

Mississippi's Lower Delta Partnership

September 2011

Great Delta Bear Affair 2011

10 Affairs to Remember is the theme for the 10th Great Delta Bear Affair festival on October 22, 2011. While the Saturday festival is full of vendors, events and great music, there are activities leading up to the festival that

are focused on education and outreach.

On Thursday before the festival, GDBA committee members join Theodore Roosevelt living historian, Case Hicks and his wife Susan as they visit the Blair E. Batson Children's Hospital in Jackson. Hicks goes from room to room visiting with patients, sharing anecdotes about President Roosevelt as he gives each child a teddy bear donated by the Theodore Roosevelt Society.

Friday, October 21, is Youth Education Day. Coordinated by Delta Soil and Water Conservation Districts, this field trip event is focused on 4th graders from Sharkey and surrounding counties. Approximately 500 4th grade students and their teachers rotate through stations that teach about wildlife, habitats, conservation and history. The students enjoy a hamburger lunch on the Sharkey County Courthouse grounds as Terry Vandeventer, the snake man, wows them with his live snakes. Sharkey Issaquena 4-H Leadership students act as group leaders for the day.

Saturday is Festival Day! It begins with a 5K run/walk at 8 a.m. and the music gets underway at 9 a.m. A new event this year, sponsored by COPP (Curb our Pet Population), is the Strut Your Mutt dog walk at 9. Dress up your canine and have him strut his stuff in front of the Courthouse for fun and prizes. There is a \$15.00 entry fee that goes to COPP.

At 10, children may participate in the Teddy Bear Fun Run, a 1 mile run for children ages 5 - 12. Sam Brookes' Mound Tours will leave from the USDA building on Hwy. 61 at 10 a.m. and again at 1 p.m. (see page 4)

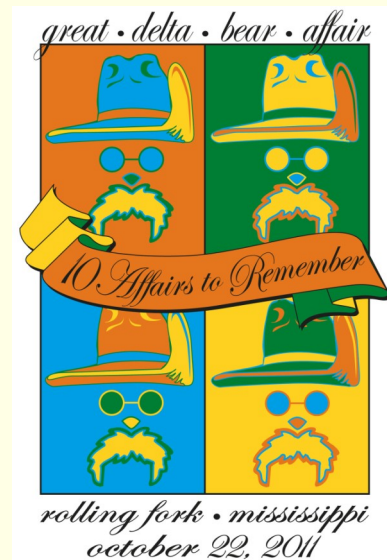
Another popular children's event is Storytelling with Doris Jones at the Library at 10:30, followed by Terry Vandeventer and his live snakes at 11:30. The final seminar will take place at 1:30 with Mississippi Black Bear Biologist, Brad Young discussing Black Bears in Mississippi. There were a record number of bear cubs born across the Delta this year. Thanks to educational efforts, like those at the Great Delta Bear Affair, the black bear population is rebounding in its native Mississippi habitats.

Another new event for 2012 will be a Motorcycle Poker Run. The poker run will begin at 1:00 and registration will be on-site behind the courthouse, the cost is \$10.00 per hand.

Dayton Scoggins will create another chainsaw carved bear for Rolling Fork throughout the day on Saturday. Be sure to stop by and watch this world champion chainsaw artist work wonders with a 12 foot cypress log donated by Anderson Tully.

There will be live music throughout the day that includes a range of genres and acts. Greenville native, singer/songwriter Steve Azar, will headline at 4:00 p.m. See the complete musical lineup on page 5.

The day will end with a fantastic fireworks display taking place behind the main stage around 7:30 p.m. Join us in Rolling Fork for the 10th Great Delta Bear Affair on September 22, 2011. For more information visit: www.greatdeltabearaffair.org.



Fishing Rodeo scheduled for September 24 in Delta National Forest

Mississippi's Lower Delta Partnership along with Delta National Forest will host its 6th Annual Youth Fishing Rodeo on September 24, 2011. The Fishing Rodeo will take place at Blue Lake Recreation Area in Delta National Forest.

Youth up to age 15 are welcome to come out to Delta National Forest and fish Blue Lake; there is no charge. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will stock the lake with catfish for this event. Fishing will take place from 8 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

Participants will need to bring their own poles and tackle, bait will be provided. Prizes will be awarded for the largest fish, smallest fish and the first fish caught. All participants will receive a treat bag of goodies. Lunch will be provided for the children, their parents and any volunteers.

Call Meg Cooper at LDP, 662- 873-6261, with any questions or to volunteer at this event.



Photos from the 2010 Blue Lake Fishing Rodeo

Bricks and Spokes Bicycle Ride

The Second Annual Bricks and Spokes bicycle ride will be held in Vicksburg on Saturday, October 1. Sponsored by the Vicksburg Main Street Association, Bricks and Spokes features a 10 mile, 30 mile and 50 mile ride, all of which begin in downtown Vicksburg and travel south to the Old Mississippi River Bridge where cyclists will cross the Mississippi River. Riders of all ages are welcome to participate.

The fee for any distance is \$ 35.00. For more information contact The Vicksburg Main Street Program at 601-634-4527 or www.downtownvicksburg.org.



Paddling, canoeing business workshop set for Sept. 28-29 in Monroe, LA

A two-day workshop on developing outdoor recreation on agricultural lands has been scheduled for Sept. 28-29 at Black Bayou Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Monroe, La.

Sponsored by the LSU AgCenter and Mississippi State University's Natural Resource Enterprises Program, the program will focus on developing agritourism activities featuring wildlife and water systems on farmlands, according to LSU AgCenter agritourism coordinator Dora Ann Hatch.



Guest speakers will talk about revenue potential, outdoor recreational opportunities on farmlands, how to start an outfitter business and legal concerns, as well as hunting and crawfish production, Hatch said.

Nationally known river guide John Ruskey will speak and offer a canoe trip on the first day of the workshop. The river guide and outfitter from Clarksdale, Miss., will lead two 10-person canoes on a two-hour paddle. The fee is \$25.

Keynote speaker for the first day will be Daryl Jones, director of Mississippi State University's Natural Resource Enterprises Program. Jones will present statistics about enterprise development and trends that are making outdoor recreation popular.

Hatch will discuss marketing enterprises, and LSU AgCenter wildlife specialist Don Reed will talk about managing private lands for fee or lease hunting.

Optional activities at the end of the first day will include a photography session and a bird-watching session offered by the Friends of the Black Bayou Lake National Wildlife Refuge.

The second day will give participants an opportunity to learn about successful tourism programs in paddling, becoming an outfitter and legal liabilities associated with navigating waterways.

Keynote speaker for day two will be Tom Potter, executive director of North Carolina Paddle Trails, who will provide information on the economic and social impacts of paddling.

A panel of speakers including Bayou Teche National Wildlife Refuge volunteer Donovan Garcia, Ruskey and Byron Almquist, of Canoe and Paddling Adventures, will talk about how they got involved in paddling and offering their services to others. Both Ruskey and Almquist own paddling businesses. Garcia paddles for fun and leads paddlers along Bayou Teche as a volunteer to encourage participation in the activity.

After the panel, Stuart Johnson, assistant secretary in the Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism Office of State Parks; Keith Casio with the Louisiana Natural and Scenic Rivers Program in the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries; Bob Strader, Gay Brantley and Jean Mikeal with National Wildlife Refuges in Mississippi and in Monroe and Tallulah, La., will talk about state and national opportunities for nature-based tourism in their respective areas.

During the afternoon session, Lynne Warnock-Dorsey, of Bayou Dorcheat; Stephanie Herrman, of Lake D'Arbonne; Jennifer Ritter, of Bayou Teche; and Steven L. Windham, of the Atchafalaya National Heritage Area will discuss how their paddling trails were developed and their plans for the future.

Registration for this event is available online at www.LSUAgCenter.com/onlinestore and at www.lsuagcenter.com/agritourism and opening the brochure under the conferences tab.

The fee is \$50 for single days or \$75 for both days.

More information is available from Hatch at 318-927-9654, ext. 229, or at dhatch@agcenter.lsu.edu.

Indian Mounds in the Rolling Fork area

by Sam Brookes

The archaeology of the Rolling Fork area is interesting to say the least. The area around Rolling Fork has a number of Indian mounds. To the south of Rolling Fork are the Rolling Fork mounds, formerly known as the Montauk Mounds. Originally there were three mounds here. This group has suffered from erosion caused by cattle, construction of a house and the digging of a cellar as well as leveling to lower the mound. Today two mounds survive, both badly altered. This is the group by the red barn. The Victorian house that was atop Mound B is no longer extant. Recent excavations sponsored by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers revealed a relatively large village site with rectangular houses and numerous pits to the south of the mounds. Up till around AD 900 most sites were located along either the Mississippi or Yazoo rivers. After this time Deer Creek began to be settled by the Indians, with most mound construction occurring from AD 1200 – 1400.

A second mound group was constructed at this time just north of Rolling Fork. The Carter mound group consists of two mounds on the west side of Deer Creek. As with the Rolling Fork mounds, settlement began around AD 900 with most construction occurring around AD 1200 – 1400. Carter is located one and one quarter miles north of the Rolling Fork mounds.

A third group is at Mont Helena, two and one quarter miles north of Carter. Originally three mounds were present at Mont Helena. Only the largest, Mound A is still extant. This mound is most notable for the house that still sits atop it. However it is a large and impressive mound. Originally ten feet higher than today this was the largest mound in the immediate vicinity of Rolling Fork. Roughly ten feet of dirt was pushed off this mound and used to widen the platform for the house. Like its neighbors, the initial occupation of this group occurred about AD 900 with most mound building activities taking place between AD 1200 – 1400.

The mounds of these three groups consist of rectangular platforms that served as the base for structures. Usually the largest mound in a group supported the temple. The remaining mounds supported houses of important people in the society. Archaeologists from Harvard noted that none of these sites show evidence of fortification. The Lake George mound group at Holly Bluff has a moat and defensive earthwork surrounding the mounds. There is evidence of conflict however, as in the late period the stone tools are all manufactured from local materials suggesting the trade routes had been shut down by internecine conflicts. People of this period were agriculturalists, though hunting and fishing were important. Most sites yield an abundance of fish, raccoon and possum remains as well as acorns and other wild species. Few sites in the region show evidence of occupation after ca. AD 1500. Reasons for this are unknown, though it is possible that warfare, combined with the effects of the Little Ice Age may well have contributed to the population decline.

*Sam Brookes, US Forest Service archaeologist, will lead tours to mound groups near Rolling Fork at 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. during the **Great Delta Bear Affair**. Participants in this free tour will drive their own vehicle and get out at the stops to hear about the mounds and their builders.*



Mont Helena mound north of Rolling Fork

Mark Your Calendar

September 20 – Lower Delta Talk – Martha Foose with “A Southerly Course: Traveling Foodways Close to Home” 6:30, S-I County Library

September 24 – LDP and Delta National Forest host the Blue Lake Fishing Rodeo at Blue Lake Recreation Area in Delta National Forest. For Youth up to age 16, bring your own pole!

September 28-29 - MSU/LSU Paddling Enterprises workshop

Month of October - Farmer Jim’s Pumpkin Patch and Corn Maze will be open on Hwy 16, just outside of Rolling Fork. Visit www.farmerjimspumpkinpatch.com for more information

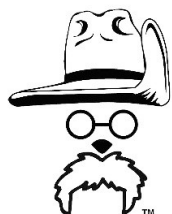
October 1 - Bricks and Spokes Bicycle Ride, Vicksburg, MS

October 18 – Lower Delta Talk – Hank Burdine, Paul Hollis and Peter Nimrod with “The Great Flood of 2011” 6:30, S-I County Library

October 21- Great Delta Bear Affair Youth Education Day

October 22 – The Great Delta Bear Affair! Downtown Rolling Fork.

November 15 – Lower Delta Talk – Willy Bearden with “Saints and Sinners: People Who made the Delta the Delta”



Great Delta Bear Affair

Scheduled Events

- 8:00 a.m. 5K Run/Walk
Register at Gazebo, \$15 entry fee
- 10:00 a.m. Teddy Bear Fun Run
*1-mile, Ages 5-12
Register at Gazebo, \$5 entry fee*
- 10:30 a.m. Prehistoric Mound Tour
Driving tour begins at USDA Building, 78 Frontage Rd.
- 10:30 a.m. Storytelling with Doris Jones
At the S-I Library
- 11:30 a.m. Live Snake Presentation
With Terry Vandevanter, at S-I Library
- 1:00 pm. Prehistoric Mound Tour
Driving tour begins at USDA Building, 78 Frontage Rd.
- Poker Run
*Registration on site. \$10/hand.
For info, call 662.907.1105*
- 1:30 pm. Mississippi Black Bear Research Seminar
With Stephanie Simek, MSU Graduate Research Associate, at S-I Library
- Youth Wildlife Olympics
*Teams of 5, Junior High & High School
Ages, Pre-register by Oct. 14 @ 662.873.6261*

Chainsaw Woodcarving Demonstrations throughout the day by Dayton Scoggins
Meet Theodore Roosevelt and Holt Collier impersonators as they mingle with the crowd

“10 Affairs to Remember”
Saturday, October 22, 2011
Downtown Rolling Fork, MS

Main Stage Line-up

- 9:00 a.m. Sharkey-Issaquena Mass Choir
- 10:00 a.m. Ben Payton
- 11:00 a.m. King Edward Blues Band
- 12:15 p.m. The Chill
- 1:15 p.m. Tim Johnson as Elvis
- 2:00 p.m. Eupora
- 3:00 p.m. Tea & Sympathy
- 4:00 p.m. Steve Azar
- 5:45 p.m. Shadz of Grey
- 7:00 p.m. The Grayhounds
- 7:30 p.m. FIREWORKS!

Food, Arts & Crafts Vendors & Exhibits
Open at 9 a.m.

Amusement Activities for Children
11 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Bungee Jump • Obstacle Course
Space Jump • Spider Mountain

