



Florida Black Bear Scenic Byway Newsletter

A National Scenic Byway

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CycloCross At Santos

Joan Bernat

Greenway Bike Shop located at 3085 SE 80th St., Ocala, will be sponsoring a CycloCross on January 23, 2011 at Santos Vortex Riding Area. One may question the wisdom of a CycloCross and what it has to do with Florida Black Bear Scenic Byway? Greenway Bike Shop has graciously agreed to donate all proceeds to Florida Black Bear Scenic Byway.

CycloCross; never heard of such a sport? It has been around since 1940's and was originally a way for bicycle road racers to maintain their fitness level through late fall and early winter. It started in Europe and if you look at World

January). The race course is usually a mix of grass fields, dirt roads, relatively short asphalt sections (if any), some sand (but not too deep), some mud or stream crossings (but not silly deep stuff that requires scuba gear), and several forced dismounts and running sections. Forced dismounts and running sections are the thing that really sets 'Cross apart from other types of racing. Barricades 10-18in high (25-45cm) are erected in the course in sets of between two and six, and they are spaced closely enough together to prevent bunny hopping.

There is grace in the way an accomplished 'Cross racer can approach a set of barricades at full speed, dismount and begin running while shouldering his or her bike, then jump the barricades, set the bike down, remount and pedal off, and this all happens in a continuous fluid motion with very little reduction in speed. When you see a large field of racers do this in unison, it reminds me of watching a herd of deer vaulting a fence or line of bushes.

Bring your mountain bike or Cross bike and be part of the fun; help save a critter. If you have no inclination of racing come out and watch, it will be a fun day no matter what you plan on doing.

More information at: <http://greenwaybikeshop.com> or <http://floridablackbearsenicbyway.org>. Vortex riding area located at 9150 SE 25th Ave, Ocala Florida. Show up the day of the event or pre register. If you would like to help out please email FBBSB99@gmail.com.

GREENWAY BICYCLES
3085 SE 80th St. Ocala FL. Across from Santos Trail Head
Registration info: <http://www.greenwaybikeshop.com> 352-351-3475

CycloCross at Santos

January 23, 2011 Santos Trails Vortex Area

Classes:
Men's Novice & Expert Kids Class Women's Novice & Expert

Be part of the fun, support the cause!!
All proceeds benefit Florida Black Bear Scenic Byway
<http://www.floridablackbearsenicbyway.org>

Class Mountain Bike Racers from early to mid 90's the Americans (who invented mountain bike racing), are no longer dominant. Europeans win almost all the races, because of their background in CycloCross. Several mountain bike world champions in recent years have been past CycloCross champions.

It is a bicycle race that typical takes place in the autumn and winter (September -



Photo - Cyndi Miller Hoxie





Member Profile

Photograph Courtesy of Chris Kincaid



Cathy Lowenstein a forester with the Florida Division of Forestry, was a key player in getting the FBBSB going. Her personal history, the Black Bear Byway, and her career all intertwine.

Her parents were missionaries with the Baptist Foreign Mission Board and three out of their four children, including Cathy, were born during their service in Nigeria. When she was 13, her father

retired and they relocated back to their DeLand hometown. She says, "I have great memories of my childhood in Nigeria and regard it as a great adventure of my life; it was dispiriting to see how deforested it was due to subsistence farming and the burgeoning population when I re-visited in 2006." In fact, she attributes her "interest in forestry and natural resource management in part to my early experiences with the Nigerian landscape, and to my parents' interest in hiking, hunting, native plants, and gardening."

She graduated from the University of Florida with a B.S. in Forest Management and began her career with the Florida Division of Forestry (DOF) in 1979 as a temporary Forester in Ft. Lauderdale. After "paying her dues" in Urban Forestry in Ft. Lauderdale for a year, she graduated again, this time to a full-time DOF position in Gainesville.

When a position opened in Lake City, she took the promotion to begin twelve years there as the Columbia County Forester, assisting landowners with forest management, primarily reforestation on agricultural lands. When the Volusia County Forester position became available in 1993, she moved her family back to DeLand to assume responsibilities on the approximately 7,000 acres of Tiger Bay State Forest.

As funding for Florida's Conservation and Recreation Lands acquisitions kicked into gear through the 1990's, the state of Florida greatly increased its public lands. State forest acreage in Volusia County also grew as the first 5,235 acres of the Lake George State Forest were purchased. She became Senior Forester and then Forestry Supervisor as state forest

acreage and personnel were added. In 2000 state forest acres increased also in St. Johns County and she was named the Bunnell District's Forestry Resource Administrator with responsibilities extended to cover all five state forests within the Bunnell District.

In 2003 Florida DOT District 5 sponsored a special SR 40 Collaborative Task Force to discuss widening SR 40 east from Ocala. The group included personnel from various governmental entities, business, environmental, and local stakeholders; Cathy represented the Division of Forestry.

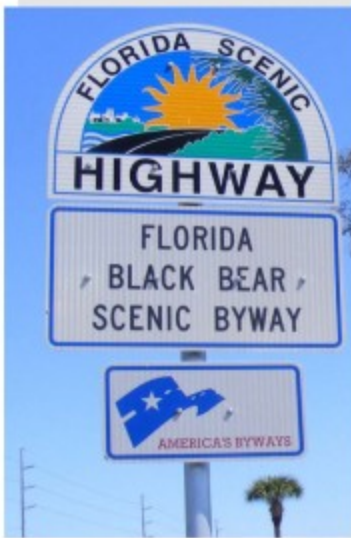
The Task Force concluded that SR 40 between Silver Springs and US 17 should be designed to function more like a parkway linking a series of publicly managed conservation and recreation areas and emphasize the character of surrounding natural resources. The Task Force determined that the National Scenic Byway Program and the Florida Scenic Highway Program could be used to help accomplish this vision. Designation as a Scenic Byway would provide a continuing forum for cooperation among agencies, governmental entities, and local advocates in support of the Greater Ocala Ecoregion and the SR 40 corridor. The Task Force recommended that a Corridor Advisory Group (CAG) be formed to apply for eligibility as a Scenic Byway.

The charter meeting of the CAG took place on September 7, 2005. Besides DOT personnel, representatives from the USFS and Division of Forestry were present. Jim Thorsen, then Ocala National Forest District Ranger, Cathy, and Carrie Seekerak, ONF Wildlife Biologist, were elected as Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary. In December 2005 Jim Thorsen retired from the USFS and stepped down as Chair. Cathy took over and Monso Tatum, who had joined the CAG during that period, became Vice Chair.

The CAG won approval of its Eligibility Application in May 2006. As the Designation Phase began, the CAG began its transition to a Corridor Management Entity. ONF District Ranger Rick Lint agreed to serve as Chair and Cathy continued as Secretary until April 2008. With the formalization of the CME, the Division of Forestry signed the Corridor Management Agreement as a partner agency and Cathy continues to participate as a technical advisory member.

In addition to gardening, Cathy enjoys reading and hiking and is working on a Master's Degree in Public Administrative from UCF. Her awards include the Florida Forestry Association's Service Forester of the Year Award in 1992 when she was the Columbia County Forester. We're lucky to have the support of this outstanding person!

National Scenic Byway Signage



Our Byway was designated as a National Scenic Byway in October 2009. Accordingly, America's Byways signs were posted at each of the four entrances to the Byway, such as the one shown above outside Silver Springs. Look for them also at SR 40 in Ormond Beach, SR 19 by Buckman Lock, and SR 19 at the south end of the Ocala National Forest.

Byway Publicity

Articles on our Byway have been showing up in various places recently. The website of the National Scenic Byways program, <http://byways.org/explore/byways/75864/stories/81622>, posted stories on the Yearling Trail and on Silver Springs in September. And the October 2010 issue of Rider magazine, carried the article titled "Riding into Bear Country" by Newsletter feature editor Tom Rose. Nice story about a motorcycle ride on the Florida Black Bear Scenic Byway, the online link is: <http://www.ridermagazine.com/output.cfm?id=2653435>. If you come across any articles please send them to FBBSB99@gmail.com and we will include the links in our newsletters.

Byway Factoid

The main corridor of the Florida Black Bear Scenic Byway is SR 40 between Ocala and Ormond Beach. Before becoming a State Road, and before it was even paved, it existed as a connector between the two cities with a rough limerock surface. In the 1920's the Good-year Tire Company used this Byway to test their tires for ruggedness and to improve them to fit demanding roads throughout the USA.

Florida Scenic Highways Bi-Annual Workshop



Bear Sightings

Coordinated by Tom Rose

Elvis, the King of Bears: Cyndi and John Hoxie moved from south Florida to Marion County in 2001 and sent the following:

In south Florida, the wildest thing you see in your yard might be a stray dog or cat. But here on the edge of the forest, we have daily sightings of deer and turkeys. When we first moved, we used to get excited every time we came across bear scat - what dorks! But just the idea of something so wild and beautiful living in our vicinity made us happy. We've purposely kept half of our 10 acres natural, and the bears seem to appreciate it. We often see them cutting through our property, and they usually stick to a particular path. At first, we only saw the bears at night. I don't know if their numbers are increasing, or if they just got used to us, but now we sometimes see them in the mornings. For the past 3 years, we've had a mom and cubs show almost daily during the winter months. John has had two instances where he was working in the yard, and looked over his shoulder to find a curious



bear checking him out. But sometimes they get a little too close to the house. In March, we were trying to catch a stray

cat, and forgot to bring in the food one night.



Bear Sighting's Cont'd

We heard a crash and expected to see a raccoon on the front porch, but it was Elvis (he's the biggest bear we've ever seen, so we figure he has to be the king!). Luckily, just a bang on the storm door sent him packing...but we now remember to bring in the cat food as we walk in from work!

The Bicyclist and the Bear: Mike Stephens is a Lake County native, an avid bicyclist, and a corporate sponsor of the FBBSB. He tells us of his startling bear experience of last October.

I was just riding my bike in the Seminole State Forest to get a quick workout. The bike trails really just consist of compacted lime-rock roads, but you can get in about 28 miles in approximately two hours if you ride all the roads and loops in the forest between 44 & 46. I started at the 44 trailhead and had already ridden out to 46 as well as the grade road section and loop road section. This happened in October prior to the time change so I was just trying to get in a quick ride after work before it got dark.

Just before dusk, I was heading toward Lako Loop/Lako Rd on Oka Road when I heard a commotion in the woods to my right. When I stopped to see what was happening, I realized that a large adult black bear was coming down out of a rotten tree right beside the road. I'm not sure if I scared him or if the tree gave way just as I was riding by, but a full grown adult black bear was basically "controlled" falling out of the tree within thirty feet of the road where I was standing. It all happened so fast, but I think it was as scared as I was... It's pretty funny thinking back on it now, but when it hit the ground right in front of me all I could think to do was to start barking at it like a dog to try to scare it off in the other direction! It was a pretty funny sight. I don't think I really needed to, as when it hit the ground it took off in the other direction, but it made me feel better! I have no idea why he was in such a rotten tree. I don't know whether it had honey in it or if he was just trying to look over a pond next to the road, or just what he was doing.

Just as an aside, this route is an out and back loop so I had to come back by the same area on my way back to the car and it was pretty dark at this point. Luckily, he wasn't anywhere in the area and he probably didn't stop running until he hit 46 as he was moving when he fell out of the tree!

It was a great night for wildlife as I saw the bear, four deer, at least fifteen turkeys and one bobcat all on that one ride. That was the most wildlife I'd ever seen in one ride.

Smarter Than the Average Bear: Cathy Lowenstein of the Florida Division of Forestry is a member of the FBBSB CME (see her Member Profile in this issue) and had a unique bear encounter while picnicking with her kids at Juniper Springs. Here is her story:

An orphaned cub had become the epitome of Boo-boo



Photo—Cyndi Miller Hoxie

without the mentoring of Yogi Bear. According to the FWC biologists, in order to survive it had become a scavenger at Juniper Springs, hanging out around the recreation area, stealing food from garbage

cans, and even scaring kids at the concession stand and eating the ice cream they dropped!

I had taken off work to take my children to swim at the spring one summer day, and stopped to talk to one of the biologists I knew to see what all the activity was about. Three or four of them were clustered around a picnic table where they had set up shop, as they were trying to capture the delinquent cub for relocation to the Okefenokee. The swimming area was fairly full of visitors that day, and as my children swam and I watched from a picnic table across the way, I observed the biologists disappear into the woods and the visitors cluster around the edge, rubbernecking. Apparently a tranquilizer shot had been fired, and the biologists were scouring the area to see if they had a hit.

As I watched from my vantage point, "Boo-boo" the bear cub emerged from the woods on the opposite side of the swimming area, ambled over to the biologist's picnic table/headquarters and proceeded to steal their lunch! When they finally came out of the woods to re-group, I thoroughly enjoyed letting them know how they had been 'had' by their target. The biologist was properly chagrined, and I still enjoy telling this story on him!



Thank You

To all of our Sponsors and Friends for a great 2010.



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Photos by Cyndi Miller Hoxie