

# Winter Newsletter 2019

*Friends of Black Hill Nature Programs (BlackHillNature.org)*

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*All photos are by Karen Ma, excepted where noted.*



## ANNUAL MEETING, POTLUCK AND AUCTION

Our annual meeting was held on November 2, 2018.

We had a delicious potluck dinner and a successful auction that generated additional funds for the nature programs.

The current members were nominated and approved for renewal of their second two-year term. Their names are on the last page of this newsletter

The Nominating Committee submitted the names of Rabia Oflaz, Anita Pustelnik and Charity Goodman as candidates for approval as new board members in 2019.

Monika Laws and Keri Perez had volunteered previously and were also approved for their first two-year term.

We were also treated to a pontoon ride around the lake to view the beautiful sunset.



## NATURE PLAY SPACES

This winter, the Naturalist staff worked to develop a strategic plan for the nature play spaces.

A new sand play area has replaced the old sandbox. Thanks to the hard work of the Black Hill Maintenance Crew, this popular area is bigger and includes seating.

The Naturalists also hosted a community potluck to engage with users of the play spaces. Parents and children voiced their opinions about their favorite spots and what new play spaces they would like to see in the park.

Look for improvements and new additions as the year

progresses! *[Photo of the sand play area by Jennifer Scully].*

Check out Upcoming Nature Programming at our website: [http://www.montgomeryparks.org/nature\\_centers/blackhill/index.shtm](http://www.montgomeryparks.org/nature_centers/blackhill/index.shtm)

## NATIVE PLANT SALE

In late January, a few gardeners received bag stratification lessons at the Pope Farm Nursery in Gaithersburg.

In horticulture, stratification is a process of treating seeds to simulate natural conditions that the seeds must experience before germination can occur.

The gardeners met in early February to stratify seeds for perennial plants that will be grown for our Annual 2019 Native Plant Sale.

*Pope Farm's motto is "Qui Plantavit Curabit" which means, "He who plants, preserves."*

The dates for the sale are:

**FOBHNP Members Only:**

Thurs., April 25 from 5—7 p.m.

**Public Sale Dates:**

Fri., April 26 from 3—7 p.m.

Sat., April 27 from 10—3 p.m.

Sun., April 28 from 1—3 p.m.

**All proceeds benefit the Black Hill Nature Programs. FOBHNP is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization.**



Stratified seeds at Pope Farm Nursery

## BECOME AN ADVOCATE

The Black Hill Nature Programs have been threatened again with budget cuts.

The County Executive will be holding budget forums over the next few weeks.

We would greatly appreciate a letter of support or your attendance at one of these forums to speak on behalf of the Visitor Center, nature programming and the SEED Classroom.

It is essential that the County Council knows the tremendous service our programs and space provide our community.

Visit the web page [MontgomeryParks.org/Advocacy](http://MontgomeryParks.org/Advocacy) to learn how you can become part of the conversation, express your opinions and show your support. Council member email addresses are listed at: <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council/members/index.html>



## BOARD MEETINGS

The Friends will meet quarterly during the 2019 calendar year.

Meetings will be held at 10:00 .m. in the Visitor Center, unless otherwise announced.

Meeting dates will continue to be shared with the Friends membership via e-mail.



## ROAD CLOSURE

As of the end of January, northern access to the Black Hill Regional Park from the intersection of Clarksburg Road (MD-121) and West Old Baltimore Road closed to traffic. The road will remain closed for approximately 14-18 months, for paving, grading and excavating. During this time, vehicles will not be able to gain access to the Park. All vehicles will need to detour from Clarksburg Road (MD-121) to Route 355-South.

## MAINTENANCE STAFF LUNCHEON — JANUARY 29, 2019

The *Friends* hosted a luncheon to recognize the Maintenance Staff for all of the hard work they perform throughout the year to support the nature programs.

This year, the menu consisted of chicken and pork BBQ, baked beans, mac 'n cheese, cole slaw, potato salad, a venison sausage and cheese platter, spiced pickles, beverages and desserts.

The *Friends* enjoyed cooking for the crew, and the crew loved our cooking! As an additional thank-you, the Perez children brought sweet gifts for each crew member. So thoughtful!



## FAMILY DAY — FEBRUARY 18, 2019

Due to inclement weather, Family Day was re-scheduled from January 21st.

The *Friends* hosted this event. Volunteers helped children explore nature topics using collections that they were able to view under microscopes, touch, and examine.

Exhibits of bones, rocks and minerals, animal hides, insects, worms, shells and

feathers were on display.

We presented a puppet show, led nature hikes, did some bird-watching, and showcased a Native American skills and gathering demonstration.

A lucky student won a nature item in one of several raffles. *[Photo of the earthworm is from the Internet].*



*“Nature builds confidence, promotes creativity and imagination, teaches responsibility, provides stimulation, gets kids moving, makes them think, and reduces stress and fatigue.” - Child Mind Institute*

## CAUSEWAY RENOVATION PROJECT

The Causeway Regional Project on Black Hill Road that crosses Little Seneca Lake started in early December and will end by February 28. Montgomery Parks has replaced the old culvert pipe infrastructure and Black Hill Road causeway. For ease of maintenance, the water level on the lake was lowered at the dam, which caused a rather

substantial beach to appear at the lake shore, bringing in a flock of seagulls to pick and scatter shells. The new pipes are more centrally located within the causeway and at completion of the project, the road will be repaved. During this time, the adjacent boat ramp will not be accessible.



  
**Organization**

*Friends of the Black Hill Nature Programs, Inc.*

**Join the FOBHNP and receive member benefits now!**

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

*We believe that these educational programs are the heart of the park.*

*The Board Members are: Sheila MacLeod, President (pictured below), Claudia Golenda, Vice-President and Acting Membership Secretary (pictured below), Mary McKnight, Acting Treasurer (pictured below), Karen Plá, Secretary, Charity Goodman, Member, Monika Laws, Member, Keri Perez, Member, Rabia Oflaz, Member, and Anita Pustelnik, Member (pictured below).*



**WHO WE ARE**

