

THE BENNETT PLACE COURIER

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE BENNETT PLACE SUPPORT FUND, INC.

Editor: Jeremiah DeGennaro

Summer 2012

A Friendly Meeting Between **ENEMIES**



UNION AND CONFEDERATE INTERACTIONS AT BENNETT PLACE

It is well established that the Bennett Place negotiations played host to two of the most famous generals of the American Civil War, William Tecumseh Sherman and Joseph E. Johnston, and much has been made of their fast friendship that lasted the rest of their lives. But what of the others who were present at Bennett Place? Sherman and Johnston arrived with approximately 200-300 soldiers and officers, and for these men the Bennett Place meetings represented the chance to see the enemy they had been fighting and struggling against. What is known of their interactions?

For those present at the Bennett Place meetings, the white flag of truce offered the first chance to talk face to face with their enemies after four years of bitter combat. For Union soldiers and officers, the joy of victory was tempered by the loss of President Lincoln. For Confederates, the reality of defeat and surrender led to bitterness and defiance. For all, the hope of finally coming home gave a feeling of relief. The desire to settle old scores, innate curiosity, and the hope

of reconciliation all brought old enemies together, and many conversations were remembered after the war.

For the enlisted cavalymen serving as William Tecumseh Sherman's escort, the meeting served as an opportunity to gauge the feelings of their Confederate counterparts, who were caught fighting in what all were considering a lost war. Union cavalryman found that Confederate moods were greatly influenced by the probability of surrender. Private Arthur O. Granger of the 15th Pennsylvania Cavalry noted in his diary, "Our men mingled with the rebel cavalry. They were pretty bitter and the officers haughty." Granger captured the attitude of Confederates worn raw by defeat and surly from the humiliation of surrender. A correspondent for the Philadelphia Inquirer also remarked on the disdainful mood of Confederate officers, writing that they "answered in monosyllables to direct questions, kept themselves together, and repelled all courteous intercourse...the parting between the officers of the respective staffs was consequently very cool and distant."



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FRATERNIZATION AT BENNETT PLACE

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Though it is noted in original accounts that Confederates at Bennett Place were in an understandably bad mood, this did not stop curious Union cavalymen, excited by the prospect of victory, from seeking out their enemies. Captain George W. Pepper of the 80th Ohio Infantry noted that on the second day of negotiations "the rebel escort were kept by their officers aloof at a barricade, two hundred yards beyond, upon the road. If this was to prevent intercourse, it failed, for our boys, in numbers, straggled down the road, and insisted upon unreserved communication over the barricade rails." This moment of unrestrained interaction showed the curious nature of soldiers toward their enemies, but it also highlights the tense nature of the meetings, as the concern of hostility between the two groups remained.

The separation between the two groups of escorts most likely stems from the problems caused by the altercation between cavalry commanders Wade Hampton and Judson Kilpatrick. The feud between Hampton, Johnston's cavalry commander, and Kilpatrick, the commander of Sherman's cavalry division, is one part of the negotiations that is almost as well documented as the surrender negotiations. James E. Taylor, of Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper, chose to depict the heated discussion between the two for his sketch that ran in the nationally-renowned newspaper. Several original accounts mention the meeting of the two cavalry officers and the heated nature of their discussions. Both cavalry forces had played key roles in what had become a brutal and emotionally taxing campaign. Use of explosive "torpedoes," now known as land

mines, execution of prisoners, and a raid of Kilpatrick's camp at Monroe's Crossroads a few weeks prior had made the two men bitter adversaries. *New York Herald* correspondent David P. Conyngham wrote of their first meeting: "Wade Hampton looked savage enough to eat little Kil, with a grain of salt; while the latter returned his looks most defiantly. It was evident that they would break out. At length Hampton taunted Kil about his recent surprise of his camp. Kil replied that he had to leave faster than he came, without being able to carry off a color. Words grew hot,—both parties expressing a desire that the issue of the war would be left between the cavalry. The affair was becoming too personal; so Sherman and Johnston had to interfere." This altercation led to Johnston's decision in the next two meet-

"Our men mingled with the rebel cavalry. They were pretty bitter and the officers haughty."

—Pvt. Arthur O. Granger

ings to halt his cavalry away from the Bennett house to minimize any risk of tempers boiling over. Johnston established a great friendship with Sherman at Bennett Place, but other accounts show his own willingness to cross the divide and engage the enemy in fraternization. In Pepper's account, he writes that "Johnston disengaged himself entirely from the proceedings within, and stepping into the yard, addressed with a kind expression a common soldier, and entertained both the man and himself with the inspection of a Spencer carbine... It was the act of a brave and noble heart, lately misguided, now chastened by age, defeat and conviction." The interactions between troops at Bennett Place help us understand the different moods during the last weeks of the war. Though most of his officers failed to follow his lead, Johnston's willing interactions with Federal troops and officers helped ensure that the Bennett Place negotiations ended successfully.

THE PLANTER'S PROGRESS:

Growing the Bennett Place Kitchen Heirloom Garden

Diane Smith

Historic Interpreter I

When I first arrived at Bennett Place State Historic Site in October of 2010, the garden was looking a bit sad with a few scraggly plants struggling to survive in raised beds that were, themselves, struggling to stay together. I immediately started thinking about what improvements I wanted to see done. I knew that I wanted to incorporate it into the home front program and to try and grow the vegetables the Bennett family grew. A kitchen garden was very important to the survival of the family, providing them with vegetables, fruits and herbs. In addition to providing the family with a food source, it could also provide a source of income or be used to barter for other needed items. This would become more evident during the Civil War as food prices escalated and confederate money became worthless.

In the two years I have been here I have learned a great deal about gardening. It's been a very rewarding experience and with hard work and perseverance the garden is now producing an abundance of vegetables, fruit, herbs and even some flowers. There is a sense of accomplishment that comes with planting a seed and watching it grow. I have tried to create our kitchen garden similar to what the Bennett family had. From reading Mr. Bennett's journal we know that they grew both Irish potatoes, sweet potatoes, watermelons, peas, corn, oats, onions, cucumbers, beans, squash, muskmelons, and alfalfa (known as Lucerne during the 19th century). Some of the items Mr. Bennett mentions in his ledgers were probably not grown in the kitchen garden, such as corn, oats and alfalfa, since these are usually large field crops, but the other vegetables probably were. Mr. Bennett recorded in his journal income received as well as expenses related to the items listed above. The items they grew for their own consumption he may not have considered recording. We can only speculate.

In addition to the known items the Bennetts grew, additional items that were popular and necessary for a more well rounded diet were also planted. These items included: carrots, okra, turnips, strawberries, blueberry bushes, garlic, pumpkins, sorghum (sugar substitute), tomatoes, cabbages and a variety of herbs. Making the



Pole beans growing in the kitchen heirloom garden

decision to grow additional food items was a bit of a struggle because we wanted to stay with what the Bennett's had, but we also wanted to try and create what might have been a typical garden. In doing the research for the garden I became especially interested in herbs and vegetables used as food substitutes. Herbs not only provide flavor in cooking but they also have medicinal properties and items like sorghum provided many southerners with a source of sweetener when sugar became unavailable. These represent just a few of the many items used. Plans are being made to expand the garden.

Today, since we no longer have to rely on a garden to provide us with those food items we love and need, we tend to forget the importance of one. Gardening today seems to be more of a hobby, and an enjoyable one at that.



THE SITE MANAGER'S DESK



By John Guss, Bennett Place Site Manager

This past April we celebrated in fine fashion 50 years of historic preservation of one of our most coveted national landmarks. Civil War living historians, authors and historians, dignitaries, and more than 1,500 visitors engaged in learning and

reflecting on this important event in American history. The surrender negotiations were recreated with Major General Sherman and General Johnston convening in the Bennett parlor and the Bennett Family members awaiting the results in the kitchen house. Mrs. Karen Edwards, President of the Bennett Place Support Fund, Inc., presided as the Mistress of the anniversary ceremony, Mayor Bell of Durham gave a profound speech, and historian Mark Bradley provided the keynote address. Perhaps the most impressive sight was the performance of the United States Military 82nd Airborne Band, which played patriotic tunes that inspired us all. The ceremony concluded with the Sons and Daughters of Union and Confederate veteran organizations laying wreaths at the base of the Unity Monument, which has become a symbolic annual tradition at Bennett Place.

With 50 years of fond memories and a great sense of achievement, we now look down the road at the second half of the century, in what we trust will hold equally, if not greater, successes for Bennett Place and the preservation of our nation's rich heritage. Indeed, much concern continues to hover over us all with the ever tightening economic matters that are testing this nation's resolve. But, landmarks such as Bennett Place serve as a constant reminder that our nation has been through much more trying times, and we will survive the present situation with everyone working together as a United nation, such as our forefathers on April 26, 1865. One bright, exciting goal in our immediate future is

our new museum exhibit renovation, which is well under way with a more diverse and detailed storyline of the Bennett Family and the soldiers who met on their land. The gathering of more unique artifacts, beyond our current collection, will help provide visitors with a genuinely splendid view in understanding the end of the American Civil War in North Carolina. We have a concrete plan, but we are now, through the leadership of the Bennett Place Support Fund, Inc., engaging in a capital campaign to raise \$50,000 to make this concept become a reality. We hope that all citizens of this nation will rally to support this effort, preserving this hallowed ground where ALL Americans should feel a sense of belonging and sharing in the reunification of our beloved country. Bennett Place also serves as a memorial to honoring the more than 700,000 American lives lost and the freedom of a people.

Lastly, we are now moving in to the heart of the commemoration of the 150th Anniversary of the American Civil War with the reenactments and commemorative events of the Battle of Shiloh, TN, and soon to be the Battles of Antietam (Sharpsburg), MD in September, Perryville, KY in October, and the Battles of Fredericksburg, VA and Goldsborough, NC in December. Next summer will mark the events around the little town of Gettysburg, PA and Vicksburg, MS. Appomattox and Bennett Place will take center stage in April 2015. Please continue to follow and support this historic anniversary series by following our new website at www.bennettplacehistoricsite.com and our North Carolina Sesquicentennial Civil War website: <http://www.nccivilwar150.com>. Civil War Traveler www.civilwartraveler.org is also an excellent source for following the events on a national level.

Enjoy this issue of the *Bennett Place Courier*.

Thank you again for your continued support.

John W. Guss, Site Manager



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: SUMMER INTERN ALLIE CRAVER

This summer we were very fortunate to have a summer intern by the name of Allie Craver join our crew. She has an interest in art history and currently she is completing her master's degree at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond. Allie was very enthusiastic in her attitude toward the work she helped us with over the summer. Her warm personality and eagerness to learn made it a pleasure to have her here.

When Allie first arrived at the beginning of June, she quickly learned about the history of the site and began giving tours to visitors. Part of her internship was to help out with costumed interpretation, which she did with enthusiasm. After trying on the clothing that women wore during the Civil War, she assisted with several school programs and participated in a living history program held during our second Saturday event. She even attempted open hearth cooking during a school program about life on the home front. I'm sure she didn't know what she was getting into when she agreed to do her internship here and, judging by the look on her face, when



the corset was laced up. That it takes some time to get used to, but she was a trooper and carried on. As mentioned above, Allie's interest is in art history and she put her talent to work here as well in helping to make some visual improvements to our scrap

book and the "Life on the Home front" interpretive manual. On the 3rd of August, her internship ended and sadly we bid her a farewell. I'm sure she will carry the memory of a fun and interesting summer internship with her throughout her life.

Follow Bennett Place Online !!

In addition to our Facebook page and Twitter feed, there is now an improved way to stay current with Bennett Place news online! Check out our brand new website at:

WWW.BENNETTPLACEHISTORICSITE.COM

The new website, created by JW Web Solutions, is completely funded by the Bennett Place Support Fund, Inc. It features event photos, videos and blogs posted by the site staff. Information is available on the surrender, school programs, site rentals, and other uses for our historic site. There is an online gift shop if you are looking for a special gift for someone, or if you simply wish to make a donation to support Bennett Place, we would greatly appreciate the contribution.



Visit Bennett Place online on Facebook and Twitter! Follow us to stay posted on what is new around the site!

<http://www.facebook.com/bennett.place>

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JOIN THE CAUSE!!

BECOME A MEMBER OF THE BENNETT PLACE SUPPORT FUND!



In addition to the satisfaction of supporting the mission of Bennett Place State Historic Site, a donation at the attached contribution levels to our support group also entitles you to the following benefits:

All Levels:

Membership Card

Quarterly Newsletter

Notices for Special Events

Captain and Above:

10 percent Gift Shop Discount

Certificate of Appreciation

Special Gift

Thank You
to
Our Latest Donors!

Robinson Everett, Jr.
Captain

Triangle Day School
Lieutenant

Garden Makers' Club
Lieutenant

Sam Miglarese
Lieutenant

Charles Thissen
Colonel

MEMBERSHIP FORM

NAME

DATE

ADDRESS

PHONE

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SIGNATURE

CONTRIBUTION LEVELS.

- ☐ Sergeant (1 yr) \$25
- ☐ Lieutenant (1 yr) \$50
- ☐ Captain (1 yr) \$100
- ☐ Major (3 yrs) \$300
- ☐ Colonel (5 yrs) \$500
- ☐ General (lifetime) \$1865
- ☐ Governor (1 yr) \$2500
- ☐ President (1 yr) \$5000

Total: \$ _____

NORTH CAROLINA'S CIVIL WAR IN REAL TIME: A LOOK BACK AT THE NC NEWSPAPERS OF AUGUST 1862

AUGUST 11, 1862: COL. Z.B. VANCE WINS ELECTION, ASSUMES GOVERNOR'S OFFICE IN SEPTEMBER WILMINGTON, N.C. TO ESTABLISH GUNBOAT FUND TO FINANCE RIVER DEFENSE

The State Election on Thursday last was, in its result, a very extraordinary one. It swept the political earth like a hurricane, tearing into fragments the bands of party.—The wreck is visible in all directions. The strongest party bulwarks were crushed beneath its violence. God be praised, it was a bloodless achievement in itself, and we sincerely hope will prove a great blessing.

COME HOME.

The people of North Carolina having elected Col. Z. B. Vance Governor of the State, almost unanimously, we feel authorized by that portion of them in Rowan and surrounding counties to call on that gentleman to resign his office of Colonel and come home at once, preparatory to entering upon his new office.

PARTISAN ATTACKS ON VANCE.

It is truly very strange what a remarkable effect party spirit exerts over men. If we did not know the editor of the *Western Democrat*, we would not venture to print these words; but knowing him to be a clear-headed, cautious and conscientious man, his course in the late canvass has excited our surprise only so far as it has afforded a striking illustration of the blinding and hardening effect of party spirit on a good man. The *Ob-*

server had told the truth on our neighbor, as also in relation to those presses in the State which have supported Col. Vance; and we hope, now that the election is over, he may be enabled to discover it. Up to this time, however, the editor of the *Democrat* doubtless thinks the *Observer*, *Recorder*, *Patriot*, *Press*, *Argus* and *Watchman* were very bitter sheets against Mr. Johnston, notwithstanding it would be hard for him to find in any of them a disrespectful or unkind word against him. Some of them *may* have published a paragraph from the *Standard* in regard to his success at the bar, and the Greensboro' *Patriot* may have hit back pretty hard once or twice at those who were assailing Col. Vance. But with very slight exceptions, these journals permitted things to take their course without an effort to control them. We thought it wise to pursue that policy, and now, since the people have spoken, rebuking in *earth-quake* tones those clamorous, censorious and unjust sheets who advocated Col. Johnston's claims by bitter assaults upon Col. Vance, its wisdom is not less apparent than the vindication of the latter gentleman is gloriously complete.

—Carolina Watchman, Salisbury, NC

DESERTERS.—We invite attention to the advertisement of deserters from the 42d Regiment. The people of the country owe it to themselves and the State to do all in their power to cause

these men to be arrested and sent back to their companies. Let there be no shrinkage from the performance of this duty.

—Carolina Watchman, Salisbury, NC

CORN.—Capt. McCoy requests us to say he is anxious to buy a hundred thousand bushels of Corn immediately, for the use of our army at Richmond. He is paying a

large price and hopes the patriotic people of Rowan, Davie and Davidson will respond to this call as promptly as possible.

—Carolina Watchman, Salisbury, NC

The Committee of Safety of the Town of Wilmington, to whom the citizens of Wilmington in public meeting assembled referred all matters connected with the construction of one or more iron clad gun-boats or floating batteries for the defence of the entrances to the Cape Fear River and the Coast of North Carolina, have constituted and underigned a Special Committee on the subject referred to them.

The means of defence indicated, whether by an iron-clad gun-boat, or by an iron-clad floating battery, to meet the impending exigency, should be constructed as promptly as may be possible; and it is therefore of vital importance that we should ascertain without delay whether the necessary means can be procured. Contributions for this purpose are earnestly solicited. Should the amount contributed not be sufficient, or should any unforeseen contingency prevent the commencement of this work, the sums tendered will be returned to the respective donors.

At the public meeting of the citizens of Wilmington it was resolved, that the citizens of the several counties of the State are requested to organize Committees to solicit contributions and otherwise to cooperate with the Committee of Safety in furtherance of the proposed work.

The manifest importance of the contemplated work to the State at large, justifies us in calling on every patriotic citizen of North Carolina to come forward promptly and liberally in aid of its speedy accomplishment.

—Fayetteville Observer, Fayetteville, NC

Special Thanks to Volunteer Jane Hoppenworth for researching and compiling these interesting articles!

CALLING ALL VOLUNTEERS! BENNETT PLACE NEEDS YOU!!

Have a love of history or a desire to help in your community? Looking to accept new challenges or acquire new skills? If you answered yes to any of these questions, you would make a great volunteer at Bennett Place! We are always looking for dedicated people interested in helping us with the various needs we have on a daily basis. Volunteers at Bennett Place can help in a variety of different ways:

- Guided Tours
- Landscaping and Gardening
- Living History
- Historical Research

In addition to the satisfaction of helping at an important historical landmark, volunteers at Bennett Place get special benefits from their service. They include special Bennett Place Volunteer shirts and hats, invitations to accompany staff on field trips to other museums and historic sites, and a discount at our Gift Shop!

More information can be found on our website at:

<http://www.bennettplacehistoricsite.com/>



Volunteer Talmadge Walker leading visitors on a tour.

**For more information, contact Jeremiah DeGennaro, Volunteer Coordinator
Call (919) 383-4345 or send an email to bennett@ncdcr.gov**

NEW SIGNATURE ITEMS AVAILABLE IN GIFT SHOP

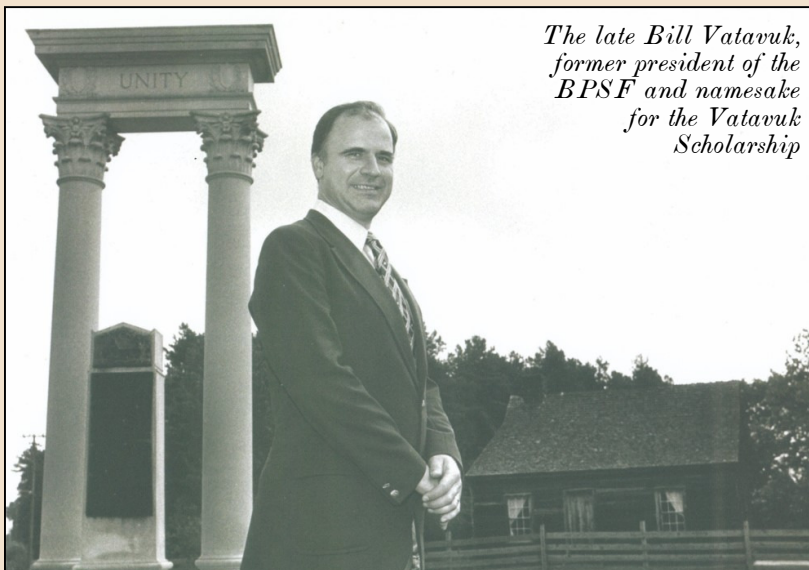
Fans and Friends of Bennett Place State Historic Site will be eager to know that a variety of new signature items are currently available for purchase in our gift shop. From soaps to shot glasses and boxes to water bottles, our gift shop is fully stocked with special items unique to Bennett Place. These items make excellent gifts, and any purchase in our shop goes directly to the Bennett Place Support Fund, Inc. to help finance site preservation, new educational programs, and special events. We accept cash, checks, debit and credit cards in our gift shop.



BENNETT PLACE SUPPORT FUND NOW ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR 2013 VATAVUK SCHOLARSHIP

The Bennett Place Support Fund, a 501 c (3) organization, is honoring one of its late members and contributors with an academic scholarship. This award of \$500 will be awarded to a deserving student who is a rising senior of a North Carolina high school. The scholarship will be presented to the award winner during the 148th Surrender Commemoration events in April 2013.

Mr. William "Bill" Vataavuk served as president of the Bennett Place Support Fund, Inc. during the 1980's and 1990's. He was a commissioned officer with the U.S. Public Health Service and worked with the EPA for 30 years. He was greatly committed to community service and youth organizations, serving as a 4-H volunteer, a tutor, a Kids Vote Durham precinct volunteer, and a member of Durham's Youth Management Board. He received the honorable President of the US Call to Service Award for over 4,000 hours of community service. In addition to his leadership of the Bennett Place Support Fund, Inc. was his contribution of the Bennett Place history guidebook, "Dawn of Peace," which was nomi-



The late Bill Vataavuk, former president of the BPSF and namesake for the Vataavuk Scholarship

nated in 1990 for the North Carolina Mayflower Award.

The \$500 monies must be put toward tuition, lab fees, books, computers and related media supplies, or other related supplies. Applications will be reviewed by a panel of judges.

Applicants must be High School Seniors, planning to study History or Education in college. They must have held a 3.0 GPA over the past two semesters. Appli-

cants must submit their application and a letter of recommendation from a teacher, mentor, or employer. Applications can be downloaded from our website:

www.bennettplacehistoricsite.com/education/william-vataavuk-scholarship/

DEADLINE for Submission is APRIL 1, 2013

For more details, call (919) 383-4345 or email bennett@ncdcr.gov.

NCCIVILWAR150.GOV

Freedom - Sacrifice - Memory



150TH LICENSE PLATES NOW AVAILABLE

As part of North Carolina's commemoration of the Civil War sesquicentennial, special license plates are now available for purchase through the Department of Cultural Resources. The plates feature the theme being used by the North Carolina Civil War Sesquicentennial Committee: "Freedom, Sacrifice, Memory." The license plate is available for a yearly \$30 fee; proceeds from plate sales will go toward commemorative programs and battlefield preservation. Applications will be accepted through 2015. For more information, or to download an application form, visit www.nccivilwar150.com.

NORTH CAROLINA

UPCOMING EVENTS AT BENNETT PLACE !

SEPTEMBER 22 - 23

CIVIL WAR SESQUICENTENNIAL SIGNATURE EVENT

*Life on the Homefront
in Piedmont North Carolina*

Saturday, 10 a.m. — 4 p.m.

Sunday, 10 a.m. — 3 p.m.

Civilian costumed interpreters will demonstrate how life on the homefront began to change with the impact of the war. Domestic chores such as cooking, sewing and gardening as their husbands and sons began to head off to war will be highlighted. Admission is FREE and donations are graciously accepted. For more information contact: 919-383-4345 or bennett@ncdcr.gov



DECEMBER 15 - 16

*Christmas in the Carolinas
During the Civil War*

Saturday, 10 a.m. — 4 p.m.

Sunday, 10 a.m. — 3 p.m.

Visit Bennett Place during the holiday season and witness how Christmas was celebrated in the Piedmont Carolinas during the Civil War. Living historians will decorate the farm in a typical modest fashion. There will be music and caroling along with refreshments served. Admission is FREE and donations are graciously accepted. For more information contact: 919-383-4345 or bennett@ncdcr.gov

FEBRUARY 23

CIVIL WAR SESQUICENTENNIAL SIGNATURE EVENT

*The Emancipation Proclamation:
An Exploration*

Saturday, 10 a.m. — 4 p.m.

On January 1, 1863 President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation to mixed reviews from a divided nation. Join us as we celebrate Black History Month with an exploration of the Emancipation Proclamation and what it really meant for enslaved African Americans from January 1863 until the end of the American Civil War. Admission is FREE and donations are graciously accepted. For more information contact: 919-383-4345 or bennett@ncdcr.gov

