



Fayetteville Natural Heritage Association

Summer 2004

NEWSLETTER

Issue 2

Greenspace Brings Greenbacks, Local Leader Says

by Nancy Varvil

Cities with parks, trails and other ways to enjoy the outdoors often win out when it comes to competing for jobs that pay well, a regional economic advisor said in a recent interview.

"Companies that pay higher than average salaries are more likely to look at parks and greenspace," said Jeff Collins, who heads up the UA Center for Business and Economic Research at the Sam Walton College of Business. "It adds to the overall perception of livability. And, typically, people who make more demand more of the environment."

Collins said that cities such as Ft. Collins and Boulder in Colorado and many California cities have had big payoffs in their investments toward parks and greenspaces. "In California, there are a lot of people, but they place a lot of premium on their outdoor amenities, so they're willing to pay for them," Collins said.

Regionally, Fayetteville is known for its enthusiasm for trees and disdain for billboards, but the city falls "far short" of what has been accomplished elsewhere, Collins said. "That's because not all the people living here recognize how green space can improve a city's economic health."



"Clearly, what I hear from leadership and the affect of the community is that a high value is placed on appreciation for the outdoors. But they're caught between two constituencies—one places a high value on green space and the other looks at greenspace as land not developed," Collins said.

"What they don't realize is that investments in green space are investments in economic development. There is evidence that a more educated, wealthier population demands both really good schools and investments in public spaces. They want urban trails, bike paths, parks and just plain greenspaces."

"The conflict comes when there is a diverse population. Fayetteville is in a tough place—it has a transitory economy, some bread and butter manufacturers with employees that won't value greenspace. We have folks moving from other places who expect their community to make investments in environmental amenities. But right now, we have no shoulders on the roads, much less bike paths."

"As a result, Fayetteville is not in a position to recruit a high tech company to Northwest Arkansas," Collins said. "But the community needs to keep up the pressure to set aside green space to grow our own [high tech companies]. We need to recruit people who would like to

work here while helping us start such businesses," he said.

"...people living here recognize how green space can improve a city's economic health."

Makes Good Sense and Cents

By Walt Eilers

The FNHA board has placed \$10,000 of FNHA money in an endowment with the Fayetteville Community Foundation and pledged to try to increase that amount to \$50,000 within three years. The board sees the investment in FCF as a way to increase community awareness of our programs, as a way to build an annual fundraising campaign and as a means of building a planned giving program. FNHA and FCF have a partnership. *Each helps the other.* As one of the first non-profits to join, FNHA gets the benefit of visibility and the professional advice of respected fundraiser, Bud Edwards. Working together, FNHA and FCF will work to increase environmentally conscious giving. Only by working with our local resources can FNHA grow its giving program and preserve additional heritage areas around Fayetteville.

FNHA Annual Fundraiser

October 16th, 2004

FNHA will be "at your service."

An evening you
won't want to miss

will take place at one of Fayetteville's finest
homes and gardens –Mainview.

Join us for an evening of great food
and pleasant company.

Mark your calendars, invitations will be
mailed to members shortly.

What does greenspace mean to you?

If you are reading this newsletter, tree-covered hillsides, wetlands, and other natural areas are probably important to you.

Please consider volunteering some of your valuable time to help FNHA work toward locating and preserving greenspace in Fayetteville.

Call Bob Caulk at **973-2968** to discuss how, when, where and what you can do.

FNHA Joins Fayetteville's Chamber of Commerce

by Nancy Varvil

"Why would a greenspace preservation group join a Chamber of Commerce?" some FNHA board members asked, when Fundraising Chairman Walt Eilers proposed the idea in April. He explained that many Chamber members would directly benefit if Fayetteville had more pieces of attractive usable outdoor spaces and that the best way to get that message to them was to "rub elbows" with them at meetings and through one-on-one contacts with members. So the board voted to join the Chamber and, in May, became one of the C of C's proud new members.

FNHA president Pete Heinzelmann, Treasurer Tom Lonon, Eilers and others plan to routinely attend Chamber events. And Eilers is planning an organized way to get the FNHA message to each chamber member.

Signs at Mt. Sequoyah Woods are Completed

By Karen Rollet-Crocker

FNHA invites everyone to enjoy and use the trail signs at the top and bottom of Mt. Sequoyah Woods. Using information from these signs, you can go on to explore the many unusual features in the woods such as the White Oaks Patriarchs, Twin Oaks Overlook, Giant's Cobblestones, The Pioneer Stone Wall, specimen trees and groves, mossy seeps, and tumbled rock cascades.

A special ribbon cutting ceremony took place on Wednesday, August 18 at 1:00 pm at the upper trail head to Mt. Sequoyah Woods.



With support in part from the Arkansas Forestry Commission's Urban Forestry Program and the U.S. Forest Service, a volunteer crew built the signs in May and early June. Mike Walker and Karen Rollet-Crocker led the effort. Construction crew members were Randy Fondren of Cox Communications, Bob Caulk, Richard Jones, Thermon Crocker, Ron Foldvary, Rich Loots, and Pete Heinzelmann. Trail infor-

mation on the signs was provided by Duane Woltjen, Pete Heinzelmann, Karen Rollet-Crocker and Tim Caffrey. Geological information was researched and drawn by Walt Manger, professor of geology at the University of Arkansas. Local birding expert, Mike Mlodinow, compiled a list of birds seen in the Woods over the past few years. Carl Hunter, author of *Wildflowers of Arkansas* and *Trees, Shrubs and Vines of Arkansas* allowed the use of his tree and flower photographs.

Individuals who assisted in locating the sign were Alison Jumper, Park Planner in the Fayetteville Parks and Recreation Department and Hugh Ernest, Chief Administrative Officer of the City of Fayetteville. Additional sources of help were Walt Eilers; Dan Coody, Mayor of Fayetteville; Connie Edmonston, Fayetteville Parks and Recreation Director; Jesse Fulcher, Planning Technician; Jeremy Pate, Associate Planner; Nelson Mower and Dennis Yocum of Cox Communications; and Patti Irwin, State Urban Forestry Program Coordinator.



FNHA gives a heartfelt thanks to the many people who helped complete this project.

Ribbon Cutting Honors New Trailhead Signs



Mayor Dan Coody, FNHA representatives Pete Heinzelmann and Karen Rollet-Crocker and St. Paul's Episcopal Rector Lowell Grisham joined members of the Fayetteville Chamber of Commerce on August 18 to cut a ribbon honoring new trailhead signs for Mt. Sequoyah Woods. The event also marked The Woods' readiness for use by the public. Arkansas state representative candidate Lindsley Smith, Fayetteville Community Foundation officials, Hugh Kincaid and Robin Baldwin and Ward 1 Councilwoman Brenda Thiel and other area leaders also attended. Coody told those attending that groups such as FNHA are the reason that green space is being preserved in Fayetteville. He encouraged them to support the city's efforts to create a trail system that connects north Fayetteville at Butterfield Village to south Fayetteville near Sixth Street.

On the Bulletin Board:

from Sara Caulk:

If you have a new or changed email or home address or phone number, please send updated information to scaulk@alltel.net

from Pete Heinzelmann:

Duane Woltjen applied for a part (**\$10,000**) of the Tontitown Landfill legal settlement to go to environmental organizations. **We have now received those funds thanks to Duane.**

FNHA's current fundraising efforts are devoted to paying for the Mt. Sequoyah Woods conservation easement, but **FNHA board members are searching for ways the organization can promote greenspace preservation elsewhere in Fayetteville.** If your organization or neighborhood would like help with its greenspace preservation effort, please contact us so we can join forces.

How Can You Help FNHA?

Volunteer!! Contact any of the people listed on page 7 of this newsletter.

Birding On Mt. Sequoyah

— a few comments by Joe Neal, co-author of *Arkansas Birds*

The field trip that some of you joined Mike Mlodinow, Irene Camargo, and myself on May 15th, 2004, was bird business as **usual in some respects, but highly unusual in others.** Let's first consider the usual.

If you fly over the Ozarks, you'll notice mostly forest—at least from Fayetteville south through the Boston Mountains to Van Buren. Even the developed corridor of US 71 and I-540 is forested. Mt. Sequoyah has many buildings and streets, but like the highways, is pretty forested. So if you journey up that mountain for birds, you'll see the development, but also lots of forest. You can leave that all-terrain Hummer parked in the drive, go afoot, and still get a sampling of what's happening, bird-wise, over a broad region. That's the charm of it.

That's why on the average spring and summer day, you'll find summer tanagers and blue-gray gnatcatchers on Sequoyah and also at Devil's Den and in the Ozark National Forest. You can hear the tropical calls of yellow-billed cuckoos. More or less, the ecological requirements for these neotropical migratory songbirds are temporarily met in all of these places.

In these respects, May 15th was business as usual in birdworld. However, May 15th was also extraordinary.

“neotropical migratory songbirds seem to drip from trees.”

Annual spring migrations of birds are propelled by weather events: birds use south winds to push them north, from South America into nesting grounds in North America. Hundreds of species and millions of individual birds are involved. However, when winds make dramatic shifts—when south winds change to north winds—this normal migration comes to a screeching halt. Birders call this “fall out.”

For a few days—until the wind shifts again—neotropical migratory songbirds seem to drip from trees. May 15th was a lovely day in which Sequoyah felt and functioned like a cloud forest. Strange and wonderful birds sang unseen their unique songs from tall trees and eye-level shrubbery. That's why we had such extraordinary looks at migrants like Blackburnian warblers on May 15th. It was a rare and wonderful day. Black-throated green warblers were all over the mountain.

With so much forest, and with many small openings, Mt. Sequoyah offers an interesting diversity of habitats. That's why, all through the year, it's possible to see and hear (personal note from an avid bird hearer: throw away those leaf blowers, please!) many species of birds. But some days are better than others—like May 15th, 2004.



Fayetteville Native Son Lauds Recent Emphasis on Greenspace Preservation

by Tx Trumbo

As a hometown boy I'm grateful and excited about what has been happening lately in Fayetteville in regard to protecting our natural world. There seem to be a number of groups engaged in some type of preservation, conservation and/or parks and trails development. This is a wonderful legacy to leave for future generations, as well as a sign of faith and humility for the wonders of creation that surround us.

A real problem in today's society is the proliferation of concrete, asphalt, speeding cars and private property at the expense of nature and public space. The University of Arkansas used to have open public green space where now sits the Walton Arena, the indoor and outdoor tennis courts and a number of parking lots. Many of our subdivisions are allowed to pay money "in lieu of parkland dedication." (Where are the parks east of Crossover Road?) These neighborhoods are left without a natural and wonderful place to walk to and enjoy as a community—instead their inhabitants must resort to driving to overcrowded parks like Wilson and Gulley.

When I was growing up, there were more open and safe places for children and adults to play and exercise in. I believe the loss of these is a primary contributor to the rise in obesity, diabetes, stress and a disconnection from the natural world.

One of the newer ideas of preserving natural space in the more closely developed parts of town is trails — narrow greenspaces running through the city.

Trails can be used for transportation, exercise, socializing or communion. The national organization Rails-to-Trails shows us how widespread and popular this idea is becoming.

Fayetteville is just starting on this journey, taking some commendable first steps: Mayor Dan Coody

created the position of Parks Landscape Architect in charge of Trails and Greenways two-and-a-half years ago and chose Steve Hatfield to help build a vision of Fayetteville's future we can all be proud of.

Our sense of civic responsibility has also helped create a new Senior Center, Boys and Girls Club, Skate Park and soon-to-be Library. Our commitment to the physical, social and intellectual development of our citizens

is commendable, but the natural realm, the inherent spirituality of creation, needs vigorous and continuous attention as well.

Today Fayetteville is focusing on saving some of the beauty that predates this little Ozark town. The Parks and Recreation Department, the Trails and Greenways Department, the Botanical Garden, the Audubon Society, the Nature Conservancy, the Fayetteville Natural Heritage Association and other groups are working to help preserve and even elevate the quality of life here. Our mayor and council have been leaders in this movement. **I feel lucky we have so many people devoted to helping conserve the innate wonder of this beautiful place.**



Native trees shade the way along West Mud Creek Trail in north Fayetteville.

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.

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Happy Trails Are Here Again!

by Duane Woltjen



Mount Sequoyah Woods hiking trails have improved remarkably this spring with the relocation and construction of a section just below the Bench Overlook to the Dripping Spring. This improved section now has an easy gradient and rock revetment embankments to create a scenic, stable trail. Hikers can now focus more on the very pleasant scene about them as they pass this way.

With the permission of the City of Fayetteville park board and staff, about 100 yards of relocated trail were built this spring by

Bob Caulk and Duane Woltjen. They used only hand tools for this work. These tools are called the Pulaski, a combination heavy duty grub hoe and axe, and the Council Fire Rake, a specialized rake with a set of six large triangular teeth on a crossbar attached as a head on a long, thick handle. These tools were developed for fighting forest fires, but they are also very efficient and commonly used for trail construction.

The large rocks used for revetment were available in the immediate vicinity thanks to the effort of persons unknown who apparently sought to improve the original trail. Unfortunately, the original trail route was far too steep to ever be stabilized against excessive erosion. Bob and Duane are thankful for this prior effort to make rocks available nearby, and for the construction of many water diversions on most of the other trail sections at Mount Sequoyah Woods, presumably by this same person.

Hiking trails made of locally available primitive materials require restoration of the tread from time to time as heavy water runoff takes its toll. This present construction work took place just before the incredibly heavy rains of April, 2004. Even these extreme rains seemed to have caused virtually no erosion, so this section should remain stable and uneroded for a good long time to come.

FNHA offers a special thanks to all volunteers, like Bob and Duane, who donate time and dollars toward the conservation of natural areas of Fayetteville and its environs for the benefit of present and future generations.