



Dear PISP Patron,

I like other non-profits organizations when the pandemic escalated in 2020, it put a stop to A LOT of our activity. But Friends of Palmetto is back on track, we were just on 'pause'. Behind the scenes, we continued to do as much as possible within the pandemic restrictions to support Palmetto island State Park. The park provided the perfect green space for patrons to de-stress and de-compress while maintaining the social distancing recommendations, especially if they didn't already live the country life. We don't have to tell you what a challenge it was, we worked through it and feel blessed that it's behind us.

I am very proud to present to you, a summary of Friends of Palmetto Island's 2020-2022 accomplishments in support of Palmetto Island State Park.

Over the last three years, Friends collectively **volunteered over 6,625 hours** in support of Palmetto Island State Park. We even managed to attract an average of **60 members** each year. We annually connected **over 4,000 people** to the park through **Facebook**. We also continued to publish the "*Palmetto Pals*" monthly newsletter to **over 1000 subscribers**. Our website, www.friendsofpalmetto.org, received **7,000 visits**.

We spent over **\$ 22,045 on promotion, events and free programs**. Friends hosted, sponsored or executed **over 11 free programs at the park**. We slipped in our 6th annual **Cracklin' Cooking Demonstration & Tasting** just before the pandemic escalated in 2020. 25 locals demonstrated their personal techniques on cooking cracklins and tasty treats. Over **800 visitors** sampled their cracklings, wings, sweet potatoes, beignets and welcomed over 20 Dutch oven cooks who provided sweet treats. Because of the limited amount of staff at the park, every year we provided volunteers to executed the park's annual **Halloween Celebration, Easter Program and Pictures with Santa** programs. Throughout the year, Friends is happy and proud to support and promote the LA Dutch Oven Society's **Latanier Cookers**. We partnered with them to hold the **Vermilion Parish First Responder Day** attracting over 300 guests and **3 'Pork in the Park' Dutch oven gatherings**. Each November we sponsor the main meal '**Cochon de Liat**' for their annual Pork in the Park gathering. Speaking of Latanier Cookers, they got creative and by June 2020 they had figure out how to host a Dutch Oven Gathering and stay with the pandemic guidelines. We estimate that they hosted **23 Dutch Oven Gatherings** onsite and one 'virtual gathering'. By our count, their 3 year impact was...over 1,656 guests attracted to park, to sample 500 different dishes prepared by 397 cooks. Their dedication to Dutch oven cooking and their contribution to the park is beyond words. The **Krewe of Palmetto** was active too. They were able to host the **2020 Golf Cart Parade** before the shutdown. They had a record 41 golf carts in that parade. Due to the pandemic, the parade for 2021 was replaced by a **Mardi Gras campsite decorating contest**. The krewe returned the **parade in 2022**, however attendance was impacted by the state cancelling of a majority of the campsite reservations for the campsite sewage project. Loyal krewe and park patrons participated with 22 golf carts for guests who attended. The krewe also participates each year in the park's Halloween celebration by hosting a **painted rock hunt** for the kids. They are very generous with prize giving. Friends often supports the krewe by sponsoring these events. Friends hosted **4 'Give Away'** events in the campground and cabins in celebration of the park reopening, Christmas, Mother's Day and Father's

Founded in 2011, Friends of Palmetto Island State Park, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) public charity organized for the exclusive benefit, support, enhancement and promotion of Palmetto Island State Park.

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Day. Prizes were collected, numbers were randomly draw by staff and we surprised patrons with gifts. This is FUN and we get show a little appreciation to the patrons. We hosted 2 Christmas Volunteer and membership socials. This event is a little give back to the people who stand by us year after year. No work, just visiting, eating good food and fun gift games. All of these programs were open to the public and increased park attendance and added variety and diversity for visitors. We continued to maintain the **book sharing program** in the campground. Patrons have also contributed movies and board games. Off property we promoted the park by attending the Henry Volunteer Fire Dept's Fin, Fur, Feather Cook off and Vermilion chamber's taste of Vermilion.

In 2020, we suspended all intentional fundraising and cancelled Stir the Pot and the BBQ Plate Lunch Sale. These are the 2 major fundraisers for Friends. We felt like we weren't conducting major events, so we didn't need the extra money. Being blessed by patrons having been generous in their support for years and we felt like fundraising would have been an addition burden on the community in the ongoing situation. We still collected over **\$31,335** in support of the park.

Friends was still able to contribute in kind donations directly to Palmetto Island State Park that valued over **\$16,217** Please note the list below:

- purchased a new Echo **blower**
- purchased a new **push mower**
- purchased a new **extension pole saw**
- contributed funds to the Eagle Scout's Teen Rope **Playground**
- purchased a new **stove** for cabin #8
- purchased new camp host and volunteer **T-shirts**
- paid for **Gator repair**
- purchased **toilet paper and electrical repair supplies**
- purchased parts **to repair septic tank**
- purchased **lift pumps, fittings and pipe** for to install **full sewage hook up for 12 campsites**
- purchased **miscellaneous parts and hardwood for repairs**

As you read through this report you might have noticed that Friends of Palmetto, Latanier Cookers and the Krewe of Palmetto never Really left and our support has continued thought the storms, the pandemic and closures. We feel the information provided above is a testament to our passion and proof of community support for Palmetto Island State Park. We're excited to continue to be of support and benefit to the site in 2023 and we look forward to working with you to continue making Palmetto Island one of the best parks in the State of Louisiana.

Thank you,

Roxanne Burnette, Past President
Friends of Palmetto Island State Park, Inc.

TOTALS SINCE 2011 FOUNDING	
# of Volunteer hours	50,987
Free Programs	73
Dollars Raised	\$ 457,607
Spent on Advertising & Events	\$239,834
Value of Gifts given directly to Park	\$154,069