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The Greenway Gazette

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GROUNDBREAKING AND CELEBRATION FOR PHASE I

For years there was talk, plans and fund raising; then on Thursday, April 26, 2007, ground was broken for the first phase of the Oconee River Greenway. A large group of supporters and friends gathered on the banks of the river at 5:30 pm to mark the day. Those making comments and turning the first shovel were Hobbie Stripling representing Congressman Jim Marshall, Baldwin County Commissioner Collins P. Lee, Dan W. Hammack III president of Southern Wilderness construction, State Representative Bobby Parham, Milledgeville Mayor Richard Bentley, ORG Authority President Peter J. Boylan, ORG Foundation President William Thompson and State Senator Johnny Grant, III. The entire group was shuttled afterward to the atrium of GMC's academic building to celebrate. During the celebration, the lovely quilt made and donated as a fund raiser by the Old Capitol Stitches, was awarded by Kathy Boylan to the lucky ticket holder, David Grant.



Turning the first shovel of dirt to construct Phase I of the Oconee River Greenway in Baldwin County were Hobbie Stripling representing Congressman Jim Marshall, Baldwin County Commissioner Collins P. Lee, President Dan W. Hammack III of Southern Wilderness construction, State Representative Bobby Parham, Milledgeville Mayor Richard Bentley, ORG Authority President Peter J. Boylan, ORG Foundation President William Thompson and State Senator Johnny Grant III.



Two who have promoted the building of the Greenway from the inception are Dr. Therry Deal, member of ORG Foundation and Gen. Peter J. Boylan, president of ORG Authority.



A large crowd of supporters and friends sat and stood along the riverbank to listen to remarks and to celebrate the groundbreaking.



Francis Rewis, Kathy Boylan and Betty Ivey of the Old Capitol Stitches presented the lovely quilt their group made and donated to a lucky ticket holder.

A.



A. View of DNR Boat Ramp and the Activity Field from the highway 22 river bridge.

B.



B. View of the beginning of the Riverwalk trail near the DNR Boat Ramp.

WHO'S NEW

Dr. Heather Langston assumed her duties as the new Executive Director of the Oconee River Greenway Project on May 1, 2007. An immunologist by training, she is an adjunct professor of biology at Georgia College & State University. Growing up on the Georgia coast as the daughter of a shrimp boat captain, she acquired an early love for our state's natural beauty as well as a desire to protect it and to help others enjoy it too. Her husband, Dr. Stephen Langston, also a native of Liberty County, Georgia, is a member of the Wild Turkey Association and a woodsman. Her young son, Wyatt, already likes finding frogs and playing with earthworms. So Heather is well-suited for this position both professionally and personally.

Since May she has been overseeing the clearing and clean-up of land on the southwest side of the River Bridge for Phase I, administering the funds accumulated so far, advocating the project to both officials and private individuals, and seeking additional

funding. Perhaps most gratifying for her at this time is the dramatic progress at the bridge site. Already the initial trail is taking shape amid the beautiful hardwood trees and along the river's edge. While she too would welcome some rain, she is delighted that the dry weather lets the bull dozers work faster, thereby making it possible for the first hikers and bicyclists to traverse the first trail before all the leaves fall and 2008 arrives.



Heather P. Langston, PhD
Executive Director
Oconee River Greenway
Authority

ON THE SHOULDERS OF ...

Without the indefatigable Jan Nichols, former Executive Director of the Greenway Project, there would probably be no work going on at the River Bridge today. For seven years, during periods of high water and low water, Jan wrote grants and talked with legislators and the governor about a park, trails, and an amphitheater along the banks of the Oconee River in Milledgeville. She met with and persuaded local and regional groups as well as

individuals that the project was not just feasible but also essential from both quality-of-life and commercial standpoints. A huge salute and great appreciation are due Jan Nichols!



A.



B.

A. View of new 0.6 mile loop.

B. View of Fishing Creek from the new 0.6 mile loop.

FROM THE DIRECTOR

First, I want to thank the members of the Oconee River Greenway Board for selecting me as the new Executive Director of the Oconee River Greenway Authority. I am honored by the confidence you have shown in me and I will do my best live up to it. I am very excited about the prospect of helping our Greenway take shape and become a truly integral part of our community, literally brought to life by the countless numbers of community members riding bicycles, hiking, fishing on the piers, listening to concerts in the amphitheater, or just sitting watching the river.

Every day I take pleasure in seeing more paths cleared along the site of Phase 1, and I am so pleased that we have received an additional grant allowing us to extend our initial paved trail by another 0.6 miles. We are already looking ahead to Phase 2: the preliminary work required - checking with the Corps of Engineers about wetlands, filling out several trees worth of paper work for the DOT - has begun. We hope to move right into the second phase without interruption after completing the first.

Of course, as we know, all this work just guzzles the dollars, so I and others will continue to apply for grants from private as well as public sources. We also need to find ways to let individuals and groups in the community help “furnish” our park with playground equipment, picnic tables, trash cans, landscaping, etc. Not only will such items make the Greenway even more “user friendly”, but they will also give local people opportunities to take ownership and therefore value OUR beautiful riverside park even more.

I look forward to working with you in the coming weeks and months and sharing in the challenges and satisfactions that lie ahead.

Contact information: email: hlangston@gmc.cc.ga.us
 Address: 201 E. Greene St, GMC-Box 150
 Milledgeville, GA 31061
 Phone: 478-445-3462

Support the Oconee River Greenway

Renew your membership or become a Friend of the River with your tax deductible donation:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Friend \$20.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Supporter \$50.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wader \$100.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Fisherman \$150.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Swimmer \$500.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Rafter \$1,000.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> River Pilot \$2,500.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Riverboat Captain \$5,000.00 or more |

Become a Volunteer

- Work on fund-raising events
- Help recruit others as friends of the river
- Help with securing grants
- Help with recreation events on the river
- Help with public awareness and publicity



ORGF
 PO Box 1434
 Milledgeville, GA 31059
 706-749-0509 or
 866-235-5695 (toll free)



ORGF
PO Box 1434
Milledgeville, GA 31059

Coming Events!



SPORTS MEMORABILIA AUCTION

The Oconee River Greenway Foundation Fall fundraiser will be held on October 1, 2007, at 6:00 pm, at 119 Chops. We will have a Sports Memorabilia auction that includes a signed jersey by Steve Bartkowski, a Jesse Tuggle football, a Kevin Brown baseball, a Brett Favre football as well as many other sports-related items. This will be a great time to add to your autograph collection and support a great cause. Be sure to come Ladies, lots of tailgater items will be up for bid! Stan Strickland will also be present to sign our "Sweetwater" print. There will be a \$15 charge per person to cover hors d'oeuvres and there will also be a cash bar. We look forward to seeing everyone there.



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