

# Summer 2019 NEWSLETTER

## Friends of the Noxubee Wildlife Refuge



Florence Box, Dalton Anthony, and Steve Reagan in front of the cut ribbon and plaque provided by the Greater Starkville Development Partnership.

*A ribbon-cutting Grand Opening of the all new Nature Store was Friday, May 17 at the Visitor Center. The Greater Starkville Development Partnership recognized the Nature Store and Dalton Anthony who has served as the Volunteer Coordinator of the Store since 2015. Check out the new look, new products, and new ways to boost your outdoor adventures while also helping the Refuge.*

*Florence Box first opened the Nature Store in 2004 at the time the Visitor Center opened, and she served as Volunteer Coordinator of the Store until 2015. To recognize her service and leadership in establishing and overseeing the Nature Store for its first 11 years, she was presented a framed Certificate of Appreciation. Steve Reagan, Project Leader for the Sam D Hamilton Complex, was also recognized with a framed Certificate of Appreciation for his consistent support of the Friends in their efforts with the Nature Store.*

*After cookies and cool refreshments in the conference room, the official ribbon-cutting was done in front of the Visitor Center. According to Dalton Anthony, who cut the ribbon, the huge scissors are real and weigh about 247 pounds, carried in what looks like a mandolin case! Thank you, Greater Starkville Development Partnership, for your wonderful help and support in recognizing the Noxubee NWR Nature Store!*

### PG. 2

Letter from the Friends of the Noxubee Wildlife Refuge President Kara Roberts

### PG. 3

Noxubee Wildlife Refuge in photos

### PG. 4

Farewell Note to  
Refuge Manager Steve Reagan

### PG. 5

Photos of Steve Reagan's time at NWR

### PG. 6

How can YOU help the Refuge?

"Look deep into nature, and then you will understand everything better."

Albert Einstein

### Visitor Center Hours:

Wednesday-Friday: 7:30 am - 4 pm

Saturday: 10 am - 4 pm

Most Sundays: 1 pm - 4 pm

### Contact Information:

Friends of Noxubee Refuge

13723 Bluff Lake Road

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[FriendsofNoxubeeRefuge@gmail.com](mailto:FriendsofNoxubeeRefuge@gmail.com)

Visitor Center phone number:

(662) 323-5548

Website:

[www.friends-of-noxubee-refuge.org](http://www.friends-of-noxubee-refuge.org)



## LETTER FROM THE FONR PRESIDENT

Summer has finally arrived! Have you visited the Refuge and enjoyed the summer sunshine? Get out there with your friends and family and enjoy a picnic and a day at the Nox! Make sure you have a current Refuge pass. You can get one at the Refuge office for \$5 a day or only \$25 a year.

We'd like to wish farewell and good luck to Steve Reagan and Janet Ertel as they leave the Refuge to pursue jobs in New Mexico. Steve will be the Deputy Chief for the Southwest Division. A BIG THANK YOU to both Steve and Janet for their time here and all they've done for the Refuge! Steve's job will be filled by monthly fill-ins till they find a suitable replacement. All other Refuge staff will remain the same, so in you need anything, just give them a call.

We had another successful Youth Fishing Derby last month with over 125 kids signed up! This event gives kids a chance to experience fish and fishing that might not get a chance to do so otherwise. Many kids get to touch a fish or fish for their first time at this event. We can always use volunteers to help with the event each year, so keep an eye out for next year's date.

Calling all Volunteers!! We have started having a monthly work-day at the Refuge, to occur on the second Saturday of each month, 9 a.m. until the last volunteer leaves. I'm not sure if everyone knows it, but this Refuge has a staff of 9, with a 10th member to be added in the future. That's 10 people to maintain a 43,000+ acre Refuge! Working one Saturday a month is a small way of helping out and showing our support for them!

Mark your calendar: the next Nature Series takes place on June 6 at 6:30 p.m. in the Visitor Center. We will hear from Dr. Joe Baumgardner about photography. Our next canoe day is June 15 at 9.

We are working to create committees to help the board accomplish various activities: if you are interested in helping out, drop us an email!  
[friendsofnoxubee refuge@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofnoxubee refuge@gmail.com)

See you at the Refuge!

Kara Roberts

President - Friends of the Noxubee National Wildlife Refuge



# Noxubee

# Nature



Photo Credit: Vicki Maples



Photo Credit: Mac Lochala

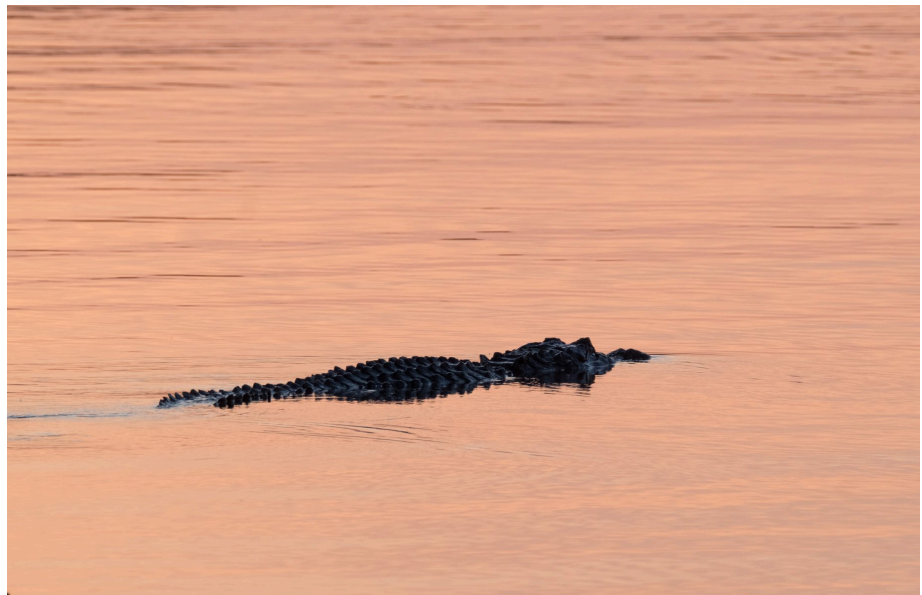


Photo Credit: Dot Perro



Photo Credit: Joe Bumgardner



Photo Credit: Diane C Lochala

Go to our  
*Friends of the Noxubee National  
Wildlife Refuge*  
Facebook page to submit your  
photos, enjoy other's photos and  
interact with fellow Friend's  
Members and nature enthusiasts!

# Steve Reagan, Farewell

by Ron Johnson and Friends



Steve Reagan recently accepted a new position as Deputy Chief of the National Wildlife Refuge System, Southwest Region, so he moved to New Mexico in late May, and his spouse Janet will follow shortly after. This note brings mixed emotions - joy for Steve and his promotion to a new regional position, but also loss of his talents, smile, and huge contributions to the Noxubee NWR and, for us, his valued partnership with our Friends of Noxubee Refuge group. Steve has served since 2012 as Project Leader for the Sam D Hamilton Complex with refuges located in both Alabama and Mississippi. Steve participated regularly in our Friends Board meetings, always keeping us in the loop on issues challenges, and opportunities, and helping as a key player in ways to effectively move the Refuge forward.

Many will remember Steve from our Nature Series programs. His seat-gripping presentations on his work with bears (ask him about being up close and personal with a grizzly) and with alligators (ask him what they do in winter) were amazing stories with an attached, WOW!

Many of us were able to go with Steve on his "Behind the Scenes" events held for Friends. Our walk across part of Bluff Lake to the rookery when the water was down was a memorable muddy-shoes event, highlighted by the thrill of seeing a batch of recently-hatched alligators. The wilderness hike on that cold and breezy day, longer than some sore muscles thought, made lunch a wonderful treat near the cypress knees taller than our heads. The sunrise gathering on the back deck exploded with morning birds and eagle sightings, while we enjoyed coffee and rolls. And, some lucky folks were with Steve, behind the scenes, with the bang-up adventure using explosives to remove a beaver dam in GTT. Steve's willingness and spirit in leading these behind the scenes events gave us fun and educational refuge experiences and adventures to remember.

Many remember Steve the friend, Steve who brought a steady hand and an even-keel to the refuge, Steve who answered questions with detail as if the question was the most important thing in the world at that moment, and some remember "vacation" Steve. Some remember Steve's community service as Vice President and then President of the local Oktoc Community Club. And some remember a quiet, but major, accomplishment initiated when Steve worked with local folks to mark original homestead sites located within the Refuge, as recognition for those family lands. Steve's professional bio of experience is over 47 miles long and requires two D-9 Caterpillars to haul. His career with the Fish and Wildlife Service began in 2000; he has worked on eight different refuges and as Deputy Refuge Supervisor for 42 national wildlife refuges in the Southeast Region. His career includes various state and federal natural resources positions and spans eleven states from coast to coast.

We will also miss seeing Janet occasionally at the Refuge, and her wonderful presentations about her work in our Friends Nature Series and other venues. Recall that she is also employed in the Fish and Wildlife Service as Chief, Inventory and Monitoring Branch, Southeast Region and, because much of her work is done remotely, she will continue in that same role from their new location in Albuquerque. We'll probably be reading more WOW things from the new Steve and Janet GPS location. We miss them and wish them continued success and happy trails in the southwest!





*Early Fishing Derby events had prizes, the trophy here for largest fish in age-group category*



*and a farewell gathering hosted by Bob Fuller and Stacey Parvin.*



*Steve and Janet holding artwork, a gift of appreciation for their consistent support of the Friends of Noxubee Refuge.*



## WANT TO SUPPORT THE REFUGE?

Refuge funding continues to decline; private philanthropic support helps fill in the gaps. Thank you for your support!

You can help by donating to our PayPal giving fund by using our website: [www.friends-of-noxubee-refuge.org](http://www.friends-of-noxubee-refuge.org)

or you can use the direct link:

<https://www.paypal.com/fundraiser/charity/1896796>

*All donations are 100% tax deductible!*

Friends of Noxubee Refuge was founded in 2003 as an independent, nonprofit 501(c)3 organization, dedicated to conserving our natural resources through volunteer work and fund raising. Friends promote and support the preservation, history, and use of the Noxubee Refuge, as well as assist Refuge staff in carrying out their mandates.



Volunteer  
Work day:  
June 8, 9-until

Canoe Day:  
June 15, 9-3