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MAYMONT NATURE CENTER CLOSING FOR RENOVATIONS \$2.3 MILLION PROJECT TO ENHANCE THE GUEST EXPERIENCE

The Robins Nature & Visitor Center at Maymont, located at 2201 Shields Lake Drive in Richmond, Virginia, will close temporarily for renovation and enhancements beginning November 1, 2019. The Nature Center, which has not seen major improvements since its completion in 1999, is expected to re-open in early spring 2020.

Exciting new features will include a 34-foot-tall active sculpture for children, engaging educational exhibits, fun interactive learning technology, an area for exploration and discovery for preschoolers, and a remodeled lobby with additional guest amenities. Themed “Run of the River,” the remodeled Nature Center will highlight the remarkable ecology of the James River in Richmond which forms Maymont’s southern border, and also will emphasize the natural history of the area and environmental stewardship opportunities for the community. This is the capstone project of Maymont’s multi-million dollar Spirit of Generosity capital and endowment campaign.

“For two decades, the Nature Center has inspired guests to appreciate the natural wonders of the James River,” said Parke Richeson, Maymont Executive Director. “This new Run of the River experience will celebrate Richmond’s relationship with the James, the beloved waterway that passes through and in many ways defines our city. From river habitat aquaria to a towering freeform sculpture, the renovated Robins Nature & Visitor Center will evoke the beauty and excitement of kayaking, rafting or tubing along the falls and exploring the species of the James in all its diversity. Guests of all ages will discover their own personal connections with the river through hands-on activities and immersive exhibitions.”

The Maymont Nature Center is a 29,000-square-foot attraction and holds close to 30,000 gallons of aquaria showcasing aquatic and terrestrial animals of the James River and Chesapeake Bay. Approximately 45,000 guests – including thousands of local students – visit the Nature Center for hands-on environmental education each year.

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“The renovated Nature Center will use engaging experiences to teach guests about James River wildlife, plants and habitat diversity and inspire a deeper appreciation for this amazing natural resource,” said Krista Weatherford, Maymont Director of Programming and Community Engagement. “With interactive activities based on the Virginia Standards of Learning (SOLs), the new exhibits will provide great learning tools for school visits, summer camps and guests eager to explore all aspects of our neighboring waterway.”

The fish, turtles, otter, and other animals that live at the Nature Center will be housed off-exhibit at Maymont during the renovation. Upon the Nature Center’s reopening, these animals will have upgraded habitats with new lighting and heating systems and better visibility for guests.

During construction, Maymont guests can access the estate and park through an entry gate on the west side of The Robins Nature & Visitor Center. The Farm and Historical Estate entrances also will be open as usual.

For more information on the Nature Center renovation and updates on the spring 2020 re-opening, visit www.maymont.org, call 804-358-7166, ext. 310, sign up for Maymont emails, and follow Maymont on social media at facebook.com/maymont, twitter.com/maymont and instagram.com/maymont_rva.

Since 1975, Maymont has been maintained and operated by the nonprofit Maymont Foundation. The Foundation is committed to creating experiences that delight, educate and inspire its guests. More than \$3.5 million must be raised each year through donations to keep the estate and park open to the public.

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