

VIEWS *from the* WOODS

Hitchcock Woods
FOUNDATION

Vol. 1, No. 2

Winter 2008

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(803) 642-0528

FIRE PLAYS A ROLE IN NATURE

Dr. Harry E. Shealy, Jr.
Vice Chairman

In our first issue, I shared how the Hitchcock Woods came to us as a gift from Thomas and Louise Hitchcock. In that article, I promised to tell you about how and why we manage the forest. Hitchcock Woods is a remnant of a large ecosystem that once dominated the entire coastal plain of the southeastern U.S. ... an ecosystem of longleaf pines and wiregrass that covered over 90 million acres. Only a small percentage of this once majestic forest remains, serving as a reminder of our loss.

Back in the mid-1980s, the Foundation began to restore the longleaf pine / wiregrass ecosystem in the Woods with the same tool that created it ... fire. Our pine forests are often called "fire forests" and are described like the Phoenix of ancient mythology, arising from the ashes to new life. Ecologists describe the species of a longleaf pine / wiregrass ecosystem as pyrophillic, or fire loving. Before Europeans came to the Western Hemisphere, fire was a result of lightning strikes and Native Americans. For anyone who has lived in the Southeast in the summer, you will agree that we are "blessed" with an ample supply of lightning strikes and very tall pine trees that act as lightning rods.

The Woods is divided into about 50 compartments, each with its own management prescription which typically involves prescribed burning. The Native Americans and lightning strikes have been replaced by crews of trained and certified fire managers armed with drip torches, rakes, pump trucks, and tractors. We burn about 50 acres in one day to minimize smoke; our fire crews choose to burn compartments on days when the wind contains



most of the smoke in the Woods. We plan to burn on incoming weather fronts so that our fires are followed by rain to douse any residual hot spots, and we coordinate every fire with the South Carolina Forestry Commission and Aiken Public Safety.

Our prescription for burning each compartment is a three to five year rotation. At the beginning of each burn season, our Woods Superintendent presents the board with his burn plan, which usually includes about 500 acres. We feel successful if we get 300 acres burned in a season. We do prescribed burning for two reasons. First, it is the best restoration tool for a longleaf pine forest. Second, prescribed burning helps to "fireproof" the Woods for the safety of the residents of Aiken. If we did not burn the Woods on a regular basis, there would be a huge problem if one of those lightning strikes or a careless smoker should ignite the Woods in the dry and hot summer months.

Recent local rains have replenished subsoil moisture and have nourished the flora of the Woods. In mid-January, Woods Staff initiated the 2008 burn season with a controlled burn of the Ridge Mile Track area. Other areas of the Woods are targeted for burns this winter. Weather conditions permitting, growing season burns are planned for areas with low levels of vegetative debris. All units slated for potential burns this year are identified on maps posted at the seven formal entrances to the Woods, as well as at Gamekeepers Lodge and the power line easement near Foxchase. Visitors are reminded to avoid burn areas during and immediately following a controlled burn.

Below are the names of Business Partners and Friends of the Woods who have joined or renewed their membership since November 19, 2007.

Friends *of the* Woods

BUSINESS PARTNERS

\$250 Level

Biddle Realty, Inc. +‡
Green Boundary Club +‡
Henny Penny's Investments, LLC *
Maxwell Law Firm +‡
The Willcox +‡

\$100 Level

Brendan T. Gilligan, Foxchase Stable +‡
Thoroughbred Investigations, Inc. *

FRIENDS OF THE WOODS

Joy Albrecht +‡
Jed and Penny Alexander *
Dr. and Mrs. Robert Alexander +‡
Bob and Betty Alexander +‡
Ms. Dione Appleton +‡
Dan Bacot *
Anonymous +‡
Mrs. William J. Blalock +‡
Arnold S. Bloom +‡
Mary and Dalton Boswell +‡
Mr. and Mrs. Donald C. Broderick, III +‡
Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Browder +‡
Michael and Diane Brunson +
Mr. and Mrs. Russ Busbee and family *
Michael Callahan *
Mr. and Mrs. Frederick J. Chamblin +
John and Nancy Church +‡
Lori Comshaw +‡
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John and Merrienne Corey *
Bea Crawford +‡
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Dr. and Mrs. Richard Eisenberg +‡
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Jimmie and Gail Engledow +
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Caryn Etherington +‡
Howard and Sandy Evans *
John W. Faircloth +‡
Robert and Katherine Ferris *

Angie C. Flanagan +‡
Juliet C. Gardner *
James M. Gaver +‡
John A. Gerstenberg +‡
Edward and Leslie Giobbe +‡
Megan and JP Godard *
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Mrs. Joan Haase +‡
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Miles and Alice Marie Hall *
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Nancy and Bob Harrington +‡
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Bill and Tami Haselden +‡
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Mr. and Mrs. James Jacks +‡
Sandra and David Jameson +‡
Robert and Susan Johnson +‡
Rob and Pam Johnston +
Anonymous +‡
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Woody and Lynn Malone +‡
Cynthia and Gary Mangum +‡
Cindy K. Martin +‡
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Zack and Marsey McFerren +‡
Deon R. Mealing *
Cathy Ann Miller and family +‡
Mr. and Mrs. Charles F. Miller +‡
Larry and Kathy Milner +‡
Renee Montenyohl and Joe Lamb *
Hammond and Tanja Moore +‡

Harvey L. and Jackie R. Nance +‡
Dione Carroll and Travis Page +
Tom and Mary Ann Parmelee +‡
Bill and Nancy Paschal +‡
Mr. and Mrs. Julian L. Peabody +‡
Dr. John and Kathleen Pearson +
Charles and Gretchen Pooler *
Judith A. Portmann +‡
Olivia Post +‡
Peggy Pruitt +
Mrs. Conni Y. Purciarele +‡
Anonymous *
Marjory Fair Read +
Carol Richardson +‡
MTR E. Ringle *
Donna and Martin Ritter +‡
Chris Riviere +‡
Rolka Family *
Lydia L. Rose +‡
Jon M. Samuels +‡
Abigail A. Schoff *
Patrick and Therese Scott +‡
Melissa Tinder Scott +‡
Mackey and Barbara Scott +‡
Richard D. Sears, III +‡
Dr. and Mrs. Harry E. Shealy, Jr. +‡
Scott and Mary Ruth Singer +‡
Hank and Jenna Smalling +‡
Pascal Smith *
Corbin and Karen Smith +‡
Frances M. Smoak +‡
Marion Smoak +‡
Tracey and Bill Soucy +‡
Todd Stilp +‡
Mr. and Mrs. John C. Stupples *
Mr. and Mrs. Michael J. Sullivan +‡
Elliott and Virginia Teitle *
Randall and Jennifer Thayer *
Jane Page and Mark Thompson +‡
Jim and Laurie Underwood +‡
Chris and Carol Verenes +
Evelyn K. Vought *
Diane Watson *
Jennifer Wilhoit and Kenneth White +‡
Kenny and Mimi Wiland +‡
Ann Willbrand +‡
James and Martha Wolf +‡
Tom and Heather Young *‡

Renewals as of 11-19-07 +
New members as of 11-19-07 *
Sustaining Partner †
Charter member ‡

IMPROVED BUSINESS PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM INTRODUCED

In September 2006, the Hitchcock Woods Foundation established its Business Partnership Program, allowing area businesses to partner in protecting and preserving the Woods. This initiative gave our Partners a variety of benefits which included a discount on advertising in the Aiken Horse Show program. The Program was well received and we considered it to be very successful.

As we were contemplating how to provide the best service to our Business Partners, we decided to revamp the Program. Now, the Business Partnership Program includes a complimentary listing or ad in the Aiken Horse Show program (size dependent upon level of support) and a listing on a placard posted inside the tent during the Show. We have also added another tier of financial support, so that our Business Partners now have five different levels to choose from - \$100, \$250, \$500, \$750 or \$1000.

If you have already joined as a Business Partner, your benefits will automatically rollover to the new package. If you have been waiting for a good time to join the Hitchcock Woods family, now is your chance to invest in two of Aiken's Treasures ... Hitchcock Woods and the Aiken Horse Show.



Attending a private retirement reception for Mr. Corley were members of his family (left to right): Aliceteen Belcher and Nancy Allen (daughters), Elease (wife) and Namon Corley, and Stephanie Belcher (granddaughter). Not pictured are the couple's other children: Frances Corley, Essie May Corley, Amelia Hill, Namie Teresa Corley, and Namon Charles Corley, Jr.

A LEGEND RETIRES

*Gail B. King
Chairman*

How do you begin to thank someone who has spent half a century working tirelessly for this organization ... and, for the most part, alone? Namon Corley's name is synonymous with that of the Hitchcock Woods and it is hard to imagine not seeing Namon on the tractor, clearing trails, building jumps, and doing all the things that have to be done to keep the Woods looking as they do.

Namon was 72 last June (something that you would never guess) and he decided to retire at the end of last year. Namon is famous for the beautiful Aiken jumps that he builds throughout the Woods and for the Aiken Horse Show, for his ability to be the most clever "fox" around, and, not quite so well known, his talent on the piano. Namon will be greatly missed by everyone. We wish him a happy and peaceful retirement. He has earned it.

Thank you, Namon, for all that you have done over the years to help make the Woods such a magical place.

THE 92ND ANNUAL AIKEN HORSE SHOW IS COMING!

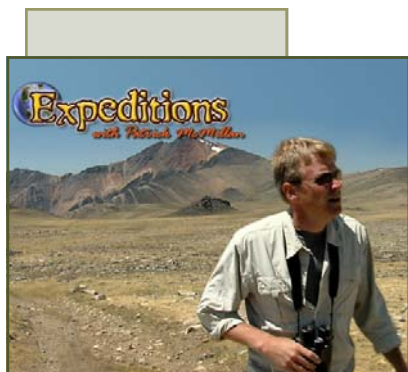
Established by Mrs. Thomas Hitchcock in 1916, the Aiken Horse Show remains one of the foremost equestrian competitions in Aiken. The Show's popularity is primarily due to its unique setting in the middle of Hitchcock Woods. As a private, non-profit organization, the Hitchcock Woods Foundation depends heavily upon the proceeds from the Aiken Horse Show to accomplish its work of protecting this important natural resource. This popular three-day event is Hitchcock Woods Foundation's signature annual fundraiser.



This year's event, scheduled to be held April 4, 5 & 6, will feature open hunters, adult amateurs, open pleasure, foxhunter, junior pony hunter, junior foxhunter, and ladies sidesaddle classes as well as the Aiken Horse Show Classic, Aiken Hounds Welcome Stakes, Junior Pony Warm Up Stakes and Security Federal Foxhunter Winners Stakes. Participants can request a prize list by contacting the Hitchcock Woods Foundation office at 803-642-0528. Information is also available on the Aiken Horse Show website (www.aikenhorshow.org). The entry deadline is Tuesday, April 1; there will be a \$10 late fee per horse after that date.

Luncheon sponsorship packages, ringside parking and individual lunches are available again this year. If you have any questions about sponsorship, lunch, or ringside parking, please call the Hitchcock Woods Foundation office (803-642-0528), visit the Aiken Horse Show website (www.aikenhorshow.org), or email info@hitchcockwoods.org. Volunteers and/or contributions are always welcomed.

EXPEDITIONS WITH PATRICK MCMILLAN ... COMES TO HITCHCOCK WOODS!



Through the lens of *Expeditions with Patrick McMillan*, the natural world comes to life and viewers of this SCETV series enjoy discovering nature's surprises. McMillan conveys his enthusiasm and wonder for these natural marvels to the audience each week.

Over the past 12 years Patrick has worked as a professional naturalist and biologist throughout the southeastern United States and the Neotropics. His research has been published nationally and he has received numerous achievement awards. In addition to hosting *Expeditions*, Patrick spends his time at Clemson University fulfilling his teaching, outreach and curatorial duties.

The Hitchcock Woods Foundation was excited to host McMillan in May 2007 when he filmed "Hitchcock Woods: Canyons and Rivers of Sand." The episode will air this spring, and the Hitchcock Woods Foundation will hold an Expeditions Premiere Party on March 18. The Premiere Party, for Friends of the Woods members only, will feature a special screening of the episode and light hors d'oeuvres.

Save the date - March 18 - and plan to join Patrick McMillan on his Expedition into the Woods!

NEW STAFF MEMBER – DEON MEALING

Please join us in welcoming Deon Mealing, who was hired in November to fill the position of Woods Technician. Deon will assist Bennett Tucker in the day to day stewardship of the Woods.

Before joining the Foundation, Deon served in the United States Army. Honorably discharged after six years of service, Deon was awarded numerous honors including the Purple Heart, National Defense Service Medal, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Iraq Campaign Medal, Army Service Ribbon, Overseas Service Ribbon (2), and Combat Action Badge.

An interest in working outdoors prompted Deon to investigate working for the Hitchcock Woods Foundation. Welcome, Deon!



FOUNDATION WISH LIST...

Occasionally we are asked what special needs the Foundation office or staff may have. The following list contains items that would help the office function better:

- Desk chair & lamp;
- Upright vacuum cleaner;
- Outdoor table & chairs;
- Carpentry skills for miscellaneous projects (shelves/storage in attic, refurbishing cabinets in kitchen);
- Students needing community service hours.

If you can assist with any of these items, please contact:

Doug Rabold
(drabold@hitchcockwoods.org) or
Carol Stewart
(info@hitchcockwoods.org).

NEW SIGNS ENHANCE NAVIGATION AND SAFETY

Woods staff recently made alphanumeric signs and posted them on trees throughout the Woods. Each alphanumeric code (such as B-13) correlates to a specific grid block on the Hitchcock Woods map (letters in the left margin and numbers along the top). This new feature helps visitors navigate the Woods and identify their location in case of an emergency. It also helps emergency agencies locate visitors more efficiently.

The signs are located at 83 major trail intersections or high visibility areas. They also are coded in five colors that identify the best entry point for rescue or emergency vehicles. Here's how the system works.

If you were walking in the Woods and sprained an ankle, the nearest alphanumeric sign would provide you with a locator tool. If you or a passerby had a cell phone, the code you reported in a call for help would correspond to a grid block on the map.

If you were immobile, but could at least report the last alphanumeric sign you saw, the emergency responder could then identify your general location. Finally, if you could not recall the code, but remembered the color of the last sign you saw, the emergency responder would know which entrance to use to begin the search.

We have shared this new system with local law enforcement, rescue, fire and EMS divisions, so they will know how to use it.



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.