

Fayetteville Natural Heritage Association 2014 Annual Meeting



ECO President Bruce Shackleford shown in a still frame from the City of Fayetteville Government channel produced video, **Woolsey Wet Prairie After the Burn**

The Fayetteville Natural Heritage Association held its 2014 Annual Meeting from 6:00-7:30 pm on Thursday, April 24th at the Fayetteville Public Library. This year, the meeting took place in conjunction with The Fayetteville Community Wildlife Habitat Project Speaker Series™ in partnership with the City of Fayetteville.

Bruce Shackleford, President of ECO, Inc., along with members of the ecological restoration team and the documentary production team, presented the first documentary program produced by the Fayetteville Government Channel: "Woolsey Wet Prairie After the Burn." The film focuses on the restoration of the Woolsey Wet Prairie, adjacent to Fayetteville's West Side Wastewater Treatment Plant.

FNHA Advisory Board member Duane Woltjen described the 2014 early spring burn as "almost perfect." The controlled burns restore the prairie to its original state, removing non-native and invasive plants and releasing seeds of many prairie natives that require fire to germinate.

Shackleford, Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission botanist Theo Witsell, University of Arkansas herpetologist, Dr. JD Willson, and retired US Forest Service biologist and local bird expert, Joe Neal, discussed the extraordinary number of rare birds, reptiles, amphibians and plants that have been observed at the site since the habitat restoration process began.

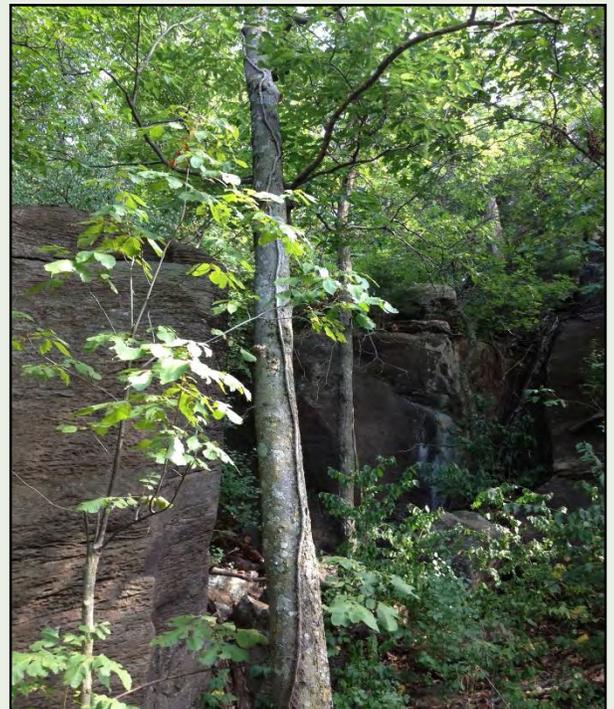
During the FNHA Annual Business Meeting, Board members Doug James, Karen Rollet-Crocker, and Dot Neely were reelected to their currently-held positions.

Purchase of Kessler Mountain Reserve Wins Overwhelming City Council Approval

Several members of the FNHA Board spoke at the February 18th meeting of the Fayetteville City Council when council members considered allocating funds to match a Walton Family Foundation grant that would allow the purchase of 376 acres on Kessler Mountain as a nature preserve and study and recreation area for current and future generations. The property is adjacent to a 200-acre future city regional park for sports activities and to a network of properties that have been designated for conservation and hiking and biking trails.

Frank Sharp led the campaign to preserve the property through his Mt. Kessler Greenways Advocates. The land was owned by Chambers Bank after developers of the proposed mixed-use development, Southpass, were unable to implement their plans. Negotiations resulted in a \$3,000,000 price, \$1,500,000 of which would come from the WFF grant and a matching amount from the City of Fayetteville. An additional \$100,000 from the city would be used to construct a public trailhead.

Kessler Mountain, which was settled in the mid 1800's, is not much changed from that time. Straddling two watersheds, and encompassing multiple ecosystems, the property has an abundance of flora and fauna, many of them rare. *Continued on page 2*



One of many beautiful areas on Kessler Mountain

FNHA Pledges Community Support for Mt. Kessler Reserve



Please - \$how your \$upport

Part of the City of Fayetteville's application for Walton Family Foundation funds to help purchase 376 acres on Kessler Mountain was a pledge made by FNHA to demonstrate broad community support by raising \$300,000, over three years, toward the purchase price. This is exactly the same amount of money that FNHA raised a decade ago when it undertook its first and founding project: saving Mt. Sequoyah Woods.

The fund-raising campaign for Mt. Kessler will be our next major effort, and the Board is working, under the leadership of John Coleman, to develop a fund-raising plan. One new element will be more extensive use of social media, a tool we didn't have available to us during that first campaign. The Mt. Kessler Run and other events will also help diversify our efforts.

But watch for news about how you can help. Some eager members have already made contributions (**Thank You!**), and there will be opportunities for all of us to join in to show support in whatever ways we can. As Frank Sharp said in his thank-you email after the February 18th City Council meeting, "Where do we go from here? 1. We help the Fayetteville Natural Heritage Association by raising funds to honor its three year commitment of \$300,000."

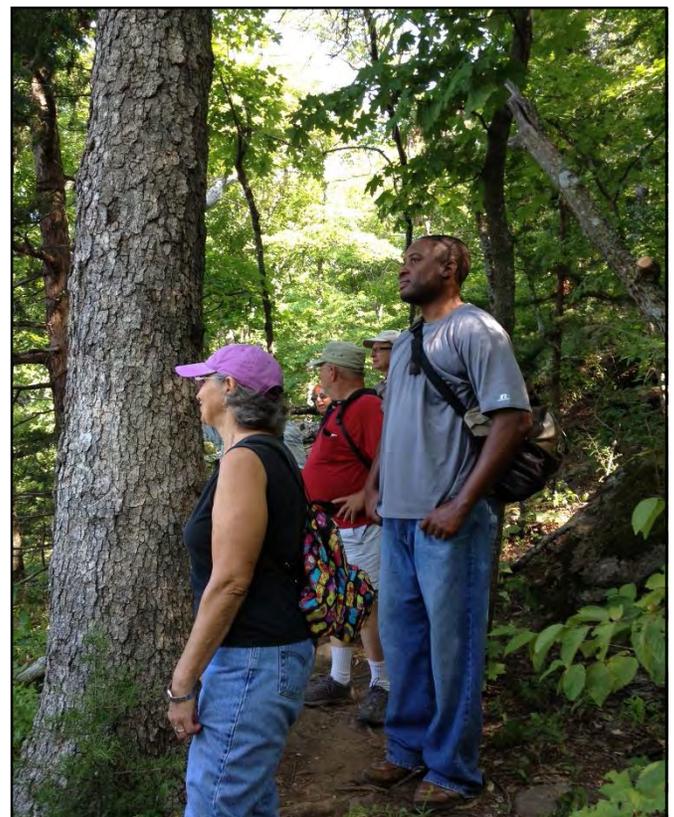
Well said, Frank! We appreciate your reminder that there's work yet to do.

Kessler Purchase *(continued from page 1)*

There are stands of old-growth Ozark tree species, some of them hundreds of years old, significant view-sheds and changes in topography as well as rock outcroppings displaying fossils from when they were part of the sea floor.

The property has amazing potential as an outdoor classroom for students from kindergarten through graduate school, as an outdoor recreation site and as a green space where natural resources can be preserved and enjoyed and parts of both the Illinois and the Beaver Lake watersheds can be protected. Bob Caulk, John Coleman, Terri Lane and Dana Smith all spoke in support of the purchase, and other Board members and FNHA members made their presence and support known at the meeting.

The final result was a unanimous decision by the City Council to purchase the property and to preserve it in perpetuity. FNHA has committed to raising \$300,000 through public support for the Mt. Kessler Reserve.



Hikers on Kessler Mountain enjoying the view

Long-time FNHA Supporter Frank Sharp Wins 2014 Mayor's Award for Outstanding Service in Historic Preservation

FNHA nominated Frank Sharp for the 2014 Mayor's Award that recognizes "an individual's or organization's outstanding and exemplary service in historic preservation, which may include funding/fundraising for preservation, instructing others in the field of preservation, advocacy for the preservation and/or protection of historic structures or landscapes, and promoting public policies that advance the interest of preserving the cultural heritage and history of a community."



Frank getting ready to fire up his wood-fired pizza oven at Sharpridge for another enthusiastic and soon to be satiated crowd of Kessler Mountain supporters

The recent economic downturn presented an opportunity! Frank formed Mount Kessler Greenways Advocates to work to conserve as much of Kessler Mountain as possible. The Advocates include his neighbors, about 20 organizations, including the Northwest Arkansas Land Trust (NWALT), FNHA, Ozark Off-Road Cyclists (OORC), the City of Fayetteville and 300 individuals.

He has developed Advocate support for the 376 acre proposed Mt Kessler Reserve to serve as an outdoor classroom/laboratory (K through Ph.D.) for local public schools, University of Arkansas

classes and University research programs, for outdoor recreation (mountain biking, hiking, trail running, nature study) for the region's residents and tourists, for watershed and habitat protection and as the next step in building Fayetteville's Enduring Green Network. The report documenting this effort can be viewed at www.dropbox.com/s/1r3ypd5g3hgeanm/Draft%20November%2015-NEW3.pdf?n=217284212

Frank Sharp has provided access to the trails through his property, provided guides to groups that want to visit and frequently cooked pizza in a wood fired oven he built for his guests. He clearly filled the role of Champion and we were honored and delighted to nominate him!

The Mayor's Award for Outstanding Service in Historic Preservation will be presented to Frank Sharp

on May 8th at 5:30 pm in Room 326

of the Fayetteville City Administration Building, 113 West Mountain Street.

The public is welcome to attend the informal presentation.

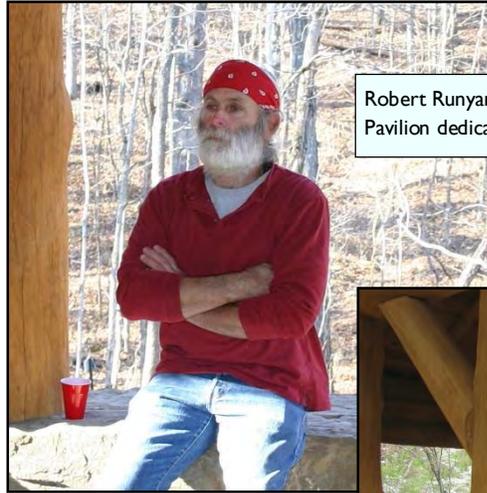
Robert Runyan to Be Recognized as 2014 Arkansas Living Treasure

Robert Runyan, creator of the magnificent Underwood-Lindsey Pavilion at the bottom of Mt. Sequoyah Woods, has been designated an Arkansas Living Treasure in honor of his work using traditional tools and building methods. Included in his body of work is the Rick McNair home located on Mt. Gaylor and the restoration of the CCC-era buildings at Devils Den.

The Department of Arkansas Heritage and Arkansas Arts Council recognition ceremony will be held on Thursday, May 15, 6:00-8:00 pm at the Shiloh Museum of Ozark History in Springdale, Arkansas.

This award is significant because it's the first time it has been bestowed on a craftsman whose work is immovable and will not fit in a gallery!

Reservations are required by 4:30 on May 9th: call 501-324-9766 or email faye@arkansasheritage.org.

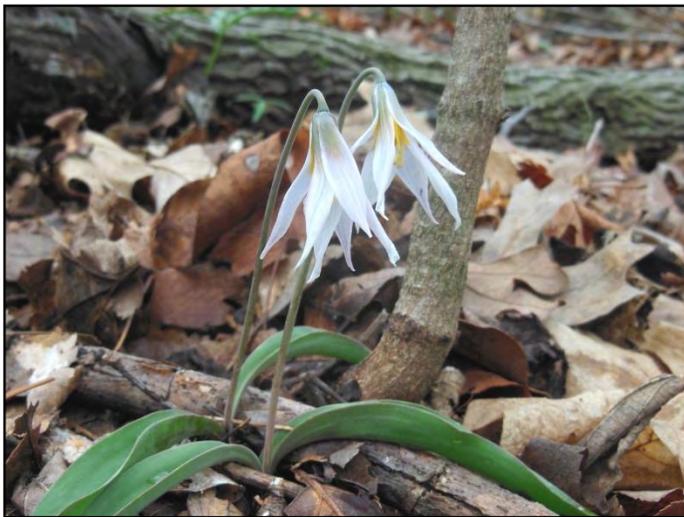


Robert Runyan, Winter 2008, at the Underwood-Lindsey Pavilion dedication in Mt. Sequoyah Woods



The Pavilion, commissioned by FNHA, surrounded by dogwoods in full bloom.

Prairie Trout Lily Relocation by Joe Neal



One of the trout lilies relocated on April 9th

On April 9, a total of 61 bulbs of what are believed to be prairie trout lilies, *Erythronium mesochoreum*, were moved from a woodland on Crossover Road in Fayetteville soon to be impacted by development. They were moved to several similar locations, mostly on public land, where they can survive and perhaps expand.

The original location is on land owned by Lynn Rogers and her husband Jerry Jones. Years ago, Lynn, who is a biology teacher and native plant enthusiast, recognized these plants were different from our usual white trout lily, *Erythronium albidum*.

She has given plants to others, including the Botanical Garden of the Ozarks, in the hope they will flourish in places less likely to be impacted by future development.

It is unclear now what future development of the site will have on the remaining plants. Lynn told us the small section of the of the property with the plants should remain after home construction because of setback requirements. *(Continued on p. 5)*

Prairie Trout Lily Relocation *(continued from page 4)*

Rogers has been in contact with Theo Witsell, at Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission, who wrote, "I am not convinced that these dry-site white trout lilies are *Erythronium albidum* or *E. mesochoreum*. They show characters of both and may represent some kind of cryptic but undescribed taxon. I'm working with some folks on the problem and hope that a detailed morphological and genetic study will shed some light on it." He also wrote, "You are all to be commended for rescuing these beautiful plants."

Plant diggers and movers on April 9 included Joan Reynolds, David Chapman, David Oakley, Bob Caulk, and Joe Neal. Prior to moving plants, we contacted folks at the Lake Fayetteville Environmental Study Center, who hold leases for use of the park lands where we wanted to move most plants. Ony Banning helped locate a good site on a well-drained hilltop just east of the ESC much like the original site on Crossover Road. Byron Humphry from City of Fayetteville approved plantings in an oak barren on Callie's Prairie in the park.

We replanted 27 bulbs on the hillside above Lake Fayetteville that has a similar forest type, is well drained, and is not infested with honeysuckle or other non-natives. We replanted 18 bulbs in Callie's Prairie. We assume that back in the pre-Civil War Butterfield Stagecoach days these special trout lilies were part of the prairie flora viewed by travelers.

A total of 8 bulbs were delivered to the Garden to add to plants previously donated by Lynn. Eight bulbs were also delivered to botanist Burnetta Hinterthuer where they are sure to receive good care and hopefully will multiply.

A lot of development has already occurred in northwest Arkansas and more is coming. The interest and willingness of Lynn



Joan Reynolds, David Chapman, Lynn Rogers, and Bob Caulk strike a pose for lily mover-helper/photographer, Joe Neal

Rogers to help save part of our natural heritage is truly commendable, as are the efforts of those who worked yesterday to relocate some plants as well as others who have previously moved and replanted these precious bulbs.

The plants have no doubt been there for a long time, almost certainly dating back to the days when American bison grazed our once extensive tallgrass prairies and associated grassy oak barrens. We can't bring back that time, but we do have the choice to make the best of what we have today of our natural heritage. Many thanks to all who helped to preserve this interesting and valuable aspect of the natural history of Northwest Arkansas.

FNHA Members Continue War on Japanese Bush Honeysuckle

FNHA's Pete Heinzmann and Tom Dureka have led recent skirmishes in the on-going war against the invasive non-native bush honeysuckle that threatens to take over woodlands, trails and yards throughout Fayetteville and surrounding areas, spreading rapidly and choking out native plants and trees.

Pete has become our unofficial General in the honeysuckle wars, leading two recent forays into Gulley Park, on March 29th and April 12th. Tom has worked with staff

and volunteers from Ozark Natural Foods to clear honeysuckle from the Brooks-Hummel Nature Preserve.

Pete reports that significant progress has been made at Gulley Park "into a well-entrenched encampment of the 'bad bush' . . . We were able to dig them out, cut them down to size and get them on the run . . . We had a crack team for the assault under the leadership of Neill Sloan with the Fayetteville Parks Department. The cadre included David Chap-

man, armed with his chainsaw, but also impressively in uniform, wearing his signature Winston Churchill zipper jumpsuit."

Those fighting the battle included Alice Beetz, Vivian Cherry, Tom Dureka, Paul LeBlanc, Juan Rivera, Pete and Margo Heinzmann, among others. Tri Delta Sorority members carried out several incursions into pockets of resistance.

"All in all, we had a *(continued on page 6)*

Bush Honeysuckle Wars *(continued from previous page)*

jolly good time and felt like we made a beautiful park even more beautiful.”

Tom invited participants to a March 23rd foray with the following come-on: “The Spring BushWhack at Brooks Hummel Nature Preserve is coming again to your town! Free admission to the first 50 players!”

Lisa Garrett, Community Outreach Coordi-

nator for Ozark Natural Foods, has rounded up a feisty gang of six to take down those pretty plants we love to hate. Neill Sloan of Parks was on hand to keep us on game.

Tom went on to say, “Relieve your cabin fever, eliminate stress, and help take back that secret, singular space you helped to preserve. Get in your licks before the ticks!”

Scenes from the Wars at Gulley Park
Both Pete and Tom took war photos, a selection of which are shown below and on the following page.



Neill Sloan and Pete Heinzlmann, above. The photo at right shows Pete surveying some of the bush honeysuckle at Gulley Park before the attack.





Honeysuckle Removal Brigade at the Brooks-Hummel Nature Preserve



Help comes in small packages, too

FNHA Weighs in on Botanical Garden of the Ozark's Expansion Plans

The Fayetteville Natural Heritage Association was one of several stakeholders submitting comments to the City of Fayetteville's Parks and Recreation Department concerning a proposal by the Botanical Garden Society of the Ozarks to expand toward and up to Lake Fayetteville.

BGSO leases land from the city and the Parks Department staff developed a recommendation for the location of the lease boundary after consultation with stakeholders including FNHA, the Ozark Off-Road Cyclists, the Northwest Arkansas Audubon Society, the Fayetteville Environmental Study Center, the Lake Fayetteville Watershed Partnership, and the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission's Urban Wildlife Biologist.

There were three primary concerns expressed by the groups:

- The requirement and sufficient size of a wildlife corridor between the northwest BGSO lease boundary and the lake;
- The ecological sensitivity of the low-lying wet area around the cove just north of the proposed BGSO multi-purpose

building (referred to as the wildlife habitat buffer);

- The location of the nature trail.

After meeting with representatives of the stakeholder groups, Park Maintenance Superintendent Byron Humphrey asked each group to write a letter stating their concerns with the BGSO proposed plan and to recommend changes they would like to see.

City Staff have recommended a revised lease boundary that takes into account many of the stakeholder concerns, but which is a compromise position between what was requested by the BGSO and the wider buffer recommended by the stakeholder groups.

There is no final decision yet, but the FNHA Board was glad to have the opportunity to provide input to a decision that will affect our natural heritage for generations to come.

Bees and Plants at Callie's Prairie and Other Local Prairie Remnants



As part of her doctoral work, FNHA member Amber Tripodi has been studying bumble bees and carpenter bees and the plant species that support them at several prairie remnant sites around Northwest Arkansas, including four of special interest to FNHA members: Callie's Prairie, Woolsey Wetland Prairie, the World Peace Prairie, and a prairie remnant near the Paul Noland Wastewater Treatment Plant. Amber has compiled a table of the flowering plants on which she observed bumble bees during surveys conducted between May, 2011 and October, 2013. Her records show an impressive total of 1,150 observations of bumble bees on 54 species of plants at 13 sites, including the four mentioned above.

Amber recently sent her table to Judy Woltjen, who suggested the name for Callie's Prairie, and observed:

"I have foraging observations for six species of bumble bees (Callie's had four) as well as Carpenter and Honey Bees on 13 sites around NWA, but I thought the bumble bee flower preferences might be of the greatest interest to you (and I'm guessing that reading 70 pages of dissertation stuff about this work isn't interesting for anyone!). The list has all of what I'm calling the "bee flowers" at each of the FNHA sites. Bee flowers just being the ones that were present and had foraging bumble, carpenter and/or honey bees! There were a few days that I didn't get good enough field pictures to determine a plant species (to distinguish *Vernonia arkansana* and *baldwinii*, for example), but a rough estimate of the number of plant species providing food for bumble bees at Callie's prairie is 17 (88% of those are natives, thanks to everyone's hard work!). Some of the really bumble bee friendly plants at Callie's are Green Antelopehorn (*Asclepias viridis*) and Germander (*Teucrium canadense*), as well as the dang Musk thistles (*Carduus nutans*) that won't go away. Our native bees don't seem to mind them being exotics! I think I love the antelopehorn as much as the bees. The single most bumble bee attractive plant at all of my sites was Button Bush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*, 8.7% of all bumble bee records), but I don't think Callie's Prairie is damp enough to support that one. In short, it looks like Callie's Prairie is on its way to being very good habitat for bumble bees in the area, and some of the plants are just now old enough to bloom. I can't wait to see what it looks like this year!"

Judy replied:

Amber Tripodi has shared her records on the survey of plants that the bumble bees have been visiting during the past three summers at Callie's Prairie at Lake Fayetteville Park. I need to comment on the likely locations of these plants at Callie's Prairie.

The green milkweed (*Asclepias viridis*) I have seen in the southern part of Unit 1. In the northern part of Unit 1 which is where prairie seeds were planted, I have seen white prairie clover (*Dalea candida*); lemon mint (*Monarda citriodora*); black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia hirta*); bull thistle (*Cirsium vulgare*); and horse nettle (*Solanum carolinense*). The remaining list of plants can be found blooming in July thru September in Units 2 and/or Unit 3.

Another observation is that two of the thistles at Lake Fayetteville are exotic. They are musk thistle (*Cardus nutans*); and bull thistle (*Cirsium vulgare*). When I see a flock of gold finches feeding on these thistles, I can tolerate them.

Furthermore, the winged sumac (*Rhus copallinum*) is an excellent wildlife food. See Carl Hunter's comments about this plant in *Trees, Shrubs & Vines in Arkansas*.



FNHA annual memberships are due in January of each year. You will receive a renewal reminder sometime during the year. Memberships at the Landmark level and above are Lifetime memberships. Since 2003, with support from so many levels, FNHA has been able to preserve natural areas, start an education endowment for children, influence land use and conservation policy, and in doing so we have gained national support and recognition. None of this would have been possible without you, our amazing members, and we hope you will continue to support FNHA as we continue to preserve our natural heritage. Thank you!

Have a question?
Need more info?
Want to comment?
Like to volunteer?

Fill out the contact form at
www.fayettevillenatural.org
or contact us directly

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Help us to continue making exemplary natural areas accessible to everyone by supporting our conservation, stewardship, policy, and education efforts.

Please join FNHA or renew your membership today

Membership is for the calendar year,
and dues are payable January 1,

Annual dues are:

- Landmark \$1000
- Steward \$500
- Sustaining \$250
- Supporting \$100
- Family \$40
- Single \$20

Use your PayPal account on the web at www.fayettevillenatural.org "Join Us"
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FNHA is a 501(c)3 nonprofit corporation comprised of a group of citizens dedicated to conserving the natural areas of Fayetteville and its environs for the benefit of present and future generations

Join the campaign for Mt. Kessler!

Contribute to FNHA's fund-raising effort today
by sending your check to FNHA,
P.O. Box 3636, Fayetteville, AR 72702.

We thank you – and so will future generations!