

SWANNEE • RIVER REFLECTIONS

THE NEWSLETTER OF STEPHEN FOSTER FOLK CULTURE CENTER STATE PARK

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UPCOMING CSO MEETINGS

August 21

5:30PM

at the

Nature &

Heritage Center

Upcoming CSO Meetings

CSO Board Meeting: August 21 at 5:30 pm
at the Nature and Heritage Center

General Membership Meeting:
September 18 at 6:30 pm

Eat & Meet! In the Auditorium. Bring a dish to share, come enjoy fellowship with friends and learn a about what's going on in the park.



ADVENTURE ANYONE? Explore the real Florida. Borrow an Adventure Pack from our Park Store.

Our Adventure Packs have a three-way bug viewer, compass, binoculars, awesome information about Florida flora and fauna, a dip net, and specimen cup.

A MESSAGE FROM THE CSO PRESIDENT

Hey there, Volunteers and Park Staff,

You guys, I have a big smile on my face as I think about the wonderful year, we have had at Stephen Foster Folk Culture Center State Park. And let me tell you, it is all thanks to folks like you!

To our dear volunteers, you have been the heart and soul of our park. And to our hardworking Park Staff, you have been the backbone. We have danced our way through the Folk Festival and Festival of Lights and welcomed new celebrations with "I Love Art" and "Juneteenth."

And here is some music to our ears: the bells are getting fixed! Our efforts have paid off, and we are on our way to hearing them ring again.

Looking ahead, I cannot wait to see you at the Old Time Music Festival and the Quilt Show. It is going to be a wonderful time!

Now, mark your calendars, friends: we have CSO Board meeting coming up on August 21 at 5:30 pm at the old Tourism Center; and a regular CSO meeting September 18th at 6:30 PM in the park auditorium – bring a dish to share. I sure hope to see your smiling faces there, as we chat about all the good things to come.

Thank you, from the bottom of my heart, for your passion, creativity, and true neighborly support. Together, we are cooking up something real special.

Gratefully yours,

Shauna Adams

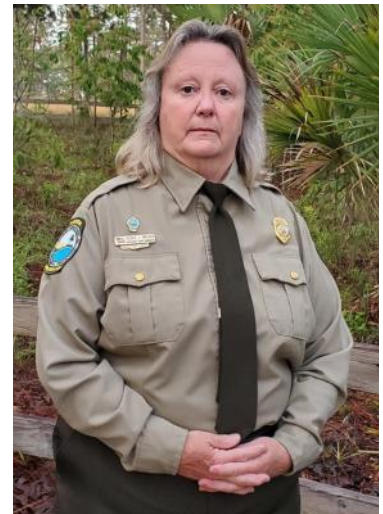
President, Stephen Foster Citizen Support Organization

MESSAGE FROM THE PARK MANAGER, MANNY PEREZ

Wow, has it been hot! Please use caution when enjoying the outdoors. At the park, we have been starting folks earlier in the day to beat the heat and using the afternoon to concentrate on indoor work. I'm using my in-door time to focus on all the things I am thankful for.

I am very thankful for our **new Assistant Park Manager, Debra Walker**. If you have been walking around the park, you have seen her working with the crew on several projects, including mowing and building repair.

A little on her background, Debra is a Texas native, born in McKinney just north of Dallas. As a young girl, she was taught to enjoy what nature had to offer. Her family would often travel to the North Georgia Mountains and the beaches of Panama City. From a very early age, Debra knew she wanted to travel and see the world. She enlisted right after high school in the United States Air Force and served for eight years. Debra was the first woman in her career field of fuels to achieve the rank of Staff Sergeant. She learned about different cultures while stationed in the Philippines, traveling to Korea, Japan, and Okinawa. After leaving the Air Force, Debra joined the Florida Park Service in 1997. She has studied natural, cultural, and archeological resources during her 26-tenure in the state parks, working 15 years at St. Andrews State Park, then at Forest Capital Museum, and Troy Spring State Park before coming to Stephen Foster. Debra's interest includes antiques, archeology, history, and researching her family ancestry.



Assistant Park Manager,
Debra Walker

I am also thankful for and want to thank the CSO Board for the purchase of our Conex storage container, allowing more storage for Festival of Lights displays and supplies.

I am thankful for the new kiosk panels at Big Shoals– Check out page 10 to see those!

STEPHEN FOSTER CARILLON RESTORATION UPDATE



The park continues to move forward in restoration of the first set of bells in the Stephen Foster Deagan Carillon. The process has been a long and winding journey just to get started, but we're finally on our way.

After many long discussions with the Florida Department of State, Division of Historical Resources (grantor), we finally were able to solicit proposals for the restoration work.

A proposal was received by The Verdin Company with recommendations that were outside of the original scope of work that was submitted in the grant application. After a few more long discussions over several months, it was finally determined that the proposal was acceptable and the CSO was allowed to enter into a contract with The Verdin Company.

However, work could not proceed until The Verdin Company submitted drawings of the proposed work and those drawings were confirmed by the Division of Historical Resources to meet the Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines for Historic Preservation. Drawings were promptly received from The Verdin Company in mid-May and in early August approval was finally received to proceed with the project. The Verdin Company has started manufacturing new strikers for the carillon.

Our next hurdle....removing the copper louvers from near the top of the tower so the old strikers can be removed. Know anybody with experience working with copper?

Contact Manny.Perez@floridadep.gov.

IT STARTS WITH AN APPLICATION...

FLORIDA



FOLK FESTIVAL

MUSIC. HERITAGE. LEGEND.

Have you ever wondered how we find so many fantastic and unique acts for the Florida Folk Festival?

It's not always easy, but it starts with an application.

Applications are posted and sent out to former applicants August 1 of each year. Performers have until October 1st to submit their applications. Each applicant must also submit recordings of their performances to be evaluated by a review panel. The review panel made up of individuals from across the State of Florida who have expertise in booking folk performers, are Florida Folk Heritage award winners, are in a position to be exposed to a wide variety of folk musicians and in some cases....panel members just love folk music. The panel reviews applications in November, carefully listening to recordings and makes recommendations based on quality of performance and musicianship.

Do you have a favorite folk performer? Have them submit an application to perform at the Florida Folk Festival <https://www.floridastateparks.org/parks-and-trails/stephen-foster-folk-culture-center-state-park/florida-folk-festival-participant-information>.

Do you have a favorite performer you would like to be considered as a feature performer? Email Elaine.McGrath@Floridadep.gov.

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT STEPHEN FOSTER STATE PARK

We love Interpretation!

This summer the park held its Summer Adventure Series again! Everything from Junior Ranger Activities to Fishing!

More than 75 enjoyed the fun-filled activities offered this summer. **Thank you to the Stephen Foster CSO for providing popsicles for the kids!**



ALL ABOUT BEARS!

Park Rangers and Teri, from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission teamed up to learn all about Florida Black Bears!



FIRE & WATER DAY!

Our partners at Forestry joined us again this year with Smokey Bear! We learned about fire safety and then played games with the fire hoses!

FISHING FUN! The River levels may have been too high to have our Fishing Program on the riverbank, so we decided to try our hand at Backyard Bass Fishing, knot tying, and identification games!



WHAT'S HAPPENING AT STEPHEN FOSTER STATE PARK



Rural Folklife Days

Rural Folklife Days (RFD) is an educational event for children of all ages (this includes an adult's inner child) hosted by Stephen Foster Folk Culture Center State Park where the past meets the present. It has been quite a few years since we have hosted RFD and we would like to

announce that some of past demonstrators will be returning; Ethel McDonald will be canning jams and jellies, Jo Arrington will be making lye soap, and The Baldwins, consisting of Lloyd, Brent, and Inslee will be playing music while Andy Kane will be calling for the square dancing. Our new resident blacksmith, John Pfund, will be demonstrating his skill at the forge. Other kinds of demonstrations are in the process of being planned, so stay tuned to see what else there is in store.

Other home and farm techniques from the past are welcomed and Volunteers are appreciated! Willingness to work with school age children is crucial.

If you are interested contact the Events' Team at 386-397-7005. The date for Rural Folklife Days is Thursday, November 2nd.



WHAT'S HAPPENING AT STEPHEN FOSTER STATE PARK



Festival of Lights

The Stephen Foster Festival of Lights is officially scheduled for December 8 – December 23. The event will include marshmallow roasting, hot chocolate, popcorn and of course, the big guy. We'll also be open December 24, but without all the extras.

Can you hang lights? Are you Creative? Do you love holiday décor? Ever want to recreate your favorite holiday memory in lights? Now's your opportunity!

We need volunteers and organizations that would like to work alongside park staff or to work alone if you wish, to help make the Festival of Lights come to life. We need scene designers, light hangers, light checkers, artists, painters, carpenters, electricians and just extra sets of hands to help beginning in October.

Smiling faces are also needed to be hot chocolatiers, marshmallow fluffers, bonfire managers, popcorn poppers, Santa's elves, ticket takers and to be extra sets of hands to help during the event.

The Festival of Lights won't happen without volunteers. We need you! If you're interested in any of these volunteer positions or know of an organization that might want to help out, please contact the park by email at Volunteer.StephenFoster@dep.state.fl.us or give us a call at (386) 397-7009.

WELCOME TO THE TEAM!



John Hill

**Park Service Specialist,
Events Team**

I feel blessed to have joined the team at Stephen Foster Folk Culture Center State Park.

Joining the team has been a new beginning for me where I

can put my collective experiences to use as well as learn a myriad of new skills that will make me feel successful as a person.

In 2016, I completed my Bachelor of Science at the University of Tennessee Knoxville in Ecology and Evolutionary with foci in mycology and herpetology.

After University, I went to Australia for a gap year (which turned into *years*) on a program called the Working Holiday Visa where I had the opportunity to meet people from all over the world and became fast friends with some of them. I had opportunities to be employed as a Reptile Interpreter for a learning center and Event Coordinator for a hostel chain. Both of these positions, I feel were integral in preparing me for joining the Florida Park Service, especially being on the Events' Team at Stephen Foster.

Every day has been something new and exciting since I have been here. Most recently, I have started taking lessons on blacksmithing and have the opportunity to operate the forge here. Blacksmithing is only one of my many interests, to name some more: hiking, kayaking, martial arts, ballroom dancing, cooking, and Japanese culture. If you come by to talk to me, I am always willing to make a new friend to share my interests (including ones not listed) with and if you are lucky enough, maybe even be able to try out one of my recipes.

BIG SHOALS STATE PARK



We are very excited to share that we have updated our kiosk panels at both Big Shoals and Little Shoals!

The updates include an updated and easier to read map, a QR code that takes visitors the Big Shoals website and information on what to see and experience at the park.

Currently, we are developing temporary and informative flyers that will update and change depending on what's happening at the park.

We are looking for volunteers to help out at the Shoals!

Jobs include:

- Blowing off the Woodpecker Trail
- Trail Maintenance
- Mowing & Trimming
- Pressure Washing
- Building & Repairing bridges

Contact Jessica Watkins if you are interested in volunteering at the Shoals.

Jessica.Watkins@dep.state.fl.us
or (386) 397-4331



CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

Event Season is starting back up!

If you are interested in volunteering for any of our upcoming events, please contact us at

Volunteer.StephenFoster@dep.state.fl.us

September 8-10, 2023: Old Time Music Weekend

October 20-22, 2023: Quilt Show & Sale

November 2, 2023: Rural Folklife Days

November 10-11, 2023: Dulcimer Retreat

December 8-24, 2023: Festival of Lights

January 14, 2024: Stephen Foster Day

YOU ARE INVITED TO JOIN THE STEPHEN FOSTER CITIZEN SUPPORT ORGANIZATION (CSO)

The CSO is an organization dedicated to helping the park succeed in all of its endeavors and to increase the park's participation in the local community. The CSO uses its membership funds to:

- ◆ *Help maintain and expand park facilities and exhibits;*
- ◆ *Help manage, preserve and protect the natural communities in the park;*
- ◆ *Provide educational activities for children and adults;*
- ◆ *Make the park an integral part of community life in White Springs and North Florida.*

Your membership to the CSO includes free admission to the park on the second Saturday of each month, a free bimonthly newsletter with park news and events and attendance to the bimonthly meetings where you can have your ideas on the park heard by fellow CSO member and the board. Please join today in order to keep receiving your newsletter and help support your park.

**Join us or renew your membership online at
www.stephenfostercso.org**

If you are already a CSO member, login with your email and create your account to access the members only section.

If you are not a current CSO member, create your account and join us today!