



# Claude Moore Colonial Farm

Living History Farm • Educational Resource • User Community

6110 Georgetown Pike • McLean, VA 22101 • 703-442-7337

Hi Folks,

Wow, thank you so much for your overwhelming support for the Farm. It has been so heartwarming to receive your expressions of support and comments about our current situation.

We especially appreciate all of you that posted, forwarded, blogged, tweeted and facebooked the CMCFNews which brought an avalanche of inquiries from the media. There have been phone interviews with media outlets from across the country and the UK, online and print articles and last night a very favorable piece done by Fox 5 who made a trip to the Farm yesterday. We spent a very enjoyable afternoon today with Griff Jenkins and his cameraman Martin from Fox National News which will be on the Greta Van Susteren show tonight at 10 pm. It was fun because the cameraman knew the Farm as he brought his children all the time when they were younger.

Unfortunately, the National Park Service remains unmovable and also unreachable due to the shutdown so nothing has changed for us.

I would like to answer some of the questions that I have received from some of you in this "group setting".

We are critical of the National Park Service because we think they have closed us down illegally according to the terms of the agreement we signed with them in 1981. The agreement states that we will operate the Farm and open it to the public and the only thing they will provide is police protection if needed. Many years ago, we decided that calling the Fairfax County Police if needed (they have joint jurisdiction) worked better for our situation. And because of our proximity to the Central Intelligence Agency, we have probably the best security on earth. The CIA has also treated us with great decency and respect and we value them highly as our neighbors.

The reason that it is so important that we remain open is because of the income we receive from Pavilion rentals, admissions, sales and program fees. We have had to cancel every event at the Farm this week so we have already lost more than \$15,000 in operating income because October is the busiest month of the year for us. When the Federal government reopens, as it inevitably will, they will be funded by all of us. The Farm may never reopen again if we cannot open soon because we don't have any other source of revenue except that which we earn for ourselves.

The staff has been here all week in spite of being threatened with arrest because we feel our cause is just and the Farm is worth protecting. And many of our volunteers are Federal employees that now have time on their hands. They could be here volunteering but are banned from the Farm. What an incredibly stupid waste of time and talent.

It is true that my comments about the National Park Service were harsh but they are based on 40 years of dealing with them so I do speak from experience. The NPS has some wonderfully dedicated professional employees who would probably lay down their lives for our parks. Unfortunately, they don't seem to be in charge anymore. The future of the NPS rests with the goodwill of the American people and groups such as ours that could help them protect and manage their vast resources. But treating your partners with disdain and contempt dooms future possibilities for healthy cooperative ventures. I wonder what would have happened at the mall if the NPS had reached out to the VFW and American Legion to provide volunteers instead of placing paid armed guards?

Hopefully our appeals will eventually reach the right people and they will come to the same conclusion we have. Our agreement gives us the right and the duty to be open to the public.

Please keep the comments coming and feel free to pass this on. With your help and support, we will win this fight! See you at Market Fair later this month. And we will definitely keep you posted.

Best Wishes,

Anna Eberly  
Managing Director



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Hi Folks,

For the first time in 40 years, the National Park Service (NPS) has finally succeeded in closing the Farm down to the public. In previous budget dramas, the Farm has always been exempted since the NPS provides no staff or resources to operate the Farm. We weren't even informed of this until mid-day Monday in spite of their managers having our email addresses and cell numbers.

The first casualty of this arbitrary action was the McLean Chamber of Commerce who were having a large annual event at the Pavilions on Tuesday evening. The NPS sent the Park Police over to remove the Pavilions staff and Chamber volunteers from the property while they were trying to set up for their event. Fortunately, the Chamber has friends and they were able to move to another location and salvage what was left of their party. You do have to wonder about the wisdom of an organization that would use staff they don't have the money to pay to evict visitors from a park site that operates without costing them any money.

Every appeal our Board of Directors made to the NPS administration was denied. They feel that as "landlord" they have absolute control of their property. The NPS is quoted today in the Washington Post saying "The monuments are closed because, during a shutdown, there is no money to pay the rangers who staff them", said the Park Service spokeswoman, Carol Bradley Johnson." And the agency is worried about the security of the memorials and the safety of visitors at unstaffed sites. "It is not something we enjoy doing," Johnson said. "But it's important that we protect and preserve our monuments for future generations."

What utter crap. We have operated the Farm successfully for 32 years after the NPS cut the Farm from its budget in 1980 and are fully staffed and prepared to open today. But there are barricades at the Pavilions and entrance to the Farm. And if you were to park on the grass and visit on your own, you run the risk of being arrested. Of course, that will cost the NPS staff salaries to police the Farm against intruders while leaving it open will cost them nothing.

You would think that with all the funding problems the NPS has, they would at least acknowledge the Farm's successful partnership in operating their park site - just to encourage other groups to support them in similar ways. But you would

be wrong. If the George Washington Memorial Parkway publishes posters or site brochures, the Farm is never included but other partnership parks are. Recently we were requested to attend a NPS regional park partners meeting and the NPS had put together a slide show of all of their parks and the Farm was once again - not included. We don't see how that benefits the mission of the National Park Service if it really is to preserve and protect. Or is it really just about control?

One reason that citizens worked so hard to save the Farm in 1980-81 was partly because the NPS tried so hard to get rid of it. But what really saved the Farm were the individuals and families with children and who had visited, participated in programs and volunteered. Even when the Farm was operated by the NPS (1972-1981), it had a very independent and entrepreneurial spirit which attracted like minded people. After all these years, we still believe that if we are willing to work hard enough, there is nothing that we cannot accomplish. And now there are a lot more of us who feel that way than in 1980.

What does all this mean to you if you are a volunteer, visitor, program participant or customer?

Until further notice, the 18th century Farm is closed as well as the GateHouse Shop and Book Shop and Pavilions of Turkey Run. If you are volunteer coming to take care of plants and animals you are allowed on the property. Otherwise, you may be denied access.

Needless to say, we are working to get this decision reversed and have been in close touch with both Congressman Wolf and Congressman Moran who have so far been unsuccessful. Being open is very important to us both to faithfully serve our visitors and volunteers and to earn income to operate the Farm.

In all the years I have worked with the National Park Service, first as a volunteer for 6 years in Richmond where I grew up, then as an NPS employee at the for 8 very long years and now enjoyably as managing director for the last 32 years - I have never worked with a more arrogant, arbitrary and vindictive group representing the NPS.

I deeply apologize that we have to disappoint you today by being closed but know that we are working while the National Park Service is not - as usual.

Thank you so very much for all of the support that you give to us.

Anna Eberly  
Managing Director