've received a mere 8.27" of rain. But look on the bright side, it will only get cooler from here on out. I don't foresee us exceeding 112 again this summer/fall. It will rain eventually and things will recover, at least somewhat. As with the rest of the state and much of the southern half of the US, this drought will have long-term effects on the forest. Park rangers have cut more trees over the past 2 years than many have cut in their entire career. The rangers are busy evaluating trees on a daily basis looking for those in highly visited areas and removing any dangerous trees.

If you driven through the parks in the last few months, you've no doubt noticed all of the construction taking place. We are nearing the end of some of the projects and gearing up for others. Most of the ADA upgrades throughout Bastrop are now complete and TxDOT is in full swing with the re-paving project. They have been working primarily in Copperas Creek campground but will soon move to other areas through the fall months. Bastrop is also slated to have both campground restrooms replaced. The cabins and refectory are scheduled for re-roofing as well this fall. Buescher's Recreation Hall is still under construction with the addition to the restroom and foundation stabilization.

There have been many rumors "floating" around about the future of the swimming pool. We are working with the YMCA to ensure the pool stays open for public use. The contract is not final yet, but we are getting closer. In the meantime, adult lap swimming will continue as normal through the end of October. Over the off-season, the YMCA will begin the transition to take over the operations and should be ready to open early in 2012. Keep your eye out for more updates.

We are very mindful of how much of an inconvenience this is for park visitors; however, it is not very often that we have adequate capital funding to tackle such large projects. Hopefully by the New Year both parks will be fully opened again and ready for visitors. I appreciate your understanding and continued support for your state parks.

Hope all is well and I'll see you in the park.

Annual Picnic in the Park



Thursday, September 22, 2001

Hot dogs, buns, "fixin's", chips will be furnished. No charge, Donations accepted. Starts at 6:00 PM.

Everyone is invited.

Buescher State Park Picnic Pavilion



Our Devastating Drought

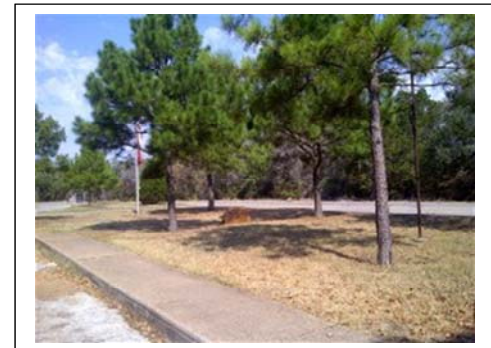


Lake Levels are down and to keep the vegetation and fish healthy, Texas Parks and Wildlife has started pumping air into the water to oxygenate the system. Both of our Lakes are down, but still have fish and we are able to canoe on them.



Fire Fighters from local Fire Departments, the Texas Forrest Service and Texas State Parks have been able to keep several fires this season from getting into the Parks. They have done a great job and we give them a tip of our hat!

The Fireban Flag is still flying over our Parks. As you can see in this photo at the entrance of Bastrop State Park, the grass and trees are very dry and a fire would quickly spread.



Water Problems in our Parks...



If you can imagine digging in 105 degree heat, not just a hole but a long trench to find water leaks. This is a common occurrence in both of our Parks this year. The photo above shows two of our Rangers at Buescher working on a water leak in August. All of our Rangers have done yeoman's duties this year and we need to let them know we appreciate their services.



The dry and heated condition of the ground causes dirt to move, breaking our water lines. As you can see in the photo on the left, the line gets twisted and breaks, causing water loss. This has happened over 18 times at Buescher alone this year. Hopefully, we will get rain to help the Parks.

Finals from our Swimming Programs, 2011

Our final counts for this summer's program, the most successful year in our program history, were fantastic!

The totals were 530 student slots filled, over \$32,500 gross income, with a net income of almost \$8500. Additionally, we made over \$750 on swim noodles for public use.

We will be able to help our parks in many different ways with our proceeds. We already got the Parks new enclosed bulletin boards, Trail Markers, and an ADA compliant swing for the playground (which was pictured on the front page of the Bastrop Advertiser.)



We are all awaiting word on the future of our newly restored swimming pool. We hope that the pool will continue to be available to the visitors and people of Bastrop for many years to come. The Friends of the Lost Pines State Parks will support the new operators in any way we can.

Right: Newly elected President Jon Pollard and Vice President Jennifer Bristol chair our last meeting of the FoTLP's

