

# VIEWS *from the* WOODS

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Fall/Winter 2015-2016



(803) 642-0528

[www.HitchcockWoods.org](http://www.HitchcockWoods.org)

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## Seventh Annual Festival of the Woods

The seventh annual Festival of the Woods welcomed a record 316 attendees, despite iffy weather. The event celebrated both cultural and historical events in South Carolina history and recent findings from the first phase of the Foundation's Cultural Resources Survey in the Woods. Artifacts from the survey were on display during the event and associated archaeologists were on hand to interpret them.

Historian, professor, and radio host Walter Edgar was the evening's featured speaker while participants enjoyed a sunset fellowship dinner catered by Blue Marlin. Longtime Woods supporter and volunteer Sara Wampole was recognized as the events Honorary Chair.



Photo by Allen Riddick



Photo by Allen Riddick

## Congratulations to the 2015 Célestine Eustis Essay Contest Winner

Ella Hammett was recognized as the winner of the 2015 Célestine Eustis Essay Contest. Ella is currently in the ninth grade at Mead Hall Episcopal School. The Festival of the Woods Committee appreciated Ella's description of the Woods: "When I was a little girl, I used to love the sweet smell of the wild flowers that bloomed on a field where my family used to take picnics. We would take our dogs, a basket of food, and lay a blanket on the soft grass and talk about everything."

For more information about the 2016 Célestine Eustis Essay Contest, please visit [www.HitchcockWoods.org](http://www.HitchcockWoods.org). The deadline for entries is May 31, 2016. Congratulations again, Ella!



## Woods Research and Education

The Foundation partnered with the Ruth Patrick Science Center to host a series of Eco-Hikes for area schools, and a "Natural & Cultural Resources of Hitchcock Woods Field Day Event" in September for over 100 3rd grade students from Millbrook Elementary School. The field day was inspired by Phase I of the Foundation's Cultural Resources Survey of the Woods. Partners included Ruth Patrick Science Education Center (RPSEC), Savannah River Archaeological Research Program (SRARP), SC Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR), the Diachronic Research Foundation (DRF) and South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC).

In addition to being outdoors and enjoying a picnic under a big tent in the middle of the Woods, students learned about the ecology and rich history of the Woods through hiking and engaging in a variety of hands-on learning stations.



Primitive Hunting Skills, SCDNR



Simulated Archaeological Dig, SRARP



Cultural Resources Survey Artifacts, DRP and SCDHEC



Eco-Hiking, RPSEC

Special thanks to the partners, volunteers and Festival in the Woods Committee for putting smiles on so many young faces and making this event a great success!

**A very special "Thank You!" to our Festival of the Woods Corporate Sponsors!**

*Silver Sponsors*





# A Gift that will keep on Giving to the Woods

The Foundation was the gracious recipient of a very generous gift made by long time Woods user and supporter, Dr. Elizabeth Carey (Biz). The gift was directed to the Hitchcock Woods Foundation by Biz through a bequest made by her late father, Francis J. Carey.

According to Biz, the gift is both a tribute to her father's legacy of supporting education and her own personal conservation ethic. Francis J. Carey believed in "doing good while doing well", and saw education as the means to instill and perpetuate this cycle of success and giving in others.

Biz's love for Hitchcock Woods began through riding in the Woods in her early twenties. She believes "Aiken's popularity is in very large part due to the enormous benefit the Woods brings to our lives". Her hope is that this gift will be used to support equestrian traditions and education programs that will instill and perpetuate the future stewardship of the Woods.



*Francis J. Carey and his daughter Dr. Elizabeth Carey*

*For more information about planned giving, please contact the Hitchcock Woods Foundation office at (803) 642-0528.*

## How does a gift like this benefit the Woods?

The gift was the impetus behind an initiative to overhaul 80 fences in Hitchcock Woods by providing the initial funding for materials and equipment for the project. It also helped fund the Foundation's first Cultural & Natural Resources of Hitchcock Woods Field Day Event for area school children this past fall.

The gift has also contributed to the Foundation's goal to build an endowment to secure the future of the Woods. As the endowment grows, the interest it yields annually will provide operating dollars needed to maintain the fences, manage the Woods, and continue our education programs well into the future.

## Why Planned Giving?

Biz is an advocate for planned or estate giving. She believes this method of giving (as it is currently set up) affords the recipient charity a greater gift, and the donor a greater tax benefit. She encourages others to explore planned or estate giving as a way to support the places and causes that are dear to them.

## Re-Built to Last

Thanks to the funding and volunteer hours donated by some very generous Woods users, 73 out of the 80 fences throughout the Woods have been re-built this past fall and winter. The fence overhaul was initiated to enhance equestrian enjoyment and safety in the Woods. It included the establishment of a standard fence design, sustainable materials that are sturdier and easier to maintain, and an embedded safety feature to protect horses from injury while also preventing fence rails from breaking when struck.

The fence overhaul was made possible by a generous gift from Dr. Elizabeth Carey (see above). A core group of Axe Club members known as the "Axe Men" donated a combined 500 hundred volunteer labor hours (so far!) working alongside Woods Staff to re-build the jumps. Axe Club members met regularly to brush each set of jumps as they were built. Shep and Jane Ellenberg contributed additional funding to purchase the equipment and materials needed to complete the last phase of the project.

Hats off to a TREMENDOUS staff, donor, and volunteer team effort!



*Axe Men worked alongside Wood Staff to rebuild the Fences.*

*Larry Byers, Steve Percy, Mark Reader, Sal Manetta, not pictured, Rich McNeil and Bob Alexander. Also pictured are HWF woods intern, Charles Bostwick, Woods Resource Steward, Eric Grande and Woods Superintendent, Bennett Tucker.*

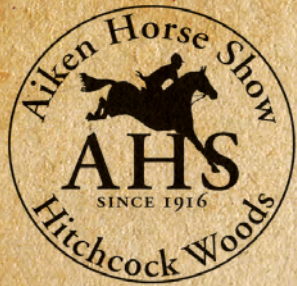


*Axe Club members Sara and Rick McNeil brush jumps to help get ready for the 2015-2016 hunt season.*



*Darrell Vaughn enjoys the new jumps in the Hitchcock Woods!*





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## Bluebird Success and Award

The SC Bluebird Society recently reported that Bluebird nesting boxes installed in longleaf pine stands in Hitchcock Woods in 2014 were very successful during the 2015 nesting season. According to the Bluebird Society, 46 of the 50 boxes installed were not only used by Bluebirds, but produced 191 new Bluebirds, results that far surpass their expectations.

SC Bluebird Society members installed 25 new nesting boxes in the Woods in January along the Devils Backbone and Memorial Gate Corridor with the help of Woods staff and the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources. Within hours of the installation, a Bluebird had already moved into one of the boxes!

The Foundation is delighted with the success of this partnership, and was honored to be presented with the **Corporate Member of the Year Award** by the SC Bluebird Society in November.



*A bluebird resting it's wings*



*A group installing new bluebird boxes in Hitchcock Woods*

## Highlights and Happenings



*Longtime Foundation employee Namon Corley celebrated his 80th Birthday in June and the Hitchcock Woods Foundation threw him a party to thank him for his years of service.*



*Woods Superintendent Bennett Tucker and his wife Lindsay welcomed a new addition to his family, Nathan Lawrence Tucker born on August 20, 2015.*



*A sculpture of a hound, graciously donated by Sam Cato, was installed at the Aiken Horse Show Grounds during the summer. The mounting materials and labor were graciously donated by Hitchcock Woods Trustees, Dr. I. Lehr Brisbin.*



*Longtime Foundation Trustee, Dr. I. Lehr Brisbin, talks turtles at the 2015 SEED (Science Education Enrichment Day) hosted by the Ruth Patrick Science Education Center at USC-Aiken in October. Over 3,596 students were in attendance.*

## Woods Merchandise in Stock!

Be sure to stop by Birds and Butterflies on Laurens Street to stock up on new Hitchcock Woods vests, fleeces, sweatshirts, and other merchandise. This is a great way to look good and feel great while supporting the Woods! Cash or checks appreciated.

The Foundation would like to extend a special thank you to **Ron & Dori Brenneman** for their willingness to display and process HWF merchandise sales at their store on behalf of the Woods!



## Welcome to Hitchcock Woods

Hitchcock Woods Foundation kiosks were built and installed this past fall at all seven main entrances to the Woods and at the heavily traveled Gamekeepers Lodge intersection by Foxchase. The kiosks were designed to help visitors identify official Woods entrances and to enable the Foundation to provide consistent messaging and communications to all Woods visitors. It is our hope that the presence and structural quality of these kiosks will enhance the safety and experience of our Woods users, while serving as a valuable branding and communication tool for the Foundation for many years to come. Thanks to those (below) whose financial support made this project possible!

- Aiken Hounds
- The Benwood Fund
- Paddy Ann Burns
- Michael Laughlin
- Lou and Teri Piancone
- Donna and Martin Ritter
- Betty and Greg Ryberg



Special thanks to Brian Baron, as well, for his willingness to donate a significant portion of his carpentry talent and labor to keep this project within budget for the Foundation.

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## R. Woodward (Woody) Millen

Robert "Woody" Millen passed away on October 6, 2015. Woody's passion for both the Woods and Golf came together in his founding of the Knowles-Goodyear Bowl golf tournament, in memory of Bobby Knowles and Bobbie Goodyear. Woody organized the Annual Knowles-Goodyear Bowl almost singlehandedly for 10 years and donated the proceeds to the Hitchcock Woods Foundation. To everyone's delight, Woody and his partner took home the bowl championship this past spring. Woody's distinctive voice, enthusiasm and friendship will be missed and remembered fondly.



Robert "Woody" Millen

## Prescribed Burning Resumes

Prescribed burns are being conducted in various areas of the Woods as favorable weather conditions permit. Like forest thinning, prescribed burning is a management tool used to maintain the ecological health of the Woods and reduce the risk of wildfire. Signs will be posted at formal entrances to the Woods where prescribed burning activities are taking place. To learn more about prescribed burns or the management of Hitchcock Woods, please visit our website or Facebook page.



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## THE MISSION OF THE HITCHCOCK WOODS FOUNDATION IS TO:

- protect and preserve the Hitchcock Woods in a natural and ecologically healthy state,
- maintain and manage historic and traditional equestrian and pedestrian uses, and
- foster education and research on the history and resources of the Woods.



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