



# FRESpace Findings

Fall Winter 2018

## President's Report

As you will see from the Park Manager and Interpretive Ranger reports, Edisto Beach State Park has gone through quite a few personnel changes. Although we will certainly miss Jon and Brandon, we congratulate them on their promotions, wish them well in their new jobs, and thank them for all they have done for the Park over the years. We are truly fortunate to have excellent replacements who are bringing new ideas and building on foundations laid by their predecessors. We are excited about working with Park Manager Kyle Bullock, Assistant Park Manager Kaley Foley, and Interpretive Ranger Samantha Pettit and welcome them to Edisto.

September ended another successful turtle season. Although the number of nests was fewer this year, it is in keeping with the cyclical nature of Loggerhead nesting, and we are hopeful of a rebound next year. Our Sea Turtle Specialist, Leah Schwartzenruber, our two interns, Skyler and Jill, and volunteers did a terrific job caring for the turtles and educating the public through nightwalks and nest inventories. The nightwalks were almost completely sold out, and the response from the participants was very complimentary.

FRESpace volunteers again sold "I Survived the Turtle Nightwalk" T-shirts and raised \$773, plus we have 102 shirts available for next year. Thanks to all who helped in the selling and especially to those who purchased the shirts.

FRESpace volunteers have been busy with various projects. In addition to the support mentioned above, volunteers have assisted with another well-attended and fun Turtle Fest, helped install and

remove shore bird fencing, planted vegetation to protect the dunes, assisted with the displays for the ELC, and via the Blowhards, routinely blow off the Park trails. As more volunteer opportunities arise, we will publicize them through our website, Facebook, and email blasts. Your support will be helpful and appreciated.

FRESpace has funded several key projects for the Park. Perhaps the most significant was partnering with the Park to replace the obsolete Sea Turtle cart. We also supported the new trash display and the new alligator exhibit at the Environmental Learning Center and purchased a new blower for the Blowhards' cart. We continue to provide bird feed for the ELC bird sanctuary and membership for FRESpace/EBSP in the Edisto Chamber of Commerce. We anticipate more funding opportunities for upgrades and additions to ELC exhibits.

Our ongoing emphasis on local recruitment, solicitation of membership at Turtle Walks, and the active promotion of FRESpace by the staff at the ELC has yielded many new FRESpace members. Currently, we have 374 members, which is an increase of 118 over this time last year and 233 more than two years ago! We also have 8 corporate sponsors. As a reminder, here are some of the benefits of membership (still only \$25/year!):

- Free entry to the State Park (camping not included)
- Free boat ramp privileges at the Live Oak Landing
- Free use of picnic shelters, tables and grills
- Parking and use of restroom facilities at the beach
- Free admission to the Environmental Learning Center (ELC)

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- Use of Park trails for hiking and biking
- Membership in an organization that makes a difference in preserving the natural beauty of Edisto Island

Communications continue to be a major emphasis for our organization. We currently have 3,623 followers on Facebook and 3,527 “likes.” Both are substantial increases over the previous year. Our email list continues to grow, and our participation with the Edisto Chamber is helping communicate Park activities to our membership and the community. Currently, we are working on plans for a Business After Hours on February 5. Please check out our frequently updated website at [www.frespace.org](http://www.frespace.org), to “like” us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/frespace](http://www.facebook.com/frespace), and to contact us at [edistofrespace@gmail.com](mailto:edistofrespace@gmail.com).

Sam, Brendon, and Pat comprise an effective and friendly Environmental Learning Center staff. They are doing a terrific job in developing programs that inform and entertain on lowcountry ecology, fauna, and flora. Come by and visit one of Edisto’s treasures. They are open five days a week (Tuesday through Saturday). Thanks to each of you for your support. Together, we are making a difference.

*Bill Andrews, FRESpace President*

## **Park Manager’s Report**

Greetings FRESpace Members,



It has been a great season! Thanks to mostly cooperative weather, the park has been full, and we have enjoyed thousands of visitors taking ad-

vantage of our beautiful park. We have some staff changes to report. I, Kyle Bullock, am replacing Jon Greider as Park Manager. I know I have some

big shoes to fill! Jon was promoted to Lakes Region Chief of the SC State Park Service. I have worked at seven different state parks in our park system. My last position was Park Manager of Hamilton Branch State Park located in McCormick County, SC. My wife, two sons, and little girl have enjoyed our return to Edisto and look forward to being a part of this great community. Our Assistant Manager, Brandon Goff, was promoted to Park Manager of Givhans Ferry State Park. He will be dearly missed, but don’t worry, he will be back to enjoy the park and the beach. We hired Kaley Foley as our new Assistant Park Manager. Kaley has worked at numerous parks and brings a wealth of knowledge that will help us keep moving forward. She previously served as Senior Ranger at Santee State Park.

This past season we have accomplished a lot together. The Turtle Patrol received a new gas-powered utility cart to replace our aging one. A big thanks to FRESpace for assisting in the cost of the cart. It is greatly appreciated! Speaking of turtles, the park alone had 109 nests. Though this number is down from previous years, we feel confident the numbers will increase with each passing year. Nests began hatching in August, and our public inventories had great numbers of visitors enjoying the experience.

The dune revegetation project was completed with the help of Volvo, FRESpace, and park staff. This project was essential to ensure our dune system stays in place. With the help of FRESpace and park staff, we were able to complete our new Alligator Exhibit at the Environmental Learning Center. If you get a chance, please come by to check it out and some of our new programs planned for this upcoming season.

This upcoming fall/winter we will work on some projects to finish up our recent storm recovery. We will remodel the day-use restroom to give it the facelift it deserves. Trail work will continue as park staff perform annual removal of hazardous trees. Throughout this off season, park staff will perform various projects to maintain and enhance facilities as the opportunities arise.

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As always, thank y'all for your continued support of the park and making my transition as smooth as possible. We look forward to seeing you out in our great community and the park.

*Kyle Bullock, Park Manager*

## **Interpretive Ranger's Report**

Hey FRESpace!



For those of you who don't know me, I'm Sam Pettit, the new interpretive ranger. I started in May, just in time for the summer season. I moved to South Carolina in 2012 where I went to

school at USC Beaufort. I graduated in 2015 with a bachelor's degree in Biology and a concentration in Coastal Ecology and Conservation. Since graduation, I have worked at Hunting Island State Park as the Nature Center Specialist. Some of my responsibilities included animal care and interpretive/outreach programs. Over the years, I have developed an appreciation and love for all reptiles. Be sure to check out one of our programs featuring some of our local reptiles here at the center!

Since coming here, there have been a few additions and changes here at the ELC. The alligator exhibit is complete, and Marsh is loving his larger home! It was finished with help of O.B., one of our campground hosts, Ashby Gale, our past interpretive ranger, along with our maintenance staff. Thank you for all your help, and thank you FRESpace for funding this project! Since Marsh is in his new home, we moved some of our other critters around, so you may see some new faces the next time you visit ELC.

Our sea turtle interns, Jill and Skyler, headed back to school to finish their senior year. Before they

left, they finished their Trash Awareness Legacy project, another new addition to ELC. They did an awesome job! Henry Tindall, a FRESpace volunteer, installed it. Thank you to FRESpace for funding this project. It is an educational display I'm proud to have up on ELC's walls. Next time you're here, come check it out! We also said goodbye to our educational intern, Lucas. He was an incredible help with day to day operations and with programs. I wish them the best on their senior years and on their future endeavors.

We have a few new programs on our schedule and a few more in the making. Be on the lookout for "Gators of the Lowcountry" and "Off the Hook Fishing" on the program schedules. Stay tuned for new programs this fall and new videos to be shown in our movie theater. Also, we have new and improved Ultimate Outsider books on display throughout the park. It's a great way to explore the beauty of South Carolina. Pick one up and start exploring! See you around.

*Sam Pettit, Interpretive Ranger*

In Memorial – We are sad to inform FRESpace members that Don Tipton passed away May 2 of this year. Don and Damaris Cardisco were responsible for establishing FRESpace in 2002, and Don was the first vice president and the second president of the organization. He was heavily involved in FRESpace for years and a member the rest of his life. His wife, Ida, was the membership chair of FRESpace for a number of years.

Check our website at [www.frespace.org](http://www.frespace.org), and "like" us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/frespace](http://www.facebook.com/frespace)

Our gratitude to our corporate sponsors: **Charleston Fossil Adventures, Edisto Kennels, Edisto Landscapes, Edisto Saltwater Tours, Edisto Watersports and Tackle, Pressley's at the Marina, Lowcountry River Rats, and The Edistonian.**

*Please check the membership expiration date on the top of your mailing address label on the front of this newsletter. If your membership has expired, we hope you will renew.*

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