

Friends of Colvin Run Mill

Spring— Summer 2022



Coming Events.....	1/7
President's Message	2
Other news.....	2/3/4
Miller's House Dedication.....	5
Wood Carvers Success.....	6
Summer Programs Planned.....	7

COMING EVENTS

Mill Tours: Every Saturday: 11am, 12pm, 1pm, 2 pm.

Behind the Scenes Tours: 2nd and 4th Sunday: 11am, 1pm, 3pm.

Grind Day: 1st and 3rd Sunday: noon-3pm; April thru September.

Fathers' Day Grind (free tour for fathers and grandfathers with one paying ticket) **6/19** 12-3pm.

Blacksmith demonstrations: Coincident with Grinding days when Blacksmiths are available. Call the site at 703-759-2771 to confirm. Free.

Northern Virginia Carvers: 1st and 3rd Sunday; April thru September

See additional offerings on Page 7

HELP NEEDED

Like to dig in the dirt? Rip weeds from the ground? We can use your help.

Volunteers are needed to keep nasty plants at bay, plant new ones, and help keep the landscaping around the Miller's House and Mill inviting to visitors.

A natural resources work day scheduled for May 14, 10 AM -1 PM. No advance notice needed. Just show up!!!!

THEY'RE BACK!



Fifty-five third graders from Belveder Elementary School attended the first post-Covid-19 "simple machines" program at the Mill on Tuesday, April 12. Another 50 were scheduled for April 13. We are soooooo happy for this popular program to be back in business!

Julie Gurnee, site manager, reports that they currently have 16 schools scheduled for attendance this spring with a total of 46 classes and 1018 students.

She also reports that there will be weekly scout programs running through the spring; nine summer camps are schedule for the summer, and additional mill tours and tour dates are scheduled for the spring and summer.

See page 7 for the full list of spring and summer camps. All will be listed in ParkTakes.

She is also working on building partnerships with Great Falls Friends and Neighbors, the Residence at Colvin Run, and looking to foster more partnerships in the community.

AN ALLIANCE OF FRIENDS

“Friends” of a number of county parks are collaborating to petition the BOS to increase funding for Fairfax County parks. This initiative would permit, among other things, the filling of vacant approved county positions and the hiring of sufficient staff to fully operate county parks.

Thirty years ago the park system was allocated about 1 percent of the annual county budget. Today that percentage has been reduced to about .06 percent. While bond issues have been approved to cover capital improvements, operating budgets, which fund personnel needs, have not kept up. As consequence, operations of the parks has been significantly constrained. In the case of Colvin Run Mill, we have been reduced from five full time, two part time, and two seasonal employees to only two full time, two part time, and two (?) seasonal employees. Other park sites are in a similar situation. Hence the desire to highlight to the Board of Supervisors (BOS) the need for additional funding throughout the park system.

Traditionally, Friends groups from a number of sites have advocated for their sites at the annual budget hearings in front of the BOS in April. This year, as a result of this alliance, speakers included statements about the general problem throughout the Fairfax County Park Authority. The goal is to engender community support which can be translated into expressions of support for the park system and help persuade the BOS to re-examine the funding priorities.

Through a series of weekly virtual meetings, the alliance members, usually about fourteen participants, channel the organization and marketing skills to establish a theme and generate a logo, seen on this t-shirt: the **Fair Parks Initiative**.

If you are interested in participating in this initiative, please contact either

Friends of Colvin Run Mill President, Jim Wallar or our Vice President Gene Bacher, either of whom can help direct you to ways to help (email: focrm1811@gmail.com)

**SUPPORT ADDITIONAL FUNDING
FOR FAIRFAX COUNTY PARKS**



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

People and plants are popping up all around the park, a sure sign of spring. The miller is milling, the smith is smithing, the carvers are carving, ducks are paddling in the pond, and two rooms in the miller's house are now open to the public, yet another good reason to hang out at Colvin Run.

Properly maintaining the mill and site requires resources that the Fairfax County Park Authority has fallen short of, being a low priority in the county's overall budget. Gene's excellent article on a new Alliance of Park Friends is just one of several initiatives to advocate for more resources for the parks. I was honored to present [testimony](#) to the Board of Supervisors and was moved by the stories of others about how their parks have suffered from neglect or shortage of staff.

As Friends we want to help all we can, but we cannot and should not become an extra bank account or a source of free help to substitute for what properly should be regular operations and maintenance expenditures. This advocacy will be a long haul. We need your help to convince the Board of Supervisors to give a higher priority to parks in the budget, and, in the meantime, we need your help as volunteers.

Everyone enjoys a “small world” story. Here is my latest. I was celebrating Nowruz, the New Year which is the first day of spring, with some Afghan families. After the symbols of the traditional foods were explained, we lined up to partake in the feast. I struck up a conversation with the man next to me. He said he was an engineer – a real one (many Afghan men call themselves engineers) – who had worked on a project with the Army Corps of Engineers in Afghanistan. His performance landed him a job with a highway construction firm in Northern Virginia. “Where have you been working?” “On Route 66 and Route 7.” Curious, I explained that I had been at Colvin Run Mill gardening the previous Friday. I had noticed progress on the tunnel being constructed under Route 7 with men in yellow safety jackets scurrying around. He looked at me with surprise: “I was there that day testing the strength and thickness of the concrete for the tunnel.” Small world.

Jim Wallar

President, Friends of Colvin Run Mill

Become an Official “Friend of Colvin Run Mill”

At the Board of Directors Meeting in April, the Board approved membership dues as follows: Individual - \$35 a year, Family - \$55, Business - \$100.

If you join, your membership supports an historic treasure that continues to educate and inform and grind out fine whole wheat flour, not to mention cornmeal, grits, and buckwheat flour.

In addition, you’ll continue to receive the Newsletters, have opportunities for special tours, receive samples of stone ground grains at special events, and you will have the right to vote for members of the board of Friends of Colvin Run Mill (one vote for individuals and businesses and two votes for families).

Join now by completing the membership form on the Friends of Colvin Run Mill site (focrm.org/be-a-friend).

BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND OFFICERS

Results of the 2021 Board of Directors election have been announced and 2022-2023 officers selected:

Members: Gene Bacher, Dan Dyke, Wes Callender; Bob Coblenz, Mike Henry; Larry Herman, Amanda McKnight; Kitty O’Hara; Jim Wallar.

Officers:

President:	Jim Wallar
Vice President:	Gene Bacher
Treasurer:	Kitty O’Hara
Secretary:	Amanda McKnight

Become a member of the Friends of Colvin Run Mill and support increased funding for Fairfax County Parks.

MEET OUR NEW EMPLOYEES

Dawn Bova and Bill Brazier

Dawn Bova has been at Colvin Run Mill since December, and has a chance to meet many of you. Prior to coming to CRM, she worked as a museum educator at the Claude Moore Colonial Farm in McLean, and the National Building Museum, Tudor Place Historic House and Garden, and Dunbarton House in D.C. She worked with 3- and 4-year-old children while a preschool teacher. Before that, she was at the Close Up Foundation, working as an instructor, curriculum developer, teacher trainer and program manager, focusing on civics and citizenship programs throughout the country. Here at Colvin Run, she is collaborating with staff and volunteers to develop and deliver programs for adults, children and families. Dawn lives in Arlington with her husband and (sometimes) three college-age sons.



Bill Brazier (on the left) has had a career in state government, public education, and non-profit public interest research. He is an author, a designer of social science curricula, and a professional developer in instruction --specifically for Equity & Inclusion and Project-Based Learning. He received a B.A. in Political Science from Boston College, an M.A. in Liberal Studies/Philosophy from George Mason University, and his Education Certification from The George Washington University. Bill has lived in nearby Reston for 29 years, and during that time has loved visiting Colvin Run Mill with his family.



TUNNEL CONSTRUCTION CONTINUES

ROUTE 7 WIDENING

Route 7 construction is moving apace and is really impacting the stretch that passes by the mill site. It may delay accessibility for some time to come.

The north half of the tunnel is now being built (see photo) and has necessitated a major temporary lane change in Route 7. We are working with Supervisors John Foust (Dranesville) and Walter Alcorn (Hunter Mill) in whose jurisdiction the potential trail connections reside to persuade the county to



make the necessary trail connections that will permit the full usefulness of this grand tunnel and provide routine access to the mill site property on the south side of Route 7.

FRIENDS OF COLVIN RUN MILL FINANCIAL STATEMENT—April 2022

Summary of Assets and Obligations

Assets

Certificates of Deposit	\$11,161.78
Checking Account	\$33,037.63
Total:	\$44,199.41

Earmarked Funds

Colvin Run Mill Historic Site Restoration Fund	\$ 7,659.62
Sam Swartz Education Fund, Historic Research	\$ 2,000.00
Mastenbrook Grant	\$ 456.06
Total:	\$10,151.68

Operating Reserves (not earmarked)	\$34,047.73
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MILLER'S HOUSE DEDICATION

Ceremonies took place on Sunday, April 3, 2022, to officially cut the ribbon and open the doors of the historic Miller's House at Colvin Run Mill in Great Falls, Virginia. Officials, descendants of past millers who had occupied the historic house, Park Authority staff and guests attended the brief ceremony, followed by tours of the house.

After extensive renovation, the house now offers an interactive design representing home life in the early and late 1800s. The two lower rooms of the house have been designed for guests to immerse themselves in the past. Sit at the writing desk, play a game from 1810 or try out an 1890s toy. The multi-year project was completed in 2020, but due to COVID-19 the opening was delayed.



Pictured from left to right are: Brian Cockerill, Virginia McGavin Rita, Alice Dimsey Lee, Nadine M. Lee (all descendants of previous occupants/miller); Philip Hoppes; Loretta Paruti, David B. Gordon; Julie Gurnee, Site Manager, Colvin Run Mill; Jai Cole, Executive Director, Fairfax County Park Authority; Tim Hackman, Dranesville District Representative, Fairfax County Park Authority Board; Mary Olien, Operations Branch Manager, Resource Management Division Park Authority; Jim Waller, President, Friends of Colvin Run Mill; and Laura Grape, Director, Resource Management Division, Park Authority.

Visitors also had the chance to tour the 200-year-old water-powered mill while it was running and grinding grain, purchase stone ground flour, cornmeal and grits from the site, and walk the colorful grounds currently in bloom.

For more information, email fcpacolvinrunmill@fairfaxcounty.gov; or call 703-759-2771. Colvin Run Mill is located at 10017 Colvin Run Road in Great Falls, Virginia.

(Photo and text courtesy of the Fairfax County Park Authority)

**BECOME A MEMBER OF THE FRIENDS OF COLVIN RUN MILL
HELP PEPETUATE THIS PARK'S MANY
CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE WORLD CLASS STATUS OF THE
FAIRFAX COUNTY PARK SYSTEM.**

COLVIN RUN MILL CARVING CLASSES A SUCCESS

By Joyce Spieler

When Covid-19 disrupted the Northern Virginia Carvers (NVC) ability to meet, our safest place to meet was outside the barn at Colvin Run Mill. As restrictions changed we were able to move inside. Thank goodness for that, especially when the weather turned rainy and cold.

In order to expand our community presence, Fairfax County Parktakes was the answer. Parktakes is Fairfax County Parks and Recreation offerings of so many activities and classes throughout the county. We developed a three class session for the New Year of 2022. There was an eight student (sixteen years old and older) capacity for the package of classes.



Seven students signed up! Yahoo! With the combined efforts of NVC volunteers (Todd Andre-Colton, Jack Edwards, Michael Wine and Joyce Spieler) we developed the program for the sessions. Since, this was a beginners' class the age old, tried and true carving a ball on a stick provided a fantastic first learning project. I thought of a little twist to this project. We carved a snowman ornament. Three round forms... a great practice in carving in the round.

The otter letter opener was introduced next. The choice of projects included were purposed for a useful end result. The students embraced carving skills with vigor. Of course, carving safety guidelines were shared and followed by all. Carving and Covid inclusive. The second class, the students carved the push/pull oven rack squirrel. This provided more carving skills as to forming curves, concave and convex. The squirrel added the bonus of a kitchen helper in the making.

During our classes the volunteers brought many different carving tools, supplies and carved examples for the students to see, feel and use for more carving exposure.

The sky was the limit. We did have a guest carver come visit. Phuong-Anh Nguyen, a wonderful carver, who produces realistic historical oriental carvings. She recently had a book published of her gorgeous carvings. It was a pleasure to have her as a guest at the Mill.

To round out our session, the last project was a stylized Santa. This project was a challenge because the students started with a rectangular piece of wood and the ability to proportion the final carving to their own vision. Michael Wine headed this project up in the class. He was so enthusiastic, that he also brought and demonstrated making custom eyelet hangers. This went well for the snowman and the Santa carvings. Since the student carvers had so much enjoyment in the carving project, the eyelet making will have to be done another day. Michael, thanks for sharing some of the eyelets for the students.

Everyone felt the program was a success. From the NVC volunteers to all the students. We are in the process of developing more class sessions and open demonstrations to be offered at Colvin Run Mill. Make sure you follow Fairfax County Parktakes and Colvin Run Mill schedules for future carving adventures.

You can also call Colvin Run Mill for confirmation of dates and times. 703-759-2771.

Thank you to all that made this carving project come to fruition. Especially Pam, Mary, Julie, Steve and Dawn. If I have missed mentioning you please know You were in my thanks as well.

PLANNED SUMMER PROGRAMS—COLVIN RUN MILL

SUMMER CAMPS:

All-American Girl: Living Dolls Camp (4-8 yrs.)	07/25/2022 - 07/29/2022; Weekdays: 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM
All-American Girl: Living Dolls Camp (4-8 yrs.)	06/21/2022 - 06/24/2022; Tue Wed Thu Fri: 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM
All-American Girl: Living Dolls Camp (4-8 yrs.)	06/13/2022 - 06/17/2022; Weekdays: 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM
Camp Colvin (8-12 yrs)	07/18/2022 - 07/22/2022; Weekdays: 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM
Camp Colvin (8-12 yrs)	08/08/2022 - 08/12/2022; Weekdays: 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM
Cooking & Crafts Camp (5-9yrs)	08/15/2022 - 08/19/2022; Weekdays: 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM
Cooking & Crafts Camp (5-9yrs)	06/27/2022 - 07/01/2022; Weekdays: 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM
Cooking & Crafts Camp (8-12 yrs)	07/11/2022 - 07/15/2022; Weekdays: 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM
Fashion Design Sewing Camp I & II (8-12 yrs.)	07/05/2022 - 07/08/2022; Tue Wed Thu Fri: 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM

SCOUTS:

DGS-Eco Learner	Sat, 05/14/2022 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM
JGS-Playing the Past	Sun, 05/01/2022 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM
BGS-Bugs Naturalist	Sat, 06/25/2022; 2:00 PM - 3:30 PM

OTHER CLASSES AND EVENTS

Ice Cream and Games at the Mill	Sat, 07/23/2022; 12:00 PM - 3:00 PM
Water, Water Everywhere	Sun, 06/05/2022; 12:00 PM - 3:00 PM
Simple Machines - Work and Play	Sat. 07/09/2022; 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

All these programs are listed in ParkTakes.

Prior registration required.

Programs highlighted in yellow are currently full.

Wait list available.

Questions? Call the site at 703-759-2771

TEMPORARY SITE CLOSING IN SEPTEMBER

The Mill site will be closed to the public during 3-4 weeks starting in mid-September for the purpose of regrading and the construction of appropriate ramps to comply with the requirements of the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) . These improvements will greatly enhance the access for everyone to this historic site's unique opportunities.