



Fall Paver Dedication
Sunday, November 22nd at 2pm

This Fall's installation of engraved pavers will be held in the courtyard of the Stevens Nature Center at Hemlock Bluffs, as usual. Members of the Friends of Hemlock Bluffs are invited to join us in fellowship as we dedicate this year's installation.

We want to try something new by asking members to bring a batch of cookies, brownies or a baked good of your choice to the event. This will allow us to keep the homey feel of the dedication, save funds for future projects and enable the Friends to serve refreshments to our guests who come to the dedication. We'd also like to engage park visitors who happen to be at the preserve on that day. We hope you'll help us turn on the charm by creating a "bake sale" type atmosphere where the goodies are free for the taking for all our guests!

New Hemlock Bluffs Staff Positions

After the retirement of Laura White, the long-time Nature Center Supervisor at Hemlock Bluffs, the Town of Cary and the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Department underwent a total reorganization. This reorg impacted Hemlock Bluffs and the Stevens Nature Center by reducing the number of full-time positions, the type of positions and the overall work plans of the site's employees.

The Nature Center Supervisor position was eliminated and a new managerial position was created. Mark Johns is the new Operations and Program Supervisor- *Environmental* at Hemlock Bluffs. A familiar face to many, Mark has worked at Hemlock Bluffs since 1991 and has served as the full time Program Specialist for Hemlock Bluffs since 2008. Mark has a B.S. in Fisheries and Wildlife and a Master's Degree of Life Science in Zoology, both from NC State University. Mark has provided the expert level adult and senior adult nature program series for many years. He is one of the last bonafide Naturalists, with expertise in ornithology, dendrology, forestry, botany, zoology, wildlife biology, ecology and the natural sciences.

With Mark's promotion to Supervisor, Morgan Bosse, was promoted from the Customer Service Representative to the Program Specialist-*Environmental* position. Morgan received a B.S. in History from Appalachian State University with a concentration in Parks and Tourism Management. She has worked at Hemlock Bluffs since 2011. Her experience at the nature center includes: creating, teaching and evaluating nature programs; marketing and promoting programs and events; training and orienting staff; participant interaction and customer service. Morgan says about the job, "Apart from working in such a physically beautiful environment, I enjoy working in a place where I fully believe in the mission and goals. Work becomes a lot less like work when you can be so passionate about what you are doing." Morgan comes to the Program Specialist position ready to bring the Stevens Nature Center into the 21st Century.

Qualified staff are key to smooth operations and quality programming at Hemlock Bluffs Nature Preserve. However, the overall reorganization of the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Department and downsizing over the past few years have impacted Hemlock Bluffs specifically. Two full-time staff positions have been cut and less facilities support has placed additional demands on existing staff and has required the Friends to step in with assistance. The partnership between the Friends and Hemlock Bluffs is more important now, than ever before.





Waverly Place Farmer's Market Promo Event
On Saturday, August 8th, 2015 Friends Board Members Christina Hester and Laura White took the show on the road and set up an info booth about the Friends of Hemlock Bluffs at the Waverly Place Farmer's Market. It was a great way to let visitors shopping at the market learn more about the Friends and Hemlock Bluffs. Lots of families stopped by allowing kids to spin our prize wheel and take home fun nature gifts. We also unveiled our new Friends of Hemlock Bluffs promotional items, including; tote bags, carabiners, decals and pins. Some of our loyal Friends members even stopped by to say "hello".



Friends Garden Workday
Saturday, October 24, 2015
1pm – 3pm
\$5.00 Friends of Hemlock Bluffs members
\$15.00 non-members (includes an annual membership/\$10.00 for seniors)

Join Laura White in the Hemlock Bluffs gardens to do some dividing, digging and decorative mulching.
If you do a little maintenance work, you can take home some divided plants for your garden!
Bring your garden gloves, some large plant pots or tubs, and water to drink.
Wear clothes and shoes that can get dirty.

Be prepared to work, this isn't kid's stuff – adults only, please!

To sign up – RSVP by contacting Laura White via email at Laurakwhite415@gmail.com
Limit 10 participants. Spaces will go on a first come/first served basis.



Children's Nature Trail Update

After the dedication of this new trail on National Trails Day in June, new additions have been happening all summer long. Ceramic birds were a part of the trail from the onset, but two new installations have occurred, one during the summer and one in mid-September. These flocks actually include animals other than birds, so keep a keen eye out for mammals as well as birds. You may see a bat, raccoon or a possum as well! New children's picnic tables, now adorned with educational animal track prints, have been placed in the trail area. A bluebird box, that kids can peek into, has been placed in the trail area. There's a surprise inside, so kids should look into the box by opening the side. It's like they are a real scientist checking on the progress of a bluebird nest! The latest purchase using Jandy Ammons grant funding allowed for the installation of a kid sized telescope and educational signs. These were recently installed by staff. The Friends of Hemlock Bluffs provided the funding for a rental auger to drill the holes for installation. The Children's Nature Trail has been a work in progress over the past year, but it has also been a fantastic community project. Stop by and see how it is being enjoyed every day by children visiting the nature preserve! You can't help but be impressed.

National Public Lands Day
On Saturday, September 26, 2015 Preserve staff, REI and Friends of Hemlock Board Members came together to organize a rainy workday event to celebrate National Public Trails Day. 55 stalwart volunteers came out in the questionable weather to pitch in and lend a hand to beautify Hemlock Bluffs Nature Preserve. REI started the day off on the right foot with event t-shirts and a quick snack for breakfast, provided by our local Kind representative (you know, those yummy Kind bars?). Volunteers with lots of enthusiasm and energy combined their efforts and worked in the preserve to knock out tasks that would not get done without their assistance. The Friends of Hemlock Bluffs provided lunch to the wet and weary workers. Some neat prizes were raffled off at the end. Staff were grateful for the work that got done, always appreciative for the many extra hands on these community workdays.



Grant and Fundraising Updates

The Friends of Hemlock Bluffs have identified grants and donations as one area of financial support for assisting the preserve with large-scale projects and the purchase of helpful equipment. Last year, staff asked the Board to focus on the implementation of the Children's Nature Trail. Through a grant in the amount of \$10,000 from REI, the initial phase of the Children's Nature Trail was installed. An additional \$9,000 grant from the Jandy Ammons Foundation allowed us to provide funding for the second phase. Almost complete, the Board would like to set up a Go Fund Me account to acquire funds for the final element (a large turtle climber). This element will be an exciting final phase to cap off the project. Stay tuned for details on the Go Fund Me page. Other donations for the trail have come from local Eagle Scout candidates and Girl Scouts, HagerSmith (a local design firm), Activate Good, and local citizens, who have donated time, money and their professional services.

Bottled Water Sales

Bottled water is available for sale by the Friends of Hemlock Bluffs inside the Stevens Nature Center. During the winter months, the Town of Cary Public Works Department turns off the outdoor water fountain to protect it against the risk of freezing. During that time, patrons may refill their water bottles in the public restrooms, however if they do not bring their own water bottle, resale bottled water is available inside the nature center during the center's hours of operation. All proceeds made by the Friends are returned to the preserve in support of nature education and environmental projects. Last year almost \$150.00 was raised by this venture. Unfortunately, the mini-fridge we used to store and cool the water in the nature center stopped working, so we'll need to purchase a new one. That may impact our budget. If you wish to support this effort, you can donate a case of bottled water at the front desk of the nature center and specify that it's for resale. That's one easy way you can help the Friends of Hemlock Bluffs help Hemlock Bluffs!

Future Projects

In the immediate future, the Friends plan to partner with Hemlock Bluffs staff to seek funding for a project involving simple modifications to the creek bank where camps and classes enter Swift Creek for stream study, creek monitoring and water quality testing. Currently, staff and participants slide down the creek bank and into the creek on a slippery slope wearing away the vegetation and soil. Staff would prefer to install a safe access that would both allow a step down method that would be easier for participants and would protect the fragile plants and soil of the creek bank. Because the project involves Swift Creek, permitting by the Division of Water Resources and other officials is involved. The project, although simple, will be made complex (and expensive) due to its proximity to the floodplain and creek. The Friends hope to assist in the grant writing process to fundraise for this valuable project.

Next year the Friends plan to hold a Nature Art Show and Sale. The event is intended to be a community event to showcase nature artists who incorporate nature into a variety of mediums. We plan to involve many nature artists of all sorts who wish to show and sell their art, then invite to public to come out and visit, shop and buy the items on the day of the sale. Combining nature and art is a natural combination and we hope to capitalize on the combination for our fundraising efforts. The date is set for next November.

Involvement

Members are always welcome to attend Friends of Hemlock Board Meetings. Upcoming meetings are scheduled for the following dates and times:
Monday, October 12th at 6:30pm
Monday, December 14th at 6:30pm
Please email questions@hemlockbluffs.org prior to any meeting you'd like to attend for further information.

Follow us on our public Facebook page, "like" the page and "share" it with your friends. Spreading the word about the Friends of Hemlock Bluffs on social media now will help us with name recognition, Town of Cary support and future efforts.
[Hemlock Bluffs Facebook Link](#)

Help us by keeping your membership current, and make an additional donation when you can. Specify the intention, if you like. We accept donations for conservation projects, like funding Eagle and Girl Scout projects, scholarship programs for underserved populations or you can earmark your donation to go toward the turtle climber in the Children's Nature Trail. Order an engraved paver! Dedicate a paver to your family, or order one in honor someone you love. Spend \$35.00 toward this simple fundraiser. Complete the online form now, or print it out and send it in. It's easy! www.hemlockbluffs.org

Feel free to send us your questions or comments at questions@hemlockbluffs.org or P.O. Box 62, Cary, NC 27512



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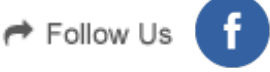
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Nature Center Staff Representatives: Mark
Johns, Operations and Program Supervisor
and Morgan Bosse, Program Specialist



Friends of Hemlock Bluffs
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