

Friends of Mason Neck State Park

May 2022 Newsletter

Come to the Eagle Festival!
10 AM to 6 PM, Saturday May 7, 2022



The Eagle Festival will be live and in-person this year! Come out on May 7 for a wonderful day at Mason Neck State Park. The festival will open at 10 AM. There will be live animal programs throughout the day. You can ride the hay wagon to an active bald eagle nest, where you'll be able to watch the activity at the nest using telescopes and binoculars. The Visitor Center will have an Eagle Cam on the large screen, along with an interpreter who can tell you about bald eagles.

The Children's Tent will have activities for children throughout the day including two puppet shows. Children will enjoy free pony rides. More than 20 exhibitors will have environmentally-themed presentations and activities for you to enjoy.



Costumed characters will travel around the festival site to entertain you and your children.



There's no need to bring a lunch; the Lions Club will have food and drinks for sale, and there may be other options for you as well. A live band will perform throughout the day.

For early risers, the Audubon Society of Northern Virginia will lead bird walks on the Bayview Trail at 8 am and 9 am. You must register for the bird walks, and participation is limited to twelve people for each walk. You can register for the 8 AM bird walk [here](#) and for the 9 AM bird walk [here](#).

The festival is free and open to everyone. Come out and enjoy the day at Mason Neck State Park!

Help Make the Eagle Festival a Success By Volunteering for Part of the Day



We need volunteers to help make the Eagle Festival run smoothly. We need people to help park cars, greet guests, help our costumed characters, and more.

You can see the volunteer signup sheet and register as a volunteer [here](#).

Mason Neck State Park Has a New Park Manager



Virginia State Parks has appointed Lance Elzie as the new Park Manager for Mason Neck State Park. Lance served as the Park Manager at Leesylvania State Park for the past year, and he will split his time between Leesylvania and Mason Neck until a new manager is hired for Leesylvania. Before joining the Virginia State Parks system, Lance was manager at four parks in the NOVA Parks system. He has a Master of Science in Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management from Clemson University. Lance is certified as a Leave No Trace Master Educator and received certifications as a Canoe Instructor from the American Canoe Association and as a Wilderness First Responder from the National Outdoor Leadership School.

Board Member Randy Streufert Taught a Nature Photography Class at the Park



Eleven lucky students enjoyed a photography class by award-winning photographer and Friends' Board member Randy Streufert on Saturday. Randy gave a presentation featuring more than 100 photos, graphics and text that covered the essentials of nature photography, followed by a hike along the park's Bay View trail where Randy passed on more pointers.

The Friends Participated in the Mt Vernon District Environmental Expo



Guests at the Mt. Vernon Environmental Expo had an opportunity to learn more about things they can do to protect our environment. They were introduced to the park's wildlife, trails, and programs and learned about the upcoming Eagle Festival. The Friend's table featured the photographs of the park by Board Member Randy Streufert and an opportunity for children and adults to measure themselves against a banner showing the wingspans of birds.

Come to the Park for Kids to Parks Day – May 21



Mason Neck State Park will participate in the nationwide Kids to Parks Day on May 21. The park's theme for this year is **Wet and Wild**, with three water-oriented activities:

10 am - Fishing on the Bay: Join a ranger down by the bay to learn the basics of fishing. All equipment will be provided by the park.

2 pm -Mud Buggin': We're taking dip-nets down to the pond to see what kind of aquatic life we can catch. Plan to get a little wet and muddy!

4 pm – Going In Seine: Using a seine net, we will take a closer look at small fish and other animals that might be living near the shoreline. Be prepared to get your feet wet.

*Kids and Families should be prepared to get a little wet at each event!

May Programs at Mason Neck State Park



Mason Neck State Park will host more than 30 programs and events this month, led by the Park's excellent, trained interpreters. You can find their calendar of events on the Park's [website](#). Just scroll down until you see the list of upcoming events and click on "More events at this park."

Please Help Us Support Mason Neck State Park!



If you are already a member of the Friends of Mason Neck State Park, **Thank You!** Your membership dues and donations help us to support the Park's activities and enable us to fund special events such as the Eagle Festival each May, our Owl Moon evening each fall, and the annual Swanfall Holiday Program each December.

If you aren't a member, or your membership has lapsed, you can become a member at [Join the Friends of Mason Neck State Park](#). You can also donate to the Friends [here](#).