

Hikers, History Buffs: Meet Hemlock Bluffs



BY ELIZABETH MAYBACH
STAFF WRITER

CARY — In a small section of urban Cary, nature is alive and well. Since 1992, visitors have enjoyed hiking and jogging trails, observation decks overlooking the forest, and a twisting creek.

Just don't call Hemlock Bluffs Nature Preserve a park.

"We don't like to call it a park," said Mark Johns, a naturalist at the Stevens Nature Center on the preserve grounds. "It's a place for more passive recreation."

The Hemlock Bluffs Nature Preserve, about a 30-minute drive from Chapel Hill, is operated by the town of Cary parks system. The preserve has 150 acres of woodlands, consisting of both upland and flood-plain environments.

Following any of the trails, walkers will find quiet benches and cool shade to enjoy, with only the occasional distant sound of traffic to interrupt the silence. It's a great place to catch up on reading or chat with a friend. Surprisingly, it's an even better place to learn a little about natural history.

The trails are rugged and sometimes steep, but fairly short, with the longest covering about 1 1/4 miles. Along the way, hikers will see the namesake of the preserve, the Eastern hemlock.

This pine-type tree usually grows much farther north and is a throwback to the last glacial period in North Carolina almost 10,000 years ago.

At that time, this area was much cooler and was able to sustain the vegetation. Now, however, the ancient plants survive because of a climate created by the north-



Hemlock Bluffs in Cary has 150 acres of woodlands, with trails, quiet benches and cool shade. The preserve is home to the Eastern hemlock, a throwback to the last glacial period in North Carolina almost 10,000 years ago.

facing bluffs and the cool water of Swift Creek, which flows at the foot of the bluffs.

Boardwalks take the place of more traditional paths at places along the walks. According to preserve naturalists, the boardwalks minimize the impact of visitors to the area.

The boardwalks arch over the flood-

plain area where the plants are extremely delicate and easily damaged by foot traffic. While on the boardwalks, hikers can get a good view of old irrigation ditches dug by farmers centuries ago.

In addition to the hiking trails, the preserve offers excellent facilities for environmental education programs with topics such as forest ecology or dinosaurs and everything in between.

There is a fantastic outdoor classroom with a vaulted ceiling and rough wooden benches. The facility is open on all four sides, as if begging students to look around. As the subject is nature itself, however, there can't be a better place to learn.

The Colonel William Walton Stevens

and Emily Stevens Nature Center graces the entrance of the park. Col. Stevens was a native of Wake County and avidly supported the construction of the preserve.

The center is beautiful, with high ceilings and many windows. Facilities are available for activities including slide shows and botanical studies.

The nature center staff conducts a variety of programs year-round at the preserve. The programs are usually between \$2 and \$5 and are available to all ages. This weekend, the preserve has three programs scheduled: one on bird calls, one on wildflowers and one on how to attract wildlife to your backyard. For more information, call the Stevens Nature Center at 387-5980.

RALLY

FROM PAGE 1

He praised the University staff for the often thankless job they did for the University. "They are the lifeblood of the school."

Cunningham questioned the legislators' vision for the University and the state. "The legislators need to know they are using poor leadership and making poor decisions," he said. "Where are our leaders leading us?"

Harold Wallace, vice chancellor of University affairs, said, "We all feel that it is our responsibility, duty and obligation to pass the University on to the next generation in better shape than we found it."

He identified the reason for the University's success throughout its history. "This University was built because of state support and the leadership and sacrifices of its citizens for over 200 years. For it to be destroyed in a matter of months makes no sense," Wallace said.

Steve Hoffmann, president of the Graduate and Professional Student Federation, expressed anger that budget cuts were being proposed when the state was doing well financially.

Hoffmann pointed out that several departments at UNC were nationally ranked. "What don't we do well?" he asked.

Chuck Stone, professor of journalism,

stressed the importance of student involvement in the fight against the budget cuts.

Stone reminded the crowd what student activists had done in the past to change public policy in this country. "You ended the Vietnam War, not the president," he said.

Stone offered his opinion of the legislators.

"They are not our enemy. They are all honorable men — like Brutus. Defeat at the polls fears them most. Only votes will change their minds," he said.

Barbara Prear, head of the UNC housekeepers' steering committee, gave the housekeepers' perspective on the budget cuts.

"The people on the bottom have been affected all the time. We have reached our limit. We cannot take any more cuts. This is it," Prear said.

LaDell Robbins, president of the Black Student Movement, spoke on the effect the cuts would have on black students at the University.

"All I know is two things right now — I'm a student, and I don't have no money," Robbins said.

Clark McCabe, a junior religious studies major, skipped class to attend the rally. McCabe said, "We tried to get our professor to come, but he refused. I don't think he realized the importance of the rally."

HUD

FROM PAGE 1

ought to go together," he said. "In the next couple of months, we will see whether the budget drives the policy to the damaging extreme that it could with the Republican leadership."

Stegman said HUD was currently working to reinvent itself in order to provide more flexibility and to transform the state of public housing, which has been the target of criticism and budget cuts.

"The mentality in Washington and the zealous-like commitment to decrease government and balance the budget at every cost could be unfortunate for our most vulnerable population," he said. "With reinventing HUD, we are talking about creating maximum flexibility as a way the community can use HUD money to provide an economic opportunity to families without causing any undue pain."

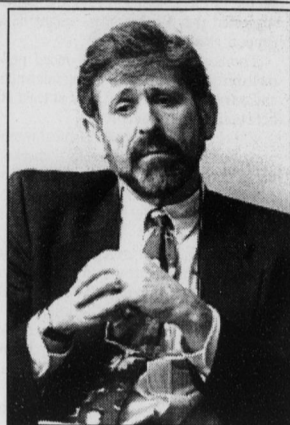
He said a rescission bill passed by the House had cut government by \$17 billion.

"We're at a point where Congress is going to have to decide, as we decrease the level of government spending, that we go about it responsibly with the objective of not causing undue pain," he said.

Stegman said that he thought HUD had a basic image problem and that it was important to call attention to those projects that were successful.

"The image of HUD nationally is the image of the worst public housing you can imagine, have seen or have heard about," he said. "It is important for us to celebrate government that works as much as it is to take ownership of our failures."

Stegman cited Dobbin Hills — a low-



MICHAEL STEGMAN is assistant secretary of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

income housing complex in Chapel Hill that was created as a nonprofit venture — as a positive example of HUD's work. "It is a marvelous example of how things can work so everyone wins."

Stegman said he thought HUD was at a point where changes were needed to bring it back on track with its original function.

"We are proposing the most radical transformation of public housing in 60 years," he said. "We want to change public housing back to its original purpose, a start not a destination."

Jenny Heizen contributed to this article.

Campus Calendar

THURSDAY

11 a.m. Sign up for 3-on-3 basketball! Sign up in the Pit for Saturday afternoon's tournament. Win \$150 or Hornets tickets. Door prizes include gift certificates from Ben and Jerry's, Nike, Pepper's Pizza, Johnny T-Shirt and the Trail Shop. Call SCALE at 962-1542 for more information.

12:30 p.m. "The Politics of Hair: Dreads, Fades and Naturals" will be presented in the Sonja H. Stone Black Cultural Center.

3 p.m. Bridges, an innovative program to help women develop and improve their academic leadership skills, will hold an open house until 5 p.m. in the Magnolia Room of the Friday Center. Call 962-2061 for more information.

6 p.m. "The Psychologist's Role in the Legal Process: Dissecting Lorena Bobbitt" will be presented by Professor Stephen Herrick in 112 Davie Hall. Sponsored by the UNC Psychology Club.

Zeitgeist Student Magazine, formerly known as the Phoenix, will hold an introductory meeting for the fall semester in Union 108.

7 p.m. Interested in playing full contact intercollegiate football? Come to the UNC Club Football meeting in 106 Fetzer.

Maryn Roze of Rockett, Burkhead, Lewis & Winslow, will discuss his advertising career in 104 Howell Hall. Call 933-2564 for more information.

Carolina Indian Circle will hold a general body meeting in Union 210. All are welcome.

7:15 p.m. Former New York Times syndicated columnist Tom Wicker will deliver the spring 1995 Reed Sarratt Lecture in the Hanes Art Center auditorium. Sponsored by the School of Journalism and Mass Communication.

8 p.m. Association of International Students will meet in 108 Bingham for another special folk-dancing session. All are welcome.

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