



Friends of Steele Creek Nature Center and Park

# Knobs and Knolls

April 2017

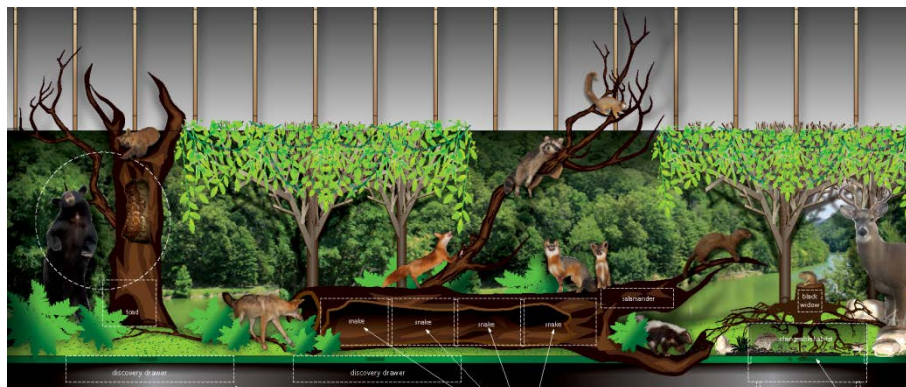
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## Great Progress on the Nature Center Expansion

Now that construction of the new addition to the Nature Center is essentially complete, we are working in earnest with our exhibit designer (Ed Hackley) and the vendors who will be responsible for constructing and installing the many new exhibits that will fill the space!

The first exhibit work to be done is construction and installation of the Aquarium Display that will fill the center of the main gallery on the upper floor. Our very own Snappy will have his own 300 gallon tank, front and center. Eight additional tanks, each 125 gallons, will complete this hands-on Live Species Lab, each displaying an aquatic species found in the Park. Access to the tanks for feeding, maintenance, and small group demonstrations will be from a central work area with discovery drawers below at 3-4 locations around the perimeter.

Two large dioramas will also be prominent in the main gallery area. The Woodland Creatures Display will feature many of our taxidermy specimens (including two black bears!) as well as terrestrial amphibians and reptiles found in the Park. The Birders Forest will focus on the wide variety of birds that call Steele Creek Park home during part or all of the year. Multiple discovery drawers located along the base of each of the dioramas will have additional hands-on interactive activities for kids of all ages!



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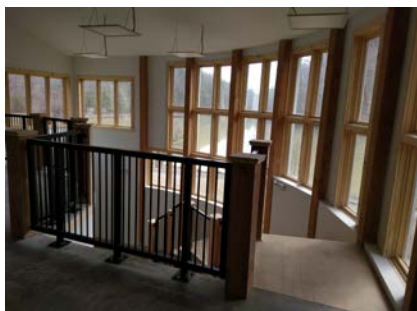
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## Nature Center Expansion (Continued)

A variety of hands-on activities will be available in the Kids Discovery Room, also located on the main floor.

Toward the back of the main floor, overlooking the curved grand stairway, a Waterfowl Exhibit will complement the Birders Forest by featuring the many species of duck, geese, and other waterfowl that can be found in the Park during the four seasons of the year.

Continuing down the stairway, visitors will be afforded stunning views of the lake and knobs.



Beneath the stairs, children will have the opportunity to crawl through a life-like Cave Exhibit, complete with structures found in the caves of Steele Creek Park.



Finally, also downstairs in the new addition, a 1,200 square foot multipurpose classroom will be outfitted with moveable work tables and chairs, large screen displays, microscopes and other lab equipment, and other materials to make it a versatile learning environment.

**All of these features should be completed in time for our grand opening in conjunction with our 2017 Wildlife Weekend, this October 13-14.**

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## Nature Center Expansion (Continued)

Additional displays will be added as funding allows. An especially exciting exhibit, which will cover one wall of the Kids Discovery Room, is a “Build-a-Pond” interactive ecosystem display. A graphic depiction of Steele Creek Lake and the surrounding knobs (both above and below the surface) will allow children to place various animal representations where they belong. Flashing lights will indicate when each animal has been placed in its correct environment.



A children’s crawl through Beaver Lodge will complete the new exhibits filling the main gallery upstairs.

Downstairs, an interactive wall display will give visitors the opportunity to learn more about the geology of the region and the Park, while another interactive exhibit will feature many of the ways in which the Park provides a variety of sensory experiences.

Once the new addition is opened in October, the City will begin renovation of the current building, resulting in two open galleries to be used for rotating seasonal displays and other special exhibits. In addition, there will be new work areas for the Nature Center staff, researchers and Friends volunteers as well as storage areas for the Herbarium specimens and other Nature Center collections. This work should be completed by the spring of 2018.



1. Entry/Orientation/Seating
2. Director's Office
3. Story-Telling Footprints
4. Hands-On Live Species Lab
5. Every Animal Has A Story
6. Bird's Hillside
7. Crawl-Through Beaver Dam
8. Bird Swamp Walkway
9. Waterfowl
10. KidZone
11. Interactive Gallery #1
12. Employee Workspace
13. Employee Restroom

Upper Floor Topic Plan View  
Design Development



1. Reception, Collections, Security, Workspace
2. Reception
3. Interactive Geology Wall
4. Crawl-Through Cave
5. Interpretive View
6. Giant Sloth Skeleton
7. Indigenous Aquatic Species
8. Invasive Aquatic Species
9. Interactive Gallery #2
10. "The Friends" Area
11. Public Restrooms
12. Programmable Classroom

Ground Floor Topic Plan View  
Design Development



## Expansion Fundraising Status

To date, we have raised well over \$200,000 toward our goal for fully implementing our expansion plans. We are deeply grateful to our major donors to date, including: the Massengill-DeFriece Foundation, Anne and Ben Cowan, Joe and Sandy Armstrong, Strongwell, Friendship Enterprises, Don and Gina Shawl, Spike Tickle, and an anonymous donor. We also thank all those who have given smaller, but very significant gifts over the past year. **Our July newsletter will list all who have contributed to our expansion efforts during the past year.**

Exciting things are happening at the Nature Center! You can be a part of the excitement by making your donation to the Nature Center Expansion Fund today. Pledges and contributions can be made online at our website ([www.friendsofsteelcreek.org](http://www.friendsofsteelcreek.org)) or by mail using the contribution/pledge card below.



## Donate Today

Use the form below to contribute to our expansion fund, 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 October 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 June 30, 2017.

**All donations are fully tax deductible to the extent allowable by law.**

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## Friends Annual Membership Meeting – Saturday, May 6

*Friends of Steele Creek Nature Center and Park* will hold its annual membership meeting on Saturday, May 6<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 pm in the new addition of the Nature Center. The meeting is open to the public and all members are encouraged to attend. Light refreshments and tours of the new building will be available beginning at 1:30 pm.

Official business to be conducted at the meeting includes the following:

Two bylaws amendments to allow electronic participation and voting in Board and Executive Committee meetings;

Determination of Board size for 2017-18 and election of new Board members with terms to begin 7/1/17.

Additional agenda items include a review of the past year at the Park, an update on the Nature Center Expansion Project and fundraising efforts, and special recognitions.

Attendees will have an opportunity to tour the new addition at the Nature Center, and to see graphics of exhibits that will be installed in the coming months. Please join us for this exciting and informative event!

## Spring Cleanup Day – Saturday, May 13

Plan to join us on Saturday morning, May 13th (9:00 am until noon) for our annual “spring cleaning”. Steele Creek Park staff and *Friends* are once again sponsoring a Park and Lake Cleanup Event in conjunction with the Great American Cleanup, sponsored locally by Keep Bristol Beautiful. Bags, gloves, and refreshments will be provided. Plan to come out to the Park and help us to get it looking better than ever for the upcoming spring and summer seasons!



## Summer Nature Camps

Summer will be here soon, which means it won't be long until kids have the opportunity to participate in the Summer Nature Camps at Steele Creek Park. These camps are conducted by the Nature Center Staff. Separate sessions are conducted for campers of different ages, and each focuses on a different aspect of the wonderful world of nature. Week-long sessions begin in early June and will continue through mid July. Specific camp sessions include:

**Rocks and Fossils Camp (Ages 7 – 9) - June 5<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup>.** Rocks, minerals, fossils, and the processes that form them will be the focus of this camp. Children will be introduced to their planet Earth through a variety of programs, hikes and field work. Participants will also get to take part in an actual fossil dig!

**Herpetology Camp (Ages 10 – 13) - June 12<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup>.** Campers will be introduced to the exciting world of Herpetology (the study of amphibians & reptiles) during this week. Frogs, toads, snakes, salamanders, turtles, and lizards will be searched for throughout Steele Creek Park. Kids will learn field biology while searching for these creatures in the forests, creeks, and lake.

**Nature Photography Camp (Ages 10 – 13) - June 19<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup>.** This camp offers kids the skills and opportunities to capture astounding images from Steele Creek Park. Each day will be a new technique and new opportunities for great shots! No camera? No problem - we have cameras to loan to all participants during this camp!

**Forest Ecology Camp (Ages 7 – 9) - June 26<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup>.** Does moss really only grow on the north side of the tree? Get ready for the basics of forest ecology during this exploration of the largest of Steele Creek Park's habitats! Campers will venture to remote areas of the park and learn the basics of forest science along the way.

**Aquatic Ecology Camp (Ages 7 – 9 and 10 – 13) - July 17<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup>.** Streams, creeks, wetlands and the lake at Steele Creek Park offer unique habitats, and unique creatures that inhabit them. This camp explores all of the freshwater habitats the park contains! Campers will spend their mornings hiking to remote areas of the park and engage in scientific investigations along the way.

All camps are limited to 15 participants. The registration fee of \$60.00 (\$50.00 if paid before May 26<sup>th</sup>) includes a t-shirt and all camp materials. Partial camp scholarships may be available for those in need of assistance. Camps begin each day promptly at 8:30 am and last until 12:00 noon. Online registration is available on the [Parks and Recreation website](#). For more information please contact the Nature Center at 423-989-5616 or the Department of Parks and Recreation at 423-764-4023, or you can email [jstout@bristoltn.org](mailto:jstout@bristoltn.org).



Rocks and Fossils



Nature Photography



Aquatic Ecology

## Proposed Bylaws Amendments

(For discussion/action at Annual Membership Meeting)

### To allow for electronic participation in Board meetings

"Article VII. Section 11. Members of the Board and/or Executive Committee may participate in Board and/or Executive Committee meetings through use of conference telephone, electronic video communication, or other synchronous electronic transmission. Participation in a meeting through use of such electronic transmission constitutes presence in person at that meeting if both of the following apply:

- (1) each member participating in the meeting can communicate with all of the other members concurrently, and
- (2) each member is provided the means of participating in all matters before the Board and/or Executive Committee including, without limitation, the capacity to discuss all matters on the agenda and to propose, second, and vote on any motion before the Board and/or Executive Committee."

### To allow for electronic voting on matters before the Board

"Article VII. Section 12. Board and/or Executive Committee action may be taken by electronic means (e.g. e-mail or other online voting mechanism) only if all of the following apply:

- (1) the matter to be voted on is time sensitive;
- (2) scheduling difficulties preclude the Board and/or Executive Committee from meeting in person to deliberate the matter in a timely manner;
- (3) all Board and/or Executive Committee members are notified in writing (electronically or otherwise, from the President or their designee) of the specific motion to be acted on at least five days prior to the announced vote being initiated; and
- (4) during those five days, no Board and/or Executive Committee member raises an objection to the electronic vote being taken.

If no Board and/or Executive Committee member has indicated objection to the vote being conducted electronically (within 5 days of the notification), all Board and/or Executive Committee members will again be provided, in writing, the specific motion to be voted on, and asked to respond to the motion with a "Yes", "No" or "Abstain" response within an additional five days. At the end of these five days, the motion will be passed if a simple majority of the full Board and/or Executive Committee votes "Yes" on the motion. Printed documentation of all related electronic communication will be maintained as formal minutes, duly reviewed and approved at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting."

You can keep up with what's going on at the Park and with *Friends* by liking us on Facebook or by following our webpage at <https://www.friendsofsteelecreek.org>.

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).



## International Dark-Sky Presentation – May 18<sup>th</sup>

Everyone needs the dark. That's why the International Dark-Sky Association (IDA) is working to end light pollution and its many environmental impacts.

According to experts, U.S. outdoor lighting annually consumes approximately 120 terawatt-hours of energy, mostly to illuminate streets and parking lots. This is enough energy to meet New York City's total electricity needs for two years. Incredibly, 50 percent of that light is completely wasted, costing U.S. citizens \$3.3 billion and contributing to 21 million tons of carbon dioxide each year.

***Friends of Steele Creek Nature Center and Park is partnering with the Bristol TN Department of Parks and Recreation and the International Dark-Sky Association to host a special presentation by J. Scott Feierabend, Executive Director of the IDA.*** After an informal and fun presentation about the important educational and advocacy work of the IDA, Scott will answer your questions about light pollution, discuss its impact on the environment, and talk about what you can do to protect our planet, save billions of dollars in wasted energy, and give millions of people the opportunity to see starry skies.

The program will begin promptly at 7:00 pm on Thursday evening, May 18<sup>th</sup>, in the Tennessee High School Auditorium, 1112 Edgemont Ave., Bristol, TN.

To learn more about the IDA, visit [www.darksky.org](http://www.darksky.org). For more information about the local event, contact us at [mail@friendsofstelecreek.org](mailto:mail@friendsofstelecreek.org).



Photo courtesy of International Dark-Sky Association