



GEORGIA WILDLIFE
FEDERATION*

Press Release

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Camping Weekend Introduces Folkston Residents to the Outdoors *Many to experience the Okefenokee for the First Time*

COVINGTON — The Okefenokee is bursting at the seams with nature – Sandhill Cranes, Pond Cypress, amazing views of the night sky, and of course, the iconic alligator. But despite the Okefenokee being so close to home, many Folkston residents have never experienced it. Local residents Antwon Nixon, Joy Campbell, and Ebony Garard are trying to change that by bringing Camp Charlie to town.

Camp Charlie, a program of the Georgia Wildlife Federation, is a planned weekend of camping and hands-on outdoor activities. Thanks to the generous support from Friends of Georgia State Parks, Camp Charlie is coming to Folkston and the Okefenokee the first weekend in November.

The program targets families who would like to experience the outdoors but may lack the knowledge, skill, equipment, and self-confidence to venture very far into the “wilds”. Campers are provided equipment and paired with experienced mentors to guide them through the weekend and assist with setting up camp, preparing meals, and experiencing activities such as canoeing, stargazing, fishing, hiking, and birding.

Georgia Wildlife Federation, Okefenokee Swamp & Adventures, and Sowing Seeds Outside the Walls, along with support from member groups of the Okefenokee Protection Alliance, are working to identify potential campers, mentors, and volunteers from the Folkston area, and pull together activities for the weekend.

“Exploring the Swamp for the first time in a canoe can be intimidating,” says Campbell with Okefenokee Adventures. “So instead, we’ll be doing a guided tour in a larger boat, hopefully at sunset. It is an impactful way to learn about the swamp as you see it in person. And the sunset views are often spectacular.”

Along with scheduled activities, there will be plenty of downtime to just enjoy being outdoors and spending time with family and neighbors.

“We are hoping the weekend will just be the start of something bigger,” says Nixon of Sowing Seeds. “We want to create a community of locals to encourage and help each other spend more time outdoors and enjoy the natural treasure that is in our own backyard.”

With the Okefenokee Wildlife Refuge in Folkston, Laura S. Walker State Park in Waycross, and Stephen C. Foster State Park in Fargo, there are plenty of opportunities within a short drive of Folkston for residents to enjoy the great outdoors.

To find out more about Camp Charlie at the Okefenokee and apply to be a camper, visit gwf.org/campokefenokee/.

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About Georgia Wildlife Federation

Georgia Wildlife Federation was founded as a sportsman’s organization in 1936 and is Georgia’s oldest conservation organization. Today, members include hunters, anglers, bird watchers, hikers, educators, and all Georgians who are interested in preserving our natural resources and outdoor heritage.