



trail tales



Loxahatchee Chapter, Florida Trail Association

Volume 29, Issue 4: Bi-monthly Publication

July/August 2019

CHAPTER MEETINGS

First Monday of every month
Social 7:00 p.m.; Program 7:30 p.m.

July 1 - TBA

Aug 5 - TBA

OKEEHEELEE NATURE CENTER

Located in Okeehetee Park on Forest Hill Blvd. east of the turnpike. Follow the main park road for about a mile, turn left at the Nature Center sign and continue to the building.

EVERYONE IS WELCOME

Chapter Officers

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561-596-4423, cummingsps@att.net

Hobe Sound: Bea Rogers

Regional FTA Conference Update

The Loxahatchee Chapter is taking the lead on organizing the regional FTA conference this year. We are planning the get-together on the weekend of December 13th at the Tanah Keeta Scout camp in Jupiter.

WE NEED YOUR HELP. You can help the chapter by planning to participate, by volunteering to help with the many tasks involved, and by helping find sponsors for the event. Ask at places that you shop or places that you work if they would be willing to be a sponsor. Gift certificates can be used in fun/fund raising at the conference. Gift baskets are also a welcome addition.

At the conference, we will need volunteers to assist in the kitchen, dining room, registration, activities, etc.

If you are willing to help, contact Paul Cummings (561-596-4423).



Mission "3rd Times A Charm!" Accomplished!

The Mission to run 62 miles (100K) from Lake Okeechobee to Hobe Sound Beach was delayed in 2016 as I missed the time cutoff at 47 miles and was delayed in 2018 as I only made it to 31 miles; however, WE got it done in 2019! I, among others that knew him, ran with the spirit of our late friend Ernie. *(Editor's note Ernie Bambauer was a fellow racer killed in an automobile accident last year.)*

In terms of the race, I can honestly say that I was nervous and felt unprepared due to my own lack of following my training plan. I compensated by "retail therapy" in buying a new vest, new bottles, new shoes, new fuel... something that is not a good idea, especially not having trained with it.

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I was so thankful that Dusty's rain dance didn't work this year and that the saying "odd years are dry years" held true. I didn't carry my knife like I did last year to wrestle alligators! *(Editor's note: Dusty Hardman was the race director and also Tony's coach.)*

Even though I've been told that I go out too fast, it was a cool morning at the 6 am start and I really wanted to bank some time before it got too hot. I had some stomach issues early on but I kept up with my fluids and salt. I ran 6 minutes and walked 2 minutes most of the first 15 miles. The new vest and bottles were good but my right ankle was paying the price for my new shoes. My crew was ready with watermelon, ice water and an ice bandana. They refilled my bottles and had me on my way at 9:12 am.

I had more stomach issues on this second section, plenty of toes connecting with root balls as well as a good fall. The heat was getting up there and the ice bandana melted away pretty quickly. I was on my own in this section as most of the runners were either way ahead of me or in their own groove behind me. I saw a big gator in a small pond, otherwise this and the previous section were dry. I got to my crew and they had me out by 11:25 am. I had a delicious hummus and avocado wrap. I did get emotional when I saw Guy Rock who crewed Ernie last year and said to him that I can't wait to get to the bench on the trail that is dedicated to his memory.

As I was entering the next 10 mile section, I saw Dave Scheffel coming in and he had the energy that I was looking for. This was figuratively and literally as he wound up giving me his amino acid drink when I started getting nauseous. Besides a great positive attitude, Dave has an amazing power walk and I barely could keep up. I had to run at times to catch up to him. Later we joined up with John Becker and I tried to keep up with both of them. The trails started getting wet in this section and the water felt boiling hot. The heat was getting to me and I wanted to lay down many times. I kept focusing on getting to Ernie's bench. By the time I got to the bench, Dave and John were too far ahead. I sat for a few minutes and then continued on. It took me about 3 hours to go 10 miles!

By the time I got to my crew, I wanted to quit. I was slurring my words and I asked Dusty for permission to quit. She walked away and came back with the "Did Not Finish (DNF) Bunny". In the meantime, my crew wouldn't hear me talking about quitting! Lulu came out with a "Speed Bunny" and started dueling with the DNF Bunny. Howard kept saying that the weather is going to change in an hour and I need to get going. I wanted a 15 minute nap but they wouldn't give it to me which turned out to be the right call. After some more hysterics, the combination of fluids and especially pickle juice, switch of my shoes from Altras to Hokas, the change of my shirt and vest, I basically was resurrected by my crew. I left here at 2:40 pm. *(Editor's note: Lulu was Tony's crew chief.)*

Once again I latched onto someone that had the energy that I wanted. This time it was Steve Harden. This was a five mile section and Steve also had a strong power walk. We kept eyeing the clouds and we finally

started getting a major break from the sun. Towards the end of this section, it started pouring and I started running like I just started with fresh legs. My crew was ready in the pouring rain. I ate a donut, got all my supplies and left at 3:55 pm.

Running in the rain was great but I was still nervous about getting the next 11 miles done before the cutoff at 7:30 pm. The rain caused most of this section to get slippery and muddy. I made it to my crew in time but knew I had to get out quickly. I got my lights, some deodorant from Leo, grabbed a turkey wrap with all my other supplies and left here at 7:22 pm.

After eating the wrap, I got back on my 6 run / 2 walk strategy. Although I did a training run on this section last year during the day, it was scary to go through it at night. The main reason being is that so easy to get off course and lost if you miss an orange blaze. There was no time to spare. A few miles in, I caught up to John Becker and he was still maintaining his power walk. I expressed my concerns but he reassured me that we could keep walking fast and make the finish before the 18 hour cutoff at midnight.

Once again, I was finding that guiding power in someone else. John knew this trail like the back of his hand. He would tell me certain landmarks like boardwalks and canal crossings before we got to them. This was a spiritual part of the journey where gratitude comes in. The woods were alive with amazing sounds and the fireflies were just magical.

We finally made it out of the trails on to the last road stretch to the beach. It was close to 11:30 pm. We knew we had to dig deep to make the cutoff. It was starting to drizzle again and we started running. We met up with his crew chief, Jen Quellhorst, and started running towards the draw bridge. My awesome crew drove by cheering us on. We power walked up and across the bridge and then started running. My crew joined us as we sprinted towards the beach. It was a spectacular moment to jump in the ocean and have Dusty call out a finish time of 17 hours and 45 minutes or 11:45 pm.

Once again, I couldn't have done this without my crew, my coach, my trail angels, my friends, my family and my spiritual path.

If you read all that then thank you for your patience.

- submitted by Tony Mehta

T-Shirt Sales

Our supply of Chapter T-Shirts has been replenished and they are now available on all sizes. They will be for sale at the Chapter meetings. \$20 each.

Chapter Activities for July / August

July

7/1 MONTHLY CHAPTER MEETING, OKEEHEELEE PARK NATURE CENTER, 7715 Forest Hill Blvd, West Palm Beach, FL Refreshments at: 7:00 p.m. Program at 7:30 p.m. TBA. Contact: Roy Moore 561-307-7792. Public is invited.

7/6 JOHN PRINCE PARK WALK. 2520 Lake Worth Rd, Lake Worth, FL. Walk for an hour at your own pace. Perfect outing for beginners. 7:20 a.m. Contact: Paul Cummings, 561-963-9906. Public/Leisure.

7/7 HIKE JONATHAN DICKINSON STATE PARK. 16450 S.E. Federal Highway, Hobe Sound, FL. Meet at the front gate of the park at 7:50 a.m. Bring plenty of water for this 7 to 12 mile hike. Contact: Mary Miller, 561-213-2189. Public/Moderate-Strenuous.

7/13 CLIP & WALK. Meet at Tomato Field Grade on South Grade at 6:30 a.m. OR at 6 a.m. at the south entrance to Corbett, 11835 Seminole Pratt Whitney Rd, West Palm Beach, FL. Contact Paul Cummings, 561-596-4423

7/14 BEACH WALK CORAL COVE, 1600 S Beach Rd, Tequesta, FL. Walk in Blowing Rocks Nature Preserve. Meet at 7:20a.m. at the parking lot of Coral Cove, S. of the nature preserve. Contact Paul Cummings, 561-596-4423. Public/Moderate.

7/20 OKEEHEELEE PARK WALK. OKEEHEELEE PARK SOUTH, 7500 Forest Hill Blvd, West Palm Beach, FL. Meet at Okeeheelee Park South's boat launch parking lot. 7:20 a.m. Contact: Paul Cummings, 561-963-9906. Public/Leisure.

7/20 GEORGE LASTRANGE PRESERVE, 4911 Ralls Dr, Fort Pierce, FL This 8.5 mile hike in St. Lucie County Mostly shaded. Bring 2 liters of water & snacks. Updates & contact on Meetup.com (linked thru lox.fltrail.org) Rita Black: 772-985-0579 Public/strenuous.

7/21 WINDING WATERS WALK, 6161 Haverhill Road N, West Palm Beach, FL 33411. This trail is located in Dyer park with parking off Dyer Blvd, 1/2 mile west of Haverhill Rd. Join Paul at 7:30 a.m. Contact Paul Cummings 561-596-4423 for details. Public/Leisure.

7/27 APOXEE PERIMETER TRAIL, 3125 N Jog Rd, West Palm Beach, FL Meet at 7:45 a.m. for a 9-mile hike. Bring two liters of water and optional snacks. Contact: Rita Black: 772-985-0579. Public/Strenuous.

7/28 YAMATO SCRUB HIKE, 701 Clint Moore Rd, Boca Raton, FL. For south county hikers. This is a 217-acre natural area atop the Atlantic Coastal Ridge. Meet at 7:20 a.m. Contact: Alan Collins, 561-586-0486. Public/Leisure

August

8/3 JOHN PRINCE PARK WALK, 2520 Lake Worth Rd, Lake Worth, FL. Stroll in the park for about one hour. 7:20 a.m. Contact: Paul Cummings, 561-596-4423. Public/Leisure.

8/4 HIKE IN JONATHAN DICKINSON STATE PARK, 16450 S.E. Federal Highway, Hobe Sound, FL. 7-12 miles in JD. Meet at 7:50 a.m. at the front gate. Bring lots of water. Contact: Mary Miller, 561-213-2189. Public/Moderate-Strenuous.

8/5 MONTHLY CHAPTER MEETING, Okeeheelee Park Nature Center, 7715 Forest Hill Blvd, West Palm Beach, FL. Refreshments at: 7:00 p.m. Program at 7:30 p.m. Topic to be announced. Contact: Roy Moore 561-307-7792. Public is invited.

8/10 CLIP & WALK, 11835 Seminole Pratt Whitney Rd, West Palm Beach, FL Meet at the S. entrance to Corbett WMA at 6:30AM for a clip and walk from the entrance at the Youth Camp west. Contact Paul Cummings 561-596-4423. Public/Leisure.

8/11 OKEEHEELEE PARK NATURE CENTER, 7715 Forest Hill Blvd, West Palm Beach, FL. Meet at the Nature Center parking lot. Stroll starts at 8 am. Contact Paul Cummings 561-596-4423 Public/Leisure.

8/17 RIVERBEND PARK WALK, 9060 Indiantown Road, Jupiter, FL. Meet at the main parking lot and Visitor Center. Arrive before start at 7:30 am. Contact: Bruce Brown, 772-333-1837. Public/Leisure.

8/17 SWEETBAY NATURAL AREA: 12560 Aviation Rd, West Palm Beach, FL 33412 in Loxahatchee Slough. Shin to knee high water. Out and back to the Blue Campsite about 11 miles. Bring min. 2 liters of water, snacks, and sun protection: road walk from Sweetbay can be hot.! Updates & contact through our Meetup.com, linked at loxfltrail.org, Rita Black: 772-985-0579. Public/strenuous.

8/18 HIKE ROYAL PALM BEACH PINES, 110 Natures Way, Royal Palm Beach, FL. Take a nice stroll through this urban Natural Area. Starts promptly, 7:30 a.m. Bring plenty of water. Contact Paul Cummings 561-596-4423. Public/Leisure.

8/24 DUPUIS WILDLIFE MGT AREA, 23500 SW Kanner Highway Canal Point, FL (meet at main gate) at 7:45 a.m. for a 8 - 10 mile hike - hot (not much shade) Bring two liters of water and optional snacks. Contact: Amy Saperstein 561-289-5551. Public/Strenuous.

8/25 FRENCHMAN'S FOREST STROLL, 12201 Prosperity Farms Road, Palm Beach Gardens, FL 33410. About an hour walk on trails that traverse shady pined areas off Prosperity Farms Rd., 7:20 a.m. Contact Alan Collins: 561-586-0486. Public/Leisure.

8/31 OKEEHEELEE PARK NATURE CENTER Clip And Walk, 7715 Forest Hill Blvd, West Palm Beach, FL. Meet at 7:30AM to help keep the Okeeheelee Nature trails clear. Contact Paul Cummings 561-596-4423 for details. Public/Leisure.

**Loxahatchee Chapter
Florida Trail Association
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ELECTRONIC SERVICE REQUESTED



*For all FTA information: www.floridatrail.org
Chapter Web site: <http://loxfltrail.org/>*

