Picture yourself taking the All Trails Challenge!

Attention Families!
Use Good Night Wissahickon Valley Park as your guide for the All Trails Challenge. Learn more on p. 13!
Welcome Back!

It is just me, or do you also feel the “pull” of September, the return to our more normal routines from a summer of no school, possible vacations, and outdoor fun.

September also represents a pause in the seasonal cycle of the year, from the heat and relative quiet of the summer months, to the cooling and regeneration that picks up in the fall months leading into winter. We are experiencing that pause here at Friends of the Wissahickon, as we regroup from the very active first half of 2016—culminating in the June Annual Meeting—and prepare ourselves for the equally active fall and wrap-up to 2016.

In the first half of the year, the FOW Board of Directors completed an exhaustive but energizing “visioning” process. Through a series of workshops and discussion groups with outside stakeholders, we developed an operational mission that can be used as the basic template for long-range strategic planning and as a timeline for translating this operational mission into actionable steps. At the Annual Meeting in June, the productive work of our Governance Committee was reflected in the experience that three newly elected board members bring to the organization: Alyssa Edwards (environmental compliance for renewable energy); Amy Branch Benoliel (property and casualty insurance, along with non-profit board experience); and Walt Crimm (architect/planner for museums and cultural institutions). We were also thrilled to have Kathryn Ott Lovell as the guest speaker for our Annual Meeting. She is another example of a key stakeholder and has recently transitioned from her position as Executive Director of the Fairmount Park Conservancy to the Commissioner of Philadelphia Parks & Recreation.

This fall, FOW will initiate long-overdue work reconstructing the three collapses along Forbidden Drive and continue to foster our partnerships with key stakeholders like the Wissahickon Valley Watershed Association. We will pick up where we left off with our visioning process this spring and examine and fine-tune how our various board committees, like Advocacy or Conservation, can best serve the Wissahickon Valley and its users. And we will begin yet another “seasonal” cycle for the organization itself—the creation of another five-year strategic plan, using the results of our visioning process as the structural guidelines for this initiative.

If the cooler fall weather makes you feel more energetic, then we hope you will consider joining FOW in the All Trails Challenge. This is an exciting four-month long event in which participants can explore the Wissahickon by hiking, walking, running, horseback riding, or biking all 50 miles of its scenic trails.

So again, welcome back, take a deep breath, and jump on board. We are excited about the All Trails Challenge, our projects, and goals for the remainder of 2016!

Will Whetzel, President
OVER 40 PEOPLE TAKE A RAIN CHECK

Over 40 people attended a Rain Check Workshop hosted by FOW in June to learn how they can help reduce stormwater entering the Wissahickon. Rain Check is a Philadelphia Water Department (PWD) program that helps residents manage stormwater at their homes. Participants receive a free rain barrel and/or a downspout planter, rain garden, or porous paving installed at a reduced price. Rain Check supports Philadelphia’s Green City, Clean Waters program which is working in neighborhoods across the City, adding green features to keep excess stormwater out of sewers. The program is funded by PWD and managed by the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society in partnership with the Sustainable Business Network.

WALNUT LANE BRIDGE TO OPEN—LINCOLN DRIVE TO CLOSE

PennDOT’s $15 million project to rehabilitate and modernize the Walnut Lane Bridge and the roundabout at Park Line Drive is on schedule to be completed by the end of September. A project on Lincoln Drive between Ridge Avenue and Wayne Avenue is set to begin after the Walnut Lane Bridge reopens. This project will include paving, sidewalk improvements, barrier and guardrail improvements, traffic signals, and installation of better drainage. According to the Philadelphia Streets Department, closures on Lincoln Drive will be limited to nights and weekends.

PRESERVATION ALLIANCE HONORS TREE HOUSE RENOVATION

On June 8, at the 23rd Annual Preservation Alliance Achievement Awards, the restoration of the Wissahickon Environmental Center (WEC) was honored with a Grand Jury Award. In 2015 FOW, Philadelphia Parks & Recreation, and the Fairmount Park Conservancy collaborated on the rehabilitation of the WEC, located in the Andorra Natural Area of Wissahickon Valley Park. The restoration included repairs to the main building and construction of a new porch, which provides a visual reference to the famous tree that once grew through its roof. The new porch offers handicap accessible, outdoor classroom space that greatly expands the WEC’s capacity for programming.

FOREST BATHING: A WALK IN THE WOODS

Saturday, October 29 and December 3 | Noon–2 pm

The Japanese call it shinrin-yoku, or forest bathing. With measurable, replicable medical evidence of specific and significant health benefits, physicians have begun writing prescriptions for a walk in the woods. Join Sarah Gabriel, who has been involved in promoting human sustainability for three decades, for a short walk, appropriate for those with limited mobility. This hike includes two short discussions on spending time in the woods. Registration is required and limited. The location will be determined and provided to those who register.

2016 BIENNIAL WISSAHICKON PHOTO CONTEST

FOW is teaming up with the Wissahickon Valley Watershed Association (WVWA) to present the Biennial Wissahickon Photo Contest! All photos entered in the contest must be taken within Wissahickon Valley Park, along the Green Ribbon Trail, or on one of the WVWA managed preserves. Participants may enter up to four photos taken within the last three years. Categories: people; wildlife; landscape; and structures. Prizes will be awarded for Best in Show, First Place in each category, and People’s Choice (chosen by Facebook voters). Photographs may be featured in the online or printed publications of both organizations. Photographs will not be returned. Complete rules and other details at fow.org. Entries not following the rules will be disqualified.

Deadline for submissions: October 14, 2016. Visit fow.org/2016-photo-contest/ for more information and to submit photos.

VALLEY GREEN ON CANVAS

Local artist Susannah Hart Thomer’s paintings of sites in the Valley Green area will be featured throughout September at Borrelli’s Chestnut Hill Gallery. Thomer received her Bachelor of Fine Arts from Moore College of Art and has been featured in various exhibitions in Pennsylvania, including at the Pennsylvania Watercolor Society. A mural of the Wissahickon Creek that she painted with artist Michael Adams is on display at the Einstein Medical Arts Building. (see FOW Newsletter, winter 2013.) Pictured here is The Wooden Walkway, one of the paintings on display at Borrelli’s, 1 East Gravers Lane in Chestnut Hill. Learn more at www.susannaharthomer.com.
WHISPERS along the Wissahickon

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2016
Wissahickon Environmental Center
300 W. Northwestern Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19118 | 5–8pm

FRIENDS OF THE WISSAHICKON
More information at fow.org

Springside Chestnut Hill Academy invites everyone to explore a new trail located just down from the Old Hartwell Lane trailhead. This ¾-mile addition to an idyllic wooded glen loops around the school property and meanders by an old dam, marshland, and creek, and includes a boardwalk and bridges. The work was funded by a generous gift from the SCH Parents Association. The school is proud to have partnered with Friends of the Wissahickon, the Philadelphia Water Department, and Philadelphia Parks & Recreation to provide this new recreational option for hikers, strollers, and runners alike.—Karen Tracy, Springside Chestnut Hill Academy

Buy your tickets early! Tickets are limited and will sell out. No tickets will be sold on site. This is a rain-or-shine event.

Tickets: $40 for adults, $15 for children, or $95 for a family ticket. Price includes food, beverages, beer, and wine.

WHAT’S GOING ON IN THE WISSAHICKON?

FORBIDDEN DRIVE STABILIZATION PROJECT

The Forbidden Drive Trail and Streambank Stabilization Project is on target to begin construction in late 2017. FOW has selected Riverlogic Solutions/AKRF to conduct the construction work and begin the permitting and design phase of this extensive project to repair three partial collapses along this popular trail in Wissahickon Valley Park. The three sections of Forbidden Drive that have partially collapsed are near Valley Green Inn, Mt. Airy Avenue, and Kitchen’s Lane.

Stabilizing the trail to keep it from eroding further and restoring the riparian streambank habitat will help improve the water quality of the Wissahickon Creek. The creek is listed on Pennsylvania’s list of impaired waters in part because of silitation, and each of the collapse sites targeted for repair are actively eroding, contributing sediment loads to the creek during rain events. Repairing these collapses will also help ensure that important utility systems are not damaged.

This project is being funded by the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Pennsylvania Commonwealth Financing Authority Department of Community and Economic Development, and private donors.

Access to Valley Green Road and parking in the upper and lower parking lots at Valley Green will be reduced during the completion of these PWD projects.

In the same area, the Wissahickon High Level Intercepting Sewer crosses over a tributary to the Wissahickon Creek near Valley Green Road. Stream erosion of the road embankment and deterioration of the concrete covered aqueduct are threatening the integrity of the sanitary sewer line. Concrete (shotcrete) and a low stone wall covering will stabilize the embankment and preserve the aqueduct. Shotcrete repairs will also be conducted on the sewer crossing structure. All of the work will occur beyond the existing street curb line, but the street and footpath will be required for construction access and construction operations.—Joanne Dahne, Jeff Twardzik, and David Weld, Philadelphia Water Department.

NEW TRAIL NEAR SCH ACADEMY

The Philadelphia Water Department (PWD) will install a liner in 1,870 feet of the 36” interceptor sewer due to leaks along the pipe in the Valley Green area that are exfiltrating (leaking out of the sewer) to the surrounding soils. Work will start in mid-September and last 30 to 45 days. The project will begin just north of the parking lot on Forbidden Drive and end ~1,000 feet southeast of Valley Green Inn.

To properly protect the sewer, PWD is installing the structural liner to help avoid any damage by the heavy equipment required to complete a bank restoration in the area. The liner will seal any cracks, leaks, or holes in the interceptor that are causing the exfiltration from the sewer. PWD will also be lining all the manholes along the lining limits, and will have to run bypass piping during the duration of the project so the pipe can be cleaned, video inspected, and lined. PWD expects to install one 18” polyethylene bypass pipe running the entire length of the project, along with three to five pumps.

FOW welcomes our new Project Manager Peg Shaw! Read more about her in our winter newsletter, coming in December.

WHAT’S GOING ON IN THE WISSAHICKON?
EMERALD ASH BORER UPDATE

by Curtis Helm, Philadelphia Parks & Recreation

Philadelphia Parks & Recreation Urban Forestry and Ecosystem Management (PPR) obtained pheromone traps from the DCNR Bureau of Forestry during May 2016. These are the large “purple traps” that may have caught your eye, hanging incongruously in the forest. Traps were installed at locations along Cobbs Creek, Pennypack Creek, and Tacony Creek. Several “suspicious” insects were collected by PPR from two traps along the Pennypack in mid-June. These insects were recently confirmed by the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture entomologists to be Emerald Ash Borer (EAB). We can no longer hope that it will bypass Philadelphia. It has arrived and is here until the damage has been done. We are likely to lose the majority of our ash trees in the next five to ten years.

In anticipation of the arrival of this scourge, PPR interns treated over 1,200 of the “best” ash trees (with an average diameter of 25”) during summer 2015. Of this number, 175 ash trees within the 2,042 acre Wissahickon Valley Park system were treated. PPR intends to re-treat these same trees again during summer 2018.

The trees were treated with a pesticide called Arbormectin (emamectin benzoate) which was injected directly into each tree. This method is preferred as there is little or no potential for environmental exposure. The trees selected for treatment were those that were already in good to excellent health with no major structural flaws or damage. These are also trees that are adjacent to trails, parking areas, roads, structures, etc. PPR does not have the resources to treat “forest” trees that do not pose a risk or hazard to citizens.

In addition to treating trees, PPR operations staff and sub-contractors have removed 204 current or future hazard trees from Wissahickon Valley Park in the past two years. A disproportionate number of these removals have been ash trees because we anticipate their death in the near future, and it is much easier, safer, and less expensive to remove a living tree than a dead one. Also, when ash trees die, they become very brittle and begin to shed large wood within one to two years following their death. Therefore, it is important for citizens to act now, and either treat their ash trees or remove them. It will only become a bigger problem to delay.

The species of ash found growing most commonly within the Wissahickon is white ash (Fraxinus americana), Pennsylvania’s most common ash, which tends to grow on rich, moist, well-drained soils. In contrast, green ash (Fraxinus pennsylvanica), also common in Pennsylvania, prefers moist bottomland or streambanks. Green ash is far more common within the Cobbs Creek, Tacony, and Pennypack Watersheds, which include greater area of floodplain than the Wissahickon.

The U.S. Forest Service i-Tree eco sampling in 2014 determined that approximately 7.1% of the City of Philadelphia tree population is white or green ash, and it can be assumed that this approximates the number of ash within the Wissahickon. As these ash trees succumb to the EAB, they will create forest openings. In a healthy forest, where suppressed tree seedlings and saplings are awaiting these opportunities, the forest will be replaced with the next forest. Witness the past replacement of the American chestnut with the variety of oaks and other eastern hardwoods. However, Philadelphia’s forests are largely devoid of tree seedlings and saplings due to herbivory by white tailed deer and competition from invasive vines, shrubs, and trees. PPR anticipates that the loss of the ash trees will allow for an increase in the number of non-native plants and further degradation of our park forests. Because the Wissahickon is a watershed park, there will be good opportunities for replanting the understory through grants provided by the Department of Environmental Protection TreeVitalize or Stream Re-Leaf programs.

Curtis Helm is Project Manager for Urban Forestry & Ecosystem Management at Philadelphia Parks & Recreation.

FOW FIELD CREW REPORTS

With such heavy use during the summer, Devil’s Pool is quietly littered with trash. This summer marks the second year FOW has hired a team of field assistants, who provide a daily presence in the park during this season of high park visitor turnout. While performing their duties, the Field Crew—Dajuan Banks, Kristin Locy, and Rosie O’Connor—educate park users on park rules and regulations and act as a liaisons between park users and FOW. These three seasonal employees work full-time in the park, from June through August, clearing trails and maintaining the area around Devil’s Pool.

The crew tends to this area daily, including on Saturdays. As a result, FOW is able to remove garbage from the site several times throughout the day. “I was surprised at how appreciative people were and how they care a lot about the park,” says Locy. O’Connor believes they are willing to put that concern into action with support: “If we hand out bags, people are more than willing to bag their own trash, but it’s just a matter of convenience for most people. If you make it easier for people to bag their trash, they absolutely will.”


Banks, who with O’Connor was a field assistant last summer, has observed improvement at Devil’s Pool. “People are trying harder. Last year, stuff was everywhere. Now, everything is near the trash can. There will be bags around the fire pits. For the most part, people are bagging up their trash neatly.”

This year the Field Crew also assisted the Nature Conservancy with a hemlock tree inventory for Philadelphia Parks & Recreation (PPR). The hemlock wooly adelgid (Adelges tsugae) is present within Philadelphia, specifically in hemock trees in Wissahickon Valley Park. According to PPR, “the infestation of insects and disease requires vigilant monitoring to detect their presence.” Once detected, steps can be taken to reduce uncontrolled spread and potential devastating tree loss.
TRAIL AMBASSADOR HIKES

Registration is recommended for all hikes (required if indicated) so that participants can be informed of weather or other emergency cancellations. Unless otherwise specified, Trail Ambassador Hikes may be on rocky, rugged trails that may be wet and slippery. Wear sturdy shoes or boots with socks. Long pants are recommended for protection against occasional poison ivy and possible ticks. Bring water and a snack if desired. Unless otherwise noted, children 8+ are welcome if accompanied by a responsible adult. Hikes are cancelled in heavy rain or icy conditions. For more information or to register, visit fow.org.

Hikes marked qualify for the All Trails Challenge!

WISSAHICKON GEOLOGY WITH JEFF FRAZIER

1 mile
Saturday, September 10, October 8, November 12, & December 10
10 am - noon
Meet at The Cedars House, Northwestern Ave. and Forbidden Drive.
Enjoy a slide presentation about the rocks of the Wissahickon gorge. Then hike and explore Wissahickon schist, view stream characteristics, and learn how the movement of rock particles through erosion processes have shaped the landscape. Level: easy.

SHORT GEOLOGY HIKE WITH SARAH WEST

1 mile
Sunday, September 18 • 3:30 - 5 pm
Meet at The Cedars House, Northwestern Ave. and Forbidden Drive.
Walk along Forbidden Drive from Northwestern Ave. to Bells Mill Rd. Visit an 18th-century quarry and several other interesting rock exposures. Learn about the likely formation of Wissahickon rocks as the result of plate tectonics. Children 10+ with responsible adult welcome.

WOODS AND MEADOW HIKE WITH KIMBERLY QUINN

3 miles
Sunday, September 25 • 1 - 3 pm
Meet at The Cedars House, Northwestern Ave. and Forbidden Drive.
Hike about 3 miles through woods to the Andorra Meadow and then to the Wissahickon Environmental Center on return. Learn about the former Andorra Nursery, visit the Tree House, and see the Great Beech and Fallen Magnolia. Children 8+ with responsible adult welcome. Level: moderate.

BUTTERFLY MEADOW WALK WELCOMING FALL WITH KRIS SOFFA

3 miles
Thursday October 13 • 10 am - noon
Meet at Houston Playground (GPS: 900 Grakyn Lane, Phila., 19128).
Join this Trail Ambassador and PA Master Naturalist for a hike through Houston Meadow. Learn how to identify common butterflies, fascinating butterfly facts, and how to attract butterflies to your home garden. Bring water, cameras, identification book, binoculars. Children 12+ with responsible adult welcome. Level: moderate.

KID FRIENDLY HIKE WITH MARY SCHWARTZ

2.5 miles
Saturday, October 15 & November 19
1 - 3 pm
Meet at Valley Green Inn.
This hike takes participants along Forbidden Drive. Visit the Livezey Dam, Gorgas Creek, and Fingerspan Bridge. We will stop to enjoy our snacks and continue on to Devil’s Pool and Pee Wee Rock on return to the Inn. Level: moderate on some rocky trails.

TRAILS LESS TRAVELLED I: THE MONOSHONE TRAIL WITH GERRY SCHWEIGER

3.5 miles
Sunday October 16 • 1 - 3:30 pm
Friday, November 25 • 1 - 3:30 pm
Meet at Johnson St. and Lincoln Drive.
Did you know that there is a trail along the Monoshone Creek? Or that trails lead up to the Yellow Trail from the Lincoln Drive bike trail? We will hike these less-used trails and visit Rittenhouse Town, the Hermit’s Cave, and Lover’s Leap. NOTE: Poison ivy is a hazard; cover legs and arms. Children 10+ with responsible adult welcome. Level: moderate.

INTRO TO BACKPACKING WITH ERICA LYNES

5 miles
Saturday, October 22 • 11 am – 3 pm
Rain date: October 29
Meet at Valley Green Inn.
Learn backpacking basics! Bring your own lunch and water. Option to bring your backpack and train for an overnight trip. We will discuss: what kind of gear you need for backpacking; using a water filter and camp stove; how to hang a bear bag; tips for hiking with a heavy load; and “leave no trace” principles. Distance: 5 miles. Level: moderate.

PHOTO DISCOVERY WALK WITH BRUCE WAGNER

.5 miles
Sunday, October 23 • 10 am - noon
Meet at Valley Green Inn.
Explore the height of Fall Brilliance in the Valley Green area. We will walk upstream to Rex Ave. and the Indian Statue and return via the other side of the creek. Pace will be slow. Children 8+ with responsible adult welcome, but they must have the curiosity and patience of photographers. Level: moderate, with some hills and rocky sections.
We met at VGI and went up the yellow trail and headed south. It has a LOT of mountain bikers, so I don't plan on returning often. Most were considerate, but many were going too fast—some way too fast. We were quite taken with a few spots that had many umbrella magnolia saplings. And as someone who laments the paucity of ferns in Carpenter's Woods, I loved seeing so many ferns all over. We chatted with a few people—one with an adorable corgi puppy (on leash) who said he didn't need to see the map since he'd been walking in the Wissahickon all his life. We walked back up Forbidden Drive to the Mt. Airy Ave. Bridge and up to the frog pond. Frogs of many sizes there today. We then went along the white trail, past Livezey Lane. We gave directions and showed the map to some folks who planned to walk to the Toleration Statue. We proceeded on the white trail over Cresheim Creek and back to VGI. We picked up more trash on this hike than I have in my prior hikes—2 grocery bags worth. I imagine the woods get more use as the summer progresses. There were several shirts and towels scattered about (though we were never very near Devil's Pool). . . . A nice day and good hike.
Every day in the Wissahickon is a challenge. This urban wilderness faces recurring threats to its survival from stormwater runoff, invasive species, non-native plants, water pollutants, and heavy use by the 1.1 million visitors it receives every year. Fortunately, these enthusiastic park users are also one of the Wissahickon’s greatest assets: they keep it safe; their presence makes it a vibrant public resource; and they care for it, through volunteer work, financial support, public advocacy, and membership in Friends of the Wissahickon. That is why FOW is turning to them with a new challenge: to raise funds to preserve Wissahickon Valley Park by doing what they love the most—using it.

“The All Trails Challenge is one of the most exciting events we’ve ever done at FOW,” says Executive Director Maura McCarthy. “It’s an opportunity for the public to support the work we do in the park while exploring it on foot, bike, or horseback. And it will be an adventure for people who don’t visit the park often, as well as those who grew up in the Wissahickon, because to complete the Challenge, they will need to venture into areas of the park they may not know.”

You can use Trail Ambassador Hikes to reach the All Trails Challenge goal of 50 miles! See p. 6.

WHAT WILL ATC FUNDS SUPPORT?
All funds raised by the All Trails Challenge (ATC) will support the preservation of Wissahickon Valley Park by Friends of the Wissahickon. FOW restores historical park structures, eliminates invasive plant species, monitors watershed management issues, and restores trails throughout the park. In partnership with Philadelphia Parks & Recreation, the Philadelphia Water Department, and dozens of other regional partners, FOW has developed a wide range of programs, such as the Sustainable Trails Initiative. This is a comprehensive approach to improving forest habitat, stormwater management, and park user experience through improvements to natural surface trails and park infrastructure. The Protect Our Watershed Program includes a joint easement program with the Chestnut Hill Historical Society, environmental education programs, and advocacy initiatives. FOW’s volunteer programs are essential to fulfilling its mission. Trained Crew Leaders lead volunteers in restoring damaged trails, fencing, and historic structures, removing invasive plants, and restoring native species. FOW Trail Ambassadors enhance park safety, encourage responsible park use, and lead educational walks and hikes.

MEET TWO ALL TRAILS CHALLENGERS!
Amy Carolla, my iRunTheHill co-founder, and I feel strongly about giving back and encouraging others to give back to Friends of the Wissahickon. We utilize the trails in Valley Green several times a week and are so grateful that we have The Wissahickon right here in our backyard. We were really excited when we heard about the All Trails Challenge! We think it is the perfect way to give back while having fun and exploring all of the beauty in our area. —Schuyler Nunn

Photos by Charles Uniatowski.
The All Trails Challenge is an exciting four-month long event that invites you to explore the Wissahickon by hiking, walking, running, horseback riding, or biking all 50 miles of its scenic trails. (All trail user designations apply) Participants will raise money for the continued preservation of the park by inviting their friends, family, and coworkers to sponsor them. As of September 5, 223 people have joined the Challenge!

This family-friendly event began August 20 and will continue throughout the fall, ending on November 29, 2016. There will be a fun kick-off party, mileage and fundraising incentives, tons of giveaways, scheduled hikes and walks (see p. 6), and great prizes, including exclusive vacations for the top mileage and fundraising participants.

HOW TO PARTICIPATE

Step 1  Register for the 2016 All Trails Challenge at fow.org/alltrailschallenge. You can join at any time before November 29. All ATC participants who have registered with a minimum of $50 raised or contributed are eligible to compete for prizes based on miles completed.

Step 2  Track your mileage through a handy tracking app like MapMyRun, Strava, or one of the many other apps available online.

Step 3  Start logging miles and raising money for the Wissahickon! Share your fundraising page on social media with your friends and family.

Be certain to tag FOW with @FOWissahickon on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram and use #FOWAllTrails so we can share in your All Trails fun!

SOME OF THE PRIZES YOU CAN WIN!

• A 5-day/4-night stay for two at an all-inclusive 4 star resort in Punta Cana, including airfare
• A weekend getaway for two at a luxury Pennsylvania resort
• iPads
• A night on the town in Philadelphia
• All Trails Challenge happy hours plus tons of giveaways, surprise goodies, and swag bags throughout the Challenge

Interested in sponsoring FOW’s All Trails Challenge? Contact Lorraine Awuku at awuku@fow.org for information!

#GivingTuesday falls on the last day of the All Trails Challenge. This is a chance for All Trails Challengers to boost their fundraising totals and for all FOW supporters to make a donation to FOW.
DRAIN MARKING

What is Drain Marking? Many storm drains send stormwater directly into our waterways, especially during heavy rain events. Not everyone is aware of this, or even that Philadelphians get about 10% of their drinking water from the Wissahickon, so the Philadelphia Water Department asked FOW to team up with them to mark the storm drains in the Wissahickon Watershed. They sent us all the supplies and we provided the labor. Look for the drain markers we installed in the Andorra neighborhood.

Volunteer Jeff Holden installing a drain marker

WEDNESDAY WORKDAYS

Our Wednesday Workday Crew worked on a variety of projects this spring and summer. In April and May, they completed the trail building project at Mt. Airy Avenue. After that, they joined our Trail Patrols. Trail Patrols are workdays where we gather a group of volunteers, tools, and supplies, and start hiking, working on the trail as we go. These volunteers removed lots of trail braiding, rebuilt grade reversals, added and scraped drains, and cut back brush from trails.

STRUCTURES CREW

No Summer Vacation for the FOW Structures Crew! They completed three projects atCourtesy Stable—replacing seats on the bleachers, moving a gate, and replacing the old roof on the springhouse. This last project required the crew to remove the old roof, repair the top of the stone wall, install a new roof, and paint the wood and decorative door they constructed. The crew also repaired broken benches along Forbidden Drive and 5.5 miles of fence along this popular trail, which involves replacing broken and missing rails, straightening posts, and replacing broken posts.

The crew at Spring House near Courtesy Stable.

TREEREMOVAL

It seems that as soon as we get caught up clearing downed trees from one storm, there is another gust of wind and 12 more trees fall over onto the Wissahickon’s trails. From June and July alone, FOW volunteer sawyers removed 18 trees from the park’s trails.

FOW Board Member Dave Dannenberg helps clear a tree at Blue Bell.

SUMMIT AVENUE TRAIL CLOSURE

If you’ve ever thru-hiked the Yellow Trail, you will know that there is one point at Summit Avenue where the trail detours onto the road for about a quarter of a mile. You may also be aware that there was an unofficial and unsustainable trail illegally built to bypass this on-road section of Yellow Trail. While FOW would also like to see the Yellow Trail moved off of the road, illegally building a poorly designed trail is not the way to go about making a change in the park. FOW volunteers and volunteer crew leaders spent a day in July closing the trail to trail users. Once an official and sustainable trail has been built, volunteers will finish the job of restoring the area.

Thanks to all the volunteers, volunteer groups, crew leaders, and everyone else who has helped FOW’s Field Crew keep Devil’s Pool clean! Learn more about the Field Crew on p. 5.

STUDENT CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION

This year’s crew from the Student Conservation Association (SCA) was led by Katie Fonte. The crew—Shane Flood, Sethone Kan, Kayla Lawyer, Latifah Nobles, Charles Richards, and Tahlia Silary—spent the summer working on trail maintenance projects, such as clearing trails of encroaching brush, maintaining and building drainage areas, and closing social trails. They assisted during our Wednesday Workdays and spent a couple of days a week removing litter at Devil’s Pool. They also spent time assisting Philadelphia Parks & Recreation staff with clearing invasives, monitoring planting areas, chopping firewood, and working on projects in the Andorra Tree House area. Finally, they spent a day or two every week installing new blazes along the entire Yellow Trail.
UP AT THE TREE HOUSE

THE JOYS OF MILKWEED

by Trish Fries, Wissahickon Environmental Center

A utumn in the Andorra Meadow is a great time to look for milkweed seeds. Large teardrop shaped seed pods from the common milkweed plant open in late fall to distribute hundreds of fluffy wind-borne seeds.

Growing up in suburban Washington, D.C., I didn’t have meadows in my neighborhood, which is where one typically finds milkweed. So I first discovered the creative uses of empty milkweed pods—making mice and angel wings for Christmas tree ornaments and boats for woodland fairies—as an adult!

Besides having an interesting outer pod, the seeds and fluff are magical and useful. The seeds are arranged on overlapping rows with white silky hairs called coma. During World War II, the pods and seeds were collected by children to use for stuffing life jackets. The coma was used during colonial times to stuff mattresses, taking about eight or nine pounds of fluff for each small bed. Native Americans used the milkweed’s fibrous stems for cordage.

But milkweed is more than just a plant for people to use; as a matter of fact, when was the last time you saw a mattress made of milkweed? No, this relatively non-showy plant is much more important to the survival of monarch butterflies. The adults get their nutrients from the nectar of the milkweed flowers and they lay eggs on the leaves of the plant. When the caterpillars hatch, they feed almost exclusively on the milkweed leaves, consuming the sap that makes their wings and bodies toxic to their predators.

In recent years monarch populations have plummeted. Reasons cited are combinations of weather, habitat loss, and changes in agricultural practices, including additional corn planted for biofuels and increased herbicides used on fields of genetically modified crops.

On a local level, we can help with monarch habitat creation and protection. Keep a few wild spaces in your yard, try to grow some milkweed, and help protect the meadows that remain in our area, such as the Andorra and Houston Meadows in the Wissahickon.

When you come across some milkweed in the meadow, look for a monarch caterpillar or milkweed beetle and examine the seeds, but remember: The monarchs need them more than we do. Hopefully there will be more of these beautiful butterflies next year.

Trish Fries is an Environmental Education Program Specialist at the Wissahickon Environmental Center (Andorra Tree House). For more information about milkweed and monarch butterflies, visit monarchwatch.org.
FOW’s many accomplishments in 2015 were celebrated at this year’s Annual Meeting on June 7. But the stars of the evening were the guest speaker, Kathryn Ott Lovell, Commissioner of Philadelphia Parks & Recreation (PPR), stressing the importance of funding Philadelphia’s parks and recreation centers fully and equitably, and the bear that made a brief appearance in the park in May. He clearly made a lasting impression on everyone.

FOW’s President Will Whetzel opened the meeting with a brief overview of FOW’s visible and less-obvious work in and for Wissahickon Valley Park. The visible: community outreach activities, such as Valley Talks and Trail Ambassador hikes and the Upper Trails Wayfinding and Signage system. The less-obvious: the Joint Easement Committee with the Chestnut Hill Historical Society and FOW’s advocacy initiatives with the Wissahickon Valley Watershed Association (WVWA).

Executive Director Maura McCarthy welcomed two new staff members, Development Manager Lorraine Awuku and Executive Assistant Ashley Velez, and bid farewell to Project Manager Henry Stroud. She followed these announcements with highlights of FOW’s work in 2015:

- installation of the Upper Trails Wayfinding and Signage System;
- completion of restoration of the Wissahickon Environmental Center;
- continued work with WWWA, Pennsylvania Environmental Council, upstream municipalities, and the State to improve water quality in the Wissahickon;
- work to ensure that the Wissahickon Watershed Overlay and the steep slope ordinance are enforced; and
- success of FOW Crew Leader and Trail Ambassador programs, which completed a large number of projects, helped park users, and conducted a record number of educational activities.

At the close of her presentation, McCarthy listed several actions FOW members can take to support the park and the creek: maintain your FOW membership, and encourage your friends and neighbors to join FOW; participate in the All Trails Challenge (see p. 8); and champion the Soda Tax, which will provide funds for the City’s schools, parks, recurrences centers, and other vital assets. (Philadelphia City Council approved this tax on June 16.)

TREASURER’S REPORT
James Walker, FOW’s Treasurer, announced that the financial condition of Friends of the Wissahickon remains very strong. FOW raised $2.3 million in 2015, which was one of the organization’s best years ever. The organization spent $1.7 million to complete the Upper Trails Wayfinding and Signage System, upgrade trails throughout the park, implement outreach initiatives to increase awareness and membership, and improve organizational infrastructure and staff development.

NEW BOARD MEMBERS
Bob Harries, Vice President of Governance, welcomed new members to FOW’s Board of Directors: Alyssa Edwards, Associate Director of Environmental Permitting at EDF Renewable Energy; Amy L. Branch Benoliel, Equity Partner of the Iroquois Group, a Property and Casualty Insurance Network; Walt Crimm, Principal and Museum Planner at Walt Crimm Associates, Inc.; and former FOW Board members Chris Bentley and Cynthia Heckscher. Several Board members were reelected: Tai Chang, Emily Daeschler, Nina Hoe, Martha Kennedy, Richard Kremnick, Robert Vance, James Walker, and Susie Wilmerding. Following these elections, tribute was paid to retiring Board members Richard Brown, Jr., Bob Harries, David Hilton, and Elizabeth Werthan. (See p. 14 for tributes.)

To register and for more information, go to FOW.org
Guest Speaker: KATHRYN OTT LOVELL
Commissioner, Philadelphia Parks & Recreation

Excerpts from Lovell’s speech at FOW’s Annual Meeting

The Friends of the Wissahickon is an exemplary organization. It is one of our most trusted partners at Parks and Recreation. It is an organization that sets the standard for what a nonprofit organization, what private/public partnerships, should and could look like in our park system.

We had a merger two years ago between Parks & Recreation and the former Fairmount Park Commission. What it has created is a really incredible department with wonderful people and an amazing staff. . . . It’s a $70 million operation. But the resources that are needed to run this system, we don’t have and we really need so badly.

We have a new mayor . . . and with his first budget he proposed a half billion dollars for Parks & Recreation and libraries. This is the largest investment in civic infrastructure in the history of our city. . . . So this investment is long overdue. It’s critically necessary.

I’ve spent the past four months visiting recreation centers and parks. . . . The level of dedication that the employees have to the young people at the centers doesn’t reflect the deplorable conditions inside the rec centers. . . . About 90% of the centers, I wouldn’t let my kids go to. And if they’re not good enough for my kid, why are they good enough for any kid?

The Wissahickon is extraordinary and amazing and beautiful, and it’s a destination and a treasure. But it’s not like that in 90% of our other facilities. . . . The Soda Tax is going to allow us to resource the Wissahickon, better than we ever have, but it’s also going to allow us to create a level of equity that has never existed within our system and that we absolutely need and that our young people absolutely deserve.

This is the biggest opportunity we’ve ever had in parks and recreation in our city.

Thank you all from the bottom of my heart for the work you do every day for the Wissahickon.
Thanks TO OUR OUTGOING BOARD MEMBERS

Richard P. Brown, Jr., served on FOW’s Board of Directors for seven years. During that time he was a member of the Development Committee and co-chaired the Joint Easement Committee (with the Chestnut Hill Historical Society). “We will particularly miss Richard Brown’s departure from FOW’s Board this year,” says Will Whetzel, FOW President. “He was a tireless steward of FOW, and his comments during our board and committee meetings were always insightful.” Brown is a staunch supporter of FOW’s major programs and has a keen interest in the Wissahickon and the welfare of Philadelphia’s park system as a whole. He generously opened his home which resides in a spectacular setting overlooking the park to membership and board events numerous times during his tenure.

“Bob Harries is one of those board members you get really lucky to find now and then,” says FOW President Will Whetzel. Harries joined FOW’s Board in 2009 and served on the Structures Crew, the Joint Water Resources Committee (with WVWA), and the Executive and Governance Committees. In the for-profit sector, he works as a consultant/counselor for CEO’s of small companies and sits on the board of WTS, Inc., and in the nonprofit sector, he is a strategy consultant and counselor. “His career experience as a strategy consultant for nonprofits and small companies was invaluable to FOW,” says Whetzel. “And, like fine wine, his structured thought process and refreshing candor helped to improve important aspects of our strategic planning and visioning. We expect to lure Bob back into the trenches of FOW’s Board in the near future.”

David Hilton, an FOW Board member for seven years, has been a passionate user of the Wissahickon for many years and is extremely familiar with the challenges and opportunities the park presents. He was one of the first people to encourage FOW to develop outdoor programming. “In a way, David’s influence has profoundly impacted the development of the All Trails Challenge in terms of helping us think about how folks are experiencing the trails and working on the trails,” says FOW Executive Director Maura McCarthy. “Both Hilton and his wife, Ann, give their time, attention, and enthusiasm to FOW’s work, and we hope that they will continue to remain engaged with FOW.”

Liz Werthan, who joined FOW’s Board of Directors in 2009, brought a wealth of knowledge about nonprofits and community action to her role as a board member. She served as Secretary and sat on the Executive and Advocacy Committees. “She was a strong supporter of FOW’s growth,” says Executive Director Maura McCarthy. “She advised us as we engaged with the city, broadened our mission to support all constituents, and helped us speak to the issues that our users and members find to be the most compelling.” Under her leadership, FOW worked on safety issues, expanded its engagement with the police, and built relationships with council persons and city departments so that FOW’s work in the Wissahickon meets their needs.


twelve suburban municipalities plus the Philadelphia Water Department in the Wissahickon Watershed have adopted an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) ordinance to officially move forward with the Wissahickon Clean Water Partnership. The Agreement simply states that they will commit to work together on a real plan to improve drinking water, mitigate damaging flooding, reduce streambank erosion, protect fish and wildlife, and restore valuable recreation area throughout the Creek corridor. Local municipalities began meeting in June to vote on joining the Agreement with the last meeting occurring August 23, 2016, at which North Wales Borough and Lower Gwynedd voted to sign the IGA.

WVWA led the effort to educate elected officials representing the 16 municipalities in the watershed, as well as local residents, about the importance of officially signing onto the Wissahickon Clean Water Partnership. Through these efforts, over 1,100 residents signed a petition urging their local officials to vote to pass the IGA.

Decision-makers from all arenas say that the Partnership is imperative to protecting and restoring clean water. It enables the municipalities to own the solution collaboratively or together, and shape future regulatory guidelines instead of complying with the current pending strict pollution limit, or Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) from the Federal government. The Partnership reduces costs for all participating municipalities due to the William Penn Foundation’s commitment of over $1 million in financial support for planning. In addition, the Partnership is advantageous in that it allows municipalities to share resources and receive guidance from experts in the field.

The municipalities in the watershed that have signed the Intergovernmental Agreement are: Abington, Ambler, Cheltenham, Lansdale, Lower Gwynedd, Montgomery, North Wales, Philadelphia, Springfield, Upper Dublin, Upper Gwynedd, Whitemarsh, and Whitpain.

Horsham Township, Upper Moreland Township, and Worcester Township make up only 3% of the watershed and have deferred signing the IGA at this time, but have voiced their support.

Representatives from each of the municipalities that signed onto the IGA will meet in the fall to officially appoint the team and determine next steps.

Gina Craigo is Events & Communications Manager and Laurie Grant is Director of Institutional Advancement at the Wissahickon Valley Watershed Association.

LOCAL MUNICIPALITIES WORKING TOGETHER TO IMPROVE WISSAHICKON

By Laurie Grant and Gina Craigo, Wissahickon Valley Watershed Association


**Prospects for Restoring the American Chestnut with John Wenderoth**

Wednesday, November 2

The loss of the American chestnut as a functional component of Eastern forest ecosystems is considered by many to be the greatest ecological disaster of the past century. Can we restore surviving chestnuts to a level of ecological and economic significance? What progress is being made to make this a reality? John Wenderoth, President of the PA-NJ Chapter of the American Chestnut Foundation, will answer these questions and describe the breeding programs that have been underway for 30+ years. He is involved in efforts to restore the American chestnut to its native habitat and leads volunteers in maintaining Tyler Arboretum’s American Chestnut Nursery.

**Hikes in the Wissahickon**

Trail Ambassador Hikes

Registration is recommended for all hikes (required if indicated) so that participants can be informed of weather or other emergency cancellations. Unless otherwise specified, Trail Ambassador Hikes may be on rocky, rugged trails that may be wet and slippery. Wear sturdy shoes or boots with socks. Long pants are recommended for protection against occasional poison ivy and possible ticks. Bring water and a snack if desired. Unless otherwise noted, children 8+ are welcome if accompanied by a responsible adult. Hikes are cancelled in heavy rain or icy conditions. For more information or to register visit fow.org.

**More Information on pp. 6-7 and at FOW.org.**

**Wissahickon Geology with Jeff Frazier**

1 mile

Saturday, September 10, October 8, November 12, & December 10

10 am - noon

Meet at The Cedars House, Northwestern Ave. and Forbidden Drive. Enjoy a slide presentation about the rocks of the Wissahickon Gorge. Level: easy.

Short Geology Hike with Sarah West

1 mile

Sunday, September 18 • 10 am - 5 pm

Meet at The Cedars House, Northwestern Ave. and Forbidden Drive. Learn about the likely formation of Wissahickon rocks as a result of plate tectonics. Children 10+ with responsible adult welcome.

**Woods and Meadow Hike with Kimberly Quinn**

3 miles

Sunday, September 25 • 1 - 3 pm

Meet at The Cedars House, Northwestern Ave. and Forbidden Drive. Hike about 3 miles through woods to the Andorra Meadow and then to the Wissahickon Environmental Center on return. Level: moderate. Children 8+ with responsible adult welcome.

**Butterfly Meadow Walk Welcoming Fall with Kris Soffa**

3 miles

Thursday October 13 • 10 am - noon


**Hikes marked with an asterisk ** are suitable for all age groups.

**Friends of the Wissahickon**

Friends of the Wissahickon is a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving the Wissahickon Valley and its resources for public enjoyment and education. Visit fow.org for more information.

**Valley Talks**

6 pm at Valley Green Inn

**Trials Less Traveled: Bushwhacking in Andorra with Gerry Schweiger**

Monday, December 26 • 1 - 3:30 pm

Meet at The Cedars House, Northwestern Ave. and Forbidden Drive. NOTE: Many brambles and thorny plants border the trails; wear leather gloves. Distance: 3 miles. Level: challenging.

**A Holiday Season Winter Walk with Bruce Wagner**

Wednesday, December 28 • 10 am - noon

Meet at The Cedars House, Northwestern Ave. and Forbidden Drive. Wear clothes appropriate for the weather. Distance: 1 mile. Level: moderate.

**Photo Discovery Walk with Bruce Wagner**

.5 miles

Sunday, October 23 • 10 am - noon

Meet at Valley Green Inn. Pace will be slow. Children 8+ with responsible adult welcome, but they must have the curiosity and patience of photographers. Level: moderate, with some hills and rocky sections.

**Fall Feathered Friends in the Wissahickon with Ruth Pfeffer**

Tuesday, September 20

Brilliant foliage is not the only reason visitors flock to the Wissahickon in the fall. Many species of birds reside, nest, or migrate through this Audubon Important Bird Area at this time of year. Join bird expert and photographer Ruth Pfeffer for a slide presentation highlighting our fall avian friends. Pfeffer, owner of Birding with Ruth, is credited with creating the birding program at the Morris Arboretum, where she is an instructor. She has led birding expeditions throughout the Mid-Atlantic region and abroad since the 1990s.

**Fall Feathered Friends Hike**

Saturday, September 24

Meet at 8 am at the concrete picnic tables at Bells Mill Rd. and Forbidden Dr.

Ruth Pfeffer will lead this hike, which complements her presentation. Binoculars and field guides will be available. Registration is required for this hike; space is limited.

**Philaventures**

philaventures.org

**Last Saturday of Month. Wissahickon Hike.**

An opportunity to walk at a moderate pace with a talkative group of LGBT folks who like fresh air and exercise! Some ups and downs and uneven paths are found along the way, so wear proper footwear and be ready to hike. Meet at 2:00 pm at Cosimo’s Pizza, 8624 Germantown Ave, at Bethlehem Pike (the top of Chestnut Hill). Registration with the hike leader is required. Bert G. at bert12345@comcast.net.

**Appalachian Mountain Club Delaware Valley Chapter**

amcdv.org

**Wednesday, September 7. Wednesday on the Wissahickon.**

Meet at 10:30 am sharp at Germantown and Rex Aves. in Chestnut Hill (19118). Moderate-paced hike through the Wissahickon Gorge with lots of ups and downs. Bring rain jacket with hood, at least a quart of water and lunch. Hiking sticks optional. Take one of the Chestnut Hill train parks or on Rex Ave. Sign up with Leader: Liz Fox, lizfoox333@hotmail.com or 215 432 8747. Please notify leader if you decide not to come. Free.

**Batona Hiking Club**

www.batona.wildapricot.org

Sunday, September 18. Hills of the Wissahickon. 7 or 13 miles—your choice. Meet at 9:30 am at Valley Green Inn. A great long (2 loops) or short (1 loop) hike. Each loop will be 6 to 7 miles. The hike will wind through the wooded hills on both sides of the creek. Bring lunch and water. If you need transportation, take the Chestnut Hill West Regional Rail Line. Exit at Saint Martin’s station and walk to Springfield Ave. Call leader by pm Saturday evening for pickup on Springfield Ave. at 9 am. Cost: $1.00. Leader: Barry Shephard, 215-673-4717.

**Friends of the Wissahickon • Fall 2016**
**Friends of the Wissahickon Membership Form**

**YES, I/We want to help preserve and protect the Wissahickon.**

### Membership Level

- $20 Limited Income/Students
- $45 Basic
- $75 Family
- $500 Patron*
- $100 Contributing*
- $250 Sponsor*
- Society of Generous Friends*
- $1000
- $2500
- $5000
- $10,000 or above

*Choice of:
- Hat
- T-Shirt (circle size)
  - Child: S (M, L)
  - Red Bird: Women: S M Adult: L XL
  - Warbler & Map: Adult: M XL XXL

All new members receive a map of the Wissahickon Valley. Limited Income/Student members receive invitations to all events and our quarterly newsletter. Basic members receive invitations to all events; our quarterly newsletter, and membership card with discounts for meals at Valley Green Inn (in the park) and FOW merchandise. Family members receive all benefits of Basic membership plus choice of two kids t-shirts ($8-10), M (10-12), L (14-16). Contributing members and above ($100 or more) receive all benefits of Basic membership plus choice of hat or T-shirt (M, L, XL).

### Method of Payment

- Check Enclosed
  (payable to Friends of the Wissahickon)
- Charge my
  - AmX
  - Discover
- Visa
- Mastercard
- Card Number
- Expiration Date
- Signature

Please return to: 40 W Evergreen Ave., Suite 108, Philadelphia, PA 19118-3224 • tel 215-247-0417 • office@fow.org • fow.org

Contributions to Friends are tax deductible as permitted by current laws. The official registration and financial information may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling, toll free, within Pennsylvania (800) 732-0999.
**CALCER OF EVENTS IN THE WISSAHICKON**

**WISSAHICKON ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER**

Programs are free unless otherwise noted. Register early; space is limited. *Indicates a program at which children are welcome but the content is not tailored to them.

**THIRD SUNDAY OF EVERY MONTH**
*Wissahickon Restoration Volunteers (WRV)* lead a service project from 9am-12pm as part of their ongoing restoration activities. Project details and directions to the site will be posted on the WRV website at least one week prior to the event. wissahickonrestorationvolunteers.org. For more information or to volunteer, contact Volunteer Coordinator John Holback at holback@fow.org or 215-247-0417 x347.

**EVERY TUESDAY**
Friends of the Wissahickon volunteers repair and build structures in the Wissahickon from 9am to 1pm. For more info. and to register, contact Volunteer Coordinator John Holback at holback@fow.org or 215-247-0417 x347.

**EVERY WEDNESDAY**
From September to May, FOW hosts Wissahickon service projects with the Creed School and Philadelphia Parks & Recreation from 1-3 pm. For more information or to volunteer, contact Volunteer Coordinator John Holback at holback@fow.org or 215-247-0417 x347.

**EVERY SATURDAY**
Friends of the Wissahickon volunteers work in the park on Saturdays from 8am-1pm, unless it is a holiday or there is inclement weather. Projects include trail maintenance, invasive weed removal, planting, and clean-ups. Visit fow.org/volunteering/upcoming-workdays for updates and info. on future projects. To register, contact Volunteer Coordinator John Holback at holback@fow.org or 215-247-0417 x347.

**FIRST SATURDAY OF EVERY MONTH**
*Wissahickon Restoration Volunteers (WRV)* lead a service project from 9am-12pm as part of their ongoing restoration activities. Project details and directions to the site will be posted on the WRV website at least one week prior to the event. wissahickonrestorationvolunteers.org. For more information or to RSVP, contact WRV at 215-951-0330, x2101 or rvinfo@fow.org.

**THIRD SUNDAY OF EVERY MONTH**
Friends of Grashem Trail conducts ongoing workshops in order to enhance the walking trail system in the Grashem Creek area from West Lawn Trail to Northwest Philadelphia. These workshops are open to the public and are free. Registration required. For more information or questions, please contact Kevin Holbrook at holbrok@fow.org.

RUNNING CLUBS

**EVERY THURSDAY**
*Wissahickon Wanderers Trail Run* 3-5 miles. Starts 6:30 pm sharp at Valley Green Inn. No Fees. All runners, speeds, skill levels welcome! For updates and more info visit wissahickonrunningclub.org.

**EVERY SATURDAY**
*Shawmont Running Club*, Start at 2100 Northwestern Ave. and check out the large group of black vultures that we sometimes see headed for their roost.

**APPLE PRESSING ON FORBIDDEN DRIVE**
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 1 • 11 AM – 3 PM
Join Environmental Educator Tony Cordellad for a birding trip that will cover Forbidden Drive from Northwesr Ave. to Ridge Ave. on your bike! This is a great time for migratory warblers, sparrows, and thrushes. Bring binoculars or binoculars. Adults.

**NIGHT SHIFT CHANGES**
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 7 • 6 PM
Here’s your last chance this year to hear night singing insects and look for bats. Or it might be the beginning of the season to hear some owls. Registration required.

**WHISPERS ALONG THE WISSAHICKON**
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 1 • 11 AM – 3 PM
Join Environmental Educator Tony Cordellad for a birding trip that will cover Forbidden Drive from Northwesr Ave. to Ridge Ave. on your bike! This is a great time for migratory warblers, sparrows, and thrushes. Bring binoculars or binoculars. Adults.

**WINTER IN THE WISSAHICKON**
NOVEMBER 5
**FOREST BATHING HIKE**
SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 5 • 11 AM – 1 PM
Join Environmental Educator Tony Cordellad for a birding trip that will cover Forbidden Drive from Northwesr Ave. to Ridge Ave. on your bike! This is a great time for migratory warblers, sparrows, and thrushes. Bring binoculars or binoculars. Adults.

**THURSDAY TOTS**
Bring your little one for an hour of discovery at the Tree House. Each month we will explore a new topic that celebrates the season. Ages 3-5. Parents stay with their child. Registration required $10.00 per child per season.

**NATURE SOUP • SEPTEMBER 8 • 1 – 2 PM**
Bring a wooden spoon soup and wear an apron for an afternoon of creative foraging and pretend food play. We will take a walk to collect natural ingredients, explore the textures, colors, and smells available to us, and create our own unique recipes. Dirt and mud must feature prominently in baked goods, so dress accordingly!

**SKELETON HUNT • OCTOBER 13 • 1 – 2 PM**
Join us on Forbidden Drive near Northwestern Ave. to discover and “migrate” through the Wissahickon leaving treats for our feathered friends. All ages.

**OLWA HIKES • SATURDAY, OCTOBER 16 • 11 AM – 1 PM**
We will walk through the woods and a meadow looking for animal tracks and screech owls. Sometimes we even see the screech owls. Space is limited. Registration required.

**CANDLES DIPPING**
SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 16 • 1 PM
Come take a walk around the Tree House and learn about nature’s true workhorses: the FBI! Participants will learn about the basic form and function of Fungi and the environmental benefits of Bacteria, and develop a new appreciation for the biodiversity that live and work in the Wissahickon. Ages 8 and above.

**APPLE PRESSING ON FORBIDDEN DRIVE**
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17 • 10 AM – 2 PM
Join Environmental Educator Tony Cordellad for a birding trip that will cover Forbidden Drive from Northwesr Ave. to Ridge Ave. on your bike! This is a great time for migratory warblers, sparrows, and thrushes. Bring binoculars or binoculars. Adults.

**WINTER IN THE WISSAHICKON**
DECEMBER 3
**LIGHTS IN THE WISSAHICKON**
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 17 • 11 AM – 12 PM
Learn the basics of bird identification and scramble over a variety of rocks that line the season to hear some owls. Registration required.

**CANDLES DIPPING**
SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 14 • 1 PM
Make your own candles to use during this darker season or give away as a gift in the spirit of the season! This is an outdoor program. Ages 6 & up. Space is limited. Registration required. $2 per person.

**FRIENDS OF THE WISSAHICKON**

**VALLEY TALKS**
SEPTEMBER 20 • NOVEMBER 2
**PERGOLA GARDENING WISER**
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 18 • 4 PM
*Indicates a program at which children are welcome but the content is not tailored to them.

**WHISPER ALONG THE WISSAHICKON**
OCTOBER 1
**FOOTSTEPS IN THE WISSAHICKON**
**ALL TRAILS CHALLENGE HIKE**
NOVEMBER 5
**WINTER IN THE WISSAHICKON**
DECEMBER 3

For a listing of more events, visit fow.org/events. Join us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.