

August 2017

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**Inside this issue:**

<i>SEED Classroom</i>	1
<i>Summer Scholarships</i>	1
<i>Native Plant Sale</i>	2
<i>Fairy Garden</i>	2
<i>Request for Volunteers</i>	2
<i>Additions to Board</i>	3
<i>Calendar &amp; Meetings</i>	3

**Why Do Kids Need Nature-Based Learning?**

- ◇ To boost academic performance;
- ◇ To enhance creativity, critical thinking and problem solving;
- ◇ To increase focus and attention;
- ◇ To improve behavior;
- ◇ To reduce stress, anger and aggression; and,
- ◇ To improve social and emotional well-being.

**Friends of BLACK HILL NATURE PROGRAMS**



*Letter of Commitment—SEED Classroom*

In early July, the *Friends* President, Sheila MacLeod wrote to the Director of Parks, Montgomery Parks (with a copy to the Executive Director, Montgomery Parks Foundation) to announce we are pleased to support the Sustainable Education Every Day (SEED) Classroom Project with a donation of \$10,000.00.

This donation will be held by the *Friends* in a Certificate of Deposit for use in the formation of a wetlands area or interior classroom needs.



It is a priority for us to support the Montgomery County park operations, development and maintenance, and with this donation, we are confident our students, naturalists and community will be well served.

On an annual basis, we intend to support the SEED Classroom Project with future monetary or in-kind donations, based upon our budget.

Our commitment was presented to the *Friends* membership, and was unanimously approved and embraced by our members.



*Summer Scholarships*

The Marvin Kahn Scholarship was awarded to two deserving applicants. The children, aged 9 to 11 attended the *Nature Explorers* and *Nature Child* camps. Each day, the *Nature Explorers* camp was presented with a new adventure! Campers learned how to kayak, fish, hike, and wade streams. Certified tree arborists taught them how to climb trees like a pro! They searched for modern-day treasure on a geo-caching excursion. The *Nature Child* camp let the campers spend a week hiking trails, splish-splashing in the creek, and catching insects and fish in Black Hill Regional Park. Discovery and exploration led to an understanding of how we are connected with the land and its creatures, and vice-versa. Campers played in the great outdoors, met people who work with natural resources and wildlife, made crafts, and took part in other activities that served to benefit both body and mind.

## Native Plant Sale

The 10th Annual Native Plant Sale was held from April 27-30, 2017. Thanks to the Greenhouse Gang volunteers, it was very successful and generated \$12,000 in net sales.



We sold approximately 3,000 plants. Many of them were cultivated locally and most are important food and shelter sources for Maryland butterflies, birds, and an array of other wildlife. Remember, this is our major fund-raiser. All proceeds go to support nature programming for the Black Hill Nature Programs.

## Fairy Garden

The fairy garden located outside the Visitor Center continues to be a great hit with the children. The volunteer gardeners tidy it up each week and the children enthusiastically explore it and use their creativity to engage in adventurous play.

On your next visit, please stop by to see the fairy garden as well as the other gardens the volunteer gardeners lovingly care for in order to provide visitors to our park with an enjoyable experience.



Photo credits: Karen Plá

## Request for Volunteers

### Monarch Fiesta Day: Sept 16

The Nature Program needs lots of help for the Monarch festival. This is the biggest day of the year and it takes about 50 volunteers to make it happen. The festival will not be a success without you. Your help is needed to lead crafts, activities, and games. You can choose to volunteer for a half day (you can choose a morning or afternoon shift), or a full day.

*School Program Volunteers:* The Nature Program is looking for volunteers to help with school programs. You will receive training to lead portions of the school program.

If interested in either activity, please contact:

Katrina Fauss, Naturalist  
Black Hill Nature Programs  
[301-528-3482](tel:301-528-3482)



## Additions to Board

Due to the fact that members routinely transition to other duties, or leave their positions for various reasons, we currently have an opening for Treasurer.

The position is a 2-year term and involves a bi-monthly obligation of your time to keep track of our funds, track expenditures and report our assets and liabilities.

Please consider joining the *Friends* to provide our group with the benefit of your skill, and a fresh perspective.

If interested in becoming our new Treasurer, please contact one of the current board members to submit your name for nomination, or send us an e-mail at [friendsblackhill@gmail.com](mailto:friendsblackhill@gmail.com)



## Friends Calendar ~ Upcoming

The **Annual Monarch Fiesta Day** will be held on Saturday, September 16 from 11:00-3:00 pm in the Visitor Center and on the front lawn. Activities include exhibits, face painting, story time, crafts, movies, monarch butterfly tagging, and more!

**National Public Land's Day** will be held on Saturday, September 30 from 1:00-3:00 pm. It will celebrate volunteering and show appreciation of our nation's public lands.

*Photo credit: Karen Plá*

## Friends Board Meetings

The **Next Friends Meeting** will be held on Tuesday, August 22 at 6:30 pm in the Visitor Center.

The **Annual Friends Meeting and Potluck Dinner** will be held on Friday, November 3 from 6:00-9:00 pm in the Visitor Center.

*Photo credit: Karen Plá*



### The Board Members

- ◆ **Sheila MacLeod**  
*President*
- ◆ **Claudia Golenda**  
*Vice-President*
- ◆ **Mary McKnight**  
*Acting Treasurer*
- ◆ **Karen Plá**  
*Secretary*
- ◆ **Barb Kreiley**  
*Membership*



Formed in April 2001, the *Friends* support, promote, and sustain the nature programs and special events conducted by the interpretive naturalist staff at the Black Hill Visitor Center.

