The Past 40 Years Have Flown By!

Forty! Can you believe it? Elachee is turning 40 in 2019.

It started as a grassroots movement four decades ago. Since becoming incorporated February 23, 1979, Elachee Nature Science Center has thrived during this time thanks to the nurturing passions, work and financial support of friends like you!

I am delighted to present this year-end edition of Nature Mixed In that also includes Elachee’s annual highlights, 2018 By the Numbers. This noteworthy report summarizes the work we do in conservation and education.

As a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization, Elachee relies on your financial support to sustain current operations. This organization is fortunate to ‘earn’ 65% of its operating income through school field trips and seasonal nature education programs, but we continuously work to also ‘earn’ the remaining 35% from donated support.

My hope is the details shared within will earn your confidence and inspire your continued financial support. Please give generously to continue the success and work ahead.

Will you support Elachee’s important nature education and conservation efforts with a year-end donation? Enclosed is an easy-to-use annual gift envelope, or you can make a secure online gift at elachee.org/donate. We will promptly acknowledge your tax-deductible donation. As always, Elachee needs you and thanks you!

My best to you,

Andrea Timpone
President/CEO, Elachee Nature Science Center

Nature Mixed In
Quarterly News from Elachee Nature Science Center • November 2018

When the oak is felled, the whole forest echoes with its fall, but a hundred acorns are sown in silence by an unnoticed breeze.

Thomas Carlyle

What Your Dollars Can Do
Your annual fund donation of...

$1,000... Could buy one year of food for Elachee’s resident Red Tailed Hawk or sponsor five Elachee Science Nights.

$500... Could pay for one PreK-12 class to participate in an Elachee nature education field trip or buy lumber for a hiking trail bridge repair.

$300... Could enable two children to attend Camp Elachee for a week of summer day camp or buy craft supplies for 1,000 campers this summer.

$100... Could replace an aging utility wagon that will last five years or provide six months of food for the demonstration bee hive exhibit.

$50... Could replenish yearly first aid kit supplies for one Naturalist leading field trips at Elachee or feed a resident turtle for three months.

Ways to Support Elachee
- Give to Elachee’s Annual Fund
- Become an Elachee Sponsor
- Annual Sponsorship or Event Sponsorship: Flights of Fancy, Raptor Fest, Trillium Trek Trail Run and Snake Day
- Contact Us about a Planned Gift
- Donate Goods and/or Services to Elachee
- Employee/employer Matching Gifts
- Tap into Georgia’s Tax Credit Giving Plan Select Elachee Nature Academy when you donate online to payforwardscholarships.com.
- Make Elachee a Payroll Deduction Option Through Earthshare Georgia, Elachee is an eligible non-profit organization in the Greater Atlanta Athens Combined Federal Campaign (0211).

LEARN MORE: elachee.org/support
Irreplaceable Natural Resource

Whether you hike once a year or more frequently traverse the hiking trails in one of Georgia’s largest protected green spaces, the 1,440-acre Chicopee Woods Nature Preserve, Elachee is looking out for you.

Elachee is conservator in perpetuity for the Nature Preserve, under a land management agreement with the Chicopee Woods Area Park Commission (CWAPC). Neither CWAPC nor Elachee receive any federal, state or local government funding to perform the conservation stewardship work that restores and protects the health of this regional treasure – its forest, streams and habitats – including the 12-mile hiking trail system.

The hiking trails connect Elachee’s Visitor Center campus with Elachee’s Aquatic Studies Center at Chicopee Lake. To operate and maintain the hiking trail system, Elachee relies on annual donations and volunteer support from individuals and community partners. This symbiotic relationship keeps the irreplaceable recreational resource pristine and accessible for our guests.

TAKE A HIKE: elachee.org/hiking-trails

HIKING TRAIL UPDATES

Elachee Volunteer Trail Crew’s current projects:

TRAIL SIGNAGE To simplify navigation, there are trail name changes prompting signage updates. What’s different? The newly named Bridge Trail starts where the Suspension Bridge intersects the West Lake Trail, extending east to its intersection with East Lake Trail. For reference, the Dunlap Trail formerly overlapped sections of the West Lake and East Lake Trails. Dunlap has now been limited to a beautiful portion of the trail that spurs off of West Lake Trail and runs down to and along Homestead Creek before reconnecting back to West Lake Trail.

TRAIL RELOCATION With the design phase complete, the Trail Crew is constructing a new portion of the Bridge Trail near the Suspension Bridge that will reroute it away from an existing staircase slated for removal. This new section of trail will have a slight grade that will not require a staircase, ultimately requiring less long-term maintenance.

TRAIL MAINTENANCE Recent bridge inspections revealed that component boards required replacement. These small bridge repairs are complete. The constant heavy humidity under the forest canopy contributes to the quick breakdown of lumber, necessitating regular maintenance of trail infrastructure.

Guests at the ribbon cutting joined Myers Elementary 4th grade students for an aquatic studies program aboard the LLALC floating classroom.

partnership Puts Student Scientists on Lake Lanier

Elachee, Chattahoochee Riverkeeper (CRK) and Hall County Parks and Leisure Services recently celebrated a ribbon cutting for the new Lake Lanier Aquatic Learning Center (LLALC) boathouse and two-slip dock at River Forks Park in Gainesville. The LLALC program serves K-12 schools throughout north Georgia, college and universities, church and civic organizations. Its operational costs are funded in part by charitable donations.

“This has been a successful Elachee and CRK collaboration for 18 years and has hosted more than 50,000 students in that time,” shares Andrea Timpone. “The move to River Forks Park adds Hall County Parks and Leisure Services to this educational endeavor and gives this important program an excellent home base.”

Aboard CRK’s catamaran, the Chota Princess II floating classroom, Elachee instructors guide students in collecting lake sediments, determining pH and dissolved oxygen levels, sample plankton and measuring turbidity. Then on shore, they engage students in environmental management activities related to the watershed.

“Our partnership is a prime example of three agencies working well together for the greater good of our community,” says Mike Little, Director, Hall County Parks and Leisure Services. “It has been a natural fit because our values and philosophies regarding environmental conservation and education line up together so well.”

READ MORE: elachee.org/student-scientists-active-on-lake-lanier
‘Recycle-Reuse-Repurpose’ Reimagined

Elachee Senior Naturalist Carol Sowers, pictured above, has created a 10 ft. x 5 ft. masterpiece quilt using past Camp Elachee t-shirts as the unifying theme. Involved with Camp Elachee since its earliest days, even before the Nature Center facility was built in Chicopee Woods Nature Preserve, Carol's unique perspective is reflected in this ingenious documentary of Elachee’s longest running nature education program. Thank you, Carol! CAMP ELACHEE DETAILS: elachee.org/camp-elachee

Share the Limelight with Camp Elachee

Since the turn of this century (you know, Y2K) we estimate 14,250 Camp Elachee t-shirts have been put into circulation throughout Gainesville and other north metro Atlanta communities. Elachee’s Annual Sponsorship Program offers your business a way to support Camp Elachee and be recognized on the 2019 summer camp t-shirt! INTRIGUED? Call 770-535-1976 or email kim@elachee.org

Take a Camp Elachee Family under Your Wing

Thanks to Elachee annual fund donations, each year families may request financial aid for their child’s Camp Elachee registration fee. Yet, they need help from an advocate to ‘plug in’ to learn how to access this resource.

“I believe that sometimes you just need someone who is in your corner,” confides a Camp Elachee 2018 parent. “When I was encouraging a friend who had fallen on a tough financial time, I didn’t know what that could look like until I learned about Camp Elachee. After making the initial call to learn what steps she needed to take to request help, I was able to point her in the right direction.” The friend’s three children received financial assistance for a week of summer day camp.

“The kids absolutely loved their time at Camp Elachee, receiving in-depth nature instruction and learning that is unmatched to other camp experiences,” she shares. “Encouragement comes in many different forms, and I am proud that Elachee Nature Science Center has found many ways impact this community and families in this area.” INTRODUCE A FRIEND TO CAMP ELACHEE: Call 770-535-1976 to learn more.

Elachee Science Nights Hit the Mark

Enthusiasm ran high at the most recent Science Night. A young couple attending the Bat Ecology program shared they recently moved here from Athens and this type gathering was just what they were looking for in their new home! Held monthly at Recess Southern Gastro-Pub, this is a free environmental education and discussion series for adults. PROGRAM TOPICS & DETAILS: elachee.org/lifelong-learning

What’s Happening?

NOVEMBER

Nov. 10, 2018 ... Stars Over Elachee elachee.org/stars-over-elachee
Nov. 13, 2018 ... Elachee Science Night elachee.org/lifelong-learning

DECEMBER

Dec. 8, 2018 ... New Student Open House Elachee Nature Academy elacheeacademy.org
Dec. 15, 2018 ... Stars Over Elachee elachee.org/stars-over-elachee

JANUARY

Jan. 8, 2019 ... Elachee Science Night elachee.org/lifelong-learning
Jan. 12, 2019 ... Stars Over Elachee elachee.org/stars-over-elachee
Jan. 14, 2019 ... Enrollment Opens Elachee Nature Academy elacheeacademy.org

FEBRUARY

Feb. 1, 2019 ... Camp Elachee 2019 Registration Opens elachee.org/camp-elachee
Feb. 9, 2019 ... Stars Over Elachee elachee.org/stars-over-elachee
Feb. 12, 2019 ... Elachee Science Night elachee.org/lifelong-learning
Feb. 16, 2019 ... Chicopee Lake Birding Hike Great Backyard Bird Count

Mark Your Calendar

Mar. 16, 2019 Raptor Fest elachee.org/raptor-fest

Apr. 13, 2019 Trillium Trek Trail Run & Walk elachee.org/trillium-trek
Apr. 13, 2019 Spring Plant Sale

Saturday Evening Apr. 27, 2019 Flights of Fancy Benefit & Auction elachee.org/flights-of-fancy

Secure Your Sponsorship Today

DETAILS: elachee.org/support
Storybook Setting for a Hike

Accessible from multiple locations around the Elachee Visitor Center, the paved half-mile Geiger Trail is tailor-made for easy, low-impact meandering. There is a particularly enchanted section of the Geiger Trail, referred to as the Storybook Trail. Here, visitors may leisurely stroll from kiosk to kiosk to read a children’s book. At the start of each new school year, the Elachee Nature Academy (ENA) posts an enlarged book reproduction for every visitor to enjoy.

“Mom and Dad would be delighted,” shares Beth Geiger Bolstad about the Geiger Trail’s namesakes. “Two of their greatest joys in one, a walk in the woods and a good book – what a brilliant idea!”

Elachee Brides Thank Walmart

Destination weddings are all the rage and Elachee’s patio, pavilion and knoll each offer a natural setting to say, “I do.” Just ask Facility Rentals Manager Kristin Love who tours, on average, four engaged couples per month. Elachee’s many open-air and indoor wedding packages are a great fit for ceremonies of 20 up to gatherings for 200.

Elachee’s new bridal suite is an awesome amenity getting a thumbs up from discerning brides-to-be. Thanks to a Walmart Community Grant from Gainesville Supercenter #510, Elachee now offers an inviting dressing area with neutral decor for bridal party pampering and photos.

Elachee Nature Academy

New Student OPEN HOUSE

Saturday • December 8, 2018 • 10-Noon

SEE DETAILS: elacheenatureacademy.org