

PHOTO BY IDA PHILLIPS LYNCH
New Hope Creek meanders through the Johnston Mill Nature Preserve where the Triangle Land Conservancy will host a 25 year Anniversary Open House this Saturday.

FLORA
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site sports such dramatically warty bark that they are easily imagined to be characters from a Tolkien-esque plot. You have to see them to believe them!

And another seeing-is-believing feature is the Liliputian forest of American Beech, *Fagus grandifolia*, high up on the Bluff Trail. Normally, beech trees occur on the moist lower slopes, not high up on dry ridges. Here, however, a few large beech trees near the top of the slope were blown down during Hurricane Fran in 1996. Those trees were loaded with beech nuts. Each time I visit, I visually try to excavate the roots to determine whether that dwarf beech forest is the result of hundreds of sprouting

beechnuts or vegetative sprouts from the extensive far-reaching root system of those original trees. It could be a combination of both.

More a wonder than a feature is the old, blown-over sycamore, *Platanus occidentalis*, on the creek bank. Though much of its massive root system is exposed, the tree, another Tolkienesque image, continues to survive and is a living demonstration of the complexity of a single-tree root system.

There is so much to see, and I advise you that if you don't get outside now you'll miss the awesome emergence of spring.

This coming Saturday, March 15, TLC is continuing its 25th year anniversary celebration with an all-day "Open House" at the Johnston Mill Nature Preserve. All are welcome,

young and old, families and friends, to join in on this day-long walking celebration. What an appropriate way to pay tribute to TLC for protecting over 10,000 acres of natural areas in our region.

From 9 to 11 a.m., volunteer birders stationed throughout the preserve will help visitors spot and identify the many birds that migrate through or call Johnston Mill home. The roster of bird species here is so diverse that the preserve has been made a part of the North Carolina Birding Trail.

During the afternoon, from 1 to 4 p.m., volunteer naturalists and botanists will take over, helping visitors spot the Hepaticas and other features of spring. Spring is proceeding so rapidly now that there are budding surprises with each passing day.

All day long, volunteers will be on hand to greet visitors and share information about TLC. Parking for the open house is available at both entrances to the preserve: on Mt. Sinai Road and on Turkey Farm Road. For personal safety, TLC advises visitors to park on the shoulder of Turkey Farm Road if the lots are full. Visit the website for a Johnston Mill locator map.

THE MILL

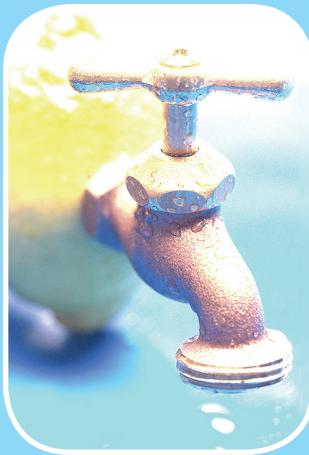


SCENES FROM THE 2008
COMMUNITY DINNER

PHOTOS BY KIRK ROSS

Lincoln Languasco, a member of the Peruvian dance group sponsored by Asociación Peruano-Americana de Carolina del Norte, and his daughter Zilia wait for dad's turn on stage at the McDougle cafetorium, and organizer Nerys Levy offers a hug to Master of Ceremonies Ron Stutts during the recent Community Dinner.

WATER WATCH * WEDNESDAY, MARCH 12



LAKE LEVELS

UNIVERSITY LAKE: 0' .25" below full
CANE CREEK RESERVOIR: 12' 1.25" below full

PRECIPITATION THIS MONTH

JONES FERRY WATER TREATMENT PLANT: 3.53"
CANE CREEK RESERVOIR: 2.99"

CUSTOMER WATER DEMAND

Past 7 days (average): 6.324 million gallons
Past 30 days (average): 6.718 million gallons

ESTIMATED WATER SUPPLY REMAINING:

303 days worth (about 10 months), based on average demand in the last 30 days, and assuming no further rainfall.

[tip]:

Get a free low flow showerhead from OWASA at 400 Jones Ferry Road, Carrboro. (Tip courtesy of OWASA. More tips at OWASA.org)



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Maya R. Jerath, M.D., Ph.D., earned her medical degree from the University of Vermont, completed her residency at Duke University and trained in allergy and immunology at UNC Chapel Hill. Dr. Jerath is now accepting new patients with allergic rhinitis, asthma, food allergies, urticaria and immunodeficiency.





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