

Outdoor Times



MARION COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION
IT STARTS IN PARKS

Volume 15, Issue 1

January 2009

HPER Club Offered

The Marion County Parks and Recreation Department will offer a *Home School Physical Education & Recreation Club* (HPER), which will focus on promoting a healthy lifestyle through physical activity. The program will encourage teamwork, strategy and fair play in a social setting. Classes will be held each Wednesday at Brick City Adventure Park, located at 1211 SE 22 Road in Ocala from 10 a.m. – 11 a.m. for 5 – 10 year olds and from

11:15 a.m. - 12:15 p.m. for 11 – 17 year olds.

The HPER Club fee is \$10 per month for the first child and \$7 for each additional child within the same family. Participants who register for two months will receive the discounted rate of \$15 for the first child and \$10 for each additional child in the same family. The program will start January 7th and run throughout the school year.



To register, or for more information, please contact the Marion County Parks

and Recreation Department at 111 SE 25 Avenue in Ocala or call Dan Burleigh at (352) 671-8560.

Coehadjoe Park History



King Coe Hadjo was a Seminole Chief in this area around 1820. Coe Hadjo's village was on the west side of Indian Prairie, north of Anthony-Burbank Road. There was approximately

450 white Seminole Indians who lived in this village.

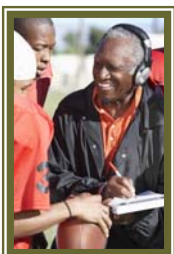
In the Muscogee language, the letter "e" is pronounced "a" so the name sounds like Co-a Had-jo. The translation is "wild-cat." Coe Hadjo was about 35 years old when he lived here.

On the north side of Indian Lake Prairie there is an Indian burial ground. There is also a larger midden that dates further back than the 1820's.

"This area is rich with Native American history, as numerous villages and forts were constructed," stated newly appointed Commissioner Mike Amsden. "It is fitting the park was named in honor of Chief Coe Hadjo."

Get back to nature and visit Marion County's heritage by visiting Coehadjoe Park, located at 4225 NE 35 Street in Ocala.

Volunteer Coaches Wanted



Wrigley Fields this winter.

The Marion County Parks and Recreation Department will offer a youth flag football program at

Volunteer coaches are needed to teach participants the fundamentals of the game, while promoting teamwork, fair play and recreation as a form of fitness.

Interested persons must successfully complete a back-

ground check, physical and drug screen.

For more information, please contact Dan Burleigh, Recreation Specialist at (352) 671-8560 or by email at daniel.burleigh@marioncountyfl.org

Outdoor Times is a monthly newsletter provided as a public service to park visitors and guests.

Any questions related to this publication may be directed to Gina Peebles, Administrative Manager, in writing at Marion County Parks & Recreation, 111 SE 25 Ave, Ocala, FL 34471, by telephone at 352-671-8560 or via e-mail at gina.peebles@marioncountyfl.org

Inside this issue:

JIM'S CORNER - DON'T MURDER THAT MYRTLE	2
PARK VOLUNTEERS RECOGNIZED	3
WRIGLEY FIELDS BASEBALL & SOFTBALL SIGN-UPS	3
YOUTH FLAG FOOTBALL @ WRIGLEY FIELDS	3
CALENDAR OF EVENTS	4
PARK OF THE MONTH - WEIRSDALE	4

Jim's Corner - Don't Murder that (Crape) Myrtle!!!

By mid-winter most gardeners are eager to get outside and start preparing for summer. For Crape Myrtles it is important to restrain from the yearning to prune too early, or too hard.

Crape Myrtles have historically received the brunt of poor pruning practices. While these trees are known for being fairly tough, they are ritualistically "murdered" each spring, while other types of trees are seldom pruned.



While there is some logic that pruning en-

courages blooming. Most plants benefit from a light pruning. Pruning done correctly actually increases the density of branches and stems. These areas where new growth is generated will host new blooms. But if a tree is "topped" or "hat-racked" every year, the number of blooming branches will not increase and put the tree under a lot of stress. Trees that are hard pruned spend the late spring and early summer recovering.

Pruning should be done on a tree-by-tree basis. One tree may need pruning while others may not. Certain trees may be blocking a view or may be crowding a neighbor's fence, but that

doesn't mean that all of the trees need to be pruned in the same manner. If a



Crape Myrtle requires annual hard-pruning just to "keep it in check," perhaps

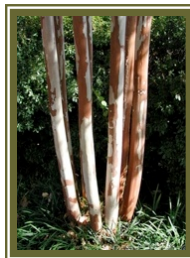
it should be replaced with a smaller, or even dwarf, variety of Crape Myrtle .

Another method of improper pruning is the removal of the previous year's growth down to where previous cuts were made. This is referred to as "pollarding." The result of both "topping" or "pollarding" actually put unnecessary stress on the trees and promotes sucker growth at the bottom of the tree. Sucker growth, if not removed promptly, begins to use the nutrients and moisture that the tree typically uses. Sucker growth can be thick at times and ends up making the trees appear ratty and less appealing.

Several varieties of Crape Myrtles are known for displaying exfoliating bark and revealing brilliant colors of reds and tans as the trees grow. Others have very muscle-like furrows that form over the years. By being repeatedly hard-pruned, these trees may not get the chance to show off these extra features. Their

trunks fail to mature to the point of supporting the exfoliation or development of deeper furrows since most of their energy is exerted on forcing new shoots.

Proper pruning of Crape Myrtles consists of removal of excessive canopy clutter, any inward growing branches, rubbing branches and any dead, diseased or damaged branches. For a tree which has been properly



pruned, branches over 1/2" in diameter will probably not need to be removed.

Old seed heads can be easily clipped and the overall shape and size of the tree can be preserved.

As with any pruning, first start by individually reviewing each tree's form and content. Look for dead, diseased or damaged branches and remove those first. Then remove any inward growing branches and crossing branches, particularly those that are rubbing each other. Then look at the overall shape of the tree. You may find that pruning any more isn't really necessary.

If pruning is necessary hand pruners are the preferred tool but loppers may be needed (or even a hand saw) to remove larger caliper branches. Remember, removing larger limbs

should be done with care and caution. Tree limbs are heavy and knowing where they are going to fall can save you a lot of headaches. If proper proactive pruning cuts are made earlier in the tree's life, there should be less need for



heavy pruning in the future.

Valentine's Day is a good time to

prune your Crape Myrtle. Proper horticultural timing is when the trees are dormant, and before new bud growth. Avoid pruning between December and late winter as pruning during this time has shown to reduce cold hardiness and increase the risk of killing the trees. Tip pruning to remove old flower clusters may promote recurrent blooming but is not practical for large plants or low maintenance landscapes. Tip pruning is largely unnecessary on many newer cultivars that naturally repeat-bloom, but it may enhance recurrent blooms on older cultivars

Crape Myrtles generally require little pruning. Some of the prettiest Crape Myrtles around town are the large varieties that have ample room to grow and show off their handsome trunks and large spreading canopies.

Park Volunteers Recognized

Volunteers Creighton Langford, Debbie Lapierre and Julie Musselman were recently recognized for volunteering more than 200 hours to the Department. For reaching this milestone, each was provided a complementary parks pass.

Our park volunteer contributed their knowledge and expertise to enhance our community's recreational experiences. Furthermore, they increase public awareness of the importance of protecting our natural resources, generate pride in our park system and demonstrate a commitment to enhancing the quality of life for our residents.

The Marion County Parks and Recreation Department

is always looking for individuals that share a love for the preservation of our park system, a true recreational interest in various leisure areas and will share their skills and enthusiasm with others.

Become part of our *It Starts in Parks* campaign by getting involved as a Volunteer in Parks (VIP). We are looking for volunteers that have an interest in the following areas:

- Canoeing and Kayaking
- Guided Nature Tours
- Walking Programs
- Umpires / Scorekeepers
- Graphic Design

- Special Events
- Clean-up Efforts
- Tree Planting
- Monitoring Wildlife
- Clerical Assistance

Volunteers must first complete a Volunteer Application, available at our office or online at www.marioncountyfl.org/parks.htm.

No experience is necessary...just a willingness to contribute your time and expertise.

Interested individuals may contact the Department at (352) 671-8560.

Wrigley Fields Baseball & Softball Sign-Ups

The *Wrigley Fields Baseball and Softball Associations* are signing up youngsters, ages 5-14, who are interested in playing baseball, softball or T-Ball during the 2009 spring season may sign-up for only \$85 for baseball or softball, and

\$40 for T-Ball, which includes a uniform.

The park is located at 405 E Hwy 316 in Citra.

For more information, or to sign-up, please call Chance Seiler at (352) 817-9688.



Youth Flag Football at Wrigley Fields



The Marion County Parks and Recreation Department will offer a youth flag football program at Wrigley Fields this winter. The program will provide children, ages 6-12, with a safe environment to learn the basic skills and strategies of the sport. Concepts such as teamwork, fair play and

recreation as a form of fitness will be promoted.

The registration fee is \$25 per player. Participants can sign-up at the Marion County Parks & Recreation Department located at 111 SE 25 Avenue in Ocala, or by calling (352) 671-8560.



Outdoor Times

Calendar of Events

Date	Event	Location	Time
January 3	Art Van-Go	Baseline Road Trailhead	10 a.m.—11 a.m.
		Liberty Community Park	12 noon—1 p.m.
		Wrigley Fields	2 p.m.—3 p.m.
January 8	Kayak & Koffee (for adults)	KP Hole (Rainbow River)	10 a.m.—1:30 p.m.
January 9	Baseball / Softball Sign-Ups	Wrigley Fields	6 p.m. - 8 p.m.
January 10	Baseball / Softball Sign-Ups	Wrigley Fields	9 a.m. - 12 noon
January 16	Baseball / Softball Sign-Ups	Wrigley Fields	6 p.m. - 8 p.m.
January 17	Baseball / Softball Sign-Ups	Wrigley Fields	9 a.m. - 12 noon
January 22	Kayak & Koffee (for adults)	Ray Wayside (Silver River)	10 a.m.—1:30 p.m.
February 5	Kayak & Koffee (for adults)	KP Hole (Rainbow River)	10 a.m.—1:30 p.m.
February 14	Birding & Nature Walk	Sunnyhill (Moss Bluff)	9:30 a.m.
February 19	Kayak & Koffee (for adults)	Ray Wayside (Silver River)	10 a.m.—1:30 p.m.
March 7	Art Van-Go	Baseline Road Trailhead	10 a.m.—11 a.m.
		Liberty Community Park	12 noon—1 p.m.
		Wrigley Fields	2 p.m.—3 p.m.
March 14	Birding & Nature Walk	Silver Springs Shores Park	9:30 a.m.
April 4	Art Van-Go	Horseshoe Lake Park & Retreat	9:30 a.m.
		Baseline Road Trailhead	10 a.m.—11 a.m.
		Liberty Community Park	12 noon—1 p.m.
		Wrigley Fields	2 p.m.—3 p.m.

Park of the Month - Weirsdale Park

Weirsdale Park, located at 16285 SE 137 Court in Weirsdale, offers amenities including a half basketball court, picnic facilities and playground unit.

“Weirsdale Park is classified as a neighborhood park due to its small size [2.44 acres] and walk-to-ability for the Weirsdale

community,” stated Parks Designer, Jim Couillard.

Neighborhood Parks are generally located along streets where people can walk or bike without encountering traffic and serve a population of up to 5,000 residents.

Currently the Department offers four neighborhood

parks county-wide including: Chatmire Park, Ocklawaha Community Park, Orange Springs Park and Weirsdale Park.

