



Natural Area News

A publication of the Ivy Creek Foundation, Volume 22, No. 4

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

Monticello Bird Club

Meetings

Please note the change to first Wednesdays.

Wed., April 5, 7 pm, Birding West Alaska, to be presented by Len Smock, director of the VCU Rice Rivers Station. Free and open to the public. Meet in the Ivy Creek Education Building.

Bird Walks

March 4, 7:30 am, First Saturday Bird Walk led by Jim Nix.

Apr. 1, 7:30 am, First Saturday Bird Walk led by Peter Dutnel.

May 6, 7:30 am, First Saturday Bird Walk led by Leigh Surdukowski.

Native Plant Society

Wed., March 8, 7:30 pm.

Developing Quarry Gardens by Bernice and Armand Thieblot.

Earth Day

Ivy Creek will host a series of special events April 22 Circle the date!

ANNUAL NATIVE PLANT SALE



Jefferson Chapter Virginia Native Plant Society Sunday April 30 1 - 3 pm Ivy Creek Natural Area Barn

Over 50 species. Includes VA bluebells, trillium, May apple, wild ginger, Solomon's seal, and milkweed. \$ 4.50 each (4" sq. pots) For more information, call (434) 293-4217

Volunteers Needed for ICNA Workdays

Thursdays: Mar. 9, Apr. 13, May 11, 9 am. Saturdays: Mar. 25, Apr. 22, May 27, 9 am.

We always need help on trail improvements, field restoration, and invasive plant removal.

ICF's "Voices" Program Wins Full Funding!

Ivy Creek Foundation is pleased to announce that it has received two grants, one each from Prana Fund and BamaWorks, totaling \$18,252, to launch its "Voices from the Land" program.

Building on its earlier success working with the Boys & Girls Clubs of Central Virginia (B&GC) and the Rivanna Master Naturalists (RMN), ICF sought a program robust enough to be the next step for the B&GC initiative and also adaptable enough to be used for other educational purposes. Both these goals are met with the "Voices from the Land" ("Voices")



project, developed by the Educational Information and Resource Center (EIRC, www.eirc.org.)

The funds will be used to pay "Voices" professionals to train ICF and RMN volunteers, who will then work with the B&GC children during weekly sessions. We will begin to train volunteers in June, and the program for B&GC will be launched in

the fall. In small groups, the children and mentoring adults will explore natural areas near their Clubs as well as Ivy Creek Natural Area, learning skills in discovery, art, poetry,

photography, and modern media. The team leading the "Voices" project at Ivy Creek consists of three of ICF's long-standing volunteers and current Board Members: President Marilyn Smith, Education Chair Alice Cannon, and Secretary Diana Foster.



Executive Director Tatyanna Patten notes, "We expect to achieve three complementary goals with "Voices":

- (1) Increase children's access to and ease in nature
- (2) Improve their understanding and appreciation of nature through the use of a research-based field-tested program
- (3) Use "Voices" techniques and exercises to expand our educational offerings to a broader range of community members.

We are excited to have full funding to launch this effort. The funds will be used to acquire both the training and the tools that will make this program a staple of our offerings for years to come."

Both the Prana Fund and the BamaWorks Fund are managed through the Charlottesville Area Community Foundation. The awards were announced in December 2016. We thank both grant-makers for investing in our programmatic vision!

Our First Partner: Albemarle County Parks and Recreation

Featured Partner Organization

Albemarle County, Ivy Creek Foundation's (ICF) first partner, administers 12 parks, which offer over 4,100 acres for passive and active recreational activities. The Albemarle County Parks and Recreation Department (ACPR) provides essential maintenance and utilities for Ivy Creek Natural Area (ICNA) and, with the City of Charlottesville, holds its deed as well as the deed to the Woods Natural Heritage Area which we also oversee. ICNA is one of two parks in the area that offer nature programs.

The Ivy Creek Natural Area began in October 1978 as an 80-acre property and has since grown to encompass 219 acres. From its onset, ICNA's existence is a testament to citizen activism through the combined efforts and funding of The Nature Conservancy, the Commission on Outdoor Recreation, the City of Charlottesville and County of Albemarle, and ICF.

Funds from a federal grant awarded for the purchase of the farm paid for the parking lot and restrooms. Donations to ICF were necessary to cover the costs to design and construct the kiosk and Education Building, develop trails, make renovations to the barn, and create educational displays.

Albemarle County maintains the entranceway, parking lot, paved trail, and the Public composting toilets. Its responsibilities include removing snow and ice, reapplying gravel or asphalt, filling in potholes, and similar projects that allow and ease public accessibility. It pays for the electricity and provides service for plumbing and HVAC needs.



Through its fundraising efforts, ICF provides landscape and trail design, plantings, educational signage, and invasive plant control. It clears and maintains the trails, barn, and Education Building, and provides the guidance and financial support for all programming and staff.

ICF and ACPR share the grounds and fields duties. The County also provides security in the form of police and animal control patrols in the parking lot. If ICNA needs some form of infrastructure, ICF and the County find a way to make it happen by working together on the solution. According to ICF Executive Director, **Tatyanna Patten**, "It's a great partnership, and the County has been very responsive to our concerns, needs, and priorities when we voice them."

A Tribute to ICF "Founding Father" Paul Saunier

by Dede Smith

The Ivy Creek Foundation lost a "founding father" this month when **Paul Saunier, Jr.** passed at the age of 97. Paul stepped up at a critical point in the creation of the Ivy Creek Natural Area, when a contentious battle was being waged between local developers and environmentalists over growth vs. protection. Paul was able to negotiate a win-win deal for both, while nearly

doubling the acreage of the natural area, returning its boundaries to those of the historic River View Farm. Serving as the first and founding president of the then fledgling Ivy Creek Foundation, Paul brought with him his extensive administrative and diplomatic experience and network of influential community members to lay the cornerstone for what would become a thriving environmental presence in our community.

Saunier family has requested that memorial donations be made to the Ivy Creek Foundation.



Paul Saunier (on right) with James Fleming to celebrate the expansion of the Ivy Creek Natural Area.

Paul was the founder of the region's well-known hawk-watching program, furthering the mission of the Ivy Creek Foundation to enhance the opportunity to experience the spectacular natural resources here in Central Virginia. As testament to Paul's devotion to this slice of his impressive legacy, the



Ivy Creek Foundation

President: Marilyn Smith
 Vice President: John Edelen
 Secretary: Diana Foster
 Treasurer: Phil Stokes
 Executive Director: Tatyanna Patten
 Ed. Coordinator: Bruce Gatling-Austin
 Newsletter Editor: Sharon Baiocco

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Earth Day @ Ivy Creek
Join us on April 22!

Full Activity Schedule TBA
Visit ivycreekfoundation.org for news!

**Extended
Barn
Tours**

**Guided
Nature
Walks**

**Invasive
Plant
Pull**

*What could
be more
natural?*

**And
More!**

The Surprising Story of Our Barn

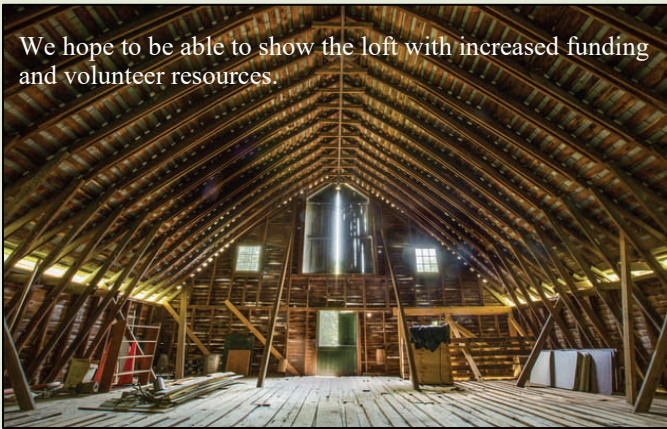
by Bruce Gatling-Austin

Beginning April 1, the barn at Ivy Creek Natural Area will be open for visitors on weekend afternoons from 2 to 4 pm. This schedule will continue until Thanksgiving. The barn was once the showpiece of the working farm known as River View Farm.

Volunteers at the Ivy Creek Foundation (ICF) have been digging into the history of our barn since December 2015, when we uncovered photographs, documents, interviews and videos while cleaning out materials in our Education Building. We have found that the barn tells the story of the land and the people connected with it, a story that needs to be told accurately. We went into this process thinking we would clarify a few things. Months later, we realize how little we understood about the barn in the first place, and how that has led us over the years to draw false conclusions and even create nonexistent histories. We now believe that the truer story of our barn can be told in six chapters.

In Chapter One, in the late 1930s, **Conly Greer** tore down Hugh Carr's small dirt-floor barn and built a larger concrete floor barn. Using plans from the Cooperative Extension, he made a modern barn with double-wide doors to allow a wagon to enter, a winch system to bring loose hay into the loft, a granary with two separate storage areas, stalls for workhorses, a milking area for eight dairy cows, and hay chutes to bring the hay down from the loft.

We hope to be able to show the loft with increased funding and volunteer resources.



Photograph by Victoria Dye

In Chapter Two, Greer switched from raising dairy to beef cattle. The beef cattle didn't need the barn as much except for feeding sometimes in the winter. Greer also acquired a tractor. We imagine the barn may have been a quieter place, with fewer cows and workhorses, but we don't know this for sure.

Chapter Three begins in 1956 with the passing of Conly Greer. His wife, famed educator **Mary Carr Greer**, tried

to maintain the farm by herself. At some point we know that she rented the barn to a pig farmer. We know from talking to farmers that pigs are not raised in the same barn with cows and horses. Also due to the methane produced, pig farming requires a lot of ventilation for the safety of both humans and animals. Perhaps this explains the presence of a gate and the open doors in all of the photographs from the 1970s. We know there are two piggens now. One of them may be for farrowing baby piglets, and another for weaned piglets. A manure port was cut into the barn wall, in the second pen. Stairs were built to the hayloft in addition to the original ladders going up through the hay chutes.



When Mary Carr Greer died in 1973, we begin Chapter Four. This is when land preservationists, not farmers, took charge of the barn and land. By 1978, the land was designated the Ivy Creek Natural Area, and the Ivy Creek Foundation was founded in 1979. During these years, focus was on the land, and the barn was repurposed as a place to hold meetings and workshops and for the ICF office. Farmers removed their animals; the pig manure was hauled away. Fencing was removed, old unused farm buildings were dismantled, and farm tools were sold off. The barn's windows were replaced with sealed Plexiglas to keep out birds, and eventually, electricity and a phone line were brought into the granary. A working demonstration beehive and natural history displays were added.

In Chapter Five the barn was in danger of collapse, and in July 2010, a County inspector shut it down. Through the efforts of donors, the County, the City and ICF, money was raised and a contractor hired to pull the barn upright. The Plexiglas windows were replaced with functioning windows that closely resemble the originals. All of the vertical posts were replaced. The ICF added natural history displays and purchased and put on display farm implements such as plows and scythes. (These are not the originals.) The barn reopened on April 21, 2012.

Today we are beginning Chapter Six. We are working to understand and tell a truer story of the Ivy Creek barn and the people who lived on River View Farm and around it. We now know that there never was a barn that housed dairy cows, pigs, a single room granary and a beehive, although this is what you see now. As we work to tell this truer story, we are left with many questions, including the best ways to share this rich history with our visitors.

Spotlight on Our Volunteers

Miles Schwartz Ivy Creek Foundation News Reporter

Miles, who prefers pronouns that are not gender-specific, is a new volunteer at ICF. They are a graduate of Oberlin College where they received a Bachelor’s degree in English with a concentration in Creative Writing and they plan on attending graduate school in the fall to pursue a Master’s in library science. They also volunteer at the Charlottesville-Albemarle SPCA. Miles’ mother, **Eve Schwartz**, is an Ivy Creek volunteer and referred them to our volunteer staff. Welcome, Miles!



Volunteer Trails Leader Needed for the Woods Natural Heritage Area

The Ivy Creek Foundation seeks a leader to head up the monitoring of the William S. D. Woods Natural Heritage Area, Albemarle County Parks’ newest natural area acquisition. Duties involve coordinating monthly visits to assess conditions and concerns. This entirely wooded 410-acre site is located 5 miles south of Charlottesville along Rte. 29. Contact **Phil Stokes**, ICF Building & Grounds Committee, at 293-4217 or philipfs@embarqmail.com.

Become a Guide

Ivy Creek Volunteer Guide Training begins Tues., Mar. 21, 9:30 am.

Learn the trails and how to share your knowledge and love of nature with groups.

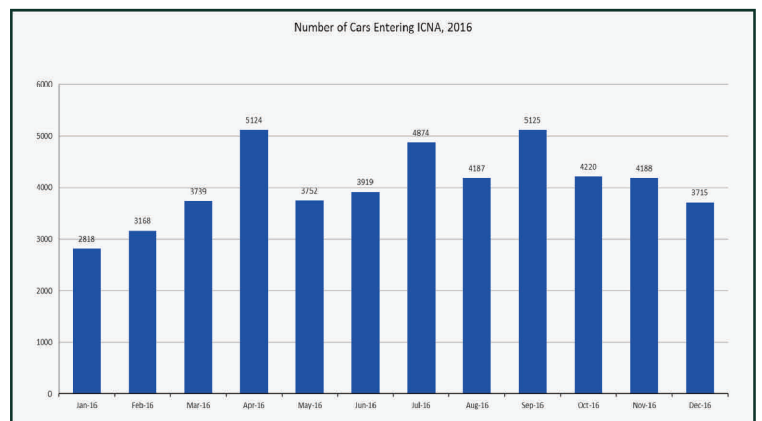
Susan Thomas Graphic Designer



Susan is a new ICF volunteer working on graphic design for this newsletter, and we are thrilled to have her! When **Mary Spear** suggested that Susan contact the ICF, she was very interested. Susan and her husband, Ross, were frequent visitors of ICNA until a new dog caused them to hike elsewhere. She says, “I am amazed to see all the research, restoration, and events that have taken place since I was last here,” and is looking forward to being a part of all that ICF does.

Susan’s artistic talents were honed as a fine arts major focusing on printmaking, and by working as a commercial artist while living in a variety of locations. As Susan and her husband traveled around the world following his career, she studied art: glass blowing and etching at the Toledo Museum of Art; stained glass in California; sculpture at the Beverly Street Studio in Staunton and the Academy of Fine Arts in Lynchburg; and oil painting at Montgomery College in Maryland, where she received a degree in accounting. In 2005, she took a course in encaustics (the art of painting with hot wax) and has worked in that medium ever since.

In 2007, Susan and her husband moved to Charlottesville where she has worked on numerous graphic projects, including doing the *OLLI at UVa* catalogs and newsletters for 5 years. Since moving to Westminster-Canterbury of the Blue Ridge in 2015, she has done design work for various committees and the marketing department, including a booklet explaining the community’s health care offerings and a book of wildlife photographs by a fellow resident.



A total of 48,829 cars entered the Ivy Creek Natural Area in 2016, making ICNA the fourth most visited park in the County system last year. The daily average was 134 vehicles.

Ivy Creek Foundation
P. O. Box 956
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Join Us for Our Spring Ivy Talks

“Bees and Beekeeping in Today’s World”
March 12, 2:00 pm

Local beekeepers **Karen and Ken Hall** will discuss the role of honeybees and beekeeping in modern society, and how we can enhance and protect them as a valuable resource. Their talk will take place in the Education Building and will answer such questions as: “Why do honeybees swarm? Are they taking pollen and nectar that would otherwise go to native bees?” and “Will honeybees survive?”

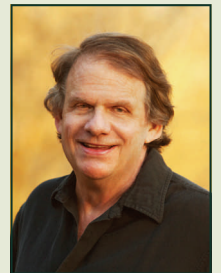
The Halls manage between 12 and 15 hives in northern Albemarle, along with observation hives at the Ivy Creek Natural Area and the Discovery Museum in downtown Charlottesville. They are members of the Central Virginia Beekeepers Association and the Virginia State Master Beekeeping Program.

They are committed to educational outreach and teach a variety of courses, seminars, and information sessions on beekeeping and honeybees throughout the Charlottesville area.



“Seeing the Forest”
April 9, 2:00 pm

Critically acclaimed local professional photographer **Robert Llewellyn** will give a slide presentation of work from his upcoming book *Seeing the Forest* as well as from five previously printed nature books.



Llewellyn’s philosophy of distinction between the passive act of “looking” and actively “seeing” combines with his knowledge of technology to produce detailed, focused images. His mission includes photographing familiar objects, ones that are so much a part of ordinary life that they are not noticed in order to open a window into the lives of ordinary things around us.

Llewellyn’s other books include *Remarkable Trees of Virginia*, *Seeing Trees*, *Trees Up Close*, *Seeing Flowers*, and *Seeing Seeds*. His photographs have been featured in major art exhibits; examples of his work can be seen on his website at www.robertllewellyn.com. Copies of his books will be available for sale and autograph.