

Outdoor Times



MARION COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION
YOURS TO DISCOVER

Volume 23, Issue 1

September 2009



SportsAbility is the premier event of the Florida Disabled Outdoor Association (FDOA). This event is about enhancing the lives of people with disabilities by promoting active living. SportsAbility provides first hand access to resources and demonstrations of activities designed to encourage participation regardless of age or ability level.

People who attend SportsAbility learn about the value of recreation and active leisure for everyone - especially people with disabilities. People discover the latest in equipment, trends and resources. This event provides an opportunity for people to network with people with disabili-

ties, resource providers and community organizations.

SportsAbility is coming to Marion County on October 2 and 3. This two day event, developed through a partnership between FDOA, Ocala Recreation & Parks and Marion County Parks & Recreation, will enable all individuals with disabilities the opportunity to experience a variety of recreation and leisure activities. The experts and adaptive equipment will be provided to allow most individuals the chance to participate in an activity previously thought to be inaccessible.

Friday's events will take place at the ED Croskey Center, Hampton Aquatic Center and MLK Recreation

Complex located at 1510 NW 4 Street in Ocala. Activities include wheelchair basketball, adaptive golf, tennis, bocce, laser target shooting, interactive fishing simulator, therapeutic horseback riding and more!

Saturday's events will be held at Carney Island Recreation & Conservation Area located at 13275 SE 115 Avenue in Ocala. The events will include activities such as kayaking, sit-down water skiing, pontoon boat rides, archery, target shooting, fishing, jet skiing, nature presentations, therapeutic horseback riding and more!

School groups, group homes, organizations, families and individuals are all invited to participate. For more information, please contact Diane Leaf, Ocala Recreation & Parks, at (352) 401-3916.



The Eighth Annual Marion County Springs Festival is scheduled for Saturday, September 26 at Rainbow Springs State Park.

The goal of the festival is to preserve Marion County springs through awareness and stewardship. To that end, expert speakers, interactive exhibits, a springs song and photography contest, live entertainment, an art show, crafts, tours, canoe rides and great food will be available. Admission is just \$2 per person.

The fun will continue on Sun-

day, September 27 with complementary admission to KP Hole, Horseshoe Lake Park & Retreat, Carney Island and Ray Wayside with a coupon available from www.springsfest.org.

For more information, please contact the Dannelon Area Chamber of Commerce at (352) 489-2320.

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, Director, in writing at Marion County Parks and Recreation, 111 SE 25 Avenue, Ocala, FL 34471, by telephone at (352) 671-8560 or via e-mail at gina.peebles@marioncountyfl.org

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White Cliff Caving

It is pitch, black dark. The people you are caving with keep teasing that there is a 150 pound, hairy spider “around here somewhere?” If you are not afraid of the dark, not claustrophobic and are looking for adventure, caving may be for you.

The Marion County Parks and Recreation Department is offering beginner caving programs at White Cliff Cave at Brick City Adventure Park for people who would like to explore an unimproved wild cave. It requires strenuous physical activity such as climbing, crawling on hands and knees and belly crawling on

rocky surfaces in tight spaces.

Participants are encouraged to wear long pants, sturdy footwear and gloves. Caving gear will be provided. This is a “down and dirty activity” so participants should bring a change of clothes.

A children’s program (ages 8 - 11) will be held on Saturday, October 24.

A teen program (ages 12 - 15) will be held on Saturday, November 14.

An adult program (ages 16+) will be held on Saturday, December 5.

All programs are from 9 a.m. – 2 p.m. and are only \$30 per person. Brick City Adventure Park is located at 1211 SE 22 Road in Ocala.

For more information, or to pre-register, please contact the Marion County Parks and Recreation Department at (352) 671-8560 or stop by our office located at 111 SE 25 Avenue in Ocala at the McPherson Governmental Complex.



Parks & Recreation Director, Gina Peebles, crawls through White Cliff Cave at Brick City Adventure Park.

Explore Marion County - Interpretive Outings

A **Greenway Land Bridge Interpretive Walk** is scheduled for Tuesday, September 22 from 9 a.m. until 11:30 a.m. This hike will explore the Marjorie Harris Carr Cross Florida Greenway from Marion Oaks to the state’s only “land bridge” that crosses I-75. The history of the Greenway will be discussed and explored; rare plants will be sought out and natural Florida will be observed, all in the course of a leisurely one mile hike (each way).

The group will meet at the Land Bridge Trailhead (CR 475A). Limited transportation is available from the Marion County Parks and Recreation Office.



Carney Island Eco-Tours are planned for October 20 and November 17. Two separate tours will be conducted each day. For walkers, a leisurely, interpretive walking tour will be from 9:30 a.m. until 12 noon. Participants will explore hiking trails in this popular County park on Lake Weir in the morning.

A driving tour will be conducted from 1 p.m. until 2:30 p.m., with stops along the way for interpretation and a closer look at things of interest.

A **Marshall Swamp Interpretive Hike** will be held on December 22. Explore the wild trail section of the Marjorie Harris Carr Cross Florida Greenway. Bring water and snacks, appropriate clothing and insect repellent.

All Interpretive Outings are free. For more information, or to reserve your spot, please contact the Marion County Parks and Recreation Department at (352) 671-8560.



Come join us for Food, Fun & Prizes at
Destination Dunnellon's 2nd Annual

KAYAK For a Cause

8 mile Charity Kayak & Canoe Race on the Rainbow and Withlacoochee Rivers
Proceeds to Benefit Dunnellon's Boys & Girls Club

Destination Dunnellon's second annual Kayak for a Cause will take place September 19 at Gruffs Tap and Grille. This year's eight mile canoe and kayak race will start at 9 a.m. with registration

beginning at 8 a.m. The proceeds will benefit the Dunnellon Boys & Girls Club.

"This is the second year KP Hole has provided canoes

and kayaks for this event," stated Commission Chair, Jim Payton. *"It is a fun day for all involved."*

Registration forms can be picked up at the Dunnellon Area Chamber of Commerce, Gruffs Tap and Grille, Rainbow River Canoe & Kayak, Boomtown Media and Soggy Bottom Tours & Rentals or you can download the form from www.myboomtown.info

Greg's Guidelines to Reduce Conflicts Between Humans & Wildlife

Do not discard food around your yard or feed wild animals and birds unless you are willing to accept the fact that you will invariably attract unwanted species.

Homeowners should secure garbage and trash cans with tight fitting lids and squirrel proof bird feeders.

Cover small access holes in the eaves of your home, as well as at ground level, to prevent entry of small mam-

mals, birds, reptiles and amphibians.

Clean up dense brush piles, thick vegetation and weeds near your home to reduce preferred habitat of undesirables.

Do not feed alligators! This is against the law and will cause the gators to lose their fear of people and may attack unsuspecting victims. Keep domestic poultry and fowl in properly constructed enclosures to ensure against losses to predators.

When planting small gardens, plan for losses to rabbits, squirrels or raccoons. A small chicken wire or electric fence will eliminate most animals. Consider use of commercial repellents or scare devices.

Do not approach any bold or abnormally acting wild animals; they may be sick and infected with rabies.

For more information on nuisance or feral animals, please contact Greg Wiley, Parks and Natural Resources Manager, at (352) 671-8560.



"Friday Fun Nights"

On Friday evenings from 6 – 9:30 p.m., Brick City Adventure Park provides a "Friday Fun Night - Parents Night Out" program where kids can have a safe and entertaining evening so parents can enjoy up to three hours of free time.

A typical night will include supervised games, crafts, music and other fun activities. The program dates are: October 2, 16 and 30; November 13 and December 18.

The fee is \$5 per child per night with pre-registration required.

Brick City Adventure Park is located at 1211 SE 22 Road in Ocala. For more information, or to pre-register, please contact the Marion County Parks and Recreation Department at (352) 671-8560.





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Calendar of Events

Date	Event	Location	Time
September 2	Pre-School PE	Brick City Adventure Park	9 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.
	HPER	Brick City Adventure Park	10 a.m. and 11:15 a.m.
	Home-School Art Program	Brick City Adventure Park	10 a.m. and 11:15 a.m.
September 4	Adult Kayak Outing	Rainbow River	9:30 a.m.
September 9	Pre-School PE	Brick City Adventure Park	9 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.
	HPER	Brick City Adventure Park	10 a.m. and 11:15 a.m.
	Home-School Art Program	Brick City Adventure Park	10 a.m. and 11:15 a.m.
September 12	Adult Kayak Outing	Ocklawaha River	9:30 a.m.
	Art Van-Go	Baseline Road Trailhead	10 a.m.
		Liberty Community Park	12 noon
		Wrigley Fields	2 p.m.
September 16	Pre-School PE	Brick City Adventure Park	9 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.
	HPER	Brick City Adventure Park	10 a.m. and 11:15 a.m.
	Home-School Art Program	Brick City Adventure Park	10 a.m. and 11:15 a.m.
September 22	Interpretive Hike	Greenway Land Bridge	9 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
September 23	Pre-School PE	Brick City Adventure Park	9 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.
	HPER	Brick City Adventure Park	10 a.m. and 11:15 a.m.
	Home-School Art Program	Brick City Adventure Park	10 a.m. and 11:15 a.m.
September 26	Springs Festival	Rainbow Springs State Park	10 a.m. - 4 p.m.
September 28	Park Explorers for Tweens/Teens	Brick City Adventure Park	8 a.m. - 5 p.m.
September 30	Pre-School PE	Brick City Adventure Park	9 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.
	HPER	Brick City Adventure Park	10 a.m. and 11:15 a.m.
	Home-School Art Program	Brick City Adventure Park	10 a.m. and 11:15 a.m.

Private Recreation Programs

Groups interested in booking a customized outdoor recreation experience for family, friends or co-workers can contact the Marion County Parks and Recreation Department for fees and to coordinate dates. Program areas include:

- Beginner Caving
- Geocaching
- Kayak Instruction Clinic
- Kayak River Trips for Youth and Adults
- Eco Tours (in Marion County)
- Overnight Campouts
- Ropes Course Program

Tell us your desired adventure and we will customize a trip for you.

For information, please contact Cathy Norris at (352) 671-8560 or e-mail cathy.norris@marioncountyfl.org.





All programs are limited in size and require preregistration. For more information or to preregister, please call the designated center.

SIDEWALK ASTRONOMY AT THE DISCOVERY CENTER
701 NE Sanchez Avenue | 401-3900
Friday, Sept. 25 & Friday, Oct. 23 | 7-9:30 p.m.
Join us in celebrating the global International Year of Astronomy 2009! The whole family is invited as we introduce the night sky with telescope viewings, hands-on activities and a brief educational presentation. FREE!

SPORTSABILITY
Oct. 2 at MLK Rec Complex | 10 a.m.-3 p.m.
Oct. 3 at Carney Island | 10 a.m.-3 p.m.
Discover the latest in equipment, trends and resources and learn how to enhance the life of people with disabilities. Participate in activities such as sailing, jet skiing, wheelchair basketball, therapeutic horseback riding and much more. Call 401-3916 for details.

■■■■■■■■ CITY OF OCALA RECREATION & PARKS 352.368.5550 ■■■■■■■■

■■■ MARION COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION UPCOMING PROGRAMS & ACTIVITIES ■■■

■■■ ADULT PROGRAMS ■■■

KAYAK OUTINGS FOR ADULTS
Rainbow River | Sept. 4 & Dec. 4 | 9:30 a.m.
\$20 per excursion plus park entrance fee.
Ocklawaha River | Sept. 12, Oct. 31 & Nov. 6 | 9:30 a.m.
\$25 per excursion plus park entrance fee.

Silver River | Oct. 16 & Dec. 19 | 9:30 a.m.
\$25 per excursion plus park entrance fee.
Kayak Outings for participants with paddling experience - kayaks, paddles, life jackets and ground transportation provided. Preregistration required.

KAYAK AND KOFFEE
Rainbow River | Oct. 8, Nov. 5 & Dec. 3 | 10 a.m.
Silver River | Oct. 22, Nov. 19 & Dec. 17 | 10 a.m.
Mini-outings on the river that are ideal for beginners - kayaks, paddles and life jackets provided. \$15 per excursion plus park entrance fee. Preregistration required.

OVERNIGHT KAYAK CAMPOUTS ON THE OCKLAWAHA RIVER
November 21-22 & December 12-13
This outdoor adventure on the Ocklawaha River provides great insight into the local history of the river and the Greenway habitat. Activities include a night hike and nocturnal wildlife observation. Camping will be at a primitive site. \$60 per person (per excursion) includes kayak, paddles, life jacket, camping gear and meals. Participants must supply their own sleeping bag. Limited to ten adults. Preregistration required.

BIRD AND NATURE WALKS AT MARION COUNTY PARKS
Oct 3 | Marshall Swamp Trailhead | 9:30 a.m.
Nov. 14 | Blue Run of Dunnellon | 9:30 a.m.
Dec. 5 | Carney Island | 9:30 a.m.
Whether you are a beginner or an experienced bird watcher, these outings promise to provide an enjoyable outdoor experience. Participants should bring a hat, insect repellent, binoculars (if you have them) and water. FREE! Preregistration required.

BRICK CITY ADVENTURE PARK BIRDING CLASS
1300 SE 22nd Road
October 31 | 9 a.m.-12 p.m.
\$10 per person or \$15 per couple.
Preregistration required.

■■■ YOUTH PROGRAMS ■■■

ART VAN-GO AT MARION COUNTY PARKS
Sept. 12 | Oct. 3 | Nov. 7 | Dec. 5
10 a.m. - Baseline Road Trailhead Park
12 p.m. - Liberty Community Park
2 p.m. - Wrigley Fields
Children ages 5-15 are invited to join us for our mobile art program featuring a new art activity each month. \$2 per child which covers art instruction and materials.

HOME-SCHOOL PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND RECREATION (HPER) CLUB
Brick City Adventure Park | 1300 SE 22nd Road
Wednesdays resuming September 2
Our "HPER Club" meets with 5-9 year olds from 10-11 a.m. and 10-17 year olds from 11:15 a.m.-12:15 p.m. \$10 per month for the first child and \$7 for each additional child within the same family. The program encourages teamwork, strategy and fair play in a social setting. Preregistration required.

HOME-SCHOOL ART PROGRAM AT BRICK CITY ADVENTURE PARK
1300 SE 22nd Road
Wednesdays resuming September 2
10-11 a.m. boys & girls 10-14 years old and 11:15 a.m.-12:15 p.m. boys & girls 4-9 years old. \$10 per month for the first child and \$7 for each additional child within the same family. Preregistration required.

MARION COUNTY PARK EXPLORERS FOR TWEENS/TEENS
Sept. 28 & Oct. 30 | 8 a.m.-5 p.m.
Learn about nature and wildlife in our community with activities that include hiking, kayaking and other activities. Youth ages 12-16. \$20 per date includes lunch. Preregistration required.

■■■ FAMILY PROGRAMS ■■■

OWL-WEEN AT CARNEY ISLAND
13275 SE 115th Avenue | Ocklawaha
October 24 | 2 p.m. & 4 p.m.
Celebrate Halloween with our nocturnal friends as we learn about owls and other raptor type birds during our wildlife education programs. \$5 per adult and \$3 per child (ages 8-17), which does not include the \$5 per car park fee. Preregistration required.

FAMILY CAMP-OUT AT CARNEY ISLAND
13275 SE 115th Avenue | Ocklawaha
November 7-8
An overnight camp-out for families that includes nature hikes, kayaking, storytelling, nature crafts, a cook-out dinner and breakfast on the grill. Children must be at least eight years old. \$30 for a family of two and \$10 for each additional family member; includes activities, tents, camping equipment (excluding sleeping bags), meals and snacks. Preregistration required.

All programs are limited in size and require preregistration. For more information, or to preregister, please call or stop by our office located at 111 SE 25th Avenue in Ocala.

