

## Election of Friends Officers

The upcoming election of Friends of Noxubee Refuge officers and members of the board of directors will be held at the September general meeting. The leaders selected to guide the organization will serve two years, unless otherwise noted, beginning January 2010. The nominated officers being presented at the meeting are listed below and additional nominations will be accepted from the floor at the meeting. The immediate past president, newsletter editor, webmaster, Nature Store committee chairperson, and volunteer coordinator are also voting members of the board and will remain on the board as directed by the Bylaws. Biographies of the nominees for officer are included in this newsletter on pages 3 and 5.

### OFFICERS

President	Lawrence Croft
Vice-President	Frank Bonner
Secretary	Gale Hagood
Treasurer	Peggy Guyton

### DIRECTORS AT LARGE

Janis Bryant (2 yrs.)
Joe Mulrooney (1 yr.)
Jacque Tisdale (1 yr.)
Jim Taylor (2 yrs.)
Bobby Thompson (2 yrs.)

*This Green Heron photo was taken by Lawrence Croft from the south side of the Bluff Lake Boardwalk Overlook. The Sibley Guide to Birds says "A Green Heron uses a feather as a fishing lure, placing the feather at various spots on the surface of a pond to try to attract small fish to within its reach."*

## GREAT NEWS!

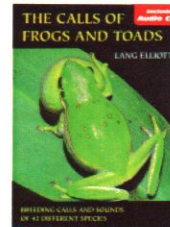
The Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), Mississippi Service Area has become our first Benefactor, the highest level of membership. TVA has graciously provided \$5000 to the Friends of Noxubee Refuge to assist with their outreach education and conservation projects.



The annual Friends and Volunteers Luncheon will be held at noon on September 26 at the Larry Box Environmental Center. Reservations are required, so call to reserve a plate. It is free to Volunteers and Friends members. Awards will be given as well as door prizes.

## Noxubee Nature Store

*The Calls of Frogs and Toads* by Lang Elliott (2004)



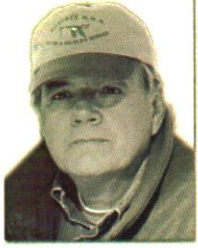
Bird watchers tend to be a group with good auditory skills. I wonder if one could be a serious birder without such ability. However, some of us cannot learn auditory material without some visual "prod." This is where this little book/CD excels. It contains pictures of the most common frogs and toads with an accompanying CD of the calls. That way, those of us challenged folks can look at the picture and have some hope of learning the calls. In addition, there are not nearly as many frog calls to learn as there are bird calls! At a recent MSU workshop I helped teach, the fifty elementary through high school teachers received a copy of this little book and I played the ten most common calls twice for them to learn. On a subsequent quiz, 90% of them correctly identified the six calls I played for them. Paired with an introduction to the frog monitoring program, Frogwatch, my hope was that some teachers will involve their students in monitoring the frog and toad populations in the

area. Most teachers know about Backyard Bird Count but are unfamiliar with the Frogwatch program.

You may also be able to find the out-of-print tapes of Bill Turcotte's MS Frog Calls (1988) online although, unfortunately, it has never been produced in CD form.

Lang Elliott also has other similar booklets available, including one of insect calls and another of night sounds. Our Nature Store often has the frog book in stock or any of them can be ordered through Amazon.

~ Sherrie Wiygul



## From The President

Those in attendance agreed that it was done just in time. I'm referring to the new eagle nest foundation which is now in place. A live 100 plus foot pine adjacent to the old nest tree has been retrofitted with a solid foundation and the beginnings of a new nest. The cost of the project was funded by Friends of Noxubee Refuge.

The old nest tree and nest are in very weak condition. The amount of deterioration became very evident when examining photos Lawrence Croft had taken over the past two years. Hopefully, the eagles will be aware of this weakness and will move the nest to the new location. This has worked in other regions of the country. We should know by Christmas if it is going to work here.

Numerous improvements are evident at the refuge as a result of the work done by the now departed AmeriCorps Team. To show appreciation for their hard work, the Friends Board hosted team members and refuge staff at a cookout. Getting to meet team members and learn of their interest in volunteering renews one's confidence in the younger generation.

New FONR officers for the 2010-2012 time period will be elected at the September 17th meeting. Those to be presented by the nominating committee are listed elsewhere in this newsletter. I encourage you to come, enjoy a good program and participate in the election process. I hope to see you there!

~ by Larry Box



Photos by Henry Sansing

## Notes Online

To help FONR save on postage and mailing costs, notify Marion Sansing at [noxubee\\_refuge@bellsouth.net](mailto:noxubee_refuge@bellsouth.net) if you wish to receive Noxubee Notes (4 issues/year) by email.

## New Projects

Have you noticed the new construction projects around the Refuge? An observation tower is going up on the north end of Loakfoma Lake, neatly tucked away between the Ray Watson Memorial Trail and the Webster Memorial Garden. This observation tower and platform will have two decks, one at twelve feet and one at twenty feet. We are also building a boardwalk at Doyle Arm winding through the cypress stands above the waters of Bluff Lake, for a full 540 feet. Both structures will be handicapped accessible when completed.

## Research At Noxubee

George Banzhaf just completed a Master of Science degree in Forestry at MSU. As part of his research, he developed a hardwood grade distribution model for species in red oak/sweetgum forests adjacent to minor stream-bottoms of Mississippi and the surrounding states. The research is one component of an ongoing hardwood growth and yield project started in the 1980's. The project's overall objective is to develop and maintain a web-based hardwood growth and yield support system that predicts both total and grade volumes at the stand and tree level. George's co-major professors for the project are Drs. Thomas Matney and Emily Schultz. In the photograph, George is measuring a 36.1 dbh (diameter breast high), three log, grade 1 cherrybark oak (*Quercus pagoda*) on a research plot in Noxubee National Wildlife Refuge. The photo was taken by his seven year old son, Simon.



Saturdays at the Refuge will again host "Nature Crafts for the Holidays" in early December. If you have access to sweet gum balls, pine cones of any size, milkweed pods, dried okra pods, magnolia pods, dried hydrangea blooms, acorns, dried Queen Anne's lace, old wreath bases of vines or other material, or any other similar dried items, please collect and save them for the workshop. Old candles and ribbon can also be used. These materials can be dropped off at Copeland's Clinic or Noxubee Refuge Visitor Center. Gather these items during the fall and contribute to the workshop.

# Nomination Biographies

## NOMINATED FOR PRESIDENT: LAWRENCE CROFT



Lawrence Croft is no stranger to the FONR. Lawrence was a founding member of the group and served as our 1st President from 2003 - 2005. He has contributed in all capacities and donated hundreds of hours working with the Friends Group both on and off the Refuge. Lawrence retired from Mississippi State University but continues as Professor and Head Emeritus with the Department of Physics and Astronomy. He is currently president of the Oktibbeha Audubon Chapter.

## NOMINATED FOR VICE PRESIDENT: FRANK BONNER

...see *Meet The Board* on page 5

## NOMINATED FOR SECRETARY: GALE HAYDEN HAGOOD



Gale Hagood works as a lab supervisor in Environmental Residue for Mississippi State Chemical Laboratory. Gale has served on the board of directors of the Friends of Noxubee for several years. She attended the 2009 Friends in Action conference in Washington D.C. and has met with our state representatives on behalf of the Friends group on several occasions. Gale has been a resident of Noxubee County most of her life, living only a few miles from Noxubee Refuge. The Refuge is one of her favorite places to spend her leisure time.

## NOMINATED FOR TREASURER: PEGGY GUYTON

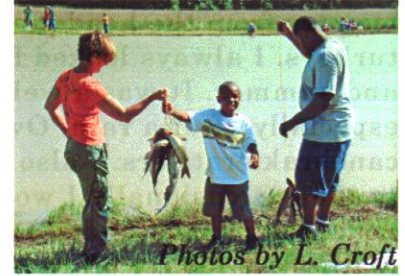
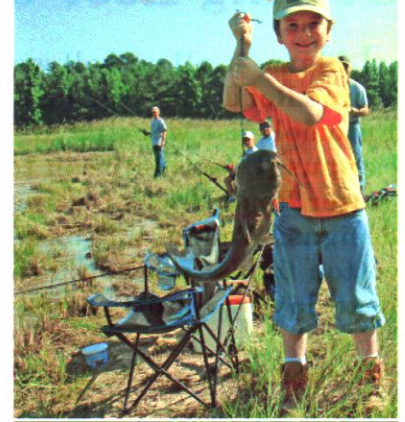


Peggy Guyton has been an active member of the Friends group for 3 years. She often assists with our Saturdays on the Refuge programs and manning the visitors center. Peggy previously worked for Murray State University in various capacities and for Ingalls Ship Building as an administrator in human resources. Since returning to Starkville Peggy spends time working with her father building outdoor furniture when she is not volunteering for the Refuge.

*Excerpt from the Friends of Noxubee By-laws:*

***Additional nominations will be accepted from the floor at the General Membership Meeting. New Directors will be elected by a majority vote. Each (Friends) member shall cast one vote each for President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and one vote each, for up to 5 Directors-at-Large.***

## Fishing Derby



## General Meeting

September 17  
6:30 PM

Noxubee Refuge  
Visitor Center

We invite you to join us for our general meeting with a presentation by Chad Manlove from Ridgeland, MS. Chad serves as the Director of Development for Ducks Unlimited's Southern region. Chad has degrees from Delaware and Auburn and he will be talking about critical habitat that serves our continent's waterfowl population.

Snacks will be served afterward.

## Getting Lost On The Refuge

I blame it all on boll weevils. That's the reason I was on the Keaton Tower Road that Spring day a several years ago. As a Research Entomologist working at the Boll Weevil Research Laboratory on the MSU campus, I routinely ran tests in one or more of the open fields along Keaton Tower Road. I was testing various pheromone formulations as well as trap designs. We found it more convenient to set up these tests in an isolated area away from any cotton fields. We would then release laboratory reared boll weevils and measure the response the next day by counting weevils captured in the traps.



Former Refuge Manager Jim Tisdale was happy for us to use the fields as long as we agreed to keep them mowed. That saved the Refuge personnel from having to transport tractors and mowers from the headquarters to do the job. The fields were mowed to provide foraging areas for turkeys. I always looked forward to my almost daily trips down to the Refuge during the spring and summer. It was a welcome break from the office and lab. I often saw snakes on the road, especially after a rain. Over the years I kept records of the snakes I found, which were primarily canebrake rattlers. I also found one pygmy rattler, and quite a few cottonmouths and gray rat snakes. Occasionally I would see a glass lizard around the field borders. I usually went around noon and parked under a big pine tree to eat my lunch. The only sounds were from Nature, as the highway is too far off to hear, thankfully.

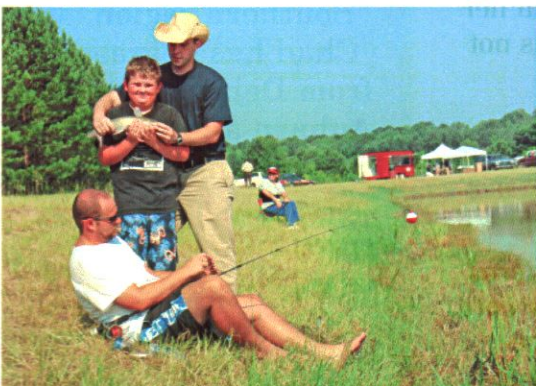
This particular day I finished checking the traps and decided to take a walk into the woods before returning. It was overcast and not too hot, so I ambled along in a southerly direction, taking in the beautiful sights and sounds of spring. (Big woods, overcast skies, no compass: big mistake).

When it was time to head back, I turned around and started walking. After 15 minutes I began to get worried, as I didn't recognize anything and should have been nearing the road. So I quickened my pace, and suddenly I came upon a river. Quickly dismissing the idea that I had discovered a new one (I was going to name it the McKibben River), it dawned on me that I was so disoriented that I had managed to end up south of where I turned around rather than north, and was at the Noxubee. In other words, I was lost.

I decided that the best plan was to walk downstream to where the River converged with the road at the place where the road ends. It took a while. I must have walked four or five miles, at least, due to the crooked nature of the Noxubee. Then I had to walk another couple of miles back up the road to the field where the truck was parked. But I found a cardinal's nest in a Holly sapling (near the road, fortunately) that made the whole episode worthwhile. I returned the next day and photographed the nest, which had three eggs in it. I kept my eye on the road though.

## Shriner's Fishing Rodeo June 27, 2009

~ by Gerald McKibben



Photos by Lawrence Croft

## Teaching At Noxubee

The Noxubee National Wildlife Refuge is an invaluable resource for teaching in the MSU College of Forest Resources. One course that utilizes the Refuge extensively is dendrology (the identification and classification of trees) taught by Dr. David Evans. This course introduces students to much of the woody plant diversity on the Refuge with well over 100 species of trees, shrubs and vines visible along the developed recreational trails.



The Dr. Ray Watson Memorial Trail, directly across the road from the visitor's center, is a tribute to the professor who was instrumental in teaching dendrology for many years at Mississippi State University. A guide for the trail is available at the visitor's center. The sense of discovery and wonder one gets from viewing the plant diversity along the Refuge's byways is a continuing source of satisfaction to all who appreciate the marvels that the plant kingdom represents.

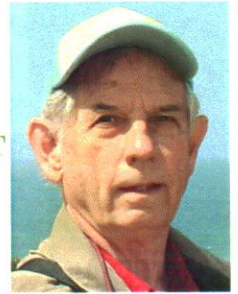
## American Lotus Rapidly Invades Bluff Lake

American lotus, *Nelumbo lutea* made expansive advances on Bluff Lake this summer. Although a native plant it quickly becomes an invasive species in most waterways when allowed to grow unchecked. Year round the refuge staff combats a myriad of invasive plants, some native and some exotic. The three water plant species of major concern at Noxubee include American lotus, hydrilla, and alligator weed. In combination or alone the above species easily reduce or eliminate desirable native aquatic plants and severely restrict or eliminate recreational uses such as boating and fishing.



## Meet The Board: Frank Bonner

NOMINATED FOR VICE PRESIDENT



Dr. Frank Bonners first love was birding, but early in his training he couldn't figure out who would pay him, so he chose to major in forestry. Frank did his undergraduate work at Louisiana State (LSU) and earned his masters and doctorate at Duke University.

Frank Bonner, along with his wife Ann, came to Starkville in 1966 as a U. S. Forest Service (USFS) Research Forester to head-up the new tree seed research lab. During his 38 years with USFS and the Seed Lab, he also worked cooperatively with the Departments of Forestry and Wildlife, amongst others, at Mississippi State University. He also spent 7 years in Stoneville, MS working with the Delta Research Station. However, the highlight of his career was being asked by USAID, World Bank, and FAO (United Nations) to train people in tree seed technology. In this role, he served in 15 other countries, primarily in Africa and Asia.

Frank is originally from the Memphis, Tennessee area and Ann is from Moss Point, Mississippi. They met at LSU and have been married over fifty years. The Bonners have three children and seven grandchildren.

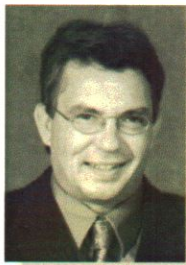
In his spare time Frank enjoys landscaping his yard and travelling. He has cruised in the Caribbean, the Balkans, and Alaska, and had the opportunity to teach and tour in China. Frank played an integral role in the design and development of the Ray Watson Memorial Trail at Noxubee. In addition, he participates in the trail walking program at the Refuge. As such, he picks up litter as he walks the trails and reports on any problems or trail maintenance issues. Frank has been a "Friend" for five years, and has been on the board for almost all of that time.

~ by Andrea Dunstan

*The handicapped fishing jetty in Loakfoma Lake is under construction!*



*Photo by Marion Sansing*



## Manager's Corner

Fall is fast approaching and we didn't have a reason to complain much about the weather this summer: we received plenty of rain and it wasn't too hot for too long. Summer just went by too fast. The rain delayed plantings for waterfowl, and kept us from accomplishing some of our needed road and parking lot work and caused a couple of emergency repairs,

which could have been disastrous. On the bright side we completed a lot of maintenance projects on the buildings and completed a lot of work on visitor facilities.

Emergency repairs were performed on Ross Branch Lake spillway, which had to be completely rebuilt. Heavy rains had almost completely mined out the overflow of the lake. We were about two feet away from losing the entire lake when the damage was discovered. A hole in the north levee of Bluff Lake was also discovered. 120 feet of levee had to be dug down to 12 feet and repacked with 180 tons of red clay; this is one of the reasons we have kept the lake at a lower level most of the summer.

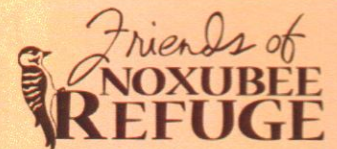
Our AmeriCorps crew has returned to their home states, colleges and jobs. They were a great crew to work with and helped our staff initiate and/or complete many of our summer projects. You can expect Noxubee Refuge to host another crew in the near future as these young volunteers were a pleasure to work with and both parties truly benefited from the experience. Their major accomplishments included re-roofing three Refuge buildings, and helping with the new boardwalk being constructed at Doyle Arm on Bluff Lake.

After a late start out west, fire season has finally kicked off and hurricane season is right behind it. Our fire crew, minus Chad Fondren, has just returned from fires in California working on an interagency hand-crew. Our lead firefighter, Chad Fondren, did not go on this detail and for good reasons. Chad and his wife Ashley had a bouncing baby boy, Noah MacLauren Fondren, born on July 17th. Congratulations to the Fondren family!

The bid for the 18.22 miles of road work to be conducted on the Refuge went to Superior Asphalt Inc. out of Jackson, MS. A pre-construction conference was held between the Contractor, the Federal Highways Administration and the Refuge on August 12. Hopefully we will get some of the paving overlay completed this year, with the majority being completed by the end of next summer.

I hope you will attend the FONR officer's election and general meeting on September 17th and come enjoy lunch on September 26th at our annual Friends and Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon (RSVP luncheon, to Andrea Dunstan at 662.323.5548 by September 21st.) See you soon!

~ Henry Sansing



is an independent, nonprofit 501(c)3 organization, dedicated to conserving our natural resources through volunteer work and fund raising.

### OFFICERS

Larry Box President  
Jack McCarty Vice-President  
Margaret Copeland Secretary  
Sherrie Wiygul Treasurer

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Florence Box Gale Hagood  
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### MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

- \*Invitations to special tours, events and presentations
- \*Noxubee Notes, quarterly
- \*1-year membership NWRA
- \*Noxubee News, quarterly
- \*Volunteer recognition
- \*Voting privileges
- \*Quarterly meetings

For an application or information about the Refuge call (662) 323-5548. Individual memberships start at only \$15.

### EDITOR

Susan E. Brooks  
susan.e.brooks@gmail.com

## Upcoming Events

**September 17 - General Meeting;**  
6:30 PM at the Visitor Center

**September 19 - Nature Photography for Kids & Teens at 8:00 AM**

**September 26 - Friends and Volunteer Luncheon; 12:00 PM at the Larry Box Environmental Education Center**

**October 3 - National Wildlife Refuge Week Event at 10:00 AM**

**October 17 - Canoeing at Bluff Lake starts 8:30 AM**

**November 7 - Pioneer Day; 10:30 AM - 1:00 PM**

**November 21 - CSI Fossils; 2 PM at the Visitor Center**

**December 5 - Nature Crafts; 9:30 AM - 12:30 PM**

**December 19 - Story Time for Children; 2 PM at Visitor Center**