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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Friends of Wilderness Battlefield Elects Board of Directors**

Friends of Wilderness Battlefield, Inc., at its annual meeting on Saturday, Nov. 14, elected eight members to its Board of Directors. The meeting, which set a record for attendance, also honored a long-time board member who is retiring.

Newly-elected FoWB Board members are: Curtis Abel, Zoila Ortega and Ann Woerner of Orange County, and Mark Wakeman of Spotsylvania County. All are interpreters at Ellwood Manor, the 19<sup>th</sup> century home in the Wilderness Battlefield, with a deep interest in Civil War history and battlefield preservation.

Incumbent board members re-elected as directors are: Dale Brown of Spotsylvania County, Carolyn Elstner of Stafford County, and Dorothy Mosso and Dwight Mottet of Orange County. Mr. Brown chairs the annual Taming the Wilderness event at Ellwood. Mrs. Elstner is FoWB Vice President and chair of the Ellwood Restoration Project and the Ellwood Committee. Ms. Mosso is chair of the Membership Committee and Mr. Mottet is a past president and member of the Ellwood Committee.

Retiring from the board is Craig Rains. Mr. Rains is highly respected in the preservation community for his leadership in the upkeep of the Wilderness Battlefield and his enthusiasm for educating others about the battle. Although he will step down as a board member at the end of 2009, having served for six years, Mr. Rains will continue his involvement as editor of the Wilderness Dispatch, the FoWB newsletter.

Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park Superintendent Russ Smith thanked Mr. Rains for his service to the battlefield and presented him with gifts from the park to commemorate his work.

FoWB President, Zann Nelson, praised Mr. Rains for his service to the board noting his involvement in the re-write of the group's bylaws, his fundraising activities, preservation work on the battlefield, and his most recent work with the Wilderness Battlefield Coalition. She presented him with a framed copy of the 1864 Edwin Forbes drawing of the Wilderness intersection sketched from the heights off Vauclose Road and depicting the command center of the battle....a joint gift of FoWB and the Civil War Preservation Trust. In a letter from CWPT read by Ms. Nelson, Mr. Rains was commended for his exemplary contributions to preservation work.

Of special interest was the attendance at the meeting of two graduate students from the University of Vermont, Lucas Harmon and Brennan Gauthier. Both are working on their Masters degrees in historic preservation; Mr. Harmon is writing a paper on issues surrounding the Wilderness Walmart. In the afternoon, Mr. Rains escorted the pair on a tour through the Wilderness Battlefield that included a stop at the Vermont memorial on Brock Road.

Friends of Wilderness Battlefield is a non-profit, all volunteer organization devoted to assisting the Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park in efforts to preserve the Wilderness Battlefield in Orange and Spotsylvania Counties. With members in 26 states and Canada, the Friends provide advocacy, educational programs and service projects for the battlefield. Be sure to visit the group's Web site at [www.fowb.org](http://www.fowb.org) for additional information about FoWB.

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Photo #1 caption:

FoWB President Zann Nelson (left) unveils the framed Edwin Forbes map presented to Craig Rains upon his retirement from the FoWB board.

Photo #2 caption:

University of Vermont history students Lucas Harmon (left) and Brennan Gauthier stand before the Wilderness Battlefield Vermont Brigade monument.