

VIEWS *from the* WOODS


Hitchcock Woods
FOUNDATION

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Fall 2008

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LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN

As the newly elected Chairman, I would like to thank the Board of Trustees for this distinction. I feel truly honored and blessed. I have a great passion for the Hitchcock Woods, and a reverence of the traditions and history of the Foundation. Back in Massachusetts, my family has a long history of land conservation and management, so this kind of work has always been an important value to me. These Woods have been in my back yard since I moved to Aiken in 1989, and I have been involved with their management in 1996 as the coordinator of the "Axe Club" and a member of the Board since 1998. My participation on many committees has given me an appreciation of all that has been done, and an awareness of all that needs to be done in the future.

Today, the "State of the Woods" is in great shape. Maintenance of the trails, hunt drag lines, and schooling fences have never been better, thanks to Bennett Tucker and Deon Mealing. The office runs like a well oiled machine. Doug Rabold, Chris Reichel, and Carol Stewart keep our fundraising activities running smoothly, and keep all of our Friends of the Woods and constituents well informed of Woods activities through these newsletters, annual reports, and, coming soon, a very well designed and interactive new website, with many new features. Finally we have a Board of Trustees that is focused and committed to the Foundation's vision.

This summer the City of Aiken undertook three construction projects that affected visitation to the Woods. I am pleased to say all of this work has been completed, and the entrances at Coker Spring and South Boundary will soon be re-opened to both pedestrians and equestrians alike. The City installed over 800 feet of sewer line along Devils' Backbone using an innovative

horizontal boring technique. This enabled them to pull the pipe through the area underground, with little change to the landscape. On behalf of the Foundation and visitors to the Woods, I would like to thank the City of Aiken for using this method and completing the necessary infrastructure improvements while protecting the Woods.

I hope you find this newsletter interesting and informative. You have received this because you support the Hitchcock Woods. I hope you are all Friends of the Woods. Hitchcock Woods is open free of charge 365 days a year from sunup to sundown, and this is all through your generosity. So, please renew your membership (our efficient office will send you a reminder!) and plan to answer the call of our Annual Fund letter. This is the only way we can keep the Woods the special place that we all have in our heart. I thank you for your support, and hope to see you in the Woods.



SHARE THE VIEWS!

Do you know someone who would like to learn about Hitchcock Woods?

It's easy to share our e-newsletter. Just send the name of your friend or family member and their email address to info@hitchcockwoods.org. By sending an e-newsletter, we are saving paper, printing, postage, and staff time. Thank you for helping us to be better stewards of your financial support and our shared natural resources.

Listed below are only the names of Business Partners and Friends of the Woods who have joined or renewed their membership with Hitchcock Woods Foundation between July 1 and September 22, 2008. A complete listing of all our Business Partners and Friends of the Woods was published in the Annual Report, issued in August 2008.

Friends of the Woods

BUSINESS PARTNERS

\$1000 Level

Hass and Hilderbrand, Inc. +‡S
The Ridge at Chukker Creek*
Woodside Farm "Hospice for Horses" +S

\$500 Level

University of South Carolina Aiken*

\$250 Level

Biddle Realty Inc. +‡
Phoenix Printing*
Woolhiser Law Firm*

\$100 Level

Airmasters of Aiken, Inc. +‡
Floyd and Green Jewelers*
Hutson-Etherredge Companies+‡
Andrew Marine, Attorney at Law+‡
Stewart and Associates, Inc.*
Sweet Water Tree Farm, LLC+‡
Your Personal Assistant*

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Dawn Beckering*
Mrs. Jacquelyn M. Blanchard+‡
Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Browder+‡
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Charles Comber+‡
Lori Comshaw+‡
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Mr. Namon Corley+‡
Robin and Ed Coward+‡
Bea Crawford+‡
Keith and Georgann Crawford+
Diana Crowley+‡
John W. Cunningham+‡
Judy L. Cunningham+‡
Tim and Anna Dangerfield+‡
Elizabeth Darden*

Robin Derrick+‡
Dick and Mary Lou Dewar+‡
John and Mo (Maureen) Empe+‡
Sam and Donna Erb*
Deborah C. Erb*
Richard and Ruth Ann Evans+
Angie C. Flanagan+‡
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Cecilia and Julius Pellegrino+
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Doug Rabold and Gene Eidson+‡
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Anna W. Zouck+‡

+ Renewals between 7/1/08 and 9/22/08
* New members between 7/1/08 and 9/22/08
‡ Charter Partner or Friend
S Sustaining Partner

SHARE THE GIFT OF HITCHCOCK WOODS



What do you get for the person who's hard to buy for, or who seems to have everything? How about a \$50 membership in the Hitchcock Woods Foundation's Friends of the Woods program ... or a gift of any amount to the Foundation made in the person's honor? Whether you purchase a gift membership or make a donation in honor or in memory of another, your gift is tax deductible and you will receive a letter specifying your contribution.

Another special gift to share with friends and family is the *Expeditions with Patrick McMillan* DVD "Hitchcock Woods: Canyons and Rivers of Sand," which aired on SCETV in April 2008. Available in the Foundation's office for only \$25, this is a great way to share the wonder of our majestic forest.

For more information on any of these ideas, please contact Carol Stewart at (803) 642-0528.

2008 CELESTINE EUSTIS AWARD WINNER

Why I Love Hitchcock Woods

by David McKeel, Third Grade, home schooled

I love Hitchcock Woods because it is 2,100 acres of wilderness within our city where I can explore, run, and play. It's a great place for education, recreation, family time, and community events. Hitchcock Woods has become a major part of my life.

I have been going to the woods since I was born. When I was younger, my family and I packed up the dogs, picked up Subway subs, and drove to the Dibble Road entrance for our weekend walks. Our first destination was "the cliffs." The cliffs are white sandy-looking clay that has been washed away with rainwater. They are wrinkled like an old man who spent too much time in the sun. We would sit on the top where the land is flat and sunny and eat our picnic while the dogs watched with envy. After lunch, we climbed down and then back up the steep slopes. This is so much fun because it is safe and scary at the same time. Last, we always took a 15 minute walk to the stream near Dibble Road. We usually saw some horses along the way.

Even though these trips were fun, I discovered that my parents were taking us on them for education (I was mad when I figured that out). Hitchcock Woods is like a super classroom, with hundreds of teachers that don't know they're teaching geology, plant life, and animal life. These "teachers" include various cliff formations, the sand river beds, erosion and erosion controls, the streams, kaolin veins, and lots of different plants and trees that you just don't see in other places. I have even learned about forest management. After they have controlled burns, you can see the burned pine trees. It doesn't kill the trees but actually helps the forest grow. These burns also protect our houses from forest fires.

The woods also provide a great place for family time, one of my favorite things to do in the woods is our Super Bowl Sunday family scavenger hunt. My dad, who loves to run on the trails, goes on a run, and hides various treasures, even some snacks which we get to eat during the game. When he gets home (he has a good memory so don't worry about us leaving them there and causing pollution) he writes clues to find the treats. Then Alex (my brother) and I follow the clues and find the treats. We usually get home just in time for the game to start.

When I was eight, I participated in the Run for the Woods Race. It was a cold morning in November. I ran into a few members of my soccer team there. We ran on a 1.2 mile trail. It was hard to run in the sandy path because our feet would sink a little in the sand. It was fun passing some of the other runners. After my race, my dad ran the longer race.

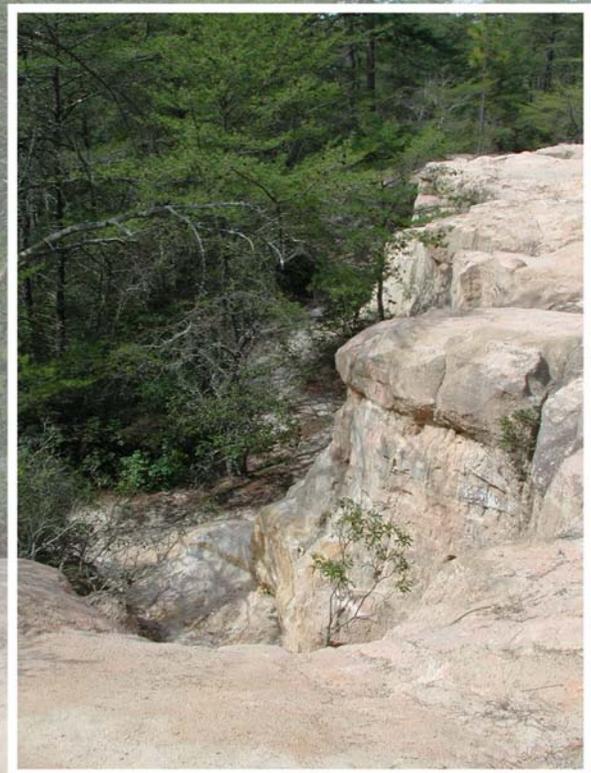
Hitchcock Woods is so important to my family that two years ago we chose to move to a house a block away from the woods. It is great to be able to walk down the street and be in the woods. Now I get to play, explore, run, climb, and act like a kid in the woods any time I want! If you haven't spent much time in Hitchcock Woods, you're missing out on one of the best things about Aiken!

CELESTINE EUSTIS ESSAY CONTEST

It was Miss Celestine Eustis who can be credited with the purchase of the original piece of land which eventually became part of the Hitchcock Woods. The aunt of Louise Hitchcock, Miss Eustis loved the serenity of the woods and wanted to ensure her family and future generations could enjoy what we know today as Hitchcock Woods.

All entrants must be under 21 years of age. Contributors must describe their commitment to, or use or enjoyment of, the 2,100 acre Hitchcock Woods. Individuals may apply personally. Some may nominate a deserving youth. Even an entire class may apply. Essays should be no more than three pages (typed or handwritten) and may be accompanied by photos or artwork. Entries will be accepted until March 21, 2009, and the winner will receive an honorarium of \$500 and will be announced at the 2009 Aiken Horse Show in the Hitchcock Woods.

For complete prize rules, contact the Foundation office at (803) 642-0528 or email info@hitchcockwoods.org.



Dear Hitchcock Woods Foundation,

Thank you for hosting the Celestine Eustis contest. I really had fun writing and thinking (a lot!).

I was excited and surprised to learn I won. The horse show and lunch were fun. I'm going to enter more contests.

Sincerely,
David McKeel

BLESSING OF THE HOUNDS

The Aiken Hounds, formerly called the Old Aiken Drag, was established in 1914 by Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Hitchcock, who acquired the land we know as the Hitchcock Woods in the late 1800s to escape the long winters in New York.

Aiken Hounds will celebrate its 94th anniversary this season. The annual **Opening Meet and Blessing of the Hounds** will be held on Thanksgiving morning, **Thursday, November 27, 2008, at Memorial Gate at 11:00 am**. The public is welcome to attend the Blessing, but be reminded that it is quite a long walk from Laurens Street to Memorial Gate, and no motorized vehicles are permitted in the Hitchcock Woods. Please leave your own dogs at home.

Also, please remember that the Aiken Hounds will be in Hitchcock Woods from October through March each Tuesday afternoon from 1:30 pm to 4:30 pm and each Saturday morning from 8:30 am to 11:30 am. All other dogs are prohibited in the Woods during these times.



The Woods staff was busy this summer with the reconstruction of "Mr. Crawford's Fences" inside the Ridge Mile Track. The old course had deteriorated so badly that it had to be torn down, so it is exciting to have restored more of the heritage of Hitchcock Woods. There are twelve new fences - chicken coops, aikens, a brush box and cross rails, plus assorted single and triple logs.

This project would not have been possible without the guidance of Linda McLean and Girl Wolcott, who designed the new course. Special thanks are also extended to Bennett Tucker, Deon Mealing, and Schuyler and Desmond Reardon (summer interns) for constructing the fences.

Mr. Crawford's Fences was named for Mr. Everett L. Crawford from New York, one of the original Winter Colony residents. He and his family rented "Live Oak" on Easy Street from Mrs. Hitchcock for a few years, eventually purchasing the home. Mr. Crawford and his daughters were regular riders in the Woods.

The Crawford daughters, Evna C. Allen and Molly C. Hopper, continued to come to Aiken every winter, kept horses in the Crawford barn on Third Avenue, and rode every day in the Woods. Sometime after they died, Molly's daughter, Fran (Mrs. Fred) Van Liew, and Evna's son, Ripley Allen, restored "Live Oak" and still spend time there with their families throughout the year.

We hope you enjoy Mr. Crawford's Fences. Please treat them with care and remember - if you knock down a rail, please replace it for the next rider.

THE MISSION OF THE HITCHCOCK WOODS FOUNDATION IS TO:

- protect and preserve the Hitchcock Woods in a natural and ecologically healthy state,
- maintain and manage historic and traditional equestrian and pedestrian uses, and
- foster education and research on the history and resources of the Woods.