



Fayetteville Natural Heritage Association

Spring 2004

NEWSLETTER

Issue 1

Our Mission:

The Fayetteville Natural Heritage Association, Inc. is dedicated to conserving natural areas of Fayetteville and its environs for the benefit of present and future generations.

Executive Committee 2003-2004

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Our Beginnings

By FNHA Chariman Pete Heinzelmann

The Fayetteville Natural Heritage Association (FNHA) began from the realization that Fayetteville, with its rapid growth, could lose many of the beautiful natural areas that have made it a unique and desirable community.

Mount Sequoyah Woods

The recent history of Mount Sequoyah Woods is a prime example of what Fayetteville could have lost but thankfully saved. The FNHA, with its 500 members and strong support of Mayor Dan Coody, worked hard to raise public awareness and money to save these woods. This, together with a huge appeal from concerned citizens, led to the authorization by the City Council to purchase the property on April 1, 2003. Now it will be part of **Fayetteville's future!** To encourage this acquisition, the FNHA committed to raise \$300,000 to help the City purchase Mount Sequoyah Woods. This money will also secure a **Conservation Easement** that will legally ensure that the Woods will remain in its natural state for all generations to come. By completing this commitment, the FNHA will be demonstrating a very valuable process—that a **partnership** between citizens and the City can provide something of great benefit for the community. We plan to obtain these funds over a three-year period. So far, we have raised \$50,000 (from donations from a broad base of citizens) and given it to the City, and we have pledges for another \$70,000. We will continue this campaign until we have reached our goal.

What's in the Future ?

The future is really why the FNHA exists—making life better not only for us but for future generations. First, I think Fayetteville must identify its special natural areas. Mount Sequoyah Woods was an obvious one but there are many others—be they wooded hills, streamways, or other areas. These spots are located, of course, in our neighborhoods and are best identified by those who live close to them. Perhaps public meetings in each ward with city council representatives present could be held. Then a plan with the City and citizens working together could be formulated to save these areas which are valuable assets to the city.

What do these natural areas mean to Fayetteville?

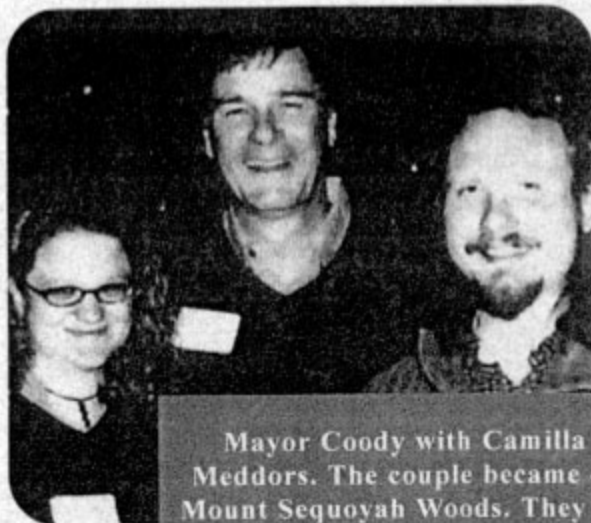
To me, they mean keeping Fayetteville's future bright. Many communities do not have the wonderful natural areas that we have. When a business, family or an individual decides on a place to locate, where will they choose to go? Will they choose a city with congestion, jammed streets, buildings, traffic, and nothing else, or a community that has preserved its special places to walk, ride, recreate, and to just enjoy? We in Fayetteville need to make sure we preserve our valuable natural heritage and **pass it on** so that our families and others will have a great community to live in.



What We Did With the Money Raised

*By Tom Lonon,
FNHA Treasurer*

We began the year with \$2,413.00 in the bank. During the year, \$61,654.16 was received and deposited into our bank account. We disbursed \$53,502.12, leaving us with \$10,565.04 in the bank at year-end. Our receipts include \$2,003.00 from a couple engaged in Mount Sequoyah Woods. They asked their friends and guests to make a donation to Fayetteville Natural Heritage Association in lieu of traditional wedding gifts. Members were asked to make three-year pledges above and beyond their annual membership contributions. These three-year pledges total \$75,320. The amount shown for the fundraiser dinner does not include memberships received in conjunction with the dinner. We also received \$300 in sales of T-shirts. Cash donations of \$186.16 were received at our booths at Farmer's Market and Autumnfest. The payments made to the City of Fayetteville are toward our commitment of \$300,000 in local monies for preserving Mount Sequoyah Woods. Office supplies include envelope and letterhead printing. The Internal Revenue Service requires an application fee of \$500 for 501 (c) (3) status determination. On December 31, 2003, we had 303 active members representing over 550 individuals and couples.



Mayor Coody with Camilla and Jon Meddors. The couple became engaged in Mount Sequoyah Woods. They asked their friends and guests to make a donation to Fayetteville Natural Heritage in lieu of traditional wedding gifts.

2002-2003 Budget Detail

Beginning Balance	\$ 2,413.00
Add: Memberships	32,108.00
Pledges	24,615.00
Fundraiser Dinner	3,635.00
St Paul's Holiday Fair	810.00
Other	486.16
Total Receipts	61,654.16
Total to account for	64,067.16
Subtract:	
Payments to City	50,000.00
Office Supplies	829.97
T-shirts & Decals	710.03
IRS fees for 501(c)(3)	500.00
Annual Meeting Expense	443.85
Dinner Fundraiser	301.61
Postage	248.30
Web Site Costs	228.34
Other Misc Costs	240.02
Total Disbursements	53,502.12
Ending Cash Balance	10,565.04



Fundraiser Dinner at the Runnels from left, Chef Bob Caulk, Gabi Schafer, Brian and Bonnie Runnels, Sara Caulk, and Margo Heinzmann

"Autumn Harvest" Saving Our Natural Heritage

Our fall fundraiser was a great success. Brian and Bonnie Runnels opened their beautiful Fayetteville home and garden for the event and Bob Caulk, our chef, prepared a gourmet meal that people are still raving about. Gabi Schafer as our hostess/coorindinator brought her gracious style and a touch of class to the evening.

The silent auction included five William McNamara prints, donated by Milancey McNamara, two books donated by Tim Ernst, an autographed copy of Doug James and Joe Neal's Arkansas Birds, and backpacks donated by Pack Rat and Uncle Sam's. The proceeds from the fund raising meal including donations was \$5,636.00. All of the beverages were compliments of Liquor Mart of Fayetteville. Thanks to so many of you who participated in making this such a wonderful event.

Natural Features of Mount Sequoyah Woods Soon To Be Explained by New Signs

by Karen Rollet-Crocker, FNHA Vice Chairman

Planning and construction of signage in Mount Sequoyah Woods is in its early stages and will soon get underway! FNHA has been given an exciting opportunity, since we were awarded a grant to design and build signs that will enhance the value and importance of these woods for the public. Our funds came from an Urban and Community Forestry Assistance Grant awarded by the Arkansas Forestry Commission. We will identify tree species and locations on a large map and put small signs on selected trees near the trails. We will also explain how a forest grows and what kinds of plants and animals can be found there in the various seasons. Any natural system is the result of climate, topography, geology, soils, and forest patterns. The sign will explain how these conditions link together to create Mount Sequoyah Woods, a typical example of the Ozark oak-hickory forest. We qualified for this grant not just because of our own organization, but because Fayetteville is a Tree City USA, and city agencies such as Parks and Recreation and the Tree and Landscape Advisory Committee are working toward public education and support of open space preservation. We will match these funds with volunteer efforts for research, design, and building of the signage. Please contact us if you would like to help. A recent study of Fayetteville's tree cover determined that there has been an 18% decline in heavy tree canopy in the past 15 years. Public support of natural area preservation is very important, and these educational signs will help in this effort.

FNHA Committee Organizes Activities at Sequoyah Greenspace and Seeks Others to Preserve

By Karen Rollet-Crocker, FNHA Vice Chairman

The "Areas" Committee of the FNHA has two goals. The first is to plan and host activities in Mount Sequoyah Woods, and the second is to look for opportunities to save additional open spaces in the city of Fayetteville. We performed trash cleanup, trail building, and removal of invasive plants during 2003, and plan similar activities in the springtime at Mount Sequoyah. Our fund raising is currently focused on the conservation easement for Mount Sequoyah Woods, so we are not able to raise money to preserve other sites at this time. In spite of this, we are working to identify places that need to be saved. A recent Citizens Survey, completed for the city of Fayetteville in the summer of 2003, found that 70% of our residents support the concept of buying land to preserve open or green space. We are working hard to help fulfill this goal. FNHA recognizes two areas that are on the future Parks Department project list as particularly important. The first is the Cummins Property on Cato Springs Road, which would be designated as a new community park, while the second is the proposed

"We see it as the Central Park of Fayetteville..."

Scull Creek Greenway and Trail, which would be a major bikeway and urban trail reaching north through the center of Fayetteville. The Cummins Property has 500 acres of beautiful land, half of which is flat to rolling while the other half is hilly and wooded. It can be used both for recreational athletic fields and for trails through natural woodlands. Compared with the three other sites proposed for a community park by the Parks Department, it is definitely FNHA's preference. We see it as the Central Park of Fayetteville—a project that may take many years to develop, but one that will be the pride of our city.

The proposed Scull Creek Greenway and Trail can be one of our most valuable recreational and natural resources, due to its location along the north/south axis of the valley where Fayetteville first developed.

This beautiful creek has long been hidden behind the university's agricultural fields, industrial warehouses, and apartment housing. Restoring the creek to its natural health and beauty and building a trail along it will bring back a natural feature of Fayetteville that has been neglected and forgotten. Also, it will create pedestrian and bicycle access from north Fayetteville to the developing Dickson Street commercial, residential, and art center. Fayetteville is an active, university-oriented community; many citizens are likely to run, walk, and bike on this trail every day of the week once the trail is completed.

More Precise Map of Mount Sequoyah Trails Now Available

by Duane Woltjen

FNHA Advisory Board Member and trails specialist

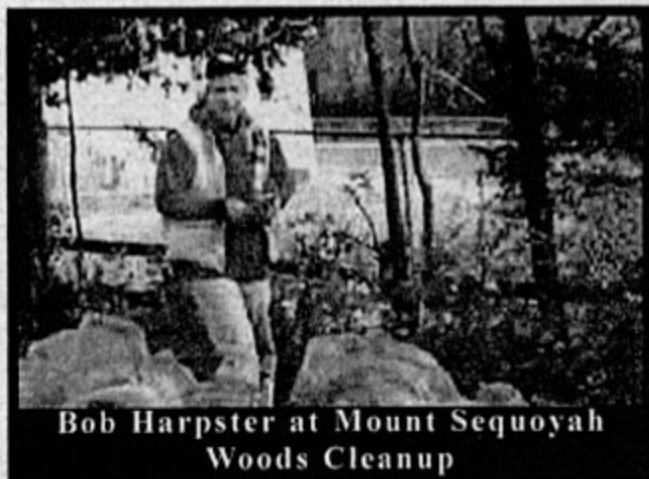
A completely new map of the trails, complete with a Fayetteville Natural Heritage Association membership application for you and your neighbors, is available at the Williams trailhead. This map was created by walking the entire trail network with a global positioning system (GPS), then transferring the track data to a topographical map of the area. The new map is much more complete than its predecessor, but there are some old roads not shown that are sometimes traveled by those wishing to explore.

Mount Sequoyah Woods trails, 1.6 intriguing and beautiful miles in all, are accessible from the northwest corner of this 67 acre nature preserve off of Williams Avenue at Skyline Drive, and at the southeast corner at Happy Hollow Road at

***“Take Nothing But
Photographs, Leave
Nothing But Footprints.”***

Paddock Lane. These primitive trails, some of which are old roads, have natural materials tread. They are very steep along the north property line entering from Williams, but the gradients are much more gentle entering from Happy Hollow Road. The trails running north and south are on hillside benches, so they are nearly level. Volunteer opportunities for you are available for all activities of the Fayetteville

Natural Heritage Association, including trails. Trails maintenance volunteers are needed to control invasive vegetation in trail corridors, improve signage, repair or improve tread surface, remove downed trees from the trails, remove trash (most of which is quite old), etc. Please contact us on the web at www.fayetteville-natural.org, or P.O.Box 3635, 72702-3635. Some sections of the existing trails are planned for relocation to prevent erosion and to make it a little easier for the hiker. As plans for amenities such as restrooms and parking develop, we anticipate some revisions or additions to the trail network will be made. Trail users at Mount Sequoyah Woods have an excellent record for litter self-cleanup as well as picking up what little has been inadvertently dropped by others. As you enjoy these special woods, please Take Nothing But Photographs, Leave Nothing But Footprints.



Bob Harpster at Mount Sequoyah Woods Cleanup



Professor Doug James leads hikers along trails in Mount Sequoyah Woods

FNHA Golden Acorn Awards have been presented to the following people who have shown support for the preservation of Mount Sequoyah Woods:

**Mayor Dan Coody
Dr. Charles Wallace**

City Council Members:
Robert Reynolds
Brenda Thiel
Kyle Cook
Don Marr
Robert Rhoads
Bob Davis
Shirley Lucas
Lionel Jordan

Check out Fayetteville's trail system and learn about more plans for new trails to be completed this year...

Existing trails

Wilson Park Trail

This hard-surface trail will take you around one of the City's largest and most-frequented parks. Length: 0.9 miles

Gulley Park Trail

A lovely neighborhood park on the northeast side of the City, Gulley Park offers a hard-surface trail suitable for baby strollers, walkers, and joggers. Water and bathrooms are available. Length: .85 miles

Lake Fayetteville Trail

This soft-surface loop trail along the shore of Lake Fayetteville features natural scenery, abundant wildlife, and a wet crossing (soon to be completed spillway bridge). The trail is within the city park system and is currently used by hikers, trail runners, and mountain bikers. Length: 5.5 miles

East Mud Creek Trail

Completed in 2002, the hard surface trails meanders along the northern bank of Mud Creek from Old Missouri Road to Frontage Road just off of Hwy. 71B. With easy access for residents of Butterfield Trail Village, a senior housing development, the trail offers natural scenery, wildlife and two bridges. An entryway and parking lot has been developed off Old Missouri Road which accommodates up to four vehicles. Length: .69 miles.

Raven Trail

This hard surface trail, completed in 2002, connects the neighborhood east of Butterfield Elementary School to the school. It provides safe transportation for children commuting to school. The trail connects Farr Lane and Katherine Ave. Length: .25 miles

Lake Wilson Nature Trail

Situated around the 320 acre Lake Wilson, a soft surface trail offers abundant opportunities to observe wildlife surrounded by a beautiful forested setting. Offering seclusion from urban surroundings, the trail is utilized for hiking and mountain biking. Length: 2.5 miles

Trails Under Construction and to be completed this year:

Walker Park Trail

This hard-surface trail will meander along the creek within Walker Park from 15th street to 7th Street. Also, as part of this project, is a hard surfaced loop trail around the new senior community center. This project is currently under construction and will be completed this spring.

Center/Prairie Trail

Center Prairie trail will be a scenic, "rail-trail" in the heart of town. This trail starts at the intersection of the Sixth Street, just west of hwy 71-B. From the redevelopment, The Mill District, it continues north until it reaches Center Street. This hard surfaced will also have a spur trail that connects to the new library location. Eventually this trail will connect to Dickson Street and the proposed north-south connection, Skull Creek Trail. The trail length is approximately 0.5 miles. A construction contract for this project will be on the April 6th, 2004 City Council meeting.

West Mud Creek Trail

When completed this trail will be a scenic, hard surface multi-use trail that provides a connection between neighborhoods and shopping areas. The Trail meanders along the banks of Mud Creek near the wetland preserve of CMN Business Park. The trail travels west from Front Street going under Hwy. 71B with a grade separated crossing, to Steele Boulevard. Construction on this mile long trail is approximately 50% complete.

For further information, contact the Trails and Greenways Coordinator, Steve Hatfield (479-718-7688)



In Praise of Untamed Places

By *Tim Caffrey*
FNHA Areas Committee

Where I grew up, there was no fence in our back yard, and no buildings beyond, just a wide expanse of desert sagebrush, silky threadgrass, yucca, and *chamisa* bushes on an open slope, running down from the edge of the mesa to the Rio Grande River. It seemed as if the whole world was my playground.

When I was 11, my eldest brother took two of my brothers and me on our first backpacking trip. We hiked 45 miles in four days in late September through the Sangre de Cristo Mountains, crossing the Santa Barbara Divide in a snowstorm and dropping into the fog-shrouded headwaters of the Pecos River and beyond. I was walking in very remote country, rarely traveled by humans, especially back in 1971. In fact, it is quite possible that some of my footsteps were the first ever placed there—I walked on patches of virgin soil that had never before been touched by the feet of humans! My adolescent mind delighted in this realization. I instinctively understood: that land held a magical power; that patch of earth beneath my feet was hallowed ground.

I backpacked and climbed in the southern Rockies from then on, throughout my teens and college years, and later, after moving to Seattle, in the Cascade and Olympic ranges. I stood on the summit of Mt. Rainier at daybreak, watching the streetlights go out in the cities of Puget Sound, over 14,000 feet below, watching as 2.5 million people roused themselves for another day, and I marveled at the power of that mountain. I realized that for all of man's technology, industry, and wealth, it was all but impossible to build a lodge or a resort atop that peak. The forces of nature—the glaciers, the high winds, the unpredictable weather, and ultimately, the violent force of the volcano itself—would conspire to undo anything that humans could build up there. On top of Mt. Rainier, man and his artifacts are temporary and trivial. And somehow, I found comfort in that fact.

Fast forward to 2004. I don't backpack much, and I certainly don't "bag peaks" like I used to. I'm middle-aged, a husband, a father, and the majority of my time and energy goes toward pragmatic activities like rearing children and earning income. Now my "wilderness experience" is limited to hikes in the woods near my house on Mt. Sequoyah. I've learned that wandering in an undeveloped patch of forest like Mount Sequoyah Woods is enough to provide the relaxation, meditation, and inspiration I need to recharge my batteries and sustain my vitality.

We middle-aged wanderers are the bridge generation, connecting the past to the future. My parents were born into a world where automobiles still shared the road with horse-drawn buggies. When my parents were young, their families would gather around the only "electronic" equipment in the house—the radio—and listen together for entertainment. Today, family members can go in every direction—one to the television, one to the computer, and one to the GameBoy—and live in the isolated, artificial environments of the electronic world. In three brief generations, we've gone from people subsisting in the physical world who sometimes dabble in technology, to people who live *inside* the medium of technology and sometimes dabble in the physical world. For the first time in the history of our species, an artificial reality—an electronic medium contrived by the minds of humans—is taking precedence over the physical world, at least in the eyes and minds of the next generation.

Growing populations and increased urbanization have aided in this transformation. An urbanite can go from a climate-controlled house to a climate-controlled car (parked in a garage with a remote-controlled door) to a climate-controlled workplace or school and even to a climate-controlled athletic club to get indoor exercise before returning home. Not only can they escape nature and the elements, they can ignore them, become oblivious to them, and render them irrelevant.

To me, this insulation from nature and the increasing predominance of the electronic medium are negative trends in our culture. Children are out of shape and overweight. Children have trouble focusing their attention in school, partly because they find it difficult to transition between electronic realities and the social/interactive medium of the classroom.

Even more importantly, we are at risk of disassociating from the wonder of nature itself, the awe-inspired view of our lives that we experience when we stand on a mountain peak, or gaze at the stars on a dark cloudless night, or wander slowly through a silent forest in the heart of a city. These moments are small miracles, humbling but not humiliating. These moments provide a window onto a world that is complex and breathtakingly beautiful, highly structured and sublime. And through that window, we catch a glimpse of the hand of a higher force; we peek at the precise handiwork that shapes the divine plan of the universe.

We owe it to ourselves and to our children to preserve this sense of the mystical, to provide untamed places where future generations can have their own nature-inspired experiences that border on spiritual epiphanies. Now more than ever, in a crowded world that moves too fast, we should make this a priority.

Those who have brought FNHA forward:

All the members and donors of FNHA: They are making a commitment to conserve Fayetteville's natural heritage.

Duane and Judy Woltjen: As members of the Ozark Society, Duane and Judy have been active in trail building and hiking in Arkansas for many years. Duane is one of the founders of FNHA. He brought his vast experience in nature conservation and a strong no nonsense commitment to get this organization going andkeep going.

Kay DuVal: Kay is also a founder as well as a superb English teacher and great sounding board for ideas. She came up with our "Golden Acorn Award" (from tiny acorns, mighty oaks grow) given to individuals who have made a special contribution to conserving Fayetteville's natural heritage. Kay was our first secretary and she coordinated the St. Paul's Holiday Fair.

Karen Rollet-Crocker: Karen who is a landscape architect teaching at the University has done so much professional work for FNHA in finding grants, designing signs and trails and identifying new areas such as Skull Creek that are important to conserve. She is the vice chair of FNHA.

Walt Eilers: Walt- a previous high school English teacher then corporate executive who grew up in Annapolis, MD, saw much of their priceless Chesapeake Bay shoreline lost to development before it could be saved. He is a professional business consultant who has volunteered his time and expertise to help us in our fund raising campaigns. He gives us direction.

Bob and Sara Caulk: A team but so individual. Sara does our web site and publicity. Bob, a past EXXON executive, has committed many hours to community service and especially for the FNHA in grant seeking and fundraising. Did you know he is a gourmet chef who cooked for our fund raising event at the home of Brian and Bonnie Runnels this past November?

Claudette Lundsford: Claudette is a nurse at WRMC. She saw the potential problems with growth in her native Southern California. She is our new membership chair and is a great writer with good ideas.

Lindsley Smith: University of Arkansas communications teacher. She helped organize our 2004 annual meeting and is working with U of A students on projects related to FNHA.

David Whitaker: He gave needed advice to develop our by-laws and incorporation papers.

Tx Trumbo: Tx represents the heart and soul of this community. As a member of a prominent Fayetteville family, he realizes and appreciates the priceless value of our natural surroundings both in the past, present and future. Have you read his letters to the editor?

Tom Lonon: Tom is a CPA who grew up in Fayetteville. He is the cornerstone of the FNHA. He records every number, name and contribution to this organization and keeps the business part of FNHA running smoothly and on the right track.

Cookie Redfern: A combination of charm and community panache. She headed our membership committee that has now brought in nearly 500 members to FNHA.

Dr. Doug James: Dr. James, a renowned professor in biology and ecology, at the U of A and coauthor of *Arkansas Birds* with Joe Neal, gave crucial support for MSW to publicize its value to the community by conducting nature walks through the woods explaining to the community the value of this natural area in our midst. He continues to do so.

Nancy Varvil: Our new secretary and expert editor of this newsletter.

LaDawna Whiteside: LaDawna is a graphic artist and has been with FNHA from the beginning. You have seen her creations on our fall fund raiser invitation. She will be working on our newsletter graphics.

Don Shreve: Don is in advertising and an avid kayaker. He did a wonderful job designing our first web site (fayettevilkenatural.org). He has passed the baton to Randy Childers.

Tim Caffrey: Tim, a member of our board, realizes how valuable Fayetteville's natural assets are from experience in the Pacific Northwest. He has organized several trail clean up events, including removal of invasive plants from MSW.

Pete and Margo Heinzelmann: Margo helps Pete and did a fine job organizing our fall fund raiser at the Runnels' home. Pete appreciates the ideas and efforts of all our members, especially those listed above.

"Over 150 Kinds of Birds Seen on Mount Sequoyah," State Bird Expert Says

In an effort to protect mature forest land owned by Mount Sequoyah Assembly, Joe Neal and others gathered this list of birds seen on Mount Sequoyah over a period of six years. Joe Neal, of Fayetteville, and Doug James wrote *Arkansas Birds*, our local source for authoritative information on birds.

Neal said, "Please notice that among these many species are local rarities, seen once or twice (e.g., Swainson's Warbler) plus the common birds (e.g., cardinal)." Season also makes a difference in which birds can be seen. Neal said that Rose-breasted Grosbeaks can be seen there in spring migration, but never in winter. In winter, the Yellow-rumped Warbler can usually be seen. Neal will guide an FNHA birding walk on Mount Sequoyah soon.

Annual Meeting Big Success

Mayor Dan Coody said that the FNHA is a good example of how the private sector can work in partnership with the City to accomplish mutual goals.

Keynote speaker, Steve Hatfield, presented an informative program about the Fayetteville Alternate Transportation and Trail Master Plan.

Walt Eilers, Tx Trumbo, Bob Caulk, and Nancy Varvil were elected to the FNHA board.