Volunteer News

We can’t say it enough...

Thank you to our great volunteers!

We had a fantastic turnout for the Hummingbird Festival:

- 39 amazing Volunteers gave more than 170 hours of their time on an amazingly Fall-like day – and helped more than 2,000 patrons at Reedy Creek Nature Preserve have an AWESOME time!

Our great volunteers didn’t stop there:

- Volunteers from the Harris YMCA, Coca Cola Consolidated, St. Gabriel’s Catholic Church, Piedmont Open IB Middle School, the Charlotte Knights and from our neighborhoods and communities kept many of our Parks and Greenways looking their best during the steamy month of August!
- Dozens of Youth Sport Coaches have signed up to help our kids learn or master the skills of playing Soccer, Flag Football and “Li’l Ray” Basketball!

Thank you to all of our awesome volunteers!

In the spotlight: Mason Wallace Park advocates

We have amazing neighbors who come out to give some of our most “fragile” Parks some tender loving care!

Registered “Project Captains” have planned and carried out multiple projects at Mason Wallace Park this year:

Cutting back bamboo, replacing wood in benches and picnic tables, sanding and painting railings, and more!
Natural Resources
Volunteer Information Sessions!

Are you interested in helping out at one of Park & Recreation's Nature Centers or Nature Preserves? **Attend one of our upcoming Information Sessions** to find out what it takes to Volunteer:
Tour the facility, review available Volunteer roles (such as special events, programming, stewardship, etc.) and expected commitments, and more!

Saturday, September 7 - 10:00-11:00am at Reedy Creek Nature Center, 2900 Rocky River Road, 28215
CONTACT: Jose.Chavez@MecklenburgCountyNC.gov

Sunday, October 13 – 2:00-3:00pm at Latta Nature Center, 6211 Sample Road, Huntersville, 28078
CONTACT: Anjoli.Reynolds@MecklenburgCountyNC.gov

Saturday, November 2 - 10:00-11:00am at Reedy Creek Nature Center, 2900 Rocky River Road, 28215
CONTACT: Jose.Chavez@MecklenburgCountyNC.gov

Sunday, December 1 – 2:00-3:00pm at McDowell Nature Center, 15222 South York Road, Charlotte, 28278
CONTACT: Melissa.OLenick@MeckNC.gov

NATURE AT NIGHT FESTIVAL

LOCATION: MCDOWELL NATURE CENTER
- 15222 York Road, 28273 – 1 mile west of Shopton Road on S. Tryon/York Road

DATE OF EVENT: SATURDAY, OCTOBER 19
VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: **2 SHIFTS**: Day/ Setup – 10am-3pm OR Event – 3pm-9pm
TIME OF EVENT: 5:00PM – 9:00PM
NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: **20** for Day/Setup and **60** for Evening/Event

Join the McDowell Nature Center for a fun-filled, educational night as we explore what surprises nature has to offer after the sun goes down! The evening will include live animals, crafts, night hikes, hayrides, hot dogs and s’mores, storytelling, and much more! This event is rain or shine. Please **dress in layers** to be outdoors. Goodie bags, snacks and water will be provided for all Volunteers; dinner is provided for the evening shift only. **Please specify a shift when signing up to Volunteer – Thank you!**
- **Day/Setup shift**: Set up of tables/chairs, tents, supplies, stations, etc.
- **Evening/Event shift**: Assist staff with stations: food, crafts, information tables, hayride, etc.

*Volunteers must be at least age 12; anyone under the age of 16 must be accompanied by a parent/adult at all times.

**Contact** VolunteerServices@MeckNC.gov or Melissa.Olenick@MeckNC.gov **to sign up!**
CREEPY CRAWLY CRITTER-WEEN!

LOCATION: REEDY CREEK PARK, SHELTER #3
- 2900 Rocky River Road, 28215

DATE OF EVENT: FRIDAY, OCTOBER 25
TIME VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: 4:00PM TO 9:00PM
NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: 10 to 15

CREEPY CRAWLY CRITTER-WEEN is a FAMILY event to celebrate the diversity of creepy crawlies at Reedy Creek Nature Center at night! We have a host of fun and exciting activities planned including; live animals, costume contest, campfire, marshmallow roast, crafts, hayrides, and night hikes! Volunteers will assist with: setup and decorations; greeting and helping with directions; kid crafts; marshmallow roasting; and crowd control at the hayride station. Please dress to be outdoors – bright colors; a non-scary, nature-themed costume is optional. **Volunteers must be at least age 12; anyone under 16 years old MUST be accompanied by a parent/adult at all times.**

Contact: VolunteerServices@MeckNC.gov or Kathleen.Sweeney@mecklenburgcountync.gov

“ Weed Warriors” at McDowell Nature Preserve

WANTED: Invasive plant *Elaeagnus sp.* – A.K.A. Silverberry!
REWARD: Protection of McDowell Nature Preserve’s native species and natural communities!

LAST KNOWN LOCATION: McDowell Nature Center, 15222 South York Road, Charlotte, 28278

Meet the staff at McDowell Nature Center to connect with people and nature, all while making a positive difference in the community by removing invasive plant species!

- **Date/Time:** Saturday, October 26 - 1:00pm-4:00pm
- Volunteers 12 years old and up are welcome!
- Anyone under the age of 16 MUST be accompanied by a parent/adult at all times.
- Please wear long pants and long sleeves; **closed-toe shoes are required!**
- Bring a refillable water bottle and snacks - water and restrooms will be available at the Nature Center.
- Hand tools and work gloves will be provided.

**You must register for this project by contacting:** VolunteerServices@MeckNC.gov or Ariel.Lowery@MeckNC.gov

*We need to know how many Volunteers to plan for (with tools and gloves), and we need to be able to contact you in case of changes or cancellations!*
RAY’s Haunted Tour and Halloween Carnival

LOCATION: RAY’S SPLASH PLANET
- 215 N Sycamore Street, 28202
DATE OF EVENT: FRIDAY, OCTOBER 25
VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: 5:30PM – 9:30PM
TIME OF EVENT: 6:00-8:00PM – Carnival
7:00-10:00PM – Haunted Tour
NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: 20

Ray’s Splash Planet is hosting a kid-friendly carnival in the gymnasium and a truly SPOOK-tacular haunted tour throughout the Splash Planet. This event is open to the entire family and promises to provide a howling good time for everyone. We’ll have games, contests, and of course trick-or-treating!

Volunteers will help run and monitor games, as well as give out prizes. We also have a special need for people who can do face painting. A third task would be to help with the haunted tour, as either a guide or a cast member. Family-friendly costumes are encouraged and welcomed. This is a great opportunity for a fun-loving GROUP! *Volunteers must be at least age 16 to help with this event.*
Contact: VolunteerServices@MeckNC.gov or Diana.Weber@MecklenburgCountyNC.gov

Tutoring at Revolution!

LOCATION: REVOLUTION PARK SPORTS ACADEMY
- 1125 Remount Road, Charlotte, 28208
DAY/TIMES: Wednesdays, 6:00PM-8:00PM – homework assistance
Saturdays, 9:00AM-11:00AM – test preparation
*Begins September 4 (Wed) and continues through the year!
VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: 1-2 hours each date, set schedule with staff
NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: 2 per day

Students in grades K-12 receive weekly tutoring during the school year in reading and math, primarily facilitated by NC Educator licensed teachers. Volunteers provide valuable 1-on-1 assistance for these scholars. A great opportunity to provide a positive example to youth and teens – WE NEED ADDITIONAL VOLUNTEERS IN ORDER TO SERVE MORE STUDENTS! Student materials/supplies are provided.

➢ Volunteers must be at least 18 years old for this ongoing opportunity and must join the Volunteer Program.

Please contact VolunteerServices@MeckNC.gov to register as a volunteer!
**Therapeutic & Inclusive Recreation Services**

**Tropical Paradise** is a dance for people in the community with disabilities, ages 13 and older. Our theme is Hawaiian, with decorations that create a luau-like atmosphere and food that matches the relaxed vibe. We will tie up the end of summer by dancing, making our own leis, eating sliders and kabobs, and drinking slushies!

- **Location:** Tyvola Senior Center, 2225 Tyvola Road, Charlotte, 28210
- **Date:** Friday, September 20
- **Time:** 6:00pm-8:30pm (event) – Volunteers needed from 5:00pm

Volunteers will help to decorate before the event; serve food, help with activities and socialize with participants during the dance; and help with take down/clean up afterwards. Dress for the theme – Hawaiian shirts and leis would be great!

![Skeletons](image)

**EAT, DANCE AND BE SCARY!**

For teens and adults with disabilities, ages 13 and up

Calling all ghouls & guys! Come celebrate Halloween with your TR friends & family! We will have music, dancing, a haunted house, & spooky treats to sink your fangs into! We just need you to arrive in your best costume, ready to have a wicked good time!

- **Location:** Tyvola Senior Center, 2225 Tyvola Road, Charlotte, 28210
- **Date:** Friday, October 18
- **Time:** 6:30pm-9:00pm (event) – Volunteers needed from 5:00pm to 9:30pm

Volunteers will help decorate before the dance & assist with the construction of the haunted house. At the dance, volunteers may help serve food, work in the haunted house, & socialize with participants, helping where needed. After the dance, volunteers will help with the break down & clean up!

**You must be at least 18 years old to Volunteer with Therapeutic & Inclusive Recreation Services.**

For more information or to Volunteer at the Dances please contact:

VolunteerServices@MeckNC.gov or Madeline.Jones@MeckNC.gov

Or Candice.Moore@MecklenburgCountyNC.gov

*Therapeutic & Inclusive Recreation Services has opportunities to “adopt” upcoming Dances by providing food, decorations, activities and/or dedicated Volunteer support! Please contact Madeline.Jones@MeckNC.gov or Candice.Moore@MeckNC.gov for more information – Thank you!*
“Car-Fit” Event
at North Mecklenburg Senior Center
❖ Location: North Mecklenburg Senior Center, 102 Gilead Road, Huntersville, 28078
❖ Date/Time: Friday, November 15 - 9:00am-12:00 — Volunteers needed from 8:00am
   o TRAINING (required) — Thursday, November 14, 9:00am-12:00
❖ Number of CarFit Technicians (Volunteers) needed: 5 to 10

CarFit is a FREE, interactive and educational program that teaches participants how to make their personal vehicle “fit” them to increase safety and mobility when they hit the road.

CarFit Technicians (Volunteers) must attend a half-day technician training hosted by an Event Coordinator. Upon completion, you will be able to take participants through a CarFit event safely. CarFit Technicians must:
• Be able to bend over, stoop down, and assist another in walking.
• Possess good observational skills.
• Demonstrate time management skills.

Roles of the CarFit Technician may include:
Traffic Direction
CarFit Technicians may help with traffic flow the day of the CarFit event. Traffic directors must have:
• Experience in directing traffic at events (e.g., at church, school, etc.).
• A friendly disposition.

General Assistance: CarFit Technicians are instrumental to a successful CarFit event, and may also assist senior driver participants with check-in, check-up and check-out on the day of the event.

To sign up as a CarFit Technician for this event, please contact:
Trinette.Mumford@MecklenburgCountyNC.gov
980-314-1127 (Center) or 980-314-1086 (Desk)

CarFit is an educational program developed by AAA, AARP, and the American Occupational Therapy Association. For more information about the CarFit program, visit www.car-fit.org
CALLING ALL COACHES!
Basketball season is around the corner...

Registration for Basketball takes place during October, with Coach meetings in November and the season running from December through February.
*All Basketball coaches must have a current Volunteer application in place BEFORE the season begins! Contact Volunteer Services if you need to check on your renewal date or status!

If you have coached with us before, THANK YOU – and we hope that you will join us again! Your Volunteer application and approval remains active for a full year, and you are welcome to help with multiple Youth Sports. Please remember that you must update your application annually.

To become a NEW Volunteer coach, you must enroll in our Volunteer Program - if you would like to enroll please contact Volunteer Services at VolunteerServices@MeckNC.gov to receive a link to the Volunteer Enrollment site, with additional instructions.

As a Coach, you will need to be available for both Practices and Games. Most of the practices are during the week and the games are usually on Saturday.

To check out where our Centers are located, and to find phone numbers for the Centers, go to www.parkandrec.com > Recreation Centers.

Volunteer Opportunities for Groups

Bring YOUR group out to help keep our Parks, Greenways and Nature Preserves looking their very best! We welcome any group, from businesses, churches, neighborhoods, fraternities/sororities, Scouts, students, civic groups, colleges/universities, etc.
For more information on volunteering for any of our projects, please contact:
- Karen Howard at 980-314-1046 Karen.Howard@MeckNC.gov
- Pamela Thomas at 980-314-1059 Pamela.Thomas@MeckNC.gov

WEEKDAY PROJECTS

➢ Projects can be arranged for groups of 10 to 100+ Volunteers, from March through November, on Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday – 9:00am – 12:00.
➢ Contact us with a preferred date for your project and an estimated number of Volunteers, including how many adults and youth, if applicable.
➢ You bring work gloves and a water bottle, and we’ll do the rest!
➢ Check out our Park locations by visiting www.parkandrec.com > Parks
SATURDAY PROJECTS

Open to the public – Sign up today!

- Hours are 9:00am – 12:00 Noon
- Volunteers 12 years old and up are welcome!
- All Volunteers under the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult over the age of 21.
- You must RSVP to VolunteerServices@MeckNC.gov NO LATER THAN the Wednesday before the project date! We need to know how many Volunteers to plan for, and we need to be able to contact you in case of changes or cancellations.
- All projects are park maintenance and beautification projects, which may include mulching, weeding, pruning and clean-ups. Be aware that all projects involve manual labor!
- All you need to bring are a pair of gloves, a water bottle and LOTS OF ENERGY!!
- Please go to www.parkandrec.com to see where Parks, Nature Preserves and Greenways are located. From the home page click on either the Parks, Nature Preserves or Greenways tab.

SATURDAY PROJECT DATES: *All Saturday projects are 9:00am – 12:00 noon*

Project dates and/or locations are subject to change!
- Saturday, September 7 – Friendship Sportsplex – mulch, cleanup
- Saturday, September 14 – Little Sugar Creek Greenway – invasive plant removal, etc.
- Saturday, September 14 – William R. Davie Park – mulch, cleanup
- Saturday, September 14 – Four Mile Greenway (Matthews) – greenway maintenance
- Saturday, September 21 – Friendship Sportsples – garden work with Butterfly Highway
- Saturday, October 5 – Stephens Road Nature Preserve – trail work, invasive removal
- Saturday, October 12 – Ramsey Creek Park – leaf removal, cleanup
- Saturday, October 12 – Albemarle Road Park – Community cleanup day!
- Saturday, October 19 – Freedom Park – annual plantings
- Saturday, October 26 – McDowell Nature Preserve, 1:00-4:00pm – invasive removal – See “Weed Warriors” listing above!
- Saturday, November 2 – Stephens Road Nature Preserve – trail work, invasive removal
VOLUNTEER ENROLLMENT TIPS

We LOVE our Volunteers, and we want to make it EASY for you to come and help your community! Here are a few tips for you...THANK YOU for taking the time to support YOUR Park & Recreation Department!

YOU DO NOT NEED TO REGISTER/JOIN THE VOLUNTEER PROGRAM:
- For one-day events or projects
- For helping with a program ONE time (Example: chaperoning ONE field trip for an after-school program)

YOU MUST REGISTER/JOIN THE VOLUNTEER PROGRAM:
- To be a Coach for any sport
- To assist with an ongoing program on a regular basis (Example: tutoring once a week; teaching ESL)

Please contact VolunteerServices@MeckNC.gov if you are not sure whether you need to enroll for a volunteer project, event or program. We are happy to assist you!

CONTACT US!

For more information on volunteering for any of our programs, events or projects, please contact:

Karen Howard at 980-314-1046
Karen.Howard@MeckNC.gov

Pamela Thomas at 980-314-1059
Pamela.Thomas@MeckNC.gov

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