



*White Sand and Blue Water  
Photo by Bill Metzger*



**February 17, 2012**

### **The Take Five Top Five**

On the way home, I picked up a copy of a magazine called "[Whole Living](#)." In it was a little list of four ways to give your New Year's resolution a reboot. As the article says, "Two months of working toward the same goal can get a little, well, boring." So allow these five strategies to help rejuvenate your enthusiasm if it's lagging.

**Get more (better) sleep.** The lights and other stimulation of technology can delay much needed restful sleep, so try turning off the tech and dimming the lights an hour before bed.

**Eat more mindfully.** A study in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* found that people who ate lunch in peace felt fuller (and snacked on roughly 100 fewer calories through the rest of the day) than those who ate in front of the computer.

**Snack smarter.** Keep wholesome foods on hand so that you don't go for vending machine baddies.

**Cultivate an Attitude of Gratitude.** An *Integrative Physiological and Behavioral Science* study found that people who were coached to be more appreciative experienced a 23% drop in their levels of stress-indicator hormone cortisol. Before tackling the To-Do list, jot down one thing you're grateful for

### **Home, Sweet Home**

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I did come back. Did you doubt I would? I have to say it was a lovely break - Florida sun shone on us as soon as we arrived and disappeared as we were leaving. I could take that as a sign.

We did the Florida State Park system proud. Pictured above is a shot of Henderson Beach State Park in Destin. White sand where snow might otherwise have been this week. Henderson Beach is about the only undeveloped stretch of beach left in Okaloosa County. Much has changed there since I left in 1979.

If you want a look at beautiful old Florida, however, you need look no further than Wakulla Springs State Park. The Wakulla River boat trip was the highlight of our visit to the Sunshine State (and that's saying a lot, given some of the gorgeous bike rides we took). Our river boat (alas, they no longer run the glass-bottomed boats they once did because of degraded water quality) came several times within 15 feet of a great blue heron. One stayed right where he stood as we passed and photographed for at least three minutes until he finally gave his pterodactyl-like call and took flight. If you ever find yourself in northern Florida, do not miss this lovely park (and its historic lodge).

today.

I'll add my two cents worth for a fifth strategy:

**Read a good book.** You never know where the inspiration will strike! Marci is putting together a book club and the first selection is called "[The Wildwater Walking Club](#)" (Claire Cook, Voice Publishing, 2009). It's about a trio of neighbors who start walking. For whatever reason, it hit a chord with me. I bought a pedometer and a new pair of Reeboks and have been working diligently at Getting In My Steps.

### Watch for the Scooter

As I mentioned last time out, Doug Bohn of Boiling Springs was the winner of Cosmo's scooter from [iConservePA](#). Here he is - with PPF President Marci Mowery, Meg Welker of PPL and Denise Wenrich of [iConservePA](#). Cool ride, Doug.



### Quick Links

[Join PPF](#)

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*Cypress in the Wakulla River*

### The Playful Life

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Yes, you would be forgiven if you looked at the calendar and wondered about the whole winter thing being a reality. Coming back from Florida, we talked to a guy in Tennessee who shared the lovely thought that the local forecasters there were saying that the weather pattern was setting up just like 1993. If you, like me, remember 1993 you will recall a pretty big ol' snowstorm hitting us in mid-March. I'd just as soon skip that if it's all the same to you.

Of course, as I recall, the first and only time we were actually snowed in here in Confluence was the first winter we were here. President's Day Weekend, 2002.

In any event, in light of the weird weather we've decided to extend the deadline of our Take Five in Winter photo contest. Photos must now be submitted before the last day of winter (March 21st) and we'll open voting on [our Facebook page](#) on March 22nd (with voting to continue through April 5th). The winner in each category (scenic winter landscapes, volunteers in action and winter recreation) will win a copy of the [Pennsylvania State Parks and State Forests Passport](#) and a [wearable checklist](#) (our new bandana); the overall winner receives a \$25 state park gift card.

See the website for [complete rules and entry instructions](#).

### Event of the Week - Where to Go? What to Do?

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As is befitting a holiday weekend, the calendar is packed this weekend with Great Things to Do and See. First, the Friends of Lyman Run will be looking to prove that it's "[Nice on the Ice](#)" up there on Lyman Lake and the [Friends of Oil Creek](#) will make host (they hope!) a night-time cross-country ski event on their beautiful groomed trails. Both are Saturday.

Looks like there is some bird counting going on - Jennings, Nescopeck, Nockamixon and Nolde Forest (*What? Not at Neshaminy?*) are all hosting Great Backyard Bird Count events and there are feeding and

identification events across the Commonwealth as well. I can weigh in with several starlings for the records.

Visit [our Calendar of Events](#) and the [DCNR Calendar of Events](#) for these and other Happenings in your state parks and forests!

### **Wise (Or Witty) Words**

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My ONLY complaint about our visit to Wakulla Springs was that we spent the Super Bowl in the lobby of the lodge watching on a huge television in near silence. It seemed rather ungentleel to raise my voice to its usual football-game-decibel-level in such a setting. I did speak with the wife of a Patriot fan early the next morning who shared that he was nearly ready to explode trying to keep quiet. I would have welcomed the opportunity to do more than let one yelp and one fist pump escape when Golden Boy Brady threw his interception.

I will spare you further vacation tales. For this week's wise words, I consult author and humorist Robert Benchley who said, "There is probably no more obnoxious class of citizen ... than the returning vacationist."

Thanks for reading anyway,

**Pam**

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