

Friends of Steele Creek Nature Center and Park

# Knobs and Knolls

July 2016

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## Nature Center Expansion



Photo courtesy of Michele Sparks

### **It's happening!**

Construction of the Nature Center expansion is well underway. Thanks to the good work of BurWil Construction Co. and cooperative weather, work is progressing rapidly. We anticipate opening of the expanded facility sometime late this year or early 2017.

Once construction of the new portion of the facility is completed, the current floor space will be completely renovated and updated. The two phases of construction have been planned to minimize disruption of daily Nature Center activities; however, some closures will be necessary as work proceeds later this year.

When completed, the expanded Nature Center will have nearly three times the floor space of the current facility. The entire Nature Center will be handicap accessible, with an elevator allowing easy access to both floors.

## Nature Center Expansion (Continued)

Some of the many features of the new facility include:

greatly expanded exhibit space, allowing for exciting new interactive educational displays, and seasonally rotating exhibits;

a large multi-purpose room that can be used as a classroom, meeting room, hands on laboratory space, or party room;

parking (including handicap spaces) immediately adjacent to the main entrance;

impressive, interpretive views of the lake and wildflower garden areas;

additional work space for Nature Center employees and volunteer naturalists.

*Friends* has contracted with Bristol native [Ed Hackley](#) to provide all of the interior design work. Ed is an internationally recognized exhibit designer. Working closely with Jeremy Stout and Terry Napier, as well as the other Nature Center naturalists and *Friends* representatives, Ed has proposed an impressive array of exhibits demonstrating the wide biodiversity diversity of the Park and our region.

However, full implementation of Ed's proposed designs depends entirely on our ability to raise the necessary funds. Although the City is paying for the construction costs for the building itself, *Friends* has committed to raising \$250,000 to assure that the experience of visiting the Nature Center is exciting, educational, and worth repeating over and over again. Our major fund raising campaign is now underway, with hopes that we can meet our goal before the end of 2016. With your help this will become a reality.



Artist's rendition of the new Nature Center, by Carolyn Hanlon

Contributions can be made at this time using the donation form on the last page of this newsletter, or by credit card or PayPal account via our [website donation page](#). You may also contact us by e-mail at [mail@friendsofstelecreek.org](mailto:mail@friendsofstelecreek.org) or by telephone at 423-764-8828.

If you are a member of a civic organization and would like to have Jeremy Stout and one of our Board members speak to your group about the Nature Center expansion project, contact us at [mail@friendsofstelecreek.org](mailto:mail@friendsofstelecreek.org).

# Elements of Nature Photography

*In this issue, we continue a series of articles on using your camera to capture nature, **by Sonie Schermer**. Sonie is a founding board member of Friends, and an accomplished amateur nature photographer. Additional articles will appear in subsequent issues of Knobs and Knolls.*

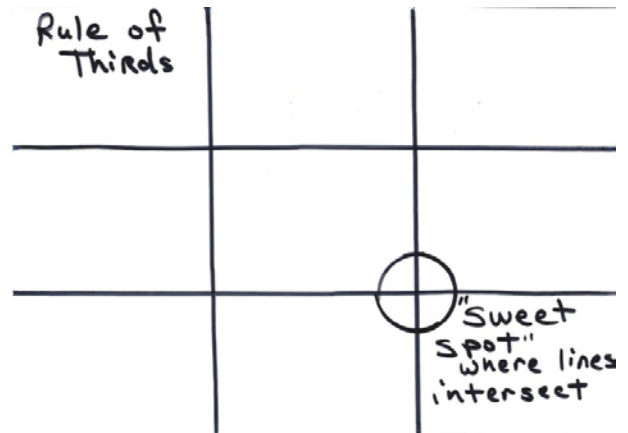
## COMPOSITION – Rule of Thirds and Depth of Field

Composition is the purposeful arrangement of the elements in a photo. We'll look next at the "Rule of Thirds" and Depth of Field.

### Rule of Thirds

The rule of thirds divides the frame into nine equal sections. (This display is provided on many cameras.) When possible, position the point of interest along one of the lines or, ideally, where two of the lines intersect lines, sometimes called the "sweet spot".

Viewer's eyes tend to go more naturally to one of these intersection points rather than to the center of the picture. It's best if you can compose the picture with the rule of thirds before you snap the photo; this placement makes for a more interesting picture.



Rule of Thirds Tip:

- When photographing animals, placing one of the lines near the animal's eye draws the viewer's attention.





# Elements of Nature Photography

## (Continued)

### Depth of Field

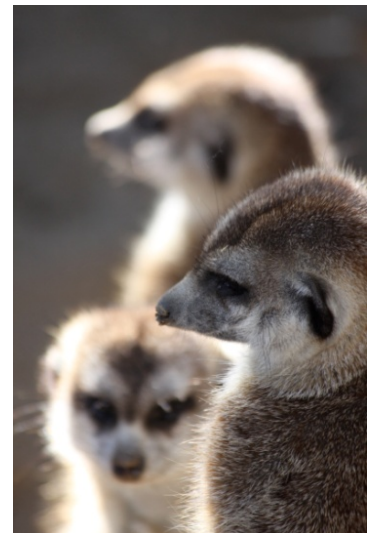
Depth of field is the distance between the nearest and farthest objects in the scene that appear to be in focus. It is determined by how close the object is to the lens and how large the lens aperture (or opening) is.

Depth of Field Tips:

- The closer the object is to your lens the shallower your depth of field will be.



- Be close to your subject – get really close and fill up the frame; use your legs, zoom lens, or a remote trigger.



- Depth of field can be controlled by which f-stop you use. Lower f-stops (e.g. f/2.8 or f/5.6) mean larger lens apertures (more widely open lens) and result in shallower depth of field – i.e. the object is in focus and the background (and/or foreground) is out of focus or blurred. Higher f-stops (e.g. f/16 or f/22) mean smaller lens apertures (less widely open lens) and result in deeper depth of field – i.e. the entire photo is in focus.

In our next issue, we'll consider the very important element of light in nature photography.

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## Meet Our Newest Board Members

We're excited to welcome four new individuals to our Board of Directors, effective July 1<sup>st</sup>. All were elected at our Annual Membership Meeting in May.

**Han Chuan Ong, PhD** is Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at King University. A biologist by training, he and his wife Laura, also on the faculty at King, moved to Bristol several years ago. According to Han "My post-doctoral and professional research has involved caves, oceans, rivers, and lakes. It is no surprise that I take preservation, conservation, management of habitats and natural beauty quite seriously... On the home front, Steele Creek Park is the place where my three boys are the happiest; with all the space to roam and trails to walk, it is one of the family-oriented locales that make Bristol a good place to live."

**Mark Overbay, MD** serves as Dean of the School of Behavioral and Health Sciences at King University. A native of Bristol, Mark attended Quillen College of Medicine and pursued family medicine residency training in Florida. After returning to Bristol he practiced family medicine for several years before taking his current position at King. Mark says "Having called Bristol home for the majority of my life, I recognize Steele Creek Park as a resource for both those who already understand that "attachment" [to nature], as well as for those yet to discover its capacity to enrich and nourish our lives... I hope that my unique background and perspectives, including participation in the Virginia Master Naturalist program, will add value to the endeavor."

**Joshua Rudd** is currently an Instructor in the Department of Biology at King University where he teaches General Biology and Anatomy & Physiology courses. He and his wife have a 2 year old daughter and are expecting their second child any time now. Jason's interest in the Park runs deep. In his own words "Some of my first memories of Bristol are centered around time spent at Steele Creek Park with family and new friends. Since then, Steele Creek has always served as a place of refuge from the mundane, and has afforded me numerous occasions to "get lost" on its trails and enjoy the beauty of the natural world... Even though our daughter is young, going to Steele Creek Park ranks highly on her list of favorite things to do."

**Jason Walden** is employed by Wellmont as the Wound Care / Hyperbarics Business Manager at Bristol Regional Medical Center. Jason and his wife have a new (nearly 4 month old) daughter. Having grown up in the area he has always recognized Steele Creek Park as a wonderful resource for the community. As Jason puts it "The opportunity to serve on the Board piqued my interest since Steele Creek is a park I have enjoyed with my family and friends from the time I was growing up, and still do. I view it as an opportunity to serve the city that I live in. Since I have been working for Wellmont, I now have more time to devote to other meaningful things outside of work; those already include my family, church, school, and teaching a personal finance class at Bristol Haven of Rest."

We are fortunate to have such a talented and devoted group of individuals now working with us on the Board of Directors. We are especially pleased that **Sonie Schermer** and **Sherry Willinger** were both elected to new 3 year terms on the Board.

However, we were sorry that both **Janice Martin** and **Charlotte Duncan** decided not to continue on the Board this year due to the many other demands on their time. Both have been dedicated members of our Board for a good many years. They have been stalwart volunteers at almost all of our events including Wildlife Weekend and Spring Clean Up days, and regulars to help with our table at Border Bash. They will be missed!

## Upcoming Nature Center Programs

### Friday, July 15th, 4:00 pm

***Edible and Medicinal Plants Walk:*** Meet Jeremy at the Nature Center for a mild walk into the woods to learn about some common but beneficial plants of the region.

### Friday, July 29<sup>th</sup>, 9:00 am

***Aquatic Investigations:*** Meet Don at the Nature Center for a trip down to (and possibly onto) the lake! We'll learn about the science of limnology and also see what's alive in Steele Creek Park's largest aquatic environment.

### Saturday, August 6<sup>th</sup>, 2:00 pm

***Dragonflies and Damselflies:*** Meet Larry at the Nature Center for a mild walk looking for these summertime gems of the sky! Bring a camera if you have one!

### Friday, August 19<sup>th</sup>, 4:00 pm

***Geologic Hike to the Quarry Cave:*** Meet Jeremy at the Nature Center for a moderate hike to the Park's own Quarry Cave (plus, we'll take a peek inside)! We'll learn the fascinating stories-in-stone along the way.

### Saturday, August 27<sup>th</sup>, 2:00 pm

***Caterpillar Crawl:*** Meet Larry at the Nature Center for a stroll looking for and identifying the larvae of moths and butterflies. You won't want to miss it; some caterpillars are just as wild and beautiful as their adult forms!

For more information about any of these programs, contact the Nature Center  
by phone at (423) 989-5616 or by e-mail at [jstout@bristoltn.org](mailto:jstout@bristoltn.org).

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## Did You Know?

The current Nature Center was completed and opened 20 years ago, in June 1996. At the time, it was designed and built in an environmentally friendly manner, at least by 1990's standards. Most of the lumber used for construction came from downed trees found in the Park. It has approximately 2,800 square feet of floor space. When completed, the expanded facility will be nearly three times larger with a total of almost 8,000 square feet!

You can keep up with what's going on at the Park and with Friends by following our webpage at <http://www.friendsofsteelecreek.org> or by [liking us on Facebook](#).

We appreciate feedback about our communication. Let us know if you find these newsletters interesting and/or useful. If you have suggestions for topics to be covered, or other formats that we could use, let us know by e-mail at [mail@friendsofsteelecreek.org](mailto:mail@friendsofsteelecreek.org).

If you prefer to not receive these newsletters, simply let us know at [mail@friendsofsteelecreek.org](mailto:mail@friendsofsteelecreek.org).

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## Thanks to Our 2015-16 Members and Donors

Thank you to all those who joined *Friends* or renewed their membership this past year, and especially to those who made additional donations. We couldn't have continued our important work in support of the Nature Center and Steele Creek Park without the support of our loyal members and donors listed below. The additional donations have helped to "jump start" our Nature Center Expansion Fund campaign!

Blue Stocking Club  
Susan Cadwallader  
Chris, Tracy, Cade and Chole Campbell  
Eddythe and Austin Carr  
Mary and Ruth Clark  
Wallace Coffey  
Cam and Ben Collins  
Joseph & Patricia Combs  
Kristen and James Cornett  
Greg and Stephenie Cousins  
Anne and Ben Cowan  
Amanda Deere  
Charlotte Duncan  
Margaret and Robin Feierabend  
Neal Feierabend  
Brenda and John Fincher  
Terry Forrest and Sarah Ruhlen  
Sharon and Powell Foster  
Dewey Fuller  
Douglas and Linda Gronski  
Ed and Linda Hagaman  
Carolyn and Tom Hanlon  
Eddie Harkleroad  
Adrienne Hess  
Maggie Hess  
Barnabas and Eryn Hines  
Tony and Beth Hobbs  
Brenda and Bill Johnstone  
Isabelle and Richard Ladd  
Frances Lamberts  
Scott Lamie  
Chris and Kerry Lancaster

Susan and Jim Lapis  
Dale Marion  
Kenneth Marion  
Janice Martin  
Jeffrey McQueary  
Carl and Elliott Moore  
Ronald Oliver  
Han Chuan Ong  
Gloria and Ken Oster  
Larry Ousley  
Mark Overbay  
Chris Peltier  
MacKay Pierce  
Tracy and Bill Pierce  
Dean and Doreen Read  
Frances Rowell  
Joshua Rudd  
Charlie Sams  
Dale and Joneen Sargent  
Mary Lynn and H.D. Satterwhite  
Carolyn Schaefer  
Sonie and Bill Schermer  
Janet Shannon  
Michele Sparks  
Rodney Taylor  
John and Karen Vann  
Jason Walden  
Wendy Weidner  
Becky and Clarence Wilkerson  
Sherry and Steve Willinger  
Gary and Jill Wishart  
Dave and Diana Worley

## Donate Today

Your donation will help to assure that the enlarged and enhanced Nature Center at Steele Creek Park is a destination worth coming back to again and again – for learning in a fun and exciting way about the natural wonders of the Park and our region.

**Use the form below to contribute today, or go online to pledge your donation today!**

### The Nature Center at Steele Creek Park Expansion Fund Contribution Form

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**E-mail:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Makes checks payable to:**

Friends of Steele Creek Nature Center and Park

**Mail to:**

P.O. Box 1763, Bristol, TN 37620

Unless you request that it remain anonymous, your **tax deductible gift** will be gratefully acknowledged and published in the *Bristol Herald Courier* in conjunction with the grand opening, targeted for spring of 2017. Please indicate donor name as you would like it to appear.

**Sponsorship Levels**

____ \$25,000 Oak (Champion)	____ \$1,000 Poplar (Partner)
____ \$10,000 Maple (Benefactor)	____ \$500 Pine (Supporter)
____ \$5,000 Chestnut (Sponsor)	____ \$100 Magnolia (Contributor)
____ \$2,500 Hemlock (Patron)	____ <\$100 Holly (Friend)

Donations at the Hemlock Level and higher will be noted on permanent signage at the Nature Center. Pledges will be accepted for gifts of \$2,500 and above, with payment due in full on or before December 31, 2016.

## Signs of Progress!



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