

# Hodges Gardens State Park

*Louisiana's Garden in the Forest*

Friends of Hodges Gardens A 501(c)3 Organization  
Established to Restore, Preserve, Protect and Promote Hodges Gardens  
Newsletter, May 2017

<http://hodgesgardens.net/>

Facebook—Friends of Hodges Gardens

## CHRIS'S COMMENTS

First and foremost, I want to thank all of you who have written and personally contacted your legislators, Lt. Governor Nungesser and Governor Edwards stating your interest in continued funding for Hodges Gardens State Park. Every contact is important. Also kudos to the wonderful work that All Things Sabine has accomplished with their drone videos highlighting all of the wonderful aspects of the Gardens in such a unique way which can be found on Facebook and YouTube. The [online petition](#) created by All Things Sabine has garnered at last count nearly 2,800 signatures with the goal “to convince the State of Louisiana that Hodges Gardens is worth keeping open and that the State should fund the park as is needed to keep it open.”

I wish I had good news to share with our members regarding the status of the Gardens, but I really don't. I have been in contact with Lt. Gov. Nungesser throughout the month continuing to state Friends position that continued funding is the only issue and that there is no need to request an extension from the Hodges Foundation because the State is not in default. The only way the State will be in default is if they don't fund Hodges Gardens for FY2018. All the talk about being in default and working on getting grant monies is a distraction. Friends is very interested in searching for grant monies for restoration purposes, however, the very uncertainty of continued funding by the State is the biggest drawback for major donors. Lt. Gov. Nungesser has the cart before the horse. First he must assure continuous funding of the park and then reach out to donors for assistance in the restoration efforts. Friends will continue its advocacy efforts and will share information with the membership as it becomes available.

*Chris*

## MOTHER'S DAY IN THE ROSE GARDEN

Spend Mother's Day with your mother in the Old Fashion Rose Garden. The roses are looking good and the weather is to be perfect for a stroll through the rose garden. Come and enjoy.





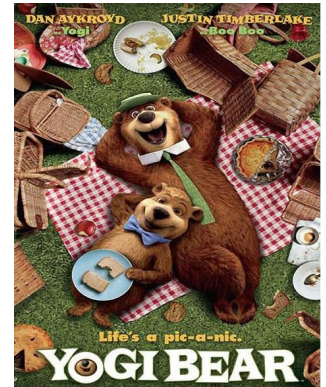
## STAR GAZING 101- MAY 19, 2017

Earth Day, April 22<sup>nd</sup> was the first in a series of Star Gazing programs led by Bob Nolen. A group of about 15 people enjoyed learning about the Spring night sky and were interested in future programs. The second program in the series will begin at 8 pm on Friday, May 19<sup>th</sup> weather permitting. Plan to arrive before 8:00 and come prepared with chairs, insect repellent, and refreshments you might like. Bob will have several telescopes set up for use but individuals may bring their own telescopes as well. The program will be looking at the prominent constellations, stars, and star clusters visible in May. This is a free event but regular Park

admission fees apply. You must register on the Friends website [www.hodgesgardens.net](http://www.hodgesgardens.net) to participate. The group is capped at 25 in order to allow for full participation so be sure to register early.

## MOVIES IN THE PARK - YOGI BEAR MAY 20, 2017

Yogi Bear sponsored by **Julian Foy Motors**- A documentary filmmaker travels to Jellystone Park to shoot a project and soon crosses paths with Yogi Bear, his sidekick Boo-Boo, and Ranger Smith. Starring Dan Aykroyd, Justin Timberlake, and Anna Faris. Come out to Hodges Gardens May 20 at 7:30 pm to enjoy a night of family fun. Bring your blankets or chairs to the Lakefront Stage. Concessions, provided by Friends of Hodges Gardens, will be available-to include Hot Dogs, Chips, Drinks, Candy and of course Popcorn. Hot Dogs cost \$2 and everything else \$1.

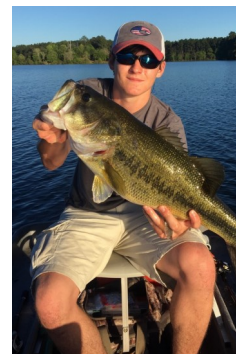


## PAINTING IN THE PARK – MAY 27, 2017

Join us at 1 pm for a fun filled Saturday afternoon with artist Kimberley Remedies. All supplies are provided. Regular park admission of \$7 applies along with a \$20 registration fee paid directly to Ms. Kimberly. Annual pass holders are admitted FREE and only pay the registration fee. Remember no talent required-step by step instructions provided. Hidden talents are discovered every time. Please call 818-424-6526 to reserve a spot.

## FISHING ON HODGES GARDENS LAKE

We have highlighted Chase Hopkins before as fishing on the Hodges Lake is his favorite thing to do. Here you see Chase with his personal best caught April 3rd. The good thing is that Chase believes in catching and releasing so that big bass is in the lake ready for someone else to catch him. Remember that only boats rented from the park are allowed in the lake to keep invasive aquatic species from choking the lake. You have to do your own paddling unless you have a friend that will do it for you. Of course you can fish from the bank as well. Please be a good sportsman and not leave hooks and line out that will snag our feathered friends.





## EASTER RECAP

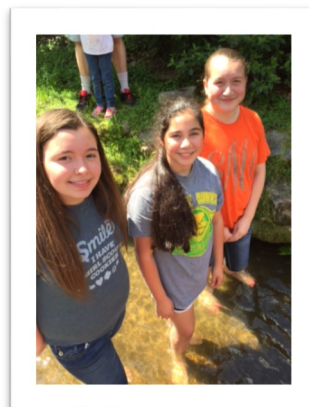
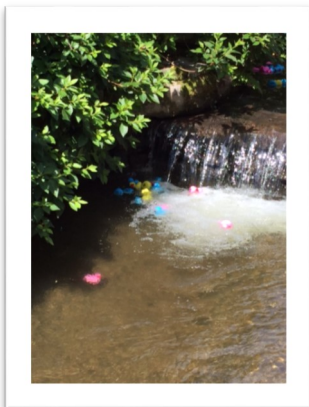
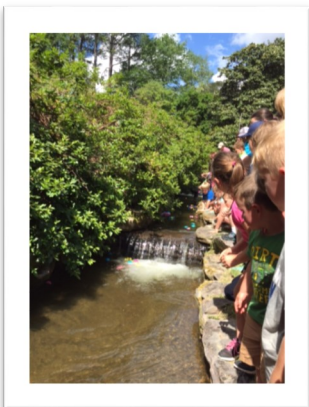
Our Easter weekend of activities was a big success based on all of the smiles. Friday night's movie HOP sponsored by **Interstate Building Materials** was well attended. The weather for the event couldn't have been better. Concession sales were provided by Friends thanks to Frankie and Lewis McBryde, Bob Nolen, Marlene Ortega and her crew from Fort Polk, Elisa, Timon, and Kentrell.

The combined efforts of Kayla Hataway, Carolyn Martin, Lindsey Carnline and Girl Scout Cadettes, Karley Martinez, Matea Whittington, and Skylar Meshell, Kim Kelly and Park staff made the Duck Race a big success. The first, second, and third place winners went home with beautiful Easter Baskets filled with goodies sponsored by **K & W Clothing** of Many.

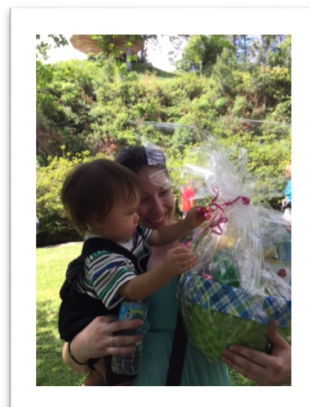
E. B., that is the Easter Bunny made an appearance on Saturday thanks to Dennis and Tammy Foster. E. B.'s Easter Basket got spiffed up thanks to Dennis's carpentry skills. Lots of Easter pictures were taken with E. B. putting smiles on many faces.

Thanks to the Randy Martin family grilled hot dogs were added to the concessions sold in the Visitor Center. And last but not least, Peggy Fisher manned the Visitor Center Saturday and Sunday. A busy day was had by all.

Sunday Mr. Gene Davis and the Vernon Parish Community Choir along with voices from the Sabine Parish Community Choir brought the word of God in song to the Lakefront Stage. All those who braved the early morning hours were blessed. Thanks to Nan Arthur, Bob Nolen and Friends of Hodges Gardens for providing breakfast for the choir members and staff after the service.



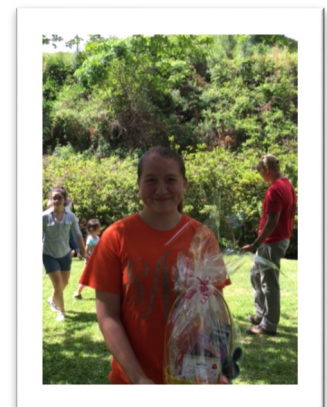
Girl Scout Cadettes  
Karley Martinez,  
Matea Whittington,  
and Skylar Meshell



First Place



Second Place



Third Place



## CHI ALPHA CAMPUS MINISTRY VS. AZALEAS AND VINES

With perfect timing and lots of determination, the Chi Alpha Campus Ministry came to the rescue as we started pruning the azaleas. With the bloom season over it was time to give the garden's massive azaleas a trim. In addition to the much needed pruning, there were vines of all kinds that were taking over the azaleas and had to be removed. With 1 employee to cover 60 acres of gardens it was an impossible task without the kickstart this group provided. These college students were undeterred, they came and they conquered!

Sponsors Eric and Annabelle Treuil of Lafayette made the arrangements for their group to travel to Hodges to complete a service project. For some, it was the first time to camp out and for all, it was the first battle with vines of this magnitude. They not only got the vines, but went all the way down to the bulbs. The pictures here do not do justice to the amount of work that was done and the size of the bulbs that were removed. Throughout the 3 days of hard work, snakes and heat, their spirits stayed upbeat and positive. Pierson Rivere, K.J. Spain, Brandon Cole, Alex Adere, Vonmark Roa, Jerrell Prier, Emmanuel Yanque, Cole Lusby, Eric Treuil, Annabelle Treuil, Niya Davis, and Amber Peltier volunteered a total of 148.5 hours. We are truly grateful for this special group of young people and send them our heartfelt thanks. They made a big impact in the garden and in our hearts.



## CONGRATULATIONS TO CINDY COX ON HER RETIREMENT

Friends of Hodges wishes you the very best in your retirement and thanks you for all of your years of service.



## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED TO PRUNE AND DEVINE THE AZALEAS



The Chi Alpha Campus Ministry made major strides in our efforts to clean up the Azaleas as seen in the pictures, however there is still more to do. Volunteers are needed each Tuesday and Thursday mornings to work with the park staff to continue the job. Come as early as 7:00 am and bring your work gloves, insect repellent and water. Spend as much time as you have to give.

Volunteers are the life blood of Hodges Gardens State Park. It is never too early to learn each of us can give of ourselves for the betterment of our environment. For more information about how you can help by becoming a volunteer or making a donation in memory or honor of a loved one, contact Friends of Hodges Gardens at [fohgsp@gmail.com](mailto:fohgsp@gmail.com).

## VISITOR CENTER

The Visitor Center will be open on Saturdays in May from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm and Sundays from 1:00-4:00 thanks to Peggy Fisher who has volunteered to open each Sunday. Those interested in volunteering to work in the Visitor Center contact Chris Nolen at (318) 315-0793.



## AMAZON SMILE

Don't forget to do to your online shopping through AmazonSmile to help support the Gardens. Use this link to connect with [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com/ch/26-4480938) to automatically support Friends of Hodges Gardens State Park <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/26-4480938> or use the amazonsmile link on the Friends of Hodges Gardens website at [www.hodgesgardens.net](http://www.hodgesgardens.net).



## Friends of Hodges Board of Directors

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The Friends of Hodges continues to seek new members to support our beloved Hodges Gardens. There is a membership level to meet all needs and all donations are tax deductible. Please consider joining us in our efforts to Restore, Preserve, Protect, and Promote Hodges Gardens. Link to [membership](#)

## Friends of Hodges Gardens

1000 Hodges Loop  
Florien, LA

Phone: 318-586-7002

E-mail: [fohgsp@gmail.com](mailto:fohgsp@gmail.com)

FaceBook@FriendsOfHodgesGardens  
<http://hodgesgardens.net/>

## Park Hours of Operation:

The gates open at 8AM daily and close at 9PM Sunday through Thursday and 10PM on Friday and Saturday. The Gardens close at sunset. Admission is \$7 per person, seniors 62+ and children under 3 are admitted free. Annual passes are available for \$80 and admit the cardholder and any passengers in the vehicle. For more information about the Park, visit [www.lastateparks.com](http://www.lastateparks.com), call 800-354-3523 toll free. **Reservations** for overnight accommodations can be made online or through the Call Center at 877.226.7652.

There are 13 cabins and a group camp, and 9 unimproved tent campsites and a primitive camping area. Also there are boats with paddles and life jackets available for rent.

