



2013 Gator Guide

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Gator Philosophy

Welcome to the Forest Hollow Swim Team! Forest Hollow is a member of the Northern Virginia Swimming League (NVSL), founded in 1956, to foster “A love for the sport, advanced aquatic skills, teamwork, and the principals of good sportsmanship.”

The Forest Hollow Swim Team fosters a spirit of community and a love for the sport of swimming. 2012 will be a tough competitive year for us – but with the hard work and Gator spirit of all of our swimmers, we are ready. The coaching staff will focus the team on enhancing the correct stroke technique, improving starts and turns, and sprint technique for all swimmers. We will continue to foster the spirit of learning teamwork, good sportsmanship, and self-discipline. The Forest Hollow Swim Team will also focus on having some healthy fun.

This handbook is intended to inform parents about our team requirements and general operating policies. The Forest Hollow web page (www.foresthollow.com) will have up to date information throughout the year, including our schedule and results. Please do not hesitate to call a one of the swim team reps if you have any questions.

**H2O
2 Parts Heart
1 Part Obsession**

2013 Coaches

Head Coach	Elvin Foreman	240-838-1156 (c)
Assistant Head Coach	Willie LaBarca	703-956-0492 (c)
Assistant Coaches	Andrew Boyd Juan Carlos Clark Carolyn Fonzi Dylan Gore Erin Johnson Catherine Kennedy Alex Lash Elizabeth Manthos Caroline Peterson Faith Paletti Sarah Padrutt	

Swim Team Board Members

Team Rep	Merari Chollette merarihc@yahoo.com	301-938-0250 (c)
“B” Meet Rep	Bob Elkins bobelkins17@aol.com	703-531-9126
Treasurer	Jay Nash jaynashjr@gmail.com	703-622-8457

Key Positions

Head Official	Doug Padrutt
Data Coordinator	Allie Rutherford
Concessions	Bill & Mary Kennedy
Volunteer Coordinators	Karen Curtin
Webmaster	Ernie Halal

Other Key Information

Forest Hollow Swim Team Website	www.foresthollow.com
NVSL Website	www.nvsl.nvblu.com
Forest Hollow Pool	703-750-9737



WHAT'S NEW

2013 brings few changes to our swim team processes and communication networks. The best way to stay up to date is to visit our website often and read any updates sent by your team rep via email. Our webmaster has done an amazing job in updating our site and making it more user friendly. The team Rep and other lead volunteers will do their best to keep the website up to date with the most relevant and key information you need to have. On occasion you may also receive emails from your A & B Meet Team Reps, please be sure to read these important messages.

One change as of 2013 to highlight is that of the role of **Table Workers - New as of 2013 is that there is no manual score sheet. What used to be the scorer is not a verifier to check time cards to the results.**

SWIM TEAM DUES

Dues for swim team members for the 2013 season remain the same as 2011 & 2012! The cost is \$92 for 1 swimmer, \$177 (or an additional \$85) for 2 swimmers, \$78 for each additional swimmer. All dues are payable in advance of practice or meet attendance. Once again in 2013, all Gators must register and pay via our online registration system at www.foresthollow.com. There are two options for payment – credit card/debit card or e-check. E-check option is just like paying your regular bills directly online with your bank. We encourage the use of e-check for everyone, as it costs less for the administrative fee, meaning more dollars directly to Forest Hollow. (See the newsletter and website for instructions on registering for returning and new members!)

As a reminder – your family must be a pool member (shareholder or full summer) to be part of the swim team per NVSL rules. Online registration for the swim club is also available with the same convenient options as team registration – credit/debit or e-check. Again, online registration eases the administrative burden on volunteers to deposit checks and update records. We strongly encourage you to register for both the team and club online – and remember e-check provides more money back to Forest Hollow.

Swim Team refunds are not a normal practice and will be rare. Exceptions may be granted by the Team Reps prior to the season beginning. Refunds will be for amounts received by Forest Hollow, transaction fees are not refundable.

NVSL

Forest Hollow is a member of the Northern Virginia Swim League. The NVSL is the largest summer swim league in the U.S. with over 10,000 swimmers on 103 teams. There are 17 Divisions, each consisting of 6 teams, with the fastest teams in Division 1. League meet scores and individual swimmers times are posted on the NVSL website weekly. The NVSL website is www.nvsl.nvblu.com. This year Forest Hollow is in Division 6.

The NVSL adopted Standards of Conduct beginning with the 2010 season. These standards reinforce the sportsmanship standards that the Gators have long practiced.

The standards apply to coaches, swimmers, parents, and fans. The standards are found on Forest Hollow's website. *We encourage each of you to read and abide by these basic principles which promote and enhance the sport of swimming.*

The NVSL has specific Rules, published each year, that define numerous standards that we must adhere to as we conduct our meets. These detail events, age group requirements, swim team eligibility requirements and other standards. Forest Hollow provides these handbooks to our officials for free and will provide copies to other parents upon request.

GATOR PRACTICE SCHEDULE & AGE GROUP ASSIGNMENT

Regular attendance at practice is encouraged. All swimmers are to swim in their appropriate "age group" session. This allows the coaches to develop a more cohesive age group practice fostering stronger social ties and greater team spirit over all. Exceptions must be at the "invitation" of the Head Coach or Assistant Head Coach with approval of the Team Reps. No parent or child may "opt into" a different age group without the above consents.

The NVSL Handbook establishes the rules for each age group and swimmer eligibility. In prior years, the age requirement for swimmers is determined as of June 1. Whatever age your swimmer is on June 1 will be their "age group" for the full summer. Swimmers eligible at the beginning of the summer (June 1) will be allowed to swim the full summer season!

Team practices usually will take place according to the following schedule, please check online for the most up to date information :

On the late May weekday evening following the team kickoff meeting Evening Practice Begins. Gators only (Mini Gators begin June 19)

Until School Ends

5:30-6:30 PM ages 10 and under

6:30-7:30 PM ages 11and over

Evening practices before school is out are for lap swimmers only. If your child cannot swim laps in a lane with many other swimmers, this practice is not for them. This is a safety issue. Your option is Mini Gator lessons (see website) or private lessons.

On the weekday after Farifax County school ends morning practice begins, for Gators and Mini Gators

Morning practice is held prior to the pool opening which allows the coaches to use the entire pool. Swimmers are divided into groups by age and ability.

A T/TH evening practice session is held for those swimmers unable to attend the morning sessions. Please be advised that space is limited, as the pool is open during this time. The swim team is usually limited to 2 lanes with swimmers of all ages grouped together. Plus, we have no control over typical summer thunder storms! *Pool closings are at the discretion and responsibility of NV Pool lifeguards on duty. Please respect them as they are protecting our safety and following their rules!*

Morning Practice – Monday through Friday

7:30 - 8:55 AM	ages 13 and over (drylands at 7:30)
8:45 - 9:55 AM	ages 9 - 12 (drylands at 8:45)
10:00 - 10:45 AM	ages 8 and under (drylands at 10:00)
10:00-10:45 AM	Mini Gators

Evening practice – Tuesday and Thursday (note: No Mon; Wed; or Fri night)

6:00 – 7:00 PM	all ages (drylands at 5:45)
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If you have questions or concerns, please wait until after practice to speak with the coaches. There will also be a Swim Team Rep at most practices – we will be glad to answer questions! E-mails, text messages or phone calls to the Team Reps are also a communication option should questions arise.

The Forest Hollow Coaches may agree to conduct private and/or group lessons outside of these timeframes. To the extent these additional sessions are available a schedule will be made available for sign-up. These additional sessions require a separate fee paid directly to the coach at the time of the lesson. These sessions cannot take place during swim practice times listed above, including evening practice times. Times for the lessons must be coordinated through the Pool Staff to ensure disruption of other patron's swimming privileges is minimized. *Private swim lessons are not managed by the swim team.*

SWIM CLINICS

Forest Hollow is not planning swim clinics at this time for 2013. If you are interested, you can e-mail the Team Reps and we'll determine if there is sufficient interest to arrange one or more clinics.

TIME TRIALS

Time trials are a practice meet which are held mid June on the Saturday before the first dual meet. The purpose of time trials is to time each swimmer in all four strokes. This practice meet will not only give the coach initial times on all of our swimmers, it also gives all swimmers and parents an opportunity to see how a swim meet is run. **It is important for all swimmers to attend time trials.** These times are used to select swimmers for the first "A" meet and are also used as a basis to measure improvement for each swimmer during the swim season. If you cannot be available for the practice meet, your alternate date to achieve times is the B Meet on the following Monday. If you cannot attend either of these meets please indicate on the Gator Only web page under "Swim Meets" your absence (or e-mail the Team Reps) and discuss with the Head Coach or Assistant Head Coach. You may also designate your absences during the registration process.

SWIM MEET ATTENDANCE

It is extremely important that the team rep and coaches know if a swimmer will not be able to attend an "A" meet, Relay meet, or Divisionals, so that we don't schedule that swimmer in the meet and deprive another swimmer of a chance to swim. It is difficult and not always possible to substitute swimmers on the day of the meet. It is essential to let the Team Reps and coaches know at least a week in advance if a swimmer will

not be able to attend a meet due to other commitments. **Our website has a place for you to easily record your swimmer’s absence. Go to the “Gators Only” – Swimmer Not Available tab and log in any weeks you know your swimmers will be absent.** At the time of your registration, you will also have the ability to indicate an absence; As always, you can also send an email to the Team Rep and have your swimmers communicate with their deck coaches as soon as you know.

- Swimmers should wear their team suit and are encouraged to wear their team t-shirt.
- Swimmers should arrive at the pool at least 15 minutes before team warm-ups are scheduled. Weekly communications will be sent to all team families that details the required time for arrival. Don’t be late.
- In the case of an away meet, Forest Hollow families will meet at Forest Hollow to caravan to the host pool. Departure time will be communicated prior to all away meets. Maps and directions will be available on the Forest Hollow website, www.foresthollow.com.
- Swimmers should remain with the team in the team area during the meet. Swimmers should watch the meet, cheer for their teammates, and show good sportsmanship at all times.
- Swimmers should verify if they are swimming in a relay event. Relays are at the end of the meet.
- Please do not take your swimmer home during a meet without first checking with the Head Coach/Assistant Head Coach.**

“A” MEETS (LEAGUE MEETS) -- OPEN TO QUALIFIED SWIMMERS

The NVSL season consists of five **Saturday morning meets**, one against each of the other five teams in our division. Each meet consists of **40** individual events and 12 relay events. The events are divided by age and gender. Along with a mixed age relay, the events are:

Age Group	Freestyle	Backstroke	Breaststroke	Butterfly	Relay
8 & Under	25 meter	25 meter	25 meter	25 meter	100 Freestyle
9 – 10 years	50 meter	50 meter	50 meter	25 meter	100 Medley
11 – 12 years	50 meter	50 meter	50 meter	50 meter	100 Medley
13 – 14 years	50 meter	50 meter	50 meter	50 meter	100 Medley
15 – 18 years	50 meter	50 meter	50 meter	50 meter	200 Medley
Mixed Age	Na	Na	Na	Na	4X50 Freestyle

The Medley Relay consists of four swimmers. Each swimmer swims his/her leg of the race in the order of backstroke, breaststroke, fly, and free. The Mixed Age Medley Relay is a freestyle relay swum in the following age group order: 11/12; 9/10; 13/14; and 15/18.

Each team enters 3 swimmers in each event. The coaches select swimmers for “A” meets based on swimmer’s times from time trials, “A” and “B” meets of the current year, and meet strategy factors. The coaches develop a meet strategy each week. Meet strategy means that your swimmer may not always swim their preferred stroke, as the coach looks to maximize points for the entire meet. No swimmer will be treated unfairly

in the process as the strategy also involves ensuring each swimmer can maximize their individual points. The coach's meet sheet is approved by the Team Reps. Swimmers scheduled for "A" meets can change from week to week, due to improved times, absences or other factors. Forest Hollow does not participate in "swim offs" for times; times must be achieved at time trials, "A" or "B" meets. This determines the strokes swimmers will swim. Swimmers will be notified no later than Thursday if they are scheduled to swim on Saturday. Occasionally there are unfilled spots, especially in some of the older age groups, and a younger swimmer may be asked to "swim up", that is, swim in an older age group. This gives swimmers the chance to better their times, and an opportunity to swim in the meet. Questions about seeding the meet should be directed to the Team Rep, Head Coach or Assistant Head Coach. (Your assistance in communicating availability under "Gators Only- Swimmer Availability" and to your deck coach is critical to making the meet selection process timely and smooth!)

The basic rules for "A" meets are as follows:

- No swimmer may swim more than two individual events in one meet.
- A swimmer can swim in only one age-specific relay.
- Four boys and four girls may also swim in the mixed age relay, which consists of one swimmer from the 9-10, 11-12, 13-14, and 15-18 age groups.
- Points are awarded to the top three finishers in each individual event: 5 points for first place, 3 points for second place and 1 point for third place.
- Relays are scored 5 points to the winning team, 0 points to the losing team.
- The point totals for the teams determine the meet winner. The division champion is the team with the most wins within the division that season.

Sportsmanship is also evaluated by each team that we swim throughout the season with a vote at the end of the season by each team. We encourage our Gators to be the best sportsman possible at each and every meet. Cheer loudly, cheer fairly, but do not be disrespectful to the opposing team. Shake hands following each race and be either a gracious host for home meets or a thankful guest at away meets. Win humbly, although excitement is totally acceptable; lose graciously! **Always be mindful of the NVSL Standards of Conduct and go beyond! That is a Gator Tradition!!**

"B" MEETS (DEVELOPMENTAL MEETS) – OPEN TO ALL SWIMMERS

Developmental, or "B" meets are held on **Monday nights**. "B" meets are not NVSL meets. "B" meets are designed to give developing swimmers a chance to compete in a meet and improve their skills. These meets offer all swimmers, regardless of age or ability, the opportunity to swim. "B" meets include the same individual events as "A" meets, plus some 6 and under events, mini-Gator kickboards, and the Individual Medley event for all swimmers. There are no relay events. These meets are less formal than the "A" meets and are not scored for points. Ribbons are awarded to each swimmer who participates. Swimmers should sign up for "B" meets directly with the coaches at practices, but definitely no later than Monday mornings. Swimmers who participate in "A" meets are strongly encouraged to use the "B" meet to swim the individual medley or swim their "off events". If a swimmer placed first, second, or third in an "A" meet in that event, they are **not** allowed to participate for a ribbon at the "B" meet. *With the coach's permission and Team Reps concurrence, they may swim for time only.*

Please see the handbook – *The A, B, C's of Developmental Meets* for more information.

DIVISION 6 RELAY CARNIVAL - Each NVSL Division will hold a Relay Carnival. The Relay Carnival involves the six teams in each division competing in 22 relay events. Freestyle relays will normally consist of the four fastest freestyle swimmers in each age group. Medley relays will consist of the four swimmers who produce the fastest composite time of the 4 events. Swimmers are chosen for relays based on individual times, composite time, attitude, and a swimmer's availability. The Divisional relay times from all 17 NVSL divisions are collected and the top 18 relay teams in each event swim at the **Relay All Stars meet mid July. Please check website for details.**

INDIVIDUAL DIVISIONALS

Each division within the NVSL holds a Divisional meet consisting of all "A" meet individual events and the Individual Medley event in each age group. Each team in our division sends **two** swimmers in each event, for a total of 12 swimmers (2 heats) in every event. Times are selected from A Meet times from the current year. Exceptions can be made if both the Team Rep(s) and the Head Coach certify a B meet time in writing. A swimmer can swim in two events. This is not scored as a team event since swimmers are competing as individuals. The top 18 swimmers in each event across the NVSL from all Divisional meets go on to swim in the Individual **All-Star meet on the first Saturday in August. The location varies by year and will be posted on the website.**

TODD POTTS INDIVIDUAL MEDLEY CARNIVAL – @ FOREST HOLLOW (traditionally on the first Wednesday of July but may vary... check website for exact date)

Each year Forest Hollow hosts the annual Todd Potts Individual Medley Swim Meet and invites other teams to participate. This meet is held in honor of Todd who was a Forest Hollow swimmer in the early 1980's. He was a popular young man and team leader who died tragically at a young age. At the meet, each swimmer swims an individual medley(IM)which consists of – butterfly, back, breast and free. Selections for the meet participation are done by the Head Coach, coaches and Team Reps based on performance and ability to swim the event. All Gators are eligible to participate, although each team is limited on the total number of swimmers they can enter.

THE TODD POTTS MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP AWARD:

At the end of the season a scholarship, funded in honor of Todd by his family, is awarded to the Forest Hollow swimmer who most personifies the qualities of leadership, kindness, spirit and mentoring of the younger swimmers. The Todd Potts award will be presented at our season-end awards banquet in July.

This award is a much coveted award among our swim team members who have grown up with the team, heard the inspirational stories, and watched as their mentors or coaches received the award every year. While the swim team board has traditionally chosen the recipient, normally from Seniors or Juniors, beginning in 2009 the selection criteria were changed to enhance the process and ensure all criteria for selection are appropriately addressed. Specifically, the process now involves:

- The eligible population of swimmers will be primarily *graduating* High School Senior swimmers, with the ability of the Forest Hollow team (swimmers and families) to also

nominate *rising* Junior swimmers or 18 year-old swimmers that have just finished their freshman year in college and are swimming for the Gators. The swimmer must have intentions of attending (or continuing) a college or post-high school academic or trade school as the scholarship is an academic scholarship. Candidates eligible for nomination will be posted online under the “Gator Info/Todd Potts” section of the webpage.

- Nominations from swimmers, swim parents, and/or swim families will provide the candidates for consideration by the decision committee. A form, explaining specific criteria for consideration, will be available for nominations during the season. This form will request not only the name of a swimmer, but supporting reasons for the nomination. A deadline for submission of written nominations will be in early July. Weekly news from the Team Rep will alert you to the deadlines. The form is available on the Forest Hollow web site.
- Because the input of the swim team peers is a vital input to the process, our 13 and over swimmers will be strongly encouraged to nominate one of their peers. The perspective of the teammates is an important element to the selection process and we want to return part of the selection process to the team members.
- A committee, consisting of a chair, along with two to three ad hoc members, will be formed each year for the special purpose of reviewing the nominations and selecting the scholarship recipients based on the input received.

SOCIAL EVENTS

Every Friday evening, beginning the Friday before the first A Meet (dual meet) the Swim Team sponsors a Potluck Dinner and Pep Rally. Themes are set (check out the calendar and website under Potlucks) allowing families to plan around the theme if they desire and the coaches to get creative with their skits. **All Gator families are invited and should bring a main dish for 8+ AND a side or dessert!** It’s a fun way to get to know other families involved with the team. After dinner the Gator of the Week awards are presented and the coaches usually have some entertainment planned. The team also plans one or two afternoon activities each season – bowling, laser tag, trip to a water park, etc. If you have a suggestion for an event or are willing to chair an event, please volunteer through the Volunteer signup or Volunteer Coordinator.

SWIM TEAM PHOTOS

Have you noticed all the team photos hung at the pool entrance? We love it when we can capture our Mini Gators through our senior swimmers. It is also fun to watch our Gators mature through the years! Team and individual pictures will be taken on the Saturday after Fairfax County schools are out mid June prior to time trials. The team photograph will be taken first with family and individual pictures to follow. Order forms will be handed out at the season kick-off meeting. The forms will also be available on the Gator website and some extras the morning of the event. Remember to come out and be part of history!! If you are interested in volunteering to coordinate our Swim Team Photo Day please volunteer through the Volunteer signup or Volunteer Coordinator.

AWARDS CEREMONY

An annual Gator Awards Ceremony is held at the end of each swim season. At the awards ceremony each swimmer who has participated in at least one swim meet (A or B) is given a trophy or memento to recognize his/her contribution to the team during the

season. The coaches also present special awards for individual achievement. The Gator Awards Ceremony will take place on the last Sunday in July, at a to-be-determined location from 2-4pm. If you are interested in volunteering to help coordinate our Awards Ceremony please volunteer through the Volunteer sign up or Volunteer Coordinator.

SWIM TEAM ATTIRE

Team suits are not required, but are encouraged. A new suit is available for purchase every season. The Forest Hollow team suits can be purchased at Sports Fair, 5010 Lee Highway, Arlington, VA 22207, 703-524-9500. A representative from Sports Fair will be at Forest Hollow for the Parent Meeting in May. All swimmers who register by May 1 will receive a Forest Hollow Team latex caps part of the registration process, while supplies last. Caps can be purchased for those registering after May 1. Optional silicon caps can be purchased during the swimmer registration process or through our merchandise chair, while supplies last. Please note: *A swimmer may not compete in a NVSL meet in a cap that includes the name or insignia of any team other than his or her NVSL team.*

FOREST HOLLOW WEB SITE

www.ForestHollow.com – it is the place to be for up to date news flashes and team information. It is also the place to make our registration process easier through online registrations. Bookmark it and refer to it often. Weekly e-mail messages from the Team Reps will also be posted. Get comfortable with the information by checking the site regularly!

'Gator Only' Information on the Web Site

The swim team provides information we'd prefer not to share with the public but which is accessible to our swimmers and parents. Two examples are team photos and swimmers' times. In order to secure this information we display it on a web page that requires the site visitor to login. Therefore, in order to gain access to the page you will need an account.

To register for the site, look in the left sidebar, near the bottom. Click, 'register' and create an account with a Username, Email and Password. All accounts will be checked against the swim team roster before they are approved. Once approved, simply login to see private gator content. Links to swimmer times and photos will appear in the gator menu on the left of every page. If you aren't logged in, those links won't appear. Please remember, this account is for access to private Swim Team information only. You do not need an account to access most of the site, and this account is not related to your account for paying dues.

If you have any questions, please contact our webmaster at ForestHollowWeb@gmail.com.

RIBBONS...WHERE ARE THOSE RIBBONS?

Forest Hollow will continue the practice of distributing ribbons via a “family file folder system”. Each swimmer (or parent) can check in the box for their FAMILY file folder and pick up ribbons, or other communications.

SWIM TEAM BUDGET 2012 ESTIMATE

Coach Salaries (Includes 1 Head Coach, 1 Assistant Head Coach, 10 Assistant Coaches)	\$16,800
Supplements, coach lunches, bonuses	4,800
Awards: Ribbons, Trophies, Swimmer of the Week, etc.	3,200
T-Shirts for Team and Coaches	2,500
Friday Nights, Award Banquet, etc.	550
NVSL Dues	875
Equipment	1,000
Misc. (Admin, Team Activities, Supplies,	2,000

Total Projected Outlay \$31,675

Estimated operating revenues for 2013 are approximately \$31,900– we are set up to simply cover our costs. This includes registration/dues, swim club support, concessions, ice cream/soda and merchandise sales. Other swim team programs, including Mini Gator lessons, winter swim, and swim clinics are self-supporting and do not produce significant net income to support the team. Our registration and dues alone cover less than 50% of our expenses. Salaries compose our highest expense, at just less than 60% of the revenue projections. We continue to follow a long-held Forest Hollow tradition of hiring some of our own swimmers to learn leadership skills and spread the Gator spirit.

Have you ever wondered what you get for your swim team dues? Here’s a breakdown:

- Approximately 40 practices for Gators; 25 for Mini Gators. That comes to between \$2 and \$3 per swim session IF nothing else is included.
- Each swimmer also receives a T-shirt and cap.
- A year-end trophy or other memento to recognize your participation.
- Ribbons, ribbons, ribbons to recognize your swimmer’s personal achievements.
- Your swimmer also gets:
 - The opportunity to set personal goals, improve swim technique and track their own personal improvement.
 - The opportunity to enjoy team spirit at the swim meets and the potlucks.
 - Exercise on a daily basis.
 - One on one expertise from our fabulous and experienced coaching staff.

So, how does the Swim Team cover its expenses? The volunteer pool board, representing the Forest Hollow Swim Club, has continued to graciously and generously support this community activity. This year the swim club has generously pledged \$4,500. (Note: No money was actually taken by the team in

2009, 2010, 2011 or 2012 due to higher revenues.) **Additionally, we sell and Gator merchandise at home meets and ice cream during pool breaks to help supplement team funds.**

VOLUNTEERS MAKE IT HAPPEN

Summer swimming is a family affair. ***Without the help and support of parents, it would be impossible to run the meets.*** It takes approximately 40 parents to run a meet and many, many others to help through the season. We need to spread the wealth of volunteer opportunities this year so everyone can find a place to contribute a little of their time to making the Gators the best they can be.

- **Volunteer Coordinator** – This is a huge role! The Volunteer Coordinator is responsible for recruiting parent volunteer for all the jobs listed. Make the volunteer coordinators job easy by signing up before being asked and then answering “yes” when a need is raised.
- **Website Volunteer Signup** – We’ve changed the process for 2012 – we keep adjusting to find that right way for the Gator families. You will find various links on the website and you’ll receive e-mail updates throughout the season. It is simple, it is transparent. Forest Hollow parents have been wonderful support in the past so our team has not gone the route of charging an “opt out” fee for those that cannot volunteer some family time. We will continue to resist this trend in 2012, but we will track hours worked by each family. We ask that each parent graciously volunteer for a **minimum of 5 hours** during the season. Take a look at the online list, look for communications on volunteer opportunities, and help us get 100% participation and avoid future “opt out” fees. Signing up online helps avoid nagging phone calls, pleas at pep rallies, and more e-mails. Volunteer early and often! Gator parents are the greatest!! Volunteering is a great way to connect with other Gator families and enjoy the meet in a whole new way. Help keep the Gator spirit alive by finding **one or more ways** to participate!! Look on the website and signup NOW!

Volunteer opportunities fall into roughly the following categories: Meet Officials, Table Workers, Concessions, Meet Helpers, and Miscellaneous (of course!). Don’t worry if you have no experience, there are many willing people ready to help train you!

Meet Officials Officials and timers are necessary for every meet.

1. Official’s positions include **Referee, Starter, Stroke and Turn, Relay-Takeoff Judge, and Clerk of Course**. These positions require attendance at an instructional clinic held by the NVSL at a local pool or at NVSL U. It is a great way to understand the rules and procedures behind a meet. Many say you haven’t lived if you haven’t disqualified your own child from a race. But, a reminder – officials are representatives of the NVSL; thus, you must maintain neutrality during a meet and reserve your celebrations for your Gator and the team to time after the meet. For more information check our website and/or contact our current Officials Chairperson. Their contact information will be on the website. The Referee is in charge of the meet. All swimmers, team reps, parents, and coaches must abide by the rules set by the NVSL, which are enforced by the meet referee. They keep the meet flowing, they provide signals for swimmers, and provide a safe and efficient environment for the swim meet.

They are trained to be impartial and are representatives of the NVSL during meets, not representatives of Forest Hollow. They discuss, accept or reject all disqualifications at a meet. They have the final word on the disqualification and must officially sign off on the meet results.

- a. The Starter works closely with the Referee and provides a consistent signal for the swimmers to know when to begin their race. The Starter is responsible, along with the Referee, for ensuring fair and equitable starts.
 - b. The Stroke and Turn Officials are responsible for watching three lanes of swimmers at a time and ensuring the swimmers are executing the strokes, turns and touches at the wall appropriately. They oftentimes carry a rule book that they can reference during an event. They are trained to be impartial also. They must explain disqualifications to the meet Referee in sufficient detail to allow the Referee to agree or disagree with the call. Remember, they are not “picking on your child” but ensuring that all swimmers abide by the same rules. Those that are disqualified for improper technique then work with the coaches to correct the mistake.
 - c. Relay Take-Off Judges are the eyes that make sure the second, third, and fourth swimmers take off only after the prior swimmer touched the wall. They are trained to watch the feet of the starting swimmer and then look at the hands of the incoming swimmer. This position is again focused on ensuring all swimmers get fair and equitable treatment for the races. To disqualify a swimmer for starting too fast, two relay take off judges (one from each team) must see the same thing. The judges do not talk about what they saw, but hand in their official observations to the referee.
 - d. The Clerk of Course is responsible for organizing groups of swimmers for each event. This is a great place to meet our swimmers and place the faces with the names.
2. Marshall – The Marshall is a critical position for our swim meets. Each team is required to have at least one Marshall on deck at all times. The Marshall can be seen cruising the deck in a bright orange vest. He/she is responsible for ensuring the safety of the swimmers and meet participants. The Marshall has authority to ask (and require) anyone on the deck to stop an activity considered unsafe or to protect the areas reserved for the swimmers.
3. Timers- We are required to provide half of the timers at every meet. Three timers are positioned at each of the 6 lanes and, using a stop-watch, time the swimmers in that lane. That means, for each meet, there are 18 timers, 9 of which must come from Forest Hollow. Timers have a spectacular view of the race and experience the cooling splashes of water on those hot summer days! The timers are led by a key volunteer called our Head Timer. The Head Timer works with the other team’s Head Timer to ensure the critical task of getting your swimmer’s times is accomplished. The Head Timer communicates with the Referee, letting the Referee know that the timers are ready for the next event. One clear way of knowing they are ready? Hearing “Timers Clear” yelled out and watching the wave to the Referee.
4. Announcer– Each meet has an official announcer that helps swimmers know when to go to the Clerk of Course, announces swimmers names at A meets, and

announces winners of events. The announcer is a critical position that works with the Referee to keep the meet flowing smoothly.

Table Workers **New as of 2013 is that there is no manual score sheet. What used to be the scorer is not a verifier to check time cards to the results.** Table worker positions include time recorder, meet score verifier and ribbon preparers. Time recorders are responsible for checking the times recorded on each swimmer's card and making sure that the middle (or average) time is recorded as the swimmer's official time for that event. Time recorders also put the cards in finish order and attach any DQ (Disqualification) slips. Meet verifiers are responsible for verifying the scores based on the official times reported. Ribbon preparers put official times and names on place ribbons given to the swimmers. Table workers are the first to know the official results of the meet and claim a shady spot to work the meet.

Concessions: The Forest Hollow Gator Grill is a tradition in the NVSL. Our grill is currently led by volunteers. At each home meet they require a number of parents to help sell the various delectable treats and drinks. This is a great way to get in your volunteer time. It is always lively at the Gator Grill with burgers flipping, new entree ideas cropping up, and being the most frequented site at the meet. The Gator Grill needs people during the meet and for setup and take down. Give the Gator Grill a try...you won't be sorry! We are also required to always have at least one food safety trained by Fairfax County on-site at each meet we sell food. The certification requires a pre-season time commitment, but is another way to assist the Gators (and other teams).

Meet Helpers. This is a broad category that includes helping out in concessions by selling or preparing food, chaperoning the team area during the meet, helping to set up for home meets and clean up after meets. Concessions helpers are only needed for home meets. The team area chaperone is needed at all meets and helps maintain order in the team area throughout the course of a meet. The parent chaperone can work with the coaches to help make certain swimmers are paying attention when it is time for them to report to clerk of course for their event.

Volunteer Photographers always needed!

The online Gator photo gallery is open to all contributors. If you'd like to contribute photos, please upload to this gallery: Gator Upload Gallery.
<http://www.smugmug.com/photos/guest/zwGFLD/gatorupload>

If you'd like your own personal upload gallery so we can credit your photos, please send an email to ForestHollowWeb@gmail.com and we'll set one up for you. Photos from your upload gallery will be attributed to you and added to the team page.

You can also email photos directly from your phone. Send an email with the image attached to ForestHollow@email.smugmug.com.

Include the password in the subject line: gatorpic

Add your caption in the body of the email and send it. (You'll need to use 'text only' format for the caption to work.)

Miscellaneous. Each year we also need a website coordinator, an awards ceremony committee, helpers for Friday night potluck dinners and pep rallies and volunteers to sell ice-cream during break throughout the pool season. We also can share the wealth in some "at home" activities, like compiling the handbook, copying the meet sheets, etc. Posting times at the pool is also another way of committing some time away from the meets. If you know of a way you'd like to help and don't see it listed, just ask the Volunteer Coordinator or Team Rep and we'll find something that works easily for you!

FOREST HOLLOW SWIM TEAM BOARD

The Forest Hollow Swim Team Board members are volunteers that step up to take a leadership role for the team for a three year term. We like to stagger the vacancies to ensure continuity. We also find times when a volunteer cannot finish a three year term or someone is willing to continue on for more than three years, sometimes due to lack of interest in a position.

The "election" process is one of tradition, as well as practical application. We have traditionally "announced" via notices or at the pep rallies when vacancies are anticipated. We usually ask that you contact the Team Rep(s) if you are interested in pursuing a volunteer position. Some positions, such as Team Rep, require some training to ensure a better transition – so you often hear announcements prior to the three year expiration of a term. In essence, we've always opened positions up to all, but we have not normally had more than one person interested in a position.

For positions where a volunteer's term is expiring, you will find an "interest posting" on the Gators Only tab on the web page. We have also detailed current leadership positions and planned terms in the spring newsletter. At the end of the season, if there is more than one person interested in the position, we will hold a ballot vote at the end of the season, most likely at the awards banquet. If there is only one person interested in an open position, we'll not hold a vote; this has been our experience for a number of years.

The Board is led by the Swim Team Rep(s). Board members currently include the Treasurer, B Meet Rep, past team reps, Concessions Chair, Data Coordinator, Merchandise Chair and other key volunteers whose input is essential to ensure the swim season is a success. We will make all positions open for voting and interest based on expiration of terms. Please read the spring newsletter to get a better understanding of open positions.

GO GATORS!!!!