

# Gator Gazette

[www.foresthollow.com](http://www.foresthollow.com)

March 30, 2013



## Notes from the Team Rep

Welcome to the kickoff of the 2013 season! I'm excited to be your new Team Rep and look

forward to a great season.

This newsletter is intended to give you some key information to begin the year – how to volunteer, coaches, our division information, leadership changes and opportunities and much, much more. I am committed to provide you as much information as possible before and during the season. This year with our new website designed by our very own Ernie Halal I will be posting everything online (in addition to emailing links to some critical information regarding meets and events) – If you follow my links and read the online information you will be up to date and ready to fully participate in the Gator 2013 season! I have a new email address this year so please add [teamrepfhsc@gmail.com](mailto:teamrepfhsc@gmail.com) to your address book as this is the email that I will be using for all Gator communications.

Registration is open as of April 1. We remain with ActiveX and our new website maintains the same address of [www.foresthollow.com](http://www.foresthollow.com). You'll find additional information those instructions later in this newsletter also. (Reminder – if you do a Google search for our website, you might find yourself at Vikaza...or a Google site, these are no longer our sites...please redirect your browser as indicated above!)

Read on for more exciting news...it is good to be back to at least thinking of summer fun! Go Gators!

**Merari Chollette**

## Meet Our 2013 Coaching Staff

Forest Hollow has a great tradition of growing many young and responsible swimmers that have a strong desire to return their love of the team and swimming to others. For 2013 the quality of our Gator Coaching staff remains high and we are excited about the leadership, maturity, eagerness, and enthusiasm that our coaching staff will bring to our swimmers.

**Head Coach Elvin Foreman** returns for his Seventh season with the Gators continuing to provide fabulous professional coaching skills, a warm demeanor, and an ever present smile. Coach Elvin is a USA Swimming Level 2 Coach with over 10 years of professional coaching experience and runs his own year round swim team. He has led the Gators to two division championships, two team sportsmanship awards and in the last 3 years the Gators have only lost 3 meets!

I am pleased to announce **Willie Labarca** as our new Head Assistant Coach assisting Coach Elvin in leading the Gator coaching staff! Coach Willie has three years of Forest Hollow Gator coaching experience and has been a Gator for most of his life. He was our 2012 Todd Potts Award recipient and is very much respected and loved by the Gator community.

Feel free to ask Coach Elvin or Coach Willie your questions – but remember the best time for that is before or after a practice – not while they are coaching your kids!

Our 2013 coaching staff brings a true love of the sport and a desire to share with your kids the Gator traditions. Here's the great roster of coaches and where you'll see them most:

Our Head Coach Elvin Foreman works with all the groups in addition to running the 13 & practice.

Gators – Overall oversight: Our Head Coach Elvin Foreman works with all the groups in addition to running the 13 & practice assisted by Assistant Head Coach Willie LaBarca – Coach Elvin works closely with all the coaches and with all the practice groups.

- 13+ – Head Coach Elvin, Assistant Head Coach Willie
- 11/12”s – Dylan Gore, Juan Carlos Clark
- 9/10’s – Andrew Boyd, Assistant Head Coach Willie
- 8 & Unders – Carolyn Fonzi, Alex Lash, Catherine Kennedy

Our Mini Gator program continues to enroll our largest group of kids. And, we continue to devote significant coaching resources to this group to ensure they gain comfort in the water, learn to swim and learn to LOVE the Gators. In 2013 we will continue the three developmental categories described in the Mini Gator Guide will continue to guide our philosophy with this group.

Under Head Coach Elvin’s oversight, this program provides attention and resources to this fun group of beginning swimmers. Assistant Coach Caroline Peterson moves into this leadership role with the Mini Gator program in 2013– providing knowledge and expertise in developing our Mini Gators. Caroline will help organize Mini Lessons pre-season, take charge of the Mini Gator meet late in the season, and use her expertise in the oversight of the program.

Mini Gators – Caroline Peterson, Sarah Padrutt, Faith Peterson, Elizabeth Manthos, Carolyn Fonzi

- Overall oversight: Head Coach Elvin Foreman, assisted by Caroline Peterson
- Bubble Blowers/Beginners: Faith Paletti, Elizabeth Manthos, Caroline Peterson
- Beginning Minis – Deep water comfort: Caroline Peterson, Sarah Padrutt,
- Transitional Minis – Development of Lap Skills/Stroke Technique: Erin Johnson, Caroline Peterson

Welcome to this strong group of coaches that will help your kids grow in their love of swimming throughout the summer. A group like this should continue to provide us many fun and memorable skits on Friday nights, as well as great swimming skills!

### Division 6 for 2013

The Gator Success Story keeps us challenged each and every year! In 2012 The Gators went from Division 8 to Two divisions to Division 6. In 2012 we had a strong season and although seeded 6th we ended the season placing 3rd. This summer we are seeded 4th and in Gator tradition we will be ready to meet our competition once again in true Gator style – team spirit, determination, surprising finishes, great swims, and Gator pride! The teams and schedule are as follows (you can also find these on the website at <http://www.foresthollow.com/2013-schedule/>)

- 6/22/13 - FH @ Waynewood
- 6/29/13 - Mantua @ FH
- 7/6/13 - Virginia Run @ FH
- 7/10/13 - Division Relays @ Ravensworth
- 7/13/13 - FH @ Fair Oaks
- 7/17/13 - All Stars Relay Meet @  
Lincolnia Park
- 7/20/13 - Ravensworth @ FH

- 7/27/13 Divisionals Championships @ Mantua
- 8/3/13 - Individual All Stars @ Annandale

Don't forget that we also host the Todd Potts IM Carnival – this year on Wednesday, July 3, 2013 and we'll also have a Mini Gator Meet for our Mini-Gators towards the end of the season.

REMEMBER – WE NEED ALL SWIMMERS TO DECLARE IF THEY ARE GOING TO BE AWAY FOR OUR DIVISION MEETS, please go to this link on our website to do so.

<http://www.foresthollow.com/swimmer-not-available-for-meet/>

### To Answer Your Questions...

- **Checkout the website on a regular basis.**
- **Read the various guides and handbooks**
- **Just ask Merari at – [teamrepfhsc@gmail.com](mailto:teamrepfhsc@gmail.com)**

### NVSL 2012 Rule Changes

Each year the NVSL has a Rules Meeting. In most years, a lot of these involve technical changes that have been insignificant to most meets. This year, on Sunday March 10 there were no rule changes that affect our parents or swimmers directly. The only changes were housekeeping issues and two other changes that affect your Team Rep and Data Coordinator (electronic meet results and clarification on Divisionals Seeding).

### Concession News



We are delighted that Bill and Mary Kennedy are returning to the lead the Gator Grill with their warm smiles, their Gator spirit and their good cooking skills! The smiles will be plenty...the Gator spirit will be high...and the menu items will continue to delight and surprise with this dedicated and spirited team. THIS IS THEIR LAST YEAR IN THEIR 3 YEAR TERM... We are looking for some volunteers to shadow them this year and take on this role for the next term 2014–2016.

The Gator Grill is our biggest income producer, short of the registrations. It is a HUGE task that requires lots of help and support from all the Gator families. Signup to grill some burgers, wrap the sandwiches, sell some drinks, or serve the multitudes! Besides the pool itself, it is the most “happening” spot at Forest Hollow. Find a meet or two where you can help make this a success.

You can also donate dollars to offset costs of the grill when you register. Pick an amount and know your dollars are going to good use. (And, we find this much easier than asking you to bring donations of candy or drinks...let the Kennedy's do the shopping with your support!!)

### Gator Leadership Primer

The Gator Swim Team operates as an organization within the Forest Hollow Swim Club. The Swim Team Representative (also known as the A-Meet Rep or Team Rep) is an officer of the Forest Hollow Swim Club and serves a three year term, similar to other Forest Hollow Swim Club board positions. The Team Rep is elected by the

**Register online by May 1 to get your FREE t-shirt and swim cap. Otherwise a \$5 per shirt and \$3 per cap will be charged while**

Gator team parents through a process developed and articulated by the Swim Team Board. The Board is led by the Team Rep with positions for the key leaders for the team. Specifically, the Board positions are **generally** the key volunteer leaders, including: Team Rep(s); most recent former Team Rep; B-Meet Rep; Treasurer; leads for Merchandise, Concessions, Volunteers and Data. Each year, the Gator Guide (also known as the Handbook) articulates the process for volunteer positions and the board election process.

The Gator board leadership positions are volunteer positions that historically run three-year terms. Some people choose to serve less than a three year term, some choose to enter a second - full or partial - term. When a volunteer has expressed and interest to transition out or is at the end of their commitment, interest for open positions are communicated to the swim team parents, via newsletters, weekly updates, volunteer signups, and word-of-mouth, including pep rallies.

Some positions require "advance" notification/planning as they require some training or shadowing to take on the task. This is primarily the Team Rep position, as many of the duties also involve NVSL processes, but merchandise, data, and concessions positions all benefit from at least shadowing the prior volunteer. These types of positions are easier to learn with some guidance than on one's own.

In most years, we have to do a little "pushing" and "pulling" to get people to step into the rolls - especially the Team Rep positions given the time commitment involved. But, some years, we have had greater interest in a position. In years where we only get one person to answer the call, we fill the position with that person with no election held. In years where the

interest is larger, we schedule a vote for the position, normally at the year-end awards banquet or other pre-announced time.

Hopefully, this article has helped you understand the process and the leadership positions. There are several other articles in this newsletter that are related - read further to meet the 2013 Swim Team Board and open positions and process for 2013 and beyond.

## The 2013 Gator Board

The 2013 open positions were filled either at the end of the season. Gator Grill Management is up with the scheduled cycle that the Kennedy's will served 2011, 2012 and this summer for 2013.

Here are your 2013 volunteers that will lead the Gators in 2013:

- Merari Chollette, A Meet Reps.
- Bob Elkins as B Meet Rep.
- Jay Nash as Treasurer.
- Cara Dalrymple with merchandise.
- Allie Rutherford Data Coordinator
- Karen Curtin as Volunteer Coordinator
- And, Bill and Mary Kennedy as Gator Grill management.

## Thanks

A HUGE word of "thanks" to the many greats who have given their time and talent for one or more years in a position that will not be with us in these roles this season:

- Merchandising Volunteer Cheryl Gregory
- Team Rep Mary Johnson
- Data Coordinator Mary Padrutt
- Treasurer Terri Boyd
- Susan Hertzler, Chief Official

THANK YOU!!!!



## Reminder – Time Trials and Picture Day

**June 15 @ Forest Hollow**  
**We'd love to have all Gators**  
**and Mini Gators in attendance**  
**for our team picture. Please**

### 2013 Gator Board Openings

Here's a recap of the open and filled positions:

Openings NOT anticipated for 2013 volunteering or election:

- Treasurer: Jay Nash; Term 2012, 2013, 2014
- B Meet Rep: Bob Elkins; Term 2012, 2013, 2014
- Volunteer Coordinator: Karen Curtin; Term 2012, 2013, 2014
- Merchandise Coordinator: Cheryl Gregory; Term 2012, 2013, 2014
- Concessions: Bill and Mary Kennedy; Term 2011, 2012, 2013
- Winter Swim Team Coordinator: Suzie Paletti; Term 2012, 2013, 2014
- Data Coordinator: Allie Rutherford; Term: 2012, 2013, 2014 (Needs a shadow/backup volunteer)

Those positions that need a 1 season replacement or could REALLY use a shadow for 2013

- Concessions: Bill and Mary Kennedy; Term 2011, 2012, 2013
- Volunteer Coordinator: Karen Curtin; Term 2012, 2013, 2014 (really needs a partner in 2013)
- Data Coordinator; Term 2013, 2014, 2015 (suggest shadow 2013)
- Head Official: Susan Hertzler; Term 2011, 2012, 2013 (looking for a replacement for 2013)

For 2014 the following positions are open

- Concessions
- Chief Official

More communications on these positions will be available during the 2013 season.

How do you sign up for an open position?

- Talk to your Team Rep Merari
- All interested swim team parents may express interest.
- If there are more than one interested for any of the positions at the end of the season, I'll communicate election processes through weekly news and announcements.

### The Gators Need YOU! We need Volunteers!!

Volunteers are truly what make the Gators one of a kind! We need YOU and your time to make the Gators a success!

This year, Karen Curtin has agreed to continue to assist in the Volunteer Coordinator role but **SHE REALLY NEEDS A PARTNER to help her**. When she asks for help, PLEASE respond by saying "yes".

Every family should contribute at least 5 hours of tasks each year to take part in the excitement of Forest Hollow. We'll be tracking your hours in 2013...hoping not to go the route of charging for "non participation" in the future. There are lots of opportunities to help...let us help you find the right fit as all hours are not just on meet days!

On the Gator website, you'll find a link to our volunteer registration site. It is an easy to use tool called "**Jooners**". Karen Curtin has set it up logically in 2012 and we will continue to use this in 2013. We will also send out periodic e-mail "invites" to volunteer. This system is easy to use, similar to what many of you use in schools, and should enhance our process for filling vacancies. Please respond early...fill in as many positions as you are able...and support the Gators and your kids!



A reminder – there are several Gator traditions – that cannot occur unless a parent is willing to organize these events. Splash Down and Bowling outings are two great examples. Let’s not lose these traditions – step up now and volunteer!

## 2013 Gator Merchandise

I am pleased to announce that Cara Dalrymple will be our 2013 Merchandising Rep! A HUGE word of thanks to Cheryl Gregory for her work in this capacity last year. It is almost time to purchase this summer’s Gator Gear. The summer suit has been selected and our Gators will be hitting the pool in Speedo Vortex (Female all sizes \$57.75 and Male all sizes \$37.28 pricing includes tax). The suits will be on sale at the parent meeting (May 28) at the beginning of the season. Suits can also be purchased at Sports Fair in Arlington.

This year’s suit is made of special fabric – that is long lasting – but doesn’t stretch like normal suits. We highly recommend that each swimmer try on the suit at the team meeting or at Sports Fair to get the right fit.

Note: A team suit is NOT required, but it is highly encouraged. It helps promote team unity and spirit and it looks great in our team picture. Gators of all ages like to be part of the team – having the Gator suit helps them be part of the team.

As part of your team fees each swimmer will receive a t-shirt (guaranteed and receive special pricing on only one order. Thus, it is imperative if you Gator wants a t-shirt in a particular size, to REGISTER by MAY 1! It is online and it is easy. Extra adult t-shirts are also only available through ordering at the time of registration.

FREE of cost IF you register by May 1). If you register after May 1, and while our “extra supplies last” you will be charged a mandatory \$5 fee for the t-shirt, no exceptions! Please understand the t-shirt process is labor intensive and one. We will

have the same swim cap as last season. Every swimmer, registering by May 1 will receive a cap for FREE. Those that register after May 1 will be charged \$3. Our supply of older caps from prior years will be on sale as practice caps. This year’s cap design but in silicone can be purchased for \$10 and ordered pre-season when you register your swimmer.

Other merchandising options will be available in 2013. Ms. Dalrymple will be working to offer some great options for fun, for Gator Buddy gifts, and for styling Gator pride around the community! Look for news and updates on the website and through notifications as these options become available!

## Register for the Club & Gators

Registration in 2013 is EASY – both for RETURNING team members and our NEW team members!

Just go to [www.foresthollow.com](http://www.foresthollow.com). You’ll find links to the Swim Club, Swim Team, and Mini Gator Pre-season Lessons. Click on the registration link and the system will guide you through. If you are a returning member (you registered in 2013 for the team), then



use your same “user name” (likely your e-mail address) and register as an “existing member”. If you’ve forgotten your password, there is a link at the bottom of the page to lead you to a reset process. If you have problems, you can always e-mail the Team Reps and we can walk you through or find your “user name”. The biggest benefit you’ll find as a returning member – your key information only needs to be updated, it is already populated into the system!



If you are a new swim team member, you simply need to register as a “new” member, enter a “user name” (suggest your e-mail) and a password you can remember. The system will walk you through some easy screens for getting your kids enrolled.

As a reminder – the registrations for the Swim Club and the Swim Team are separate – that means you’ll have to register for the Swim Club separate from the Swim Team. Mini Gator lessons are also under a separate registration. But, once you’ve signed in, your same name and password will work.

For the Swim Team, all registrations are online – we don’t take your checks! You’ll have two options to pay – debit/credit or e-check. We encourage you to use e-check if you can as the fees are lower, giving more back to the team.

For the Swim Club, you can register online or pay the traditional way by filling out a hand form and paying by check. We strongly encourage you to register online! Why? You can either pay by debit/credit card or e-check, just like for swim team, but you can also click an option to mail in your payment by mail. The glory is – you can easily fill out the information electronically and it is part of Forest Hollow’s data base. E-mail notifications about pool closings and other news will come from this data base. So try something new and register online for both the Swim Team (required) and the Swim Club!

### Read All About the Gators...

Gator Handbooks and Guides for 2013 will be up on the website soon. We have a host of reading material for you: Gator Guide for 2013, the New Parent Handbook, the A, B, C’s of Developmental Meets and a Mini Gator Guide. **Take the time pre-season to read up on our practices, traditions, rules, and processes!!** For reference, last year’s guides are available on the website at <http://www.foresthollow.com/gator-swim-team/>

## NVSL Training – For Some Positions It is a Must

Most of the “meet officials” positions require training every two years. But, the NVSL makes it easy. If you are interested or did not renew your training in 2012 for various positions including stroke & turn judge, a referee, a starter or a head timer or learning more about clerk of course and table workers positions – the NVSL has a spot for you!

- May 30 – New Referee Clinic – Lee-Graham Pool 7pm
- June 1 – NVSL U – Falls Church HS
  - Referee/Starter & New Starter Clinics – 8:00 am
  - Hy-Tek Clinic – 8:00 am
  - Clerk of Course Clinic – 9:00 am
  - Table Workers Clinic– 9:00 am
  - Fairfax County Food Safety Workshop – 10:00 am
  - Announcer Clinic – 11:00 am
  - Chief Timer Clinic – 11:00 am
- June 8 – Annandale Swim Club – 8:00 am – Stroke and Turn
- June 11 – New Referee – Lee Graham – 7:00 pm
- June 16 – Referee/Starter; New Starter – 9:30 am – Mantua
- June 16 – Stroke & Turn – Hunt Valley – 9:30 am
- June 19 – Stroke & Turn – Hunt Valley and Sully Station – 7:00 pm

## Mini Gator Pre-season Lessons

Over the past several summers, the Gators have offered our Mini Gator swimmers a pre-season opportunity to get in the water before Mini swimming begins on June 19. These lessons are offered for a two week period – Monday/Wednesday or Tuesday/Thursday for 30 minutes each over a two week period. Each registered swimmer gets FOUR pre-season sessions.

For 2013, we are once again offering these lessons. But, registration is online ONLY. We must have a minimum of 4 swimmers registered and we can take no more than 6 swimmers for each session. A flyer explaining additional details, costs, etc is on the website. The costs remain steady, although a transaction fee is added for the online registration process. Should we need to cancel the session, you will be refunded the cost (not the transaction fee) as disclosed on the registration page. Remember - this is pre-season and the weather can at times be challenging. Makeup days if necessary will be communicated. Should we not be able to hold these, we would refund on a pro-rata basis.

### Summer Fun Arranged by the NVSL

There are various opportunities the NVSL has arranged for outings to

- Kings Dominion,
- DC United,
- Potomac Nationals,
- Washington Nationals

These flyers are on our website. Take advantage of these discounts and have some fun with fellow swimmers.

### Gator Facts ...

#### WHO ARE THE GATORS?

The Gators are boys and girls (and their parents) who are members of the Forest Hollow Swim Team. Our team focuses on improving swimming skills, learning good sportsmanship and self-discipline. We have daily practices, compete in swim meets, have family potluck dinners and pep rallies on Friday nights, make new friends and have lots of fun!!

#### WHO CAN JOIN?

### Free NVSL Coaching Clinic

- Sunday May 19 1-5
- Sunday June 23 8am-noon

Lee-Graham Pool

Signup:[nvslcoachclinic@gmail.com](mailto:nvslcoachclinic@gmail.com)

The swim team is open to swimmers, ages 4 - 18. Gators must be able to swim at least 50 meters (2 pool lengths) continuously, without assistance. Gators will work on stroke technique, starts, turns and endurance during practice and participate in swim meets.

Mini Gators must be comfortable in the water (can fully submerge head for 5 seconds), propel themselves for a short distance in the pool, be able to follow directions, work well in a group and leave parents willingly. The goal of the Mini Gator program is to provide young swimmers with the basic swimming skills necessary for the continued involvement in competitive swimming. Please check out our Mini Gator Guide on the website for more information about whether your child is ready to be a Mini Gator or ready to be a Gator!

#### WHEN DO GATORS SWIM?

Swim season for Gators begins on Wednesday, May 29 and ends July 26. The season is extended to Aug. 3 for those who make it to individual All Stars. Beginning May 29 through June 18, swim practice is held Monday through Friday in the evening. Beginning June 19 practices are held Monday through Friday in the morning for all swimmers. Practices are also available on Tuesday and Thursday in the evening for swimmers unable to attend morning practice. Please note: Nighttime practice is shared with pool patrons so space is limited. Plus, there are more evening thunderstorms that may disrupt practice.

Mini Gators will practice from June 19 through July 26, Monday through Friday in the morning. Tuesday and Thursday evenings are available for Mini Gators unable to attend the morning practice.



Swim meets are held on Saturday mornings (league meets) and Monday evening (developmental meets). All swimmers are encouraged to swim at the developmental meets. Participating in league or Saturday morning meets is limited and selections are made based on specific criteria (see Gator Guide). Regular attendance at practice and meets is encouraged.

Specific practice times are online under PRACTICE TIMES.

#### HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?

- \$92 for 1 swimmer
- \$85 for the 2nd swimmer
- \$78 for each additional swimmer.

Registration fees help to pay for the coaching staff, equipment, ribbons, awards and team activities. Each swimmer registered by May 1 will receive a free team t-shirt and latex swim cap. **Swimmers registered after May 1 are not guaranteed a T-shirt or latex cap; the mandatory cost for these items after May 1 is \$5 for the t-shirt and \$3 for the latex cap - while supplies last. No exceptions!**

#### NVSL Standards of Conduct

In 2010 the NVSL issued their Standards of Conduct for swimmers, coaches, parents and fans. These are found on our website under NVSL Standards. Please take a look at these - and abide by them as true Gators during 2013! Good sportsmanship is good for the team and the league! Lead by example! Once again you'll be asked to confirm you will abide by these during registration!

#### Attention All High School Seniors

Each year the NVSL award several scholarships to swimmers in the league. Criteria for the selection process includes:

- 1) Swim/Dive team commitment and leadership
- 2) School and community involvement
- 3) NVSL Scholarship essay

The application form and details are posted on the Gator website - [www.foresthollow.com](http://www.foresthollow.com). The information is also posted on the NVSL website in the documents center.

The deadline is Friday June 28, 2012. We encourage our seniors to look into this opportunity and start planning for the submission now!

#### Gator Only Information on Website

The swim team provides information about the team we'd prefer not to share with the public but which is accessible to our swimmers and parents. This includes team photos and swimmers' times. In order to secure this information we display it on a webpage 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 of any page. 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 Ernie at [ForestHollowWeb@gmail.com](mailto:ForestHollowWeb@gmail.com).

H2O

2 Parts Heart

1 Part Obsession