



2024 LAKE JAMES ICE FESTIVAL

Jurassic Ice Park

The 3rd annual Lake James Ice Festival took the beloved event to new heights in January, thanks to ice carver Aaron Costic's remarkable talent and imagination.

Jurassic Ice Park featured 19 dinosaur-themed sculptures, some of them so large that patrons could sit astride and mug for photos. Costic brought in a crack team of professional ice carvers to lend their inspiration and skills. Jim Duggan and Todd Dawson, both world champion carvers in their own right, helped create a fantastical world that included tyrannosaurus rex, velociraptors, triceratops and more.

More than 700 tickets were sold, raising more than \$5,000 for the Friends of Lake James State Park and their mission of supporting park projects, programs and staff.

The highly anticipated Cold Hard Cash Raffle raised over \$2,000. The cash and sculpture that encased it was all donated by Marion Tire and Service Center.

Other major donors to the event included; Duke Energy, SanStone Health and Rehabilitation, Community Companion Home Care and Fonta Flora Brewery.



NATURE NOTE

Winter in the park is a time of rest and recuperation. Reptiles and amphibians have greatly slowed their activity to save precious energy in the cold weather. Birds are resting their songs for warmer times when eligible bachelors and bachelorettes are actively searching for mates.

Most leaf-bearing trees have long since shed their leaves, making the view through the landscape as clear as ever. However, you may see the occasional tree full of browned, withered leaves still attached. Known as “marcescence,” some trees, such as American beeches and oak species, will retain their leaves through all of fall and winter until they are removed by wind or animal activity. The advantages of marcescent leaves are not fully known, but some thoughts include deterring browsing animals from nibbling on twigs or young buds and storing nutrients to be released into the soil later once the leaves finally detach.

While the rush of summer visitors has slowed to a trickle, that doesn't mean there aren't any crowds. White-tailed deer rule the park this time of year. As “crepuscular” creatures – meaning most active at dawn and dusk – herds



of deer are best spotted about an hour after opening and 1-2 hours before closing during the winter. Although, with light human traffic, it is not uncommon to see a group of mothers and fawns loitering on the roadside between the Obeth and Rock Hill cemeteries. They might even enjoy a day at the beach.

When you spot one of these groups roving around the park, you may get the feeling of stumbling into a deer day-care. Fawns will typically stay with their mothers for at least a year. At that point, yearling males will typically separate from the group to become strapping young bachelors while yearling females will live with their mother for another year. Even after a female deer departs from her mother, she may likely establish her home range nearby.

Whether you're enjoying winter in the park in a herd or on your own, the still waters and sweeping views leave plenty to enjoy without all the hustle and bustle. So bundle up, drive slowly (for the deer), and take in the tranquility of the season before we ramp up into spring.

Until next time, see you out on the trail.

WHO WE ARE

A group formed in 2010, made up of dedicated people working together to help Lake James State Park meet its mission of providing opportunities for public enjoyment and education while still protecting the natural beauty and historic integrity of the State Park.

BOARD MEMBERS

- Eric Jenkins** - President
- Annette Bryant** - Vice President
- Mike Sewell** - Secretary
- Robert Hunter** - Ex Officio Member
- Randall Conley** - Member at Large
- George Milner** - Member at Large
- Greg Norell** - Member at Large
- Molly Sandfoss** - Member at Large
- Jeff Stark** - Member at Large
- Mickey Lewis** - Member at Large
- Bryant Lindsey** - Member at Large
- Teena Fox** - Member at Large
- Pete Colwell** - Member at Large
- Nancy Connelly** - Member at Large

To contact the Friends of Lake James State Park Group please email info@lakejamesstatepark.org

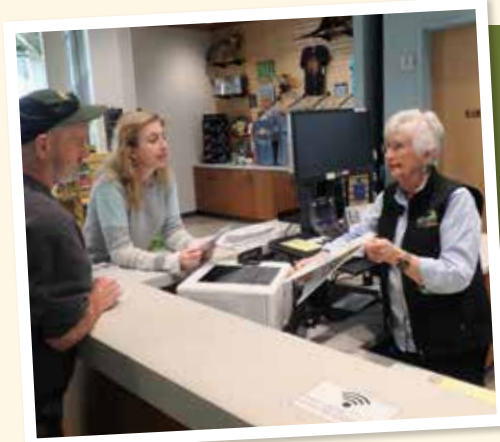
VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION!

We love our volunteers at Lake James State Park! Four volunteers topped our 2023 list with over 200 hours of service each, and during a short-staffed year, their generosity has been priceless.

All retirees, these volunteers enjoy outdoor activities, such as hiking, boating, and exploring nature, and they all agree that being friendly and welcoming are essential job skills. In addition, our visitor center volunteers stress working knowledge of computers and an adventurous attitude.

But what motivates these folks to donate their time to the park? Extroverts Annette and Teena both serve on the Friends of Lake James State Park's board of directors, but more importantly, they both knew that visitor center work would be fun. The Olsons, on the other hand, had their fill of deep Iowan snow, so they looked to spend their winters in a warmer climate.

In 2023 visitors and staff benefitted from these and other volunteers donating 3,339 total hours to the park. Through enjoyment of a beautiful park and interactions with interesting people, they shared their love of Lake James and the surrounding areas. May our 2024 volunteers, like the Olsons, continue to "welcome people like it's your home."



Name: Annette Bryant
Hometown: Marion, NC
Job: Visitor Center
Favorite Trail: Holly Discovery Trail
Experience: Hosting a weekly public affairs talk show on WBRN, the local radio station.
Fun Fact: She has moved 20 times in her life, living in seven different states.



Name: Jeff and Sandy Olson
Hometown: Hudson, IA
Job: Camp Hosts
Favorite Trail: Lake Channel Overlook
Experience: Hosting at a KOA campground in Arizona and an equestrian campground in Wisconsin.
Fun Fact: They met while working at McDonald's and have been married 44 years.



Name: Teena Fox
Hometown: Burnsville, NC
Job: Visitor Center
Favorite Trail: Fox Den Loop (obviously)
Experience: Years of waterskiing and camping with her family on Lake James.
Fun Fact: Roy Acuff once brought her onstage at the Grand Old Opry to be a caller and clogger.

JURASSIC ICE PARK



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YEAR OF THE BEAR

An American icon steeped in history and lore, North Carolina State Parks has dubbed 2024 “Year of the Bear.” In the Tar Heel state, our only native bear is the American black bear.

While historical black bear habitat spread across the state until the mid-1900s, their current range spans across the mountains of the Blue Ridge and in hardwood forests and swamplands of the Coastal Plains. This leaves the Piedmont a veritable bear desert. Here in the Foothills, Lake James State Park typically sees light to moderate bear activity during peak times of year from spring to early autumn.

For those that live in prime bear country – especially Buncombe County residents – black bears can be an adorable nuisance. Their curious nature, omnivorous diet, and keen sense of smell frequently get them into hijinks. Black bears are usually shy and non-aggressive, but they can encounter humans while looking for food. Unsecured trash cans, coolers, and even cars with food inside are often subject to being pillaged by a hungry black bear.

Even though sightings are infrequent, humans can pose a big risk to black bears – and we don’t mean hunting. Our friends with BearWise® have some easy tips for you to do your part in protecting black bears while you’re visiting Lake James State Park:

- **Never feed or approach bears** – while you may be well-intentioned, you could cost a bear its life if it becomes too habituated to people.
- **Properly store food, trash, and cookware** – make sure your food is secured in your campsite’s bear box. That includes pet food, trash, and empty food wrappers as well. NEVER store food or cookware in your tent!
- **Keep dogs on-leash at all times** – not only is this a law in state parks, off-leash dogs can threaten black bears. Off-leash dogs are a factor in over half of all negative encounters between black bears and humans.
- **Notify a ranger if you see a bear** – while simply seeing a bear enjoying the park (much like yourself) is not automatically cause for alarm, it’s helpful for park staff to keep track of bear activity.



We hope that you dare to care to recreate safely and responsibly during our Year of the Bear.

FRIENDS OF LAKE JAMES STATE PARK

APPLY NOW!



Lake James State Park

**WE ARE
HIRING!**

All Positions Are for the Summer 2024 Season
Full Time and Part Time Hours Available
Must Be Willing To Work Holidays and Weekends

OPEN POSITIONS STARTING AT:

- Park Attendants \$15/hr
- Concessions Clerks \$15/hr
- Concessions Manager \$17/hr
- Naturalist \$18/hr
- Lifeguards * \$17/hr

*Our lifeguards must meet all state and federal requirements, including current lifeguard training and certification.

For more information, contact us
828-544-6801
or email lakejames@ncparks.gov

LJSP TRAILS



CATAWBA RIVER AREA:

- Fishing Pier Trail (0.3 mile, easy)
- Fox Den Loop Trail (2.25 miles, moderate)
- Lake Channel Overlook Trail (1.5 miles, moderate)
- Sandy Cliff Overlook Trail (0.5 mile, easy)

PADDY'S CREEK AREA:

- Holly Discovery Trail (0.75 mile, easy)
- Mill's Creek Trail (3.6 miles, moderate)
- Overmountain Victory Trail (2.0 mile, moderate)
- Paddy's Creek Trail (2.0 miles, moderate)
- Tindo beginners' mountain bike trail (4.0 miles)
- Wimba intermediate mountain bike trail (11.25 miles)
- South Wimba Hike/Bike Trail (1 mile, easy)

PARK GENERAL INFO

- During February, park hours are 7 a.m. until 7 p.m. Starting in March the nightly closing time is 9 p.m.
- The public swimming area is closed until May 1st. As is the concessions stand and boat rentals at Paddy's Creek.
- The Visitor Center is open seven-days-a-week, from 9:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m.

FRIENDS OF LAKE JAMES STATE PARK

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Do you have an interest in Lake James State Park? Whether you enjoy hiking the trails, swimming at the beach or just picnicking with your family, there is some part of the park for everyone.

Join the Friends of Lake James State Park group and learn about all the opportunities to help make the park a better place for everyone to enjoy. The Friends of Lake James State Park focus on working together to help Lake James State Park meet its mission of providing opportunities for public enjoyment and education while still protecting the natural beauty and historic integrity of the State Park.

There are a variety of opportunities to get involved from trail work days, to volunteering at RiverFest and other festivals. Become a member of Friends of Lake James State Park, and know that you are helping to preserve the natural beauty and historic resources of Lake James for generations to come.

FRIENDS CONTRIBUTIONS

The Friends of Lake James State Park is proud to support the hardworking staff at Lake James State Park and contribute wherever we can to help improve park operations and offer new recreational opportunities to visitors. If you think these efforts are meaningful, please consider joining our group using the form at the bottom of this page.

- Boat Camping Project; partially funded, purchased equipment including rebar driver and auger
- Stand-up Paddleboards; purchased two for rental fleet and one for lifeguard use
- Funded instructor for Waterfront Safety training for lifeguards
- Linville Overlook picnic area
- Assisted with Overmountain Victory Trail 2 construction
- Holly Discovery Trail; partially funded and dedicated, annual funding for upkeep
- Park of the Year celebration
- Sponsored night rides on mountain bike trails
- RiverFest Sponsor

HOW TO JOIN THE FRIENDS OF LAKE JAMES STATE PARK GROUP

Become a member of Friends of Lake James State Park, and know that you are helping to preserve the natural beauty and historic resources of Lake James for generations to come. **For more information please visit www.lakejamesstatepark.org, email info@lakejamesstatepark.org or Scan the QR Code to the right!**



FRIENDS OF LAKE JAMES STATE PARK - MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Be a Friend of Lake James State Park

Select class of annual membership:

- Individual \$10
- Family \$25
- Corporate \$50
- Patron/Industry \$100 - \$999 \$_____
- Lifetime \$1000 (or more) \$ _____

I would like to be contacted about volunteer opportunities with the Friends of Lake James State Park

Where did you hear about us? _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____

Phone _____

**Return to:
Friends of Lake James State Park, Inc.
P.O. Box 1327
Nebo, NC 28761**

Friends of Lake James State Park, Inc. is a registered 501(c)3 charitable organization. Receipt of membership will be supplied upon request.