

# THE DUNE

# Breeze

*Jockey's Ridge in Gale (Photo courtesy of Ray Matthews)*

## The Winds of Change

*By Mark Dunlevy, Chairman*

Unless you've been hiding under a rock, it will come as no surprise when I write that the winds of change are blowing here on the Ridge. From Carolista Fletcher Baum and the People to Preserve Jockey's Ridge back in the 70s to Peggy Birkemeier and the Junior Friends of Jockey's Ridge in the late 80s, there is a rich history of dedicated citizens who care deeply for this special place and put that passion into action.

Since the early 90s, the Friends of Jockey's Ridge have been the people carrying that torch but lately we have been reflecting, getting inspired, and making some tough but good decisions. With the Friends' best financial interests at heart, we closed the Gift Shop in January 2012. And then in

December we made an even bigger leap. You may recall that we co-hosted the first ever Friends of State Parks Conference here on the Outer Banks in 2011, and our Board was inspired by what other Friends groups around the state were doing. We dreamed of again having a dedicated group of active volunteers working on all sorts of meaningful projects and programs on a consistent basis at Jockey's Ridge. Knowing firsthand that an organization comprised of volunteers with busy personal and professional lives would face difficulties finding the time and energy to undertake this renewed vision in earnest, we hired the organization's first Executive Director (see "A New Chapter") to help provide the leadership and

administrative skills necessary for this new expression of the Friends.

Now, thanks to a grant from the Outer Banks Community Foundation, the Board of Directors is embarking on a Strategic Planning initiative to help set the vision and direction of the Friends as we move forward. By the time this newsletter goes to press, we will have held an all-day brainstorming session, led by a professional consultant, on March 23. The Board anticipates revealing these new plans at the Annual Meeting on May 19 so please save the date. Until then, like us on Facebook or visit the website to stay up-to-date on what's happening at Jockey's Ridge. And, as always, thank you for your trust and continued support!



## A New Chapter *by Jennifer Allen McNinch – Executive Director*

You may be wondering just who *is* this new Executive Director? I'm a Tar Heel born and bred, having grown up in Raleigh and having received my B.S. in Biology from UNC-Chapel Hill in 1994. While I may bleed Carolina blue, there's salt water in my veins, too.

I grew up vacationing and sailing on the Crystal Coast and spent my early married life on the Outer Banks living aboard a Tartan 37 in Manteo and working at The Nature Conservancy's Nags Head Woods Preserve. My husband, Jesse, and I returned to the Outer Banks in 2008 after an 8-year stint in Virginia... this time with three kids (now ages 12, 10, and 9) in tow! If there's spare time to be found from our busy family life, sailing, reading, hiking, and volunteering for other non-profits top my list of fun things to do.

Rachel Carson once wrote, "In every outthrust headland, in every curving beach, in every grain of sand there is the story of the earth." I, too, believe there is a story in each grain of sand at Jockey's Ridge, and I can't wait to write some new stories with the Friends. My mother would be mortified if I put in print my family's all-time favorite story of the Ridge but I'd be happy to tell it to you in person...just don't tell her I told you! Stop by sometime, and I'll do just that. Or, better yet, bring your family and friends and come write a new one of your own.



## Meet Ranger Kandi

Kandi Zinn joined Jockey's Ridge State Park – her self-proclaimed "dream job" – in December 2012, having previously spent 5 years at Kerr Lake State Recreation Area and 1½ years at Falls Lake State Recreation Area. Kandi has a B.S. Zoology degree from NC State University as well as an NC Environmental Educator certificate and an Intermediate

Law Enforcement certificate. She says, "I love being a ranger because we get to do such a variety of things from teaching children to fighting fires. Every day is different and exciting!" Kandi, and her partner, Scott Crocker, enjoy fishing, kayaking and doing pretty much anything outside, and they are "looking forward to calling Jockey's Ridge home for many years to come."

## NAME OUR RACCOON

While *Procyon lotor* is his scientific name, we were hoping to come up with something a little more personal for the new mount that the Friends of Jockey's Ridge recently purchased to add to the Park's incredible collection. Email your suggestion to [jennifer@friendsofjockey'sridge.org](mailto:jennifer@friendsofjockey'sridge.org) by April 30, 2013, and the winner will receive a free t-shirt or puzzle!





## Dunes of Our Lives *by Debo Cox – Park Superintendent*

As a kid I spent a fair amount of time in the outdoors. I'm not sure if it started out as a genuine interest or resulted from parental exile, but either way I ended up learning a lot about the natural world, the realities of life, and the interconnection of all things. Some years later in college, I was exposed to the writings and views of some of the greatest naturalists, poets, original thinkers, and environmental pioneers of their respective day on those very subjects. For the first time I was confronted with forming a real, cogent opinion and philosophy about my own feelings, and it proved to be cathartic for me. Since winter at the park is generally a time of respite and reflection, I thought I'd share some of the beliefs and ideas that shaped

my own thinking so you can enjoy them with your coffee.

“Look deep into nature, and then you will understand everything better.” - Albert Einstein

“Recreational development is a job not of building roads into the lovely country, but of building receptivity into the still unlovely human mind.” - Aldo Leopold

“There is nothing in a caterpillar that tells you it's going to be a butterfly.” - R. Buckminster Fuller

“I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived. - Henry David Thoreau

“When one tugs at a single thing in nature, he finds it attached to the rest of the world.” - John Muir

“In wilderness is the preservation of the world.” - Henry David Thoreau

“That each day I may walk unceasingly on the banks of my water; that my soul may repose on the branches of the trees which I planted.” - Egyptian Tomb Inscription

I hope these provide as much food for thought for you as they have for me through the years. I feel incredibly lucky to work in a place where I feel like we do great service to these ideals and the mission of conservation, recreation, and education outlined by NC State Parks. I feel equally blessed that the park has such a dedicated and passionate group of supporters like the Friends of Jockey's Ridge. If you're not already a member, I'd encourage you to join their ranks and discover what all of the excitement is about. Feel free to quote me on that.

Come see us!

- *Debo*

## WHO'S IN THE PARK?

Mark Allen of Manteo, NC – a.k.a. the Sugar Shack/Creek Shrimp – was in the Park for a recent “Harlem Shake” video shoot sponsored by MaxRadio of the Carolinas. A 2012 graduate of Manteo High School, Mark has been donning the shrimp costume for a year and a half and remembers coming to Jockey's Ridge as a young boy for birthday parties where “we'd all just run wild out there”... which is, oddly enough, exactly what was happening out there again for the video shoot. Check it out at [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mSatJg-m9\\_c](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mSatJg-m9_c).



## JOIN THE FRIENDS OF JOCKEY'S RIDGE!



Join online by visiting [www.friendsofjockeysridge.org](http://www.friendsofjockeysridge.org) or  
Just fill out the form, clip and mail along with your check to:  
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Comments: \_\_\_\_\_



# SAVE THE DATE!

Our Annual Meeting is scheduled for Sunday, May 19.  
Stay tuned for more details!

## FRIENDS OF JOCKEY'S RIDGE

### Board of Directors

Mark Dunlevy, *Chairman*

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Michael O'Brien

Bruce Weaver, *Concessionaire's Representative*

Jennifer McNinch, *Executive Director*

### Park Staff and Support

Debo Cox, *Park Superintendent*

Justin Barnes, *Ranger*

Scott Coffman, *Ranger*

Jennifer Cox, *Ranger*

Kandi Zinn, *Ranger*

Alan Hurdle, *Maintenance Mechanic*

Rowan Jones, *Maintenance Mechanic*

Shoshannah Torres, *Office Assistant*

[www.friendsofjockeysridge.org](http://www.friendsofjockeysridge.org)

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