Riverbend Park Summer Camps

The Riverbend Park Visitors’ Center is buzzing with activity as the park staff prepares to welcome dozens of school-aged visitors to enjoy summer camps on the Potomac Gorge. The park offers week-long day camps led by experienced and knowledgeable naturalists and instructors. These camps are also the platform and resource for five select interns that will join the camp staff and learn about the Potomac Gorge and non-formal education techniques. These internships are paid and supported by the Friends of Riverbend Park (FORB).

Children as young as three years old and as old as fifteen will find something to love at one of the many Riverbend Park summer camps. From exploring habitats with Wildlife Rangers to balancing on top of a stand-up paddleboard at
Paddle Away Camp, children get a chance to connect with nature on their own terms.

Top left: Campers learn natural rope-making during Primitive Teachings Camp. 
Top right: All cheers for a canoe adventure during River Explorers’ Camp. 
Bottom left: Interns Ana Bishop, Clare Sutton, Emily Meehan and Kali Hawkins. 
Bottom right: Zip line experience in the Potomac Adventures Camp. 

Parents can learn more about Riverbend’s summer camps by visiting the webpage, [www.partakes.fairfaxcounty.gov](http://www.partakes.fairfaxcounty.gov) where camps may be searched by both site and/or interest. Riverbend staff also offers camps at Dranesville Tavern, Great Falls Grange, Hunter House, and Turner Farm Observatory Park. Extended care is available on all Riverbend Park camps with pickups as late as 6 PM.
FORB & FCPA Sign Memorandum of Understanding

The Friends of Riverbend Park (FORB) and the Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) at the Riverbend Park Visitors’ Center on Thursday, May 3, 2018. Signing on behalf of the Fairfax County Park Authority was Kirk Kincannon, Executive Director. John Callow, Riverbend Park Manager, added his signature on behalf of the park, while Hugh Morrow, President of the Friends of Riverbend Park, endorsed the understanding on their behalf. The agreement essentially codifies and reaffirms the arrangements under which FORB, FCPA and RBP have existed since FORB’s was founded in 1999.

Hugh Morrow (President, Friends of Riverbend Park), Kirk Kincannon (Executive Director, Fairfax County Park Authority), and John Callow (Riverbend Park Manager) sign the Memorandum of Understanding while Tim Hackman (Fairfax County Park Authority Board of Directors) and John Hughes-Caley (FORB Board of Directors) nod their approval.
After the ceremony, Tim Hackman, Kirk Kincannon, Hugh Morrow, John Hughes-Caley, and John Callow pose on the deck of the Visitors’ Center with signed copies of the Memorandum of Understanding. The FORB-FCPA Memorandum of Understanding may be found on the FORB website at:

**New Educational Pavilion for Riverbend Park**

Construction is scheduled to begin this summer on a new educational pavilion and picnic shelter for Riverbend Park. The pavilion will initially include construction of a parking lot for twenty additional parking spaces including one accessible parking space. The structure will be located on Potomac Hills Street, the main access road into the Riverbend Park Visitors’ Center, and is consistent with the Conceptual Development Plan of the Riverbend Park Master Plan.

The pavilion would be available for conducting educational field trip classes for school children, rental to the general public, and to conduct events such as the FORB Native Plant Sale every spring. The addition of this structure is expected to generate both educational and financial value for Riverbend Park.
The new educational pavilion and picnic shelter is expected to be completed by late 2018 or early 2019, and be available to generate revenue and accommodate park programs by the spring of 2019.

**FORB’s Annual BBQ Benefit to be Held on Saturday, September 22\(^{nd}\) at the Visitors’ Center**

The Friends of Riverbend Park (FORB) will be sponsoring its annual Riverbend Park BBQ Benefit at the Riverbend Park Visitors’ Center on **Saturday, September 22\(^{nd}\) from 6 to 9 PM**. The BBQ Benefit is the perfect opportunity to support Riverbend Park, meet your friends and neighbors, and relax and enjoy a
cool drink and a barbeque dinner on the deck overlooking the Potomac River. Once again, the event will be catered by Mookie’s Barbeque of Great Falls, whose offerings have proved so popular in the past. S’mores by a campfire and boat rides on the river will also be available. Come meet the Riverbend Park staff, learn about the great variety of activities available at Riverbend, and get the latest updates on important developments at the park.

Registration is now open on the FORB website (www.forb.wildapricot.org), click on “Riverbend BBQ Benefit” to register. Payment may be made by credit card, PayPal, check by mail or cash at the door. Prices are $50 per adult ($20 tax-deductible), $100 per couple ($40 tax-deductible), $25 for children ($10 tax-deductible), and $125 for a family ($50 tax-deductible). Checks should be made payable to “FORB and mailed to Post Office Box 1481, Great Falls, VA 22066-8481.

Scenes from the 2017 Riverbend Park BBQ Benefit

Left: John Callow and Julie Gurnee (Riverbend Park Staff), Hugh Morrow (Friends of Riverbend Park), Bobbi Longworth (Fairfax County Park Foundation) and Tim Hackman (Fairfax County Park Authority) pose on the deck.

Right: Walt Lawrence (FORB Member) and Julie Gurnee (Riverbend Park Staff) partake of the delicious Mookie’s barbeque.
FORB Notes

• The Friends of Riverbend Park is seeking one additional Director to fill out its Board of Directors. Currently, there are nine Directors plus Riverbend Park Manager, John Callow, who serves as an *ex-officio* member of the Board. Our By-Laws permit and we have found it most advantageous to have all ten Board positions filled. If you or someone you know is interested in serving on the FORB Board of Directors, please contact FORB President, Hugh Morrow, at hughmorrowiii@gmail.com. Board meetings are held on the third Tuesday of every month at 7:30 PM at the Nature Center. Normally a few meetings are cancelled during the year because of summer vacations or inclement weather. Get involved with Riverbend Park and help protect and enhance this wonderful resource!

• The Friends of Riverbend Park’s website (www.forb.wildapricot.org) has now been modified to permit donations to specific projects rather than just general donations for park support. The donations tab may be found on the FORB website home page to the far right of the menu bar across the top of the page. Click on the three-bar symbol, and then click on “Donate.” Four donations options are now available, and more may be added in the future as projects and programs are undertaken. The four donation options now available are:

  - Riverbend Park Canoe Replacement Fund
  - Riverbend Park Forest Restoration Project
  - Support for Riverbend’s Summer Camps Interns
  - General Support for Riverbend Park Equipment

The Riverbend Park Forest Restoration Project is a brand new program initiated by a very generous and anonymous gift of $5,000. Details of this initiative will be forthcoming in future issues of *The Riverbend Naturalist*. 