

GRIST FROM THE MILL

VOLUNTEER NEWSLETTER

COLVIN RUN MILL
HISTORIC SITE

July 2009

Salute the 2009 Volunteer Award Winners

DISTINGUISHED VOLUNTEER



Eugenia "Genie" Davis is a legacy volunteer at Colvin Run Mill. Her husband, Bob, volunteered at the mill from 1996 to 2003. After he died, Genie told site volunteer coordinator Mary Allen she wanted to continue her family connection with the site. While Bob had been fascinated with the mill's

technology, Genie had other interests.

Genie says she "grew up in her father's general store" in western Pennsylvania pictured below. Like the Colvin Run General Store, Genie's father sold a variety of items to the local community of farmers and miners, and she started selling penny candy

as soon as she could see over the counter.

Since 2004, Genie has donated 200 hours annually as the Monday storekeeper in the Colvin Run General Store – for a combined milestone of 1,000 hours.



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WEEKENDS IN JULY:

Family Fun Weekends
Noon—3pm
July 4 & 5,
July 18 & 19

Price varies by activity.

Crank ice cream (Saturdays),
take a carving lesson
(Sundays), watch grinding,
visit farm animals and play
old-fashioned games.

☞ ☞ ☞ SPECIAL PROGRAM:

Children's Concert
Fairfax Symphony
Percussion Duo
"What is Rhythm?"
Thursday, July 16, 2—3pm
FREE

Length of Service Milestones

The following people were recognized at the site's 2009 Volunteer Awards picnic for their length of service milestones.

ONE-YEAR CERTIFICATES

Reed Asay
Usha Chartarpaul
Tom Milton
Patrick Standiford
Bridget Sullivan
Richard Thorpe

These folks received special pins for their years of service:

5 YEARS

Genie Davis & Bing Tseng

10 YEARS

Barbara Raymond

15 YEARS

Frank Boucher & Joe Pruden

20 YEARS

Marjorie Lundegard



2009 Volunteer Salute, cont'd. from page 1

VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR



On his volunteer application, **Rich Thorpe** described his area of interest as “carpentry” and said he wanted to “just help out.” This turned out to be quite an understatement.

Rich’s projects have benefited site staff and visitors alike. Brochures, artifacts and hands-on items are now displayed on beautiful custom-crafted racks and bases. The site’s grounds are more attractive and welcoming thanks to his work – leaves raked, beds weeded and shrubbery trimmed.

Rich helps make grinding demonstrations possible by cleaning the mill, preparing the machinery and toting grain. Then he dresses out in c.1810 period costume and helps miller Mason Maddox

operate and interpret the historic mill for week-end visitors.

But it is the magnificent hand-cranked model of the waterwheel, power train and grinding stone that is his most outstanding contribution to the site’s mission. During the school year, more than 3,000 elementary students come to the site on field trips. Typically, they are studying simple machines and come to see the mill’s gears and waterwheel to reinforce that curriculum. On tour, a docent guides the students through the mill and outside to the waterwheel to explain how everything works together. However, the waterwheel is outdoors, the gears are in the

basement and the grinding stones are on the first floor. And even with the waterwheel turning, it is difficult for young students to imagine just how it powers the gears and how that power is transferred to the grinding stones.

By providing a scale model that displays the power transmission, Rich has enabled the students to see exactly what happens on two floors of the mill when the waterwheel turns. They see first-hand how the size of each gear determines its speed of rotation, and how the speed of the waterwheel ultimately controls the speed of the grinding stone. He has given the docents a new teaching tool and the students a new learning experience.



Rich Thorpe (r) and Mason Maddox dressed out as 19th century millers.



Best wishes for a continued speedy recovery to **Harriet Hunt**, who is recuperating from surgery to repair her rotator cuff on June 10.



JULY BIRTHDAYS

1 Kim Whitacre will celebrate by blazing a new trail on her bicycle.

12 Kitty O'Hara claims she's not having any more birthdays, but she will mark the day gliding through the forest canopy on a zip-line 30' in the air with friends at Terrapin Adventures.

13 Harriet Hunt and her hubby Don's birthdays are four days apart, so they will celebrate together with family, probably going out to dinner. They may also take a day trip somewhere close by if her post-operative shoulder is up to it .

16 Mike Murphy

17 Ann Korzeniewski will be packing for her vacation to Bermuda, where she plans to kayak into the dreaded triangle.

Arti-FACTS

by Dawn Kehrer

1. Name That Millard

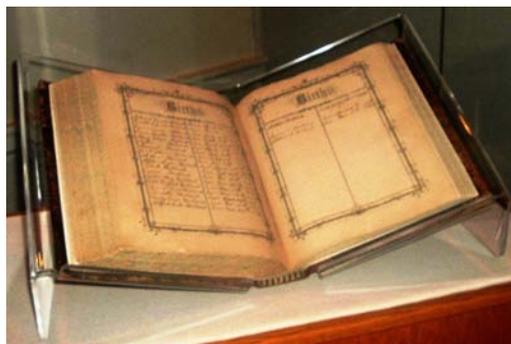
Just like today, families of the early 1900s displayed their shared history with photographs, special documents and favored objects in their parlors. Photographs of the Millard family and some special items are displayed in the parlor of the Miller's House. As always, the large Millard family photograph and the wall-hung portraits of Addison, Emma and Florence are in place, but now there are additional photos of Millard family members on the piano and the mantel.

If you would like to identify the Millards for visitors, or simply for your own knowledge, look in the "Photo" section of the Miller's House Roomguide on the windowsill with the stereoscope. You'll see copies of the photos with names and dates when available. The mantel and piano are a bit crowded – on purpose – with vases, plants, photographs and a statue to show the style of the time period.



2. Millard Bible

Please note that the Millard family Bible is now on a new book cradle given to us by Susan Clark of the Collections Management section. The Bible will be much more comfortable in this rack. It is tilted away from the light for better paper conservation and at a better angle for viewing.



The Bible is open to where the names and dates of the Millard births are written. Birth certificate forms were generally not used in the United States until the early 1900s. Before forms were available, births were recorded with the local church, civil court or in family records, such as the Millard Bible. The Millard deaths are recorded on pages following the birth pages. Copies of all these records are in the Parlor Roomguide.



Who Ya Gonna Call? BEE-busters!

Some of you may remember Karen Temple, former financial analyst for the Resource Management Division of the Park Authority. She called Colvin Run Mill with an unusual problem one day last month.

It seems a swarm of honeybees had landed in a tree in her front yard in Herndon. Her husband's first reaction was to call in an exterminator – understandable when you look at the picture here.

But when the exterminator arrived, Karen told him to wait while she picked up the phone and called Colvin Run Mill for some expert advice. Ann Korzeniewski gave her beekeeper **Toni Burnham's** phone number and here's what happened:



Bees are Toni's passion and within the hour, she was on the case!

She estimates that about **40,000** bees swarmed onto the Temples' tree searching for a new place to live. The swarm looked quite intimidating, but — if left alone — the bees probably would have only stayed 24 hours while the colony's scout bees found a more appropriate spot, like a cavity in a tree, to build their new hive.

But since the humans did not want 40,000 temporary apian neighbors, Toni set about capturing the bees. The most important thing was to make sure she got the queen — the other bees will smell their queen and follow her.

First, Toni prepared her bee boxes. Then she sprayed the swarm with sugar water. As they fell off the branches, she collected them in the frames and boxes.





BEE-busters, cont'd.

- ◆ She sprayed again.
- ◆ She rattled the branches.
- ◆ Bees rained down.
- ◆ Did she have the queen?
- ◆ Success!

The bee rescue provided a fascinating neighborhood science lesson. Kids watched the excitement from the safety of a van parked in the Temple's driveway. An elderly neighbor came over to tell about the time he saw his father stick his bare hand into a swarm of bees. "Like this?" asked Toni.

Eventually Toni captured most of the bees. What next? She wrapped the boxes in a blanket, put them in her car and transported the bees to their new home at the Colvin Run Apiary.

Next time you're at the park, venture up the hill above the main parking lot and see how well the rescued bees have settled into their new home.



"Like this?" asked Toni, sticking her bare hand into the swarm of bees.

Photos courtesy of Karen Temple.



Making sure the queen bee has been captured.



The bees' new home in the Colvin Run Apiary.

To learn more about honeybee swarms, visit this site from the University of Nebraska:

<http://entomology.unl.edu/beekpg/beeswarm.shtml>

And here's a link to Toni Burnham's CityBees blog: <http://citybees.blogspot.com/> where she's posted more about this swarm and lots of info about the new White House bees.



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The mission of Colvin Run Mill Historic Site is to maintain and interpret its historic buildings and collections for the enrichment of Fairfax County residents and visitors as they relate to the themes of technology and community in 19th century rural northern Virginia.

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