

Highlands Biological Foundation
Annual Membership Meeting 2022



HIGHLANDS
BIOLOGICAL FOUNDATION

Annual Membership Meeting, June 25, 2022 at 2 PM

“Sto” Pavilion at the North Campus of the Highlands Biological Station

1. Approval of the minutes of the previous meeting

2. Reports

a. President

b. Executive Director

c. Finance

d. Education

e. Development

f. Garden

g. HBS

5. Election of Trustees

6. Other Business

a. North Campus Update

b. Institute for the Environment Update

7. New Business

8. Adjournment

FINANCE

Members: Amy Patterson (Chair/Treasurer), John Mitchener, Frances Oakley, Kim Coward, Vernon Skiles, Jim Milby

See 2021 Financial Review.

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

Members: Karen Patterson, Jennie Stowers, Melanie Mauldin, Monte Galliard, Sarah Morgan Wingfield, Carol Stewart, Cathy Jones, Charlotte Muir, Jason Love, Rada Petric, Paige Engelbrektsson, and Holly Theobald

Zahner Lectures:

The **2022 Zahner series** will kick off on July 7 and conclude 9 weeks later, on Sept 1. We are returning to the Nature Center for all of them. The committee selects the speakers based on suggestions from all sorts of sources, and we strive for an eclectic lineup. This summer scientists, authors and leaders of conservation programs will bring us insights on cave art; fireflies; coastal erosion; stream degradation; birds; plant relationships; conservation and conservation heroes, and more.

If you have suggestions for speakers, please send them to Charlotte or Winter. Some of you know amazing people who would be terrific Zahner guests.

Summer Camps:

Nature Camps are underway, with a full complement of campers, and as always, a large waiting list. With two environmental educators, and three summer staff, we can more easily host simultaneous camps, and keep the Nature Center adequately staffed. As always, the camps are great successes. We only wish we could accommodate more children. Several community grants provide funds for camp scholarships each year.

Nature Center:

The Nature Center has reopened and is hosting daily and weekly programming for children (and children at heart). In February, the Nature Center hosted the first annual Student Sustainability Summit for about a dozen Macon County high school students. The purposes of the summit are to raise student awareness of environmental sustainability and to help them develop sustainability programs in their schools and communities.

Melanie Mauldin has put together a beyond terrific merchandise kiosk, focused mostly on things for children, but she also has books, t-shirts and hats, jewelry, hostess gifts, and more for adults. In just three weeks of the Nature Center's limited (Fri-Sat) operation the kiosk collected about \$1,000.

Many thanks to our several Foundation trustees who are volunteering at the Nature Center information desk.

Spring/Fall Education Events:

After two postponements HBF finally hosted Rain Check, a Saturday lecture, lunch and field trips focused on the effects of rain and runoff on the Plateau.

On September 23, our fall education event will feature Dr. Jim McClintock, an NSF-funded veteran polar researcher, who is studying the effects of the warming planet on Antarctica. More information will be forthcoming later this summer.

Support for Highlands Biological Station:

In addition to supporting the Foundation programs, we also support various HBS-sponsored programs and staff. This year we awarded \$32,000 in scholarships and grants-in-aid to 14 scientists or students. We awarded the funds for the second year of our three-year funding commitment to the UNC Institute of Ecology. The semester program's maximum enrollment had been capped at 12 students, however, the caliber of the applicants was such that UNC-IE at Highlands will have 15 students enrolled this fall. We continue to provide financial support to the multi-year MAPS bird-banding program, a comparative review of recent and historic stream macroinvertebrate data, and will fund the initial year of a study of bat populations in the Southern Appalachians.

HBF is also funding the salaries of the three HBS summer research assistants working on several HBS projects. Total summer staff salaries is \$35,400. Many thanks to A. Friends Foundation for awarding us a \$16,500 grant that covers the salaries of the Nature Center summer staff.

In May HBF purchased a one-bedroom town house a block from the Station. We have put two of the summer staff in the townhouse.

Thanks

Obviously, none of this would be possible without the tremendous support we get from generous donors. HBF has been providing summer programming to the Highlands community since 1928, and since 1928 the primary support has been from the Highlands community.

DEVELOPMENT

Members: Jennie Stowers (Chair), Tricia Allen, Ruthie Edwards, Greg Gregory, Julia Grumbles

HBF continues to successfully raise funds to support our programs and investments in research and education. After a dormant year of events in 2020, 2021 enabled us to again host our Summer Soiree at the home of Julia and Bill Grumbles and also host Highlands on the Half Shell at HBS in the fall. This return to normalcy was so invigorating to our HBF community! We rely on funds from these events to support our mission.

Between June 1 and December 31, 2021 (we have now moved to a calendar fiscal year, so we had a “half-year” to get on track), we received over \$350,000 in contributions overall including gifts made to support our fundraisers, the newly established Grumbles fund which supports North Campus improvements, social media campaigns, appeal letters, membership renewals, annual giving and grants.

Our Trustees continue to offer overwhelming support, contributing over \$150,000 during this 6-month period. A priority outlined in our strategic plan was to build a board that is engaged, with skill sets that fill the needs of the organization, and financially support the organization at whatever level is available to each of them. Our Trustees generosity exceeded our expectations. These gifts reflect the commitment of each member to the vision of the Highlands Biological Foundation – *to inspire present and future generations to preserve and protect the unique environment of the Highlands Plateau by raising awareness through experiential learning.*

Another notable income source last year was our Nature Center Gift Shop. Spearheaded by Trustee Melanie Mauldin, this shop is now producing game-changing revenue, allowing us to add on another fulltime staff member.

GARDEN

Members: Lisa Armstrong (Chair) Frank Langford, Linda Barlow, Bill Reeves, Marianne Jenkins, Alex Smith, Jason Love, Sonya Carpenter

HBF remains focused on the north campus area. Sonya Carpenter of Canty Worley and Associates has been maintaining the space as well as adding new elements including benches, planters, and additional plants. Educational signage for north campus is currently in production and will be installed this summer with signs for the green roof, climate station, and pollinator garden. This area of campus looks incredible as plants continue to establish. A sculpture for north campus is in the works with the WCU Public Art Committee and jurying will kick off this fall. Support from the Grumbles Fund is making these additions possible.

Charlotte Muir, Executive Director of HBF, sits on the HBS Garden and Grounds Committee which oversees the entire campus including the Botanical Garden. They have made great progress in evaluating the names of the smaller gardens throughout campus to prepare for our large signage project that HBF & HBS are dually supporting. Equinox Environmental has been contracted to create a signage master plan for campus to update all wayfinding and educational signage.

NOMINATING

Members: Julia Grumbles- Chair, Jennie Stowers, John Mitchener, David Martin, Marianne Jenkins

Nominated to serve a second term: Cathy Jones (Education), Melanie Mauldin (Gift Shop), Frances Oakley (Finance), Vernon Skiles (Finance)

NOMINEE PROFILES FOR FIRST TERM:

Jonnie Swann (Jimmy)

Merritt Island, FL & Highlands, NC

In 2017, the Swanns received the Florida Today Bjorg and Bjornar Hermansen Legacy Award for a lifetime of philanthropic achievement. They grew up in the Clearwater-St. Petersburg-Tampa area and are Brevard County residents since 1973. The Swanns involvements touch many aspects of the community. The Swanns led the community building the Brevard Zoo. Jonnie is a nature person spending more time outside than inside. Her passions are plants, birds, butterflies and other insects.

Jonnie has served on the boards of The Florida Audubon society, the United Way, Keep Brevard Beautiful, and she presently is a Trustee for the Nature Conservancy Caribbean Program and is a Trustee for the Florida Institute of Technology.

They have hosted Half-Shell for many years and attend Zahner Lectures.

<https://www.floridatoday.com/story/news/2017/09/28/jonnie-and-jim-swann-merritt-island-receive-legacy-award-philanthropic-achievement/694710001/>

Potential Committee: Development



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Annual Membership Meeting 2022

Tom Holmes (Florence)
Highlands, NC

Tom has a BS (Geology) from South Carolina and an MS (Geophysics) from Penn State and is a registered Professional Geologist in GA. He has worked almost exclusively in investigation and cleanup of contaminated soil and groundwater at industrial and Dept of Defense sites since the mid-1980s. He took a break from 1998 to 2004 to establish a stream and wetland mitigation bank on a section of Florence's family's property near Columbus, GA. He also established mitigation banks in the Chattahoochee River basin in SW Georgia and in the Conasauga River basin north of Chatsworth, GA in 2004. Tom has continued to manage these banks since he returned to other environmental work. Lastly, Tom worked with Florence's brother and other family members on a conservation easement completed in 2012 with the GA Forestry Commission. The easement protects a large tract of montane longleaf forest which Florence now manages.

Florence introduced Tom to Highlands in 1984 and they came up here frequently until becoming full-time residents in 2014. They visited the nature center and hiked the trails frequently particularly when our two children were young. Since that time, they have mainly visited for the Zahner Lectures.

Potential Committee: Finance, Education



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Annual Membership Meeting 2022

Dr. Drew Lanham (Janice)

Seneca, SC

Alumni Distinguished Professor of Wildlife Ecology at Clemson

Master Teacher and Certified Wildlife Biologist

J. Drew Lanham (B.A. Zoology 1988; M.S. Zoology 1990; PhD Forest Resources 1997) is a native of Edgefield and Aiken, South Carolina. In his twenty-five years as Clemson University faculty he's worked to understand how forest management impacts wildlife and how human beings think about nature. In particular, he's interested in how ethnic prisms bend conservation practice and perception. Dr. Lanham holds an endowed chair as an Alumni Distinguished Professor and was named an Alumni Master Teacher in 2012. In his teaching, research, and outreach roles, Drew seeks to translate conservation science to make it relevant to others in ways that are evocative and understandable. He is an award winning and widely published author and poet, garnering the Southern Environmental Law Center's Reed Award for Outstanding Environmental Writing in 2018, a Southern Book Prize for his book, "The Home Place – Memoirs of a Colored Man's Love Affair with Nature (Milkweed Editions 2018; Tantor Audio 2019) and named an author of One of America's Best Essays in 2019. He was named Poet Laureate of his home place county, Edgefield SC, in 2018. He lives in Seneca, SC with his wife, Janice Garrison Lanham.

Potential Committee: Education



Martha Stibbs (Hal)

New Orleans, LA, Spring Islands, SC & Highlands, NC

Martha Stibbs is a continuous supporter and leader, especially in the Half-Shell Fundraiser. Martha was born in New Orleans and attended St. Anne's School in Charlottesville and Chateau Brillantmont in Lausanne Switzerland. She received a BA in Art from Oregon State University. Stibbs, co-founded with Henry Stibbs, Waterborne, Inc., headquartered in New Orleans, which develops and sells environmental products to detect intestinal parasites in drinking water. She served on the board of HBF in various positions including a 10 year tenure as president. She created an internationally acclaimed blog, myjaundicedeye, enjoys gardening if it does not involve any physical exertion, and reading if it doesn't involve any intellectual exertion. The Stibbs have been married for 52 years.

Potential Committee: Nominating



Procedure for Nominating Trustee Candidates

The following criteria should be considered when making HBF Trustee nominations:

1. The nominee is supportive of the HBF mission.
2. The nominee is willing to share his/her volunteer time, talents, energy, and resources with HBF.
3. The nominee will demonstrate a fiduciary responsibility to HBF.
4. The nominee will help fill HBF's need for a well-rounded board with balanced talents and professional experience.
5. The nominee will contribute the HBF annual fund.

NOMINATING PROCEDURE:

Trustee nominations should be submitted a minimum of 30 days prior to the June Board meeting. Nominations will be accepted throughout the year, up to the 30-day deadline. Nominations will not be accepted from the floor of the Annual Meeting. The Nominating Committee needs 30 days to properly vet the candidates, collect pertinent information, and allow time for the Board to review the nominees.

Members of the Foundation are encouraged to self-nominate, or to nominate other HBF or Highlands community members whom they know to meet the Trustee criteria.

The person making the nomination should send by email or hand-delivery to the Executive Director the following information: the name of the proposed candidate; a bio with all contact information; and a letter stating why he or she feels that this candidate is appropriate and would be an asset to HBF.

To encourage nominations, the Nominating Committee will send out a call for nominations to all HBF members, either as a notice with the spring email, or as an independent email notice.

Once an individual is identified and accepted by the Nominating Committee, the Board Chair with the Executive Director will approach the nominee to discuss board responsibilities and also to confirm the interest of the individual. *No member of the Nominating Committee should approach or discuss the nomination with the individual.*

The Nominating Committee will submit their nominations to the Executive Committee 20 days prior to the June Board meeting. The Executive Director will distribute the list of nominees and attached information to the Board of Trustees seven days prior to the June meeting. This will allow time for the Board to familiarize themselves with the candidates prior to the meeting. The Board members should direct questions about nominees to the members of the Nominating Committee. Board of Trustee nominees will be voted on at the June meeting.

Once the individual is confirmed at the June Meeting of the Board of Trustees, the Executive Director or Board Chair will contact the individual and a letter of congratulations will be sent to the individual with a reiteration of the board responsibilities, as well as the schedule for the Trustee Meetings. This is the appropriate time for the Chair or the Executive Director to meet with the individual to discuss their individual interests and to determine their committee options.

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