

Highlands Biological Foundation
Annual Membership Meeting 2023



HIGHLANDS
BIOLOGICAL FOUNDATION

Annual Membership Meeting, June 17, 2023 at 11 AM

Seminar Room at the Coker Laboratory of the Highlands Biological Station

1. Approval of the minutes of the previous meeting
2. Reports
 - a. President (Jennie Stowers)
 - b. Treasurer (Amy Patterson)
 - c. Executive Director (Charlotte Muir)
 - d. Research and the Institute for the Environment (Dr. Rada Petric)
3. Election of Trustees (Julia Grumbles)
4. Old Business
5. New Business
6. Adjournment

FINANCE

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

See 2021 Audit Report.

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

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

Thank you:

Education focused on natural history is the mission of the Foundation, and this is where most of your time, talent and treasure are used. On behalf of the Foundation Board, the Education committee thanks all the many generous donors; members and friends, known and anonymous, local and distant, who make our programming possible.

Zahner Lectures:

The 2023 Zahner series will kick off on June 15 and conclude on August 10. This year marks the 100th birthday of Bob Zahner, in honor of whom the series is named. This summer's topics include birds, native plants, microplastics, geology, national forest management, sounds in nature, archaeoastronomy, and wilderness areas. As always, generous donors are funding the lecture series.

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. Holly and three summer staff are teaching more camps than in previous years. We have also added a week-long camp after the peak of the season to accommodate children who live in Macon County. Several community grants provide funds for camp scholarships each year.

Nature Center:

The Nature Center opened the last week in May. Paige and a full-time summer staff person are hosting daily and weekly programming for children (and children at heart). We have increased the frequency of the very popular weekly programs. We also now require registration to better manage expectations.

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The merchandise kiosk is a great revenue generator. Its focused mostly on things for children, but also has books, t-shirts and hats, jewelry, hostess gifts, and more for adults.

Many thanks to our several Foundation trustees and friends who volunteer at the Nature Center welcome desk.

The Foundation is funding four Nature Center summer staff for the first time. Our increased summer programming requires additional staff, which have been generously funded by a grant for A Friend, a local family foundation.

Year-round Programming:

In response to requests from community organizations Paige and Holly have increased their year-round programming. They regularly visit Gordon Center Preschool, Methodist Church (Summer Camp & Afterschool, Highlands Community Child Development Center, South Macon Summer Camp, Lonesome Valley, Highlands School Summer Camp, Boys & Girls Club of the Plateau, Chestnut Hill, the Hudson Library, and more.

Holly is a frequent and popular visitor to regional middle schools where she presents program on geology. In addition, she is working with the Highlands School to start an organic garden.

The Foundation responded to a request from the Macon Country STEM program with a \$10,000 grant to support 2023-24 academic year programming that would have been curtailed because of lack of funding. Our support would be impossible with our donors.

The Book Club read *The Nature Fix* by Florence Williams last fall and *Entangled Life* by Merlin Sheldrake this spring. The book club meets weekly on Zoom and most of the members are not full-time (or even part-time) residents of Highlands. Anyone is welcome to join.

Carpenter Lecture:

On October 11, the Foundation will host the 2nd Biennial Carpenter Lecture. The speaker will be Florence Williams, the author of *The Nature Fix*. This lecture series is sponsored by a generous anonymous donor.

Support for Highlands Biological Station and the Institute of the Environment, UNC-Chapel Hill:

In addition to supporting the Foundation programs, we also support various HBS and IE-sponsored programs. This year we awarded \$12,600 in scholarships and grants-in-aid to 6 researchers and students.

We will award our third and final funding of our three-year funding commitment to the UNC Institute of Ecology. In toto HBF provided \$300,000 to IE to reinvigorate the program, which has succeeded. IE admitted 15 students to the 2022 fall program – and

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the enrollment will have to stay capped at 15 because 15 students + several professors is the capacity of available housing and transportation. By March of this year, the slots for next fall's semester were filled, and there is a waiting list.

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. This year we are also providing \$10,500 to support a citizen-science project that is a continuation of one of the IE semester research projects.

In addition to the Nature Center's summer staff, HBF is also funding the salaries of the four HBS summer research assistants working on several HBS projects. Again, this is possible because people and foundations believe in our mission of environmental education. Total 2023 temporary personnel funding is \$59,000.00. 2 of the summer staff are underwritten by the Paul Sanger Fund.

DEVELOPMENT

Members: Jennie Stowers (Chair), Tricia Allen, Ruthie Edwards, David Martin, Bill Clarkson, Julia Grumbles

HBF continues to successfully raise funds to support our programs and investments in research and education. We held our most successful fundraisers ever last year, the Ravenel Soiree and Highlands on the Half Shell. Each event had nearly 200 attendees!

We raised over \$330,000 last year through contributions and grants (not including events). We continue to raise more money annually each year to support our ever-growing programs. 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 a steady revenue driver for HBF.

NOMINATING

Members: Julia Grumbles- Chair, Jennie Stowers, John Mitchener, David Martin, Marianne Jenkins, Ruthie Edwards, Lisa Armstrong

Many thanks to the following trustees who have completed a term. We are so grateful for your contributions to HBF and serving as strong leaders during a time of rapid growth.

Nominated for term a second term: Lisa Armstrong, Bill Clarkson, David Martin, John Mitchener, Alex Smith, Carol Stewart, Jennie Stowers, Frank Langford

Nominated for a first term:

Linda V. Barlow

Linda graduated with a BA from Belhaven College, Jackson, MS And an M Ed from Auburn University. She is certified as an Alabama Nursery Person, in Landscape Design and Maintenance and in Nightscaping Design and Installation. She owned and operated her own business for 30 years, Vaughn Road Nursery and Landscaping, Montgomery, AL. Linda continues to consult in Landscape Design and Horticulture. She Co-founded German Shepherd Rescue of Central Alabama and served as President for 25 years. Hobbies include gardening, plant propagation, reading, botanical water color painting, restoring antique lamps, and her biggest hobby: being the hand servant to her Chihuahuas. Linda has served terms on the HBF board previously.

Lindy Colson Harrison

I grew up in Avon Park, Florida, a very small town in central Florida. After graduating from the University of Florida with a BS in Business Administration, I moved to Miami to work for Burdines Department Store's. After leaving Burdines, I worked in residential condominium sales.

I was a member of The Junior League of Miami, serving on many committees, the Executive Board and as President. I was also an active member of the Kristi House Board.

Currently, I am on Cullasaja Women's Outreach Grants Committee and serve as one of the chairs. Additionally, I enjoy working on The Dahlia Festival.

Our family has spent many summers in Highlands loving the outdoor activities the area has to offer. We were frequent visitors to the Nature Center, enjoying their many programs. I look forward to being a member of the Biological Foundation Board and learning the many areas it serves.

Lisa Dailey

My grandmother Louise Harrison, an authentic gardener, passed on a love of nature through my mother, Dede Austin. Having such pure intentional gardeners cultivate me, how could I be anything else but a horticulturist? Growing up in Savannah, surrounded

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by live oaks, camellias and azaleas I learned to appreciate nature's bounty and draw inspiration from centuries-old gardens. Equally nurturing was the influence the mountains of Highlands, North Carolina has had on my love and appreciation of native flora.

I continued to deepen my knowledge of the natural world at the University of Georgia by obtaining a bachelor's degree in Agriculture. Following college, I pursued my passion. For thirteen years I worked in the consumer garden products division of Chevron/Ortho where I discovered my talent and enthusiasm for being an educator. In the next season of my life, I enjoyed being the best cultivator, MOM. Living in Sarasota, Florida allowed me to expand my knowledge of tropical plants, soil health, as well as to hone my formidable flower-arranging skills.

I have now returned to my hometowns, Savannah and Highlands, and my horticultural roots. I am so energized to use my educational skills to share all that I have learned about gardening, landscape design, healthy soil and botanical floral design over the past several decades. Working beside my clients to create individual gardens that will enhance their homes for generations will be so exciting.

Jim Landon

Jim is an Atlanta native, where he practiced law for forty years, in the fields of employee benefits, nonprofit organization law and estate planning. He retired in 2013. Jim graduated from Vanderbilt University and Harvard Law School. He has had a home in Highlands for forty years, and has served on the board of The Bascom Center for the Arts and as chair of the Highlands Community Fund Advisory Board. In Atlanta, he serves on the boards of the Atlanta Symphony and the Cherokee Garden Library and is a Life Trustee of the Woodruff Arts Center, for which he was General Counsel for several decades. Jim has also served on the boards of the Atlanta Botanical Garden, the Atlanta Historical Society and Atlanta Medical Heritage, as well as the Piedmont Healthcare Foundation.

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.