



# The Arkansas Post Gazette

## Organizational Meeting for The Friends of Arkansas Post - June 14

On June 14, at 7:00 pm, a meeting is planned to assess the interest of the community and the willingness of prospective members to undertake the necessary roles to form a Friends Group. There is an apparent interest from a fair number of community members that have provided their names and addresses requesting that they be included in the discussion. Mr. Marty Sterkel from the NPS Midwest Regional Office will lead a discussion of the processes and basic operational parameters of such groups. He has extensive experience in partnerships and the operation of Friends Groups gained through his position as Associate Regional Director for Partnerships and Concessions. He also coordinated the development of the "NPS --Making Friends Handbook" which provides a step by step guide to creation of a Friends Group.

This first meeting will be a 'meet-and-greet', where everyone will be able to introduce themselves, express their expectations, gather information and be able to discuss their concerns and reservations. Attendees will be asked to volunteer for the roles as organizers and assume the duties necessary to develop a Charter, By-Laws and a basic Board of Director's guidelines. (Representative samples are available from the NPS-Making Friends Handbook.) Once the founding documents are developed a subsequent meeting will be scheduled and a Board created as specified in the Charter. The Board will then need to file



James "Doc" George of Pine Bluff won the Grand Champion photo for a second consecutive year. See all of last years winners on pages 4 -5.

documents with the Secretary of State's Office, negotiate an agreement with the park and finally but certainly not least, file forms with the IRS to establish the group's tax status.

Friends Groups are a partnership between the community and the park. Their boards can act as ambassadors of sorts, helping to extend the presence and values of the park into the community in a positive way. They help leverage the work of park employees through donated labor and funds. They may provide an avenue for public steward-

ship of park resources. Ultimately, they are a way to deepen public support for the park and the value of the park to the community. Traditionally, Friends Groups function in support of a park as volunteers and advocates and provide additional financial resources through fundraising activities. Some of the roles that Friends Groups have undertaken in their efforts to support NPS parks and programs are recruit and manage volunteers, involve communities, inform

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# Superintendent's Scribblin's

I am really quite anxious about the upcoming meeting – the one aimed at founding a Friends Group for Arkansas Post NM. There is definitely a need and there seems to be a widespread interest in helping the park to grow and manage the resources appropriately. My anxiety comes from the knowledge of the commitment required to make and keep it running. It cannot be done by one or even two people! It is going to take the support of more than a handful of folks; it will need more like a community of interested and dedicated patrons.

I have had the privilege of working alongside several actively functioning park Friends Groups during my career and they are a pleasure to partner with since they are organized to accomplish the very same things that the park employees are trying to do. A Friends Group however, is able to do tasks that the park, as a federal agency, is unable or is specifically prohibited from doing. Probably one of the most frustrating parts of managing a park is the inability of the park to attract visitors. Oh, the park can provide great events or programs but the problem is we can't tell anybody – a federal agency is prohibited from advertising. We must rely on the good graces of news media, informational posters and the like to get the word out. Unlike an amusement park or other business enterprise, we are prohibited from buying spots on television

or radio stations or even ads in magazines or newspapers. Things that most businesses rely on for attracting customers, we can't do. A Friends Group can come to the rescue. They can buy air time or a big fancy ad with a resulting influx of visitation.

Another function that a Friends Group can perform that a park cannot is in the political arena. A federal agency cannot lobby. The park answers queries from congressional offices, but cannot advocate for or against congressional actions even if the action has a critical effect on park resources or activities.

But among all the things that a Friends Group can accomplish for a park, probably the greatest is their ability to garner support for park management decisions. The park is limited by the staff's ability to hold public meetings or conduct surveys when it comes to park issues. A Friends Group serves as an immediate and "friendly" forum for sounding out plans. That does not mean that a Friends Group will necessarily agree with the park's plan. But, if there is a disagreement, it can be resolved in a reasonable atmosphere. Friends Groups can be fantastic help to their parks.



**Edward E. Wood, Park Superintendent**

Getting back to my anxiety . . . For all the great things that a Friends Group can do, there is a cost. These groups are not perpetual motion machines! They require energy to fuel their engines. They need things that do not come cheap in this day and age – time and sweat. Running a Friends Group is akin to running a business. There are Charters, Boards of Directors, financial reports, contractual agreements, and membership issues. The real problem is finding some very interested people who will commit to providing the time and expertise to both get the group started and then keeping it running. I think that there is a genuine interest in an Arkansas Post National Memorial Friends Group and that if the right people step up, my anxiety will disappear. But until then, I'll be sitting on pins and needles.

I hope to see you at the organizational meeting, June 14th at 7 PM.

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**2012 Digital Photography Contest: First Place Historical Photo by Melissa Grantham (Tichnor)**The next cannon firing will take place on Colonial Kids Day, July 21.

# White Tailed Deer in Arkansas Post

Wildlife viewing is one of the most popular activities at Arkansas Post. During the fall and winter months, visitors flock to the Park to see the herds of White-tailed Deer that make their home at The Post. Occasionally there are sightings of herds containing as many as forty deer. White-tailed Deer were driven nearly to extinction in the early 1900's. Since that time predators such as mountain lions and coyote populations have decreased

leaving deer populations unchecked. Without these predators, deer numbers have grown dramatically leading to some unfortunate side effects. Overpopulation can lead to disease and starvation, damage to natural resources from the deer foraging on native plants, and threats to safety due to increased vehicle collisions.

Arkansas Post is tracking the size of our deer population with the help of



**Sarah Allely, Resource Manager**

the Heartland Inventory and Monitoring Network, a group of scientists that monitor trends and issues within parks. The work they do helps the managers of Arkansas Post make informed decisions. Each January scientists travel here to survey the White-tailed Deer. These surveys serve to document yearly changes in the population and to determine long-term trends associated with these changes. Since the surveys began in 2005, the population has changed every year, in an up and down oscillation. The 2011 surveys showed that the population numbers were on a downward trend. However, even with the up and down oscillation, it is evident that the deer population is increasing as the 2011 population number is 33% above average.



**Photo by Ed Wood**

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## Recycling Trailer: Year One Recap

The park's Recycling Trailer has been a hit with Gillett and surrounding communities. In 2011, the trailer collected over 10,120 pounds of paper material and 3570 pounds of glass, aluminum, and plastics #1 and #2. Last year the trailer appeared at Gillett Elementary School, Heritage Days, e-waste programs in DeWitt, Arkansas County Fair, and a special event at Little Rock Central High School National Historic Site. This spring, it was featured at a tourism fair in Helena.

Several times a month the trailer is taken to a recycling facility in North Little Rock. Recently this facility transitioned to a single-stream recycling center and began accepting a wider range of materials including plastics #1 - #7. This now includes plastic bottle caps and harder plastics. Arkansas Post is also accepting shredded paper if it is in clear tied off bags. Containers such as rinsed out orange juice boxes are also accepted. To learn more on how to identify recyclable materials including the numbers on plastics go to <http://thinkgreen.com/>

The Recycling Trailer will be located at the park visitor center for the first week of each month throughout 2012. During the rest of the time it may be offsite being emptied or for special programs. If you want to find out if the trailer will be at the park during your visit, please contact the park at 870-548-2207. To inquire about having a recycling program with the trailer for your school or civic group, please contact Joe Herron at the same number.



**Photo by Melissa Grantham**

# 2011 Digital Photography Contest Winners

Visit the Park News section at [nps.gov/arp](http://nps.gov/arp) for 2012 rules and entry form. The contest continues through Labor Day.



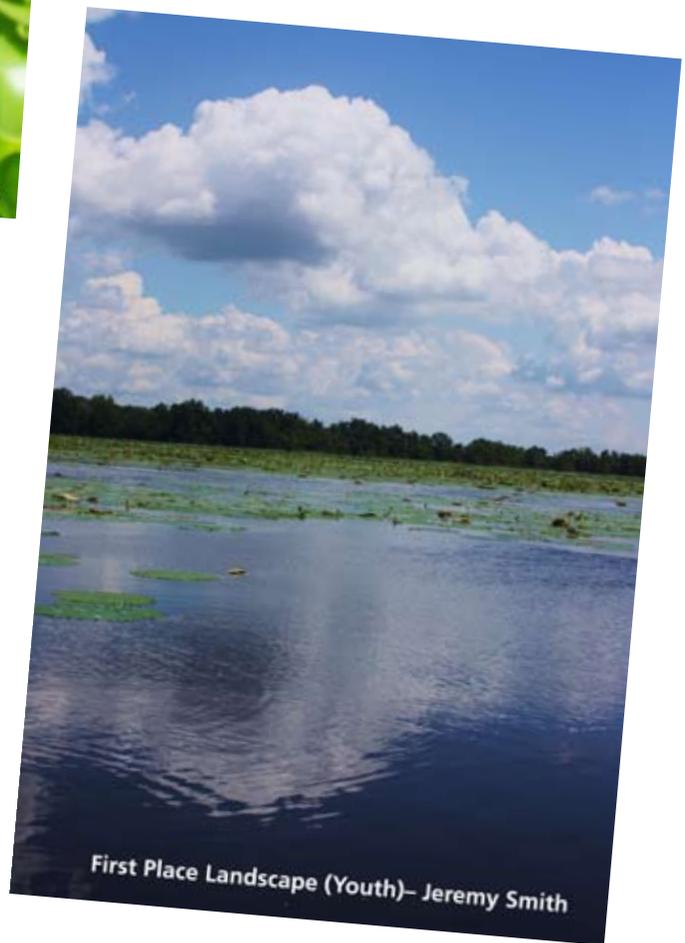
First Place Historical (Youth) – Jeremy Smith, Dumas



First Place Macro (Youth) – Drake Dority, North Little Rock



First Place Plantlife (Youth) – Jeremy Smith



First Place Landscape (Youth) – Jeremy Smith

# Adult Division

See more winning photos on pages 1 and 2.



First Place Plantlife - Terry Middlebrooks, Bastrop LA



First Place Landscape - Pat Rawls, DeWitt



First Place Recreation - Charlotte Purdy



First Place Macro - Charlotte Purdy, DeWitt

# Union Navy at Arkansas Post - Part 2

## USS Rattler

USS *Rattler* a 165-ton stern-wheel "tin-clad" river gunboat, was built in 1862 at Cincinnati, Ohio, as the civilian steamer, Florence Miller. Purchased by the Navy in November 1862 and converted to a gunboat, she was commissioned the following month. In January 1863, she led the Mississippi Squadron up the White and Arkansas Rivers to capture Fort Hindman. On the first evening of the Battle of Arkansas Post, she was the first ship to attempt to pass Fort Hindman. She was stuck on pilings placed in the river by engineers and took heavy fire from the forts large guns. The ship barely survived the firefight after being shot through and losing two crew members. On the second day, with Fort Hindman's guns silenced, the lighter *Rattler* cut off any Confederate escape to the south.

In March, the *Rattler* was flagship for the Yazoo Pass expedition, an unsuccessful attempt to isolate the Mississippi River

strongpoint at Vicksburg. She took part in raiding up the Red, Black, and Ouachita Rivers during July 1863, assisting in the capture of the Confederate steamer, *CSS Louisville* which later became *USS Ouachita*. Then she patrolled and performed convoy duties on the Mississippi River, largely near the town of Rodney, Mississippi. A heavy gale near Grand Gulf, Mississippi, on 30 December 1864 drove the *Rattler* ashore, causing her to strike a snag and sink. After being abandoned by the U.S. Navy, she was burned by the Confederates.

## USS Cincinnati

The *USS Cincinnati*, a 512-ton City class ironclad river gunboat, was built at Mound City, Illinois, for the U.S. Army's Western Gunboat Flotilla. Commissioned in January 1862, early in the following month she took part in the capture of Fort Henry, Tennessee and the successful siege of the fortress at Island Number Ten. In May, she was rammed by the Confederate River Defense Fleet and sank in shallow water near Fort Pillow.



Joe Herron, Park Ranger  
(co-written by Eric Leonard,  
Andersonville National  
Historic Site)

Raised and repaired, the *Cincinnati* was transferred to the Navy in October 1862 and engaged in operations on the Yazoo River during the latter part of that year. In January 1863, she took part in the White River campaign, including the Battle of Arkansas Post.

At Vicksburg, she was heavily damaged by enemy shore batteries and sunk on May 27, 1863. Again, she was raised, repaired and returned to service, spending most of the rest of the war patrolling the Mississippi and nearby rivers. In February 1865, she was sent to operate in the Mississippi Sound and Mobile Bay areas. The *USS Cincinnati* was decommissioned in August 1865, sold in March of the following year. The mighty warhorse came to her end when she sank later that year.

## Friends Group

(From Page 1)

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elected officials of park issues, support staff, conduct market research and awareness building, and deliver programs and stage events. Some Friends Groups can assist a park with all or portions of operation and maintenance responsibilities for structures, visitor centers, parks, or specific programs.

Anyone interested in supporting the park or park activities is welcome to attend this first organization meeting. Come and share your thoughts on how best to help found the group so that it is effective, efficient, and representatives of your ideas and concerns for management. The public meeting is on June 14 at 7 pm in the Visitor Center Theater. Please contact Dyan Bohnert at (870) 382-2017 if you have questions.

USS Rattler



USS Cincinnati

# Calendar of Events 2012

Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays in June and July - Trailblazers – Join Ranger Joe Herron at 8 AM for a special “couch-potato to 5K” running program. Time completing the program can go towards earning the Presidential Active Lifestyle Award. Registration is necessary; call Joe Herron at 870-548-2207.

## For Educators

Arkansas Teachers are invited to learn about Arkansas History were it all began Founded by Henri DeTonti in 1686, Arkansas Post is older than New Orleans and St. Louis. After changing hands between Spain and France, it became part of the United States in 1803 under the Louisiana Purchase. It was the first capital of the Arkansas Territory in 1819 and then it served as the important river port until the Civil War.

Educators are invited to join Park Rangers on a journey through Early Arkansas History which includes a discussion on Colbert’s Raid, the fur trade in early Arkansas, and a hike to the historic town-site and Civil War rifle pits. Educators attending a workshop will receive six hours towards ADE approved Professional Development Training including two hours for Arkansas History. The workshops are free, but registration is required by calling 870-548-2207 or by e-mailing [joey\\_herron@nps.gov](mailto:joey_herron@nps.gov)

Each workshop will be held from 9 AM to 3 PM. Please bring a sack lunch and comfortable shoes. The dates for the Early Arkansas History at Arkansas Post Workshop are:

- June 21
- July 5

September 29 – Climate Change at Arkansas Post – Resource Manager Sarah Allely will lead a walk discussing the effects of climate change in the park especially relating to wildlife migration and the spread of invasive exotic plants. The program is free, registration is not required.

**Family Fun Days are back: Saturdays 9 am – 1 pm**  
**Register for these events (except for Youth Fishing Derby) by calling 870-548-2207**

## **June 16 - Youth Fishing Derby**

Park Lake will be stocked by the Arkansas Game & Fish Commission with 250 channel catfish for this event. Prizes will be awarded for the largest catfish landed. Competition is open to youth 12 and under. Registration begins at 8:30 am. Competition fishing will be from 9:00 am to Noon. Fishing will be open to all ages (adults required to have state fishing license) after the contest.

## **June 23 – Outdoor Fun 101**

Learn some of the basic skills needed for reading maps, using a compass, and utilizing a GPS unit. Also, learn how to apply Leave No Trace principles to your next camping or hiking trip.

## **June 30 – Plants and Insects**

How does plantlife rely on creepy crawling critters? Hands on activities will help us answer this question. Rangers will also share some basic identification skills in this program.

## **July 7 – Civil War Kids**

We will start the program with a hike to the rifle pits to discuss the Battle of Arkansas Post. Activities and crafts will then help kids learn about young people in 1860s Arkansas.

## **July 14 – Reptiles and Amphibians**

Learn about the slippery and scaly inhabitants of Arkansas Post. Special programs on snakes, turtles, and alligators and a hike around Park Lake are just part of the fun.

## **July 21 – Colonial Kids Day**

What kind of chores and games would a kid done during 1700s Arkansas? Join Rangers and volunteers to learn about the early days of Arkansas History. Musket and Cannon demonstrations will also be presented

## **July 28 – National Park Traveler**

What are some ways to get the most out of your visit to the National Parks? We will discuss how to plan your trip to America’s best kept secrets and how to get the most enjoyment out of the places your visit.

October 20 – The 18th Annual Ghosts of the Past - Join park staff and volunteers for the annual guided walk through Arkansas History. Living History presentations will portray events from the exploration and settlement of Arkansas Post, Colbert’s Raid, and the Civil War periods. Tours last approximately one

hour. Reservations are strongly recommended.

Since we have had to cancel previous fall floats due to excessive vegetation, the program this year will be pushed back into December. Dates will be announced soon.



2011 Digital Photography Contest: First Place Wildlife (Youth) Jeremy Smith (Dumas)



**National Park Service**  
**U.S. Department of the Interior**

Arkansas Post National Memorial  
1741 Old Post Rd.  
Gillett, AR 72055

## EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA™

Arkansas Post National Memorial commemorates the earliest European settlement in the Lower Mississippi valley. First established in 1686, the Post was an important staging point for Mississippi River trade between New France and the Gulf of Mexico. Situated along the Arkansas River, the small settlement here blossomed into the first capital of the Arkansas Territory. It was the site of a small Revolutionary War skirmish as well as a two-day Civil War Battle.

Arkansas Post National Memorial  
1741 Old Post Road  
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Phone  
870 548-2207

E-mail  
[arpo\\_historian@nps.gov](mailto:arpo_historian@nps.gov)

Internet  
[www.nps.gov/arpo](http://www.nps.gov/arpo)

Visitor Center Hours  
Daily 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Grounds and Picnic Area Hours  
Daily 8:00 a.m. to dusk



**2011 Digital Photography Contest: First Place Recreation (Youth) Jeremy Smith (Dumas)**