Forbidden Drive: Everyone’s Trail

on p. 8

Forbidden Drive, 1908. Courtesy of Chestnut Hill Historical Society
A MESSAGE from the PRESIDENT

It is interesting for me to look back over the eighteen months since I was elected to the position of FOW Board President and attempt to quantify the number and scope of projects within the Wissahickon watershed for which the Friends of the Wissahickon has been responsible. In this short time alone, FOW has (in addition to many other projects, large and small) restored the trails and habitat at the Andorra Natural Area, refurbished Valley Green Inn as part of its 90th Anniversary celebration in 2014, and rebuilt the porch on the beloved Tree House, formally known as the Wissahickon Environmental Center.

But the Friends of the Wissahickon have been in business since 1924, and over the years work has been done by the volunteers and staff of FOW involving all aspects of the Wissahickon’s 1,800 acres: the Thomas Mill Road covered bridge, rebuilt first in 1881 and most recently in 1939, with help from WPA and FOW volunteers; ongoing repair and maintenance of the WPA shelters in the park; the building and rebuilding of the Valley Green Warming Shed in 2011 and 2012; constant attention to the maintenance of the habitat of the valley through FOW’s Protect Our Watershed program; and most recently the introduction of comprehensive new signage, visible at all major entrances to the park and trail intersections within it.

The common denominator for most park users is the spine and nervous system of the park—the Wissahickon Creek and Forbidden Drive. In 2016 FOW is turning its sights to repairing and restoring several sections of Forbidden Drive that would qualify as deferred maintenance. In the coming year, we will begin Phase I of this project, which will involve completing designs and acquiring permits. At three different locations along Forbidden Drive—Valley Green, Mt. Airy Avenue, and Kitchen’s Lane—you can see orange fenced-off sections of the drive, where the bank down to the creek has collapsed. While a rudimentary drainage system was incorporated in the construction of Forbidden Drive over 150 years ago, this system has deteriorated over time due to a lack of maintenance and gradual erosion. Nearly $1 million has been raised for this restoration work on Forbidden Drive from state government agencies and private donors.

As you continue to use Forbidden Drive this year, I ask all of you to take a mental photo of the three work zones as they currently exist—and then compare it with the finished repair work and reconstructed stream banks as FOW completes these projects. If you like what you see, remember it takes continuing support from the users of our beautiful park to keep it beautiful and environmentally sound.

Yours in the Wissahickon,

Will Whetzel, President

The common denominator for most park users is the spine and nervous system of the park—the Wissahickon Creek and Forbidden Drive.

United Way Donations

The Friends of the Wissahickon can receive membership/donations through the United Way. Our United Way number is 9882. If this is the most convenient way for you to give, please do so. Visit our website (www.fow.org) to learn about the benefits of membership in Friends of the Wissahickon.
Wissahickon Grows by Six Acres

Wissahickon Valley Park has grown by six acres. In the fall of 2015, Philadelphia City Council adopted a bill allowing the city to accept six acres of woodlands from the Natural Lands Trust and add it to Wissahickon Valley Park. A second bill was passed rezoning the property for recreational use. The land is located off of Valley Green Road between Mt. Airy and Chestnut Hill, and is now under official parkland protection.

Kathryn Ott Lovell to Speak at Annual Meeting on June 7

FOW members are invited to this year’s Annual Meeting on June 7, 2016, at 6:00 p.m. at Valley Green Inn. Review the past year, elect members to the Board of Directors, learn about upcoming projects, and enjoy a presentation from Guest Speaker Kathryn Ott Lovell, Commissioner of Philadelphia Parks & Recreation. FOW members who attend the annual meeting will receive a printed copy of the Annual Report for 2015, in addition to the copy that will be available in FOW’s Summer 2016 Newsletter. Space is limited. Register to attend at fow.org.

Rain Barrel Workshop on June 22

Learn how you can get a free rain barrel from the Philadelphia Water Department (PWD) at this Rain Check program. Come to the Rain Barrel Workshop on Wednesday, June 22, 2016, from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. at Valley Green Inn. Reduced pricing for downspout planters, rain gardens, depaving your yard, and permeable pavers will also be offered.

PWD believes that everyone can make a difference in transforming Philadelphia into a greener city with clean water. PWD’s Rain Check program gives Philadelphia residents an opportunity to reduce pollution that would otherwise enter creeks and rivers. Rain Check is managed by the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, which will be hosting the workshop. The workshop presentation will be one hour with time afterward for questions.

Visit fow.org to register. Contact Sarah Marley at marley@fow.org for more information.

Walnut Lane Bridge to Close April 1

The Walnut Lane Bridge is slated for closure for six months, beginning April 1, 2016. PennDOT has already begun a repair project that involves removing and replacing the bridge roadway, improving lighting and signage, and repairing drainage systems and eroded slopes beneath the bridge. At a cost of $7 million, the project is estimated to take six months, and will require crews to close access to the bridge for motorists and direct them along a three mile detour. Pedestrians will still have access to the bridge during the project, but traffic will be detoured.

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 are: 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 for more information and to submit photos.

GORGE YOURSELF ON OUR NEW WEBSITE.

Check out the new fow.org today!

Now everything you ever wanted to know about Wissahickon Valley Park is right at your fingertips.

- Info about the park, the trails, the wildlife and more.
- Helpful maps to get here (and where to park.)
- A calendar of events, activities, talks and hikes.
- “How-tos” for volunteering, membership and donations.

Visit fow.org today.
And let’s be friends!
TRAIL AMBASSADOR WALKS

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 Walks 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 over six are welcome if accompanied by a responsible adult. Walks are cancelled in heavy rain or icy conditions. For more information or to register visit fow.org.

Visit fow.org for updated information.

Wissahickon Walkers with Kris Sofia
Every Wednesday • 9 - 10 am
Meet at Cedars House–Northwestern Ave. and Forbidden Drive.
Learn interesting facts about the Wissahickon and enjoy the benefits of regular exercise. Learn fitness walking tips about posture, stretching, fitness poles, weight vests, and more. Distance: 2 miles along Forbidden Drive from Cedars House to the Covered Bridge and back. Suitable only for adults; no pets please. Rain, snow, or ice cancels.

Currently Exposed Rock in the Wissahickon Gorge with Jeff Frazier
Saturday, March 12, April 16 • 9 - 11 am
Meet at Cedars House–Northwestern Ave. and Forbidden Drive.
Learn through a slide presentation and hike how the rocks of the Wissahickon Gorge were formed and why they are now exposed at the earth’s surface. Explore Wissahickon Schist, with its intricate and beautiful patterns. View stream characteristics, and learn how movement of rock particles through erosion processes have shaped the landscape. Steep, rocky, and some muddy trails. Distance: ~2 miles. Level: difficult.

Woods and Meadow Hike with Kimberly Quinn
Sunday, March 20, April 3, May 22, June 19 • 1 - 3 pm
Meet at Cedars House–Northwestern Ave. and Forbidden Drive.
Learn about the former Andorra Nursery and visit the Wissahickon Environmental Center. See the Great Beech and the Fallen Magnolia! Wear good sneakers or hiking boots. Distance: 3 miles through woods and Andorra Meadow to the WEC and back. Level: moderate.

Basics of Birding and True Stories of Amazing Avians with Mike Kopena
Sunday, March 27, April 24, May 22 • 4 - 6 pm
Meet at the FOW outreach table at Valley Green Inn.
Whether you are a beginning and curious birder or an experienced birder, this walk is for you. Spend spring evenings with friends along Forbidden Drive and the lovely creek looking for birds and learning cool facts about them. Level: easy.

Trails Less Traveled I: The Monoshone Trails with Gerry Schweiger
Sunday, April 3 • 1 - 3:15 pm
Meet at Johnson St. between Wissahickon Ave. and Lincoln Drive. (Johnson St. is one-way, so enter from Wissahickon Ave.) Park on Johnson St. as close to Lincoln Drive as possible.
Did you know that there is a trail along the Monoshone Creek? This hike will cover several little used trails, including visits to Lover’s Leap and the Monoshone Overlook. Cover legs and arms to protect against poison ivy. Children ten and older are welcome if accompanied by a responsible adult. Level: challenging.

Trails Less Traveled IV: Icons of the Lower Wissahickon with Gerry Schweiger
Sunday, April 10 • 1 - 3:30 pm
Meet at parking lot at Gypsy Lane and Lincoln Drive, opposite Wissahickon Hall.
Most Park visitors spend their time at points of interest along Forbidden Drive. We will visit the lesser known points along Lincoln Drive including the Rittenhouse Trail, the 100 Steps, Hermit’s Cave, and Lover’s Leap, and attempt several strenuous climbs. Distance: 4.5 miles. Level: challenging.

Spring Awakening in the Park with Scott Quitel
Saturday, April 16 • 9 am - noon
Meet at Forbidden Drive and Bells Mill Road.
Experience the park springing to life and hike some mildly rigorous trails in search of tulip poplar flowers, trout lily, bloodroot, spring beauty, and other spring ephemerals. Smell the fresh spicebush. Pass by lush skunk cabbage wetlands. Listen for toads, bullfrogs, snakes, red-backed salamanders, and other critters. Cross and be sprayed by frothy brooks. Level: moderate-difficult.

Fishing the Wissahickon with Tony Fazio
Saturday, April 23 • 9 - 11 am
Meet at Cedars House–Northwestern Ave. and Forbidden Drive.
An experienced fisherman, Tony Fazio will share his knowledge about the fish living in the Wissahickon Creek. Wear waterproof boots or be prepared to get your feet wet in the creek. This hike will take place along Forbidden Drive. Level: easy to moderate.

Woodland Wild flower hike with Don Simon, Susan Simon, and Lisa Kolker
Saturday, April 30 • 9:30 am - 12:30 pm
Meet at Valley Green Inn.
This hike will cover the trails along Cresheim Creek and onto the White Trail ending at the Mt. Airy Bridge and returning to Valley Green Inn along Forbidden Drive. Expect to see some woodland wildflowers such as Trout Lilies and Bloodroot. Distance: ~4 miles. Level: moderate.

Trail Ambassador Peter Lapham leads a hike along Forbidden Drive.
Kid Friendly Hike with Marv Schwartz  
Saturday, April 30 • 10 am - noon  
Meet at Valley Green Inn.  
This hike will stop at popular sites from Valley Green Inn, down Forbidden Drive, to the Livezey Dam and Gorgas Creek cave. See interesting rock formations and cross Fingerspan Bridge. There will be a stop to enjoy our snacks and drinks on the stone steps high above the creek, and then on to Devil’s Pool and Poo Wee Rock on return. Level: moderate (some rocky trails).

Identifying and Drawing Wildflowers in Nature with Lisa Kolker  
Saturday, May 7 • 10 am - noon  
Meet at Cedars House–Northwestern Ave. and Forbidden Drive.  
Bring a sketch book or paper and clip board, a drawing implement, and a cushion to sit on (optional). Children 12 and older are welcome if accompanied by a responsible adult. Level: easy-moderate.

A Woodsy Trek to Visit Our Legendary Indian with Bruce Wagner  
Saturday, May 14 • 10 am - 12:30 pm  
Meet at the Valley Green Warming Shed.  
Walk with us to our legendary Indian statue along rocky trails. Using stories and photographs we will experience the past and present of the Wissahickon gorge, noting geology and historic information along the way. We will visit the Victorian stairway, which celebrates the inclusion of the Wissahickon Valley in the Centennial Exhibition in 1876. Level: easy-moderate.

Short Geology Hike Along Forbidden Drive with Sarah West  
Saturday, May 21 • 3 - 4 pm  
Meet at Cedars House–Northwestern Ave. and Forbidden Drive.  
Look at several rock exposures that show evidence of plate tectonics and learn about a likely geological origin of the Wissahickon Formation. Visit two quarry sites from the 19th century and see talc rocks that probably originated deep inside the earth’s crust. Level: easy.

Butterfly Walk with Kris Soffa  
Thursday, June 2 • 10:30 am - noon  
Meet at Wissahickon Environmental Center (Andorra Tree House).  
A North American Butterfly Association member, Kris Soffa will lead a hike to the Meadow Observation Loop in the Andorra Natural Area. Learn how to identify common butterflies while sharing fun facts about them, and how to attract butterflies to your home garden. Bring water, cameras, identification book, binoculars, and magnifying glass. Rain cancels. Level: moderate.

History Walk on the Lower Wissahickon with Sarah West  
Saturday, June 18 • 3 - 4:30 pm  
Meet at the small parking lot where Forbidden Drive meets Lincoln Drive, a short distance downstream from Rittenhouse Town.  
Hike lower Forbidden Drive on level ground as far as the Walnut Lane Bridge. Visit two historical sites connected to the Revolutionary War era, the Blue Stone Bridge, and the foundation of the Lotus Inn, and discuss the history of Forbidden Drive. Distance: 1 mile. Level: easy-moderate.
Andorra Stormwater Management and Sediment Reduction Project

The Wissahickon Environmental Center (WEC) sits at the bottom of a large drainage basin. During rain events, the WEC is inundated with stormwater which routinely causes flooding of the structure and damage to the surrounding grounds, particularly the center’s driveway. This problem is exacerbated by several factors: the location of the WEC at the bottom of the basin; the lack of water infiltration into forest soils which have been hardened and smoothed by the use of heavy machinery; the lack of understory growth (plants slow the movement of water and create infiltration opportunities); and uncontrolled runoff from Northwestern Avenue.

Beginning in 2016, FOW will hire a consultant to design and build a stormwater management system to reduce the amount of water flooding the environmental center and to create plans for stabilization of the WEC’s lower driveway and the adjacent tributary which has become deeply eroded.

Funded by: PA Department of Environmental Protection

Wissahickon East Master Plan

The Wissahickon East parcel was acquired by the City of Philadelphia in 2013 after a lengthy campaign by the Wissahickon East Project, a community group focused on its continued preservation. The property is comprised of six acres of woodlands parallel to the old Reading Railroad right-of-way, south-east of Cresheim Valley Drive. It is accessible via entry at the intersection of Woodbrook Lane and Anderson Street in East Mt. Airy, Cresheim Creek, a tributary of Wissahickon Creek, runs through the property.

Using funds provided by the City of Philadelphia, FOW will lead a planning process for the newly acquired parcel. Among other things, the plan will describe existing conditions and provide a detailed base map of the parcel, identify critical erosion areas, include concept level designs for stabilization of the stream corridor, and identify restoration opportunities for upland areas of the park.

Funded by: City of Philadelphia through the Department of Parks & Recreation

Wissahickon Creek Cleanup Needs You!

The Friends of the Wissahickon and the Wissahickon Valley Watershed Association (WVWA) are joining forces to clean the Wissahickon Creek from top to bottom on Saturday, April 30, 2016, from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. This spring marks the 46th anniversary of the annual Creek Cleanup, and the seventh year that FOW has teamed up with WVWA to clean all 21 miles of the Wissahickon Creek. Volunteers of all ages will clean the creek, its surrounding trails, and its many tributaries. Armed with bags, volunteers will be assigned to sections of the creek to collect anything from plastic bags and swing sets, to mattresses and tires.

Following the Cleanup, all volunteers are invited to WVWA’s Talkin’ Trash picnic held from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Flourtown Pavilion on Mill Road in Fort Washington State Park. To register, contact FOW Volunteer Coordinator John Holback at holback@fow.org.

In addition to the Forbidden Drive stabilization project (see pg. 9), there are two other significant projects that FOW is currently undertaking.
VALLEY TALKS

Sponsored by Valley Green Bank
6 – 8 pm at Valley Green Inn

Valley Talks are free and open to the public.

Planning for the Wissahickon: Lessons Learned from the Black Rock Forest with Dr. William Schuster
Tuesday, April 5

Dr. William Schuster, Executive Director of the Black Rock Forest Consortium in Cornwall, New York, will discuss the Consortium’s model for operating and managing the 4,000-acre Black Rock Forest, located one hour’s drive from New York City. Research, education, and conservation activities individually and interactively inform management policies and priorities. He will discuss successes and challenges in managing over-abundant deer populations, pests and pathogens, public use, and regional ecological connectivity.

The Power of Urban Nature: Why Better Ecosystems Create Better Lives with Claudia West
Thursday, May 19

Our cities need natural places more than ever before. They clean our air and water, provide a balance to our stressful lives, and increase biodiversity and habitat. Join FOW and Claudia West, Ecological Sales Manager at North Creek Nurseries, in Landenberg, Pennsylvania, as we explore how properly managed urban parks and gardens can make a difference in our lives. Be inspired and learn what you can do to improve the health, beauty, diversity, and resilience of Wissahickon Valley Park and beyond.

Seasonal Field Assistants Needed this Summer

FOW will be hiring three Seasonal Field Assistants to carry out various tasks in Wissahickon Valley Park beginning June 17, 2016, through early September. These temporary positions are primarily field based and applicants should be comfortable with spending long periods of time outdoors performing various tasks. Ideal candidates will have experience working in park settings, be highly motivated, and able to successfully work as part of a team.

Members of the seasonal field crew will be responsible for assisting FOW Field Staff. Duties include monitoring and cleaning popular destinations, trail maintenance/construction, assistance at FOW volunteer workdays, and other duties as assigned. Field Assistants will use hand tools, such as shovels, picks, pulaskis, and other tools as needed.

For more information, visit fow.org beginning in early April 2016, when an application form will be posted at http://tinyurl.com/FOW-Seasonal-Field-Assistant. Deadline for applications is May 15, 2016.

Martin Luther King Day

Since 1983 Americans across the country have dedicated time on the third Monday in January to serve their communities, serve each other, and serve the memory of Dr. Martin Luther King. This year about 50 volunteers gathered on a very cold morning at Thomas Mansion to help with the continuing effort to restore the mansion grounds to their former beauty. Invasive plant species were removed, debris was cleared, and significant progress was made.

I am so happy for the opportunity to serve with such a diverse and dedicated group of people, and I left the workday feeling inspired and enthusiastic about more than just our accomplishments. Dr. King said of service, “Everybody can be great . . . because anybody can serve. You don’t have to have a college degree to serve. You don’t have to make your subject and verb agree to serve. You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love.”

Volunteers in winter gear at Martin Luther King Day of Service.

Volunteer Workdays

Tuesdays
Join FOW for structure repair and construction from 9 am to 1 pm.

Wednesdays
Can’t volunteer with FOW on the weekends, but still want to help out?
Come work with the Wednesday Morning Crew each week from 9 am to 12 pm as we tackle projects throughout the park.

From September to May, FOW hosts Wissahickon service projects with the Crefeld School and Philadelphia Parks & Recreation from 1 pm to 3 pm.

Saturdays
There’s no better way to be friends than to help us in the park with trail maintenance, invasive weed removal, planting, and general cleanups from 9 am to 1 pm.

To register, contact Volunteer Coordinator John Holback at holback@fow.org.
Visit fow.org for more details.

Bird Boxes

For those who, like me, frequent the local hardware stores even when you don’t really need anything, you may have noticed that FOW has begun selling a few types of bird/wildlife boxes to help fund our Wildlife Committee. What you might not have noticed (and how could you?) is that all the boxes are built by our talented volunteer craftsman. There are four models to choose from: bluebird, owl/hawk, wood duck, and bat. By installing these boxes locally, animals that suffer from habitat loss will have a better chance to find breeding and roosting habitat, which is great. But that’s not all that we’re doing with these animal boxes.

This fall I was approached by Victor Diaz, a local Boy Scout working toward becoming an Eagle Scout. Victor is interested in helping FOW upgrade its bluebird trails and wood duck boxes, as well as adding more owl/hawk boxes and installing bat boxes on certain park structures. Victor will also be recording coordinates of all current boxes, plus the ones he will install, in order to create an effective and organized monitoring system.
Drivers may be forbidden along this wide gravel trail, but everyone else is welcome: the young, the old, bikers, hikers, equestrians, runners, walkers, birders, painters, those who fish, and those who feed the ducks. Almost everyone who comes to Wissahickon Valley Park finds themselves on Forbidden Drive at some point during their visit.

If Valley Green Inn is the heart of the park, Forbidden Drive is its main artery. It runs 5.4 miles along the Wissahickon Creek, spanning the length of the park, and connects visitors to many of the historic and natural landmarks in the park as well as the many of the upper trails.

Over forty years ago, the trails in Wissahickon Valley Park, including Forbidden Drive, were designated National Recreation Trails. Forbidden Drive connects Northwest Philadelphia to lower Montgomery County at the northern end and the Lincoln Drive Trail at the southern end. This trail then connects to the Schuylkill River Trail leading into Center City Philadelphia.

Forbidden Drive is extremely popular with Philadelphians and suburban park users. My Park Counts, the 2011 FOW park user survey and count, confirmed that over half of all park visitors come from outside Philadelphia, primarily lower Montgomery County. Forbidden Drive is used intensively by all visitors (1.1 million annually) with over 80% of survey respondents reporting that they visit more than once a month.
Forbidden History

constructed between 1823 and 1856, Wissahickon Drive (Forbidden Drive’s former name) originally operated as a turnpike. Until 1899 automobiles were not permitted on any part of it, only horse-drawn conveysances. It was the main thoroughfare running through the Wissahickon Valley.

This 1,800-acre wilderness was acquired by the City of Philadelphia in 1868 as part of Fairmount Park (now the Philadelphia Park System) in order to protect its drinking water supply. Mills and taverns were demolished leaving evidence of the Valley’s industrial history in the form of dams and foundations. Nevertheless, as driving became more prevalent, the park commission decided to allow automobile access on Wissahickon Drive.

Public resistance against this idea arose in 1914-15 and again in the early 1920s, when 200 equestrians from the Riders of the Wissahickon led a protest with other concerned citizens. These citizen activists won their campaign to close the entire length of the road to automobile traffic, thereby protecting the water quality of the creek and the wildlife habitat, while transforming the road into a multi-use trail renamed Forbidden Drive (forbidden to automobiles). In 1924 some of these citizens sought to become stewards of the park and founded the Friends of the Wissahickon.

Forbidden Drive is maintained by Philadelphia Parks & Recreation in conjunction with FOW, whose staff and volunteers maintain fences, benches, and other structures along the trail, including WPA guardhouses and Valley Green Inn. FOW makes substantial investments to support the community’s relationship with Forbidden Drive by recruiting, training, and retaining volunteers.

Caring for Forbidden Drive

In 2016 FOW will begin the permitting and design phase of one of its largest projects to date, the Trail and Streambank Stabilization Project to repair three partial collapses of Forbidden Drive. This popular trail was originally supported on its waterside edge by stone walls for much of its length. Additionally, a rudimentary drainage system comprised of a series of trail side ditches and culverts running beneath the drive kept it from becoming oversaturated during storms. Over time these systems have deteriorated from a lack of maintenance, while the frequency of large, damaging rain events has increased.

Three sections of Forbidden Drive have severely eroded or partially collapsed near Valley Green Inn, Mt. Airy Avenue, and Kitchen’s Lane. Park users probably notice the chain link fence FOW installed to keep park users away from danger, as these collapses have restricted the width and undermined the stability of the trail in the immediate vicinity of the collapses.

Beneath its gravel surface, portions of Forbidden Drive have infrastructure embedded within them, including the Wissahickon low level sewer interceptor and a PECO electrical line that powers various lights and facilities. The collapse near Valley Green Inn has exposed a portion of the low level sewer interceptor, while a portion of the electrical line near Mt. Airy Avenue has also become exposed. Repairing these collapses will help ensure these important utility systems are not damaged. Moreover, stabilizing the trail to keep it from eroding further and restoring the riparian stream bank habitat will help improve the water quality of the Wissahickon Creek.

Wissahickon Creek is listed on Pennsylvania’s list of impaired waters, partially due to siltation. Each of the collapse sites targeted for repair are actively eroding, contributing sediment loads to the creek during rain events. Restoration of these sites will contribute to meeting the established Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) for siltation of Wissahickon Creek as established by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection in accordance with the Clean Water Act.

FOW’s 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.

The importance of Forbidden Drive lies not only in its role as a recreational source and its environmental function, but in its civic impact. Forbidden Drive reminds park users every day that multi-use trails work; it is possible for park users to share trails with others enjoying different activities. It also teaches us to cultivate partnerships between municipalities and non-municipal organizations in order to adequately care for our natural resources. Community engagement and volunteers are essential to preserve our trail systems and public lands.

Did You Know?

The shelters along Forbidden Drive were built by the Works Progress Administration (WPA) between 1938 and 1943.

In 1830 a railroad was proposed that would have run directly along the Wissahickon Creek, but steep embankments made the plan impractical.

There were three tollgates along Forbidden Drive when it was the Wissahickon Turnpike: at Rittenhouse Lane, the park trail at the end of Chestnut Hill Ave.; and just below the Montgomery County Line at Northwestern Ave.

In 1899, a proposal to extend the Wissahickon Turnpike all the way to Fort Washington was abandoned.

You can support the continued improvements on Forbidden Drive with a donation. Contact Development Director Ruffian Tittmann at tittmann@fow.org or 215-247-0417 x102.

FOW offered tours of the Wissahickon in the early part of its history (date unknown). If any of our readers know when FOW gave these tours, please contact us at office@fow.org. Courtesy of Chestnut Hill Historical Society

Near Kitchen’s Lane a portion of Forbidden Drive has collapsed. On the left side of this photo is the fence that originally ran along Forbidden Drive. Its collapse was most likely caused by the failure of the stream bank beneath the heavy, sodden drive.
Eighth Annual Volunteer Recognition Night

FOW volunteers, board, and staff gathered on December 8, 2015, at Valley Green Inn to celebrate the achievements of the dedicated Friends of the Wissahickon volunteers. Volunteers received a framed map as a gift of appreciation. It shows areas of the park where FOW performed the most trail work in 2015: Blue Bell, Kitchen’s Lane, and the Yellow Trail. Jack Ott and the staff of Valley Green Inn prepared a complimentary dinner that everyone enjoyed. Afterward, Volunteer Coordinator John Holback presented a program detailing the accomplishments of the Structures Crew, Crew Leaders, Trail Ambassadors, and Conservation volunteers throughout the year. Here are some highlights from his presentation.

Yellow Trail

There was over 4,000 feet of trail built and maintained during volunteer workdays and hybrid volunteer/contractor workdays. Thanks to Steve Thomas for sharing his experience and wisdom with us. There were also many maintenance projects from STI Demo 1 down to Pachella Field. They were led by Crew Leaders Dan Mercer, John Cassidy, and David Dannenberg.

Work

The upper section of the Gorgas Reroute was built by David Dannenberg and hand-finished on a weekend workday. The Roxborough Reroute was awesome because FOW incorporated machines training into the project. Volunteers built a small rake and ride section of trail, which was a huge improvement over the eroded fall-line trail up to the golf course.

Trail Closures

Our volunteers put in a lot of time this year closing rogue trails, some not for the first time. FOW concentrated on Blue Bell Hill, where we installed split-rail fencing to help guide park users onto official trails. Volunteers tore up the rogue trail tread and covered it with brush to help re-naturalize the area. Other trail closures were completed at Mt. Airy Avenue Bridge, Walnut Lane Golf Course, Pachella, and at Thomas Mill Road, which was an REI sponsored project for National Trails Day.

Structures

The structures crew was busy this year. They completed the shelter at the District 4 yard, the guard shed next to the warming shed at Valley Green, park benches throughout the park, and beautiful picnic benches that were donated to the local equestrian stables, Cedars House Café, and Valley Green Inn. They also built a bathroom enclosure up on Northwestern Avenue, which hides the ugly Port-o-Potties.

Crew Leaders

Crew Leaders were singled out for their hard work, enthusiasm, expertise, and guidance in 2015. These volunteers make it possible to break large groups of volunteers into smaller ones and send them off to work.

Because of Crew Leaders, FOW volunteers have a much better work experience and are a lot more efficient. FOW welcomed five new Crew Leaders this year: Sharon Horace, Lance Lau, Kara Schoch, John Stenger, and Lisa Stout.

Trail Ambassadors

Trail Ambassadors contributed over 4,400 hours of environmental education and outreach in 2015. They worked over 500 patrol shifts and filed 250 field reports, which are shared with FOW and Philadelphia Parks & Recreation staff to help them address park issues efficiently. Valley Green Inn information tables continued to be a great success in 2015. TAs also led over 60 guided hikes and talks both in the park and for local partners.

Trash

FOW volunteers collected over 580 bags of trash in 2015. That's not to mention all of the random debris removed: couches, tires, an entire staircase, and all sorts of rusty junk. Volunteers focused on major sites, such as Devil's Pool, the Walnut Lane Bridge, Henry Avenue Bridge, the Wissahickon Bus Transfer station, and the creek itself during the Annual Creek Cleanup. Watershed Baptist Church of Roxborough and community business partner Gray Consulting joined many individuals to help with the work.

Plantings

FOW volunteers planted trees at the Andorra Natural Area, Valley Green Road, the Gorgas trail closure, and the Hotter Street trail closure. Three big planting events were held this year: Love Your Park Day at Gorgas, Temple Day of Service in Andorra, and a planting workshop led by Mindy Maslin from the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society. Special volunteers Buzz Wemple, Bob Harries (Board Member), Merritt Rhoad, Jack Kelly (Board Member), and Peter Andrews.
thanks to Marc Snyder for helping to plant all the Hortter Street trees in the rain. It would have been a rough day without him.

Chain Sawin’
Volunteers cleared 39 fallen trees from park trails this year. Some were pretty straight forward and others, like the mess on Segment 41, required an entire crew, the griphoist, and dozens of man-hours to clear. Special thanks to Dave, Chuck, Dmitri, Karl, Steve, and Dave’s dogs.

PA Master Naturalists
FOW partnered with PA Master Naturalist this year to help build our volunteer programs. A number of these naturalists will go on to perform their required service hours with FOW and we look forward to them applying their knowledge to projects in the Wissahickon.

Michael KOPENA
Michael joined the Trail Ambassadors in 2013. He immediately took an interest in the outreach tables in the park and increased volunteer participation and park user engagement at these tables, mostly at Valley Green Inn, but occasionally at other locations in the park and local community. He was nominated by his fellow TAs through their positive feedback throughout 2015. We received a number of calls and e-mails from other Trail Ambassadors and park users about Michael and what a pleasure it was to either work with him or talk to him in the park. He has served as a mentor to new Trail Ambassadors both at the outreach table and by individually mentoring a new trainee from each training class. He also co-leads a TA training session on customer service and outreach with TA Shelly Brick. During this class, Shelly and Michael go over best practices on interacting with park users, park rules and regulations, as well as staffing outreach events and how to conduct every interaction with park users positively. He works for Drexel University (as Residential Desk Coordinator in the Residential Living Office), so on top of working full time, he has contributed over 570 hours since joining FOW as a Trail Ambassador in 2013.

Special THANKS to
David Bower, whose tool shed is always open when FOW needs it, and who helps us each week by keeping the Crefeld School students busy and productive.

David Dannenberg, who is always willing to make some time in his schedule to help out for even the smallest project, like installing a switch on the SK.

Trail Ambassador Freddi Flax for developing a Bird of the Day handout.

Steve Okula has been a huge help by allowing FOW to use his woodshop, sharing his knowledge and tools, offering advice, and bringing us those little egg tacos. Also thanks to the guys who work with Steve regularly: Sam, John, Rich, and Dave.

T&F Farmer’s Pride and High Point Cafe for donating tons of food and coffee for our volunteers this year.

Trail Ambassador Bruce Wagner for volunteering over 350 hour this year.

Valley Green Bank
LOVES TO TALK UP
VALLEY TALKS
UPCOMING TALKS:
4/5 & 5/19
All Valley Talks take place at the Valley Green Inn
To register and for more information, go to FOW.org
Leave the Leaves: Changing Garden Practices for a Healthy, Sustainable Landscape

by Brian Ames, Wissahickon Tree & Landscape Services, LLC

Look around Mt. Airy and Chestnut Hill, not to mention other suburban areas, and most gardens look tidy, clean, and perfect. Pretty perhaps, but is it beneficial for a garden to be so neat? With spring in the not-too-distant future, I offer an alternative to the time-intensive spring cleanup, where homeowners attack their gardens in a seasonal spring cleaning event.

The current trend in gardening practices and aesthetics has the hidden effect of reducing garden health. To create this look, a gardener must, almost always, blow the property “clean” of leaves and debris using a blower. Then the waste materials must be trucked away and yards of mulch must be brought in and distributed throughout the garden. These processes require significant amounts of time, labor, fuel, and emissions.

Want a more natural way to manage your property? This spring you might begin a small shift in your landscape management to arrive at a more natural and sustainable practice. During the winter many leaves and debris have undoubtedly accumulated in your garden. Instead of removing all the leaves from your property, consider leaving them there to improve soil health and stormwater management, increase drought tolerance and strength in plants, and decrease erosion. It’s easy, it costs less, and it will improve your garden. Often it can decrease the need to use chemicals to improve stressed plants. Also, over-blowing of your landscape can remove the upper quarter-inch of prime organic material.

For many of us with “clean” yards, this may seem like a big leap, but it is only a slight shift in aesthetics and practices. In my opinion, the winter look of leaf litter in the forest is a beautiful, desired look, and it is appropriate for most garden beds and styles of gardening, particularly for those in the tree-filled northwestern parts of the city. This is easy to achieve in a naturalistic design, and most formal gardens will handle it well without diminishing refinements and with minimal modifications.

Clean leaves and debris from hard and paved surfaces. Clean leaves from the front few feet of a garden bed, and areas of very thick leaves, with a rake. Chop these leaves with a mulching lawn mower (most mowers have a little attachment on the side), and spread these chopped leaves back in the garden beds, as you would with mulch. Chop the leaves on the lawn and leave them there. If they are too thick, spread them around with a rake. Cleaning just the front edges of beds has a remarkable way of “neatening” a property. Many perennials can be cut down and left in the bed or left standing. A light mulching in the spring can help give that fresh, tidy look, while the garden benefits from the nutrients in the leaves. In the spring, plants push through and grow over the leaf litter. This process minimizes disturbance and does not rob the landscape of essential components critical to its natural processes.

This technique also allows for wonderful increases in plant health and decreases in maintenance effort and cost. Soil is very fragile and can take years to build, and it is the most precious commodity in your garden that helps your plants stay healthy. By not over-managing your property, the quality of your soil will continue to improve.

Repeating this process over just a few years with leaf litter, or the right depth and application of mulch over leaf mulch, should benefit your garden through increased organic content, decreased drought stress, and reduced or eliminated chemical additives. Protect your soil, heal and beautify your garden, reduce your impact, and leave the leaves.

Brian Ames is the owner of Wissahickon Tree & Landscape Services, LLC. A graduate of the Rhode Island School of Design, he is an ISA Certified Arborist, a Horticulturalist, and certified in multiple categories of plant health care. For more information visit www.wissatree.com

The Tree House Porch

by Trish Fries, Wissahickon Environmental Center

The long-awaited back porch of the tree house is finally complete. The porch’s cedar floors, green roof, tree silhouette railing, and skylight not only look amazing, but the porch has doubled the covered space we can use for classes, bird watching, and meetings.

Our charming little house in the woods had its limitations when it came to teaching in inclement weather and offering meeting space. The indoor public space could only fit small groups of about ten people.

When plans were being made for the new porch, we seized the opportunity to make it a few feet wider than the original porch so that it could comfortably accommodate small group lessons. We estimate that up to twenty children can use the porch at once.

So far the porch has been used as the meeting location for the Thursday morning bird walks led by Environmental Educator Tony Croasdale; people observe the bird feeders from the shelter of the porch. The handicap accessible ramp that leads from the front of the house to the back porch goes past the bird feeding station and allows the smallest of visitors a close look at the birds, similar to being in a bird blind.

The porch has been used for a larger meeting space in nice weather, and it once served as a sleeping porch when a sudden thunderstorm sent our overnight campers scurrying for a safe and dry place to sleep. Maple sugaring lessons this year were concluded on the porch with a tasting of pancakes and syrup; the porch provided easy access to the kitchen.

The green roof and the rain barrels under the downspouts are used to teach lessons on stormwater management. We are still working on building a periscope that will allow visitors a closer look at the roof-top plants.

FOW will complete final details on the porch this spring. The door used to enter the Tree House from the back porch will be repaired; it is wide enough for wheel chairs to finally access the inside of the building. Shelves for storage will be built under the porch, and a new sliding barn door to hide it all will enhance its appearance. Final grading and additional planting are also planned for this spring.

If you haven’t seen this porch yet, pick a beautiful day this spring to come visit. Maybe we will have an Adirondack chair available for you to sit for a spell!

Trish Fries is an Environmental Education Program Specialist at the Wissahickon Environmental Center (Tree House) for Philadelphia Parks & Recreation.
Winter in the Wissahickon

Every year, friends and family gather with FOW staff to start the holidays right by enjoying what nature has to offer us during winter. Winter in the Wissahickon is a holiday tradition for many families who wish to decorate their own holiday wreath, and where children are invited to make nature crafts that can be left for wildlife to feed on during the winter. Everyone has a chance to enjoy chestnuts roasting on an open fire, hot apple cider, and a light lunch/breakfast buffet. What better way to welcome winter!

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Why I am a Friend of the Wissahickon

To me, the Wissahickon is absolutely the best part about living in Philadelphia. I was lucky enough to grow up with the park literally as my backyard. My childhood is filled with memories of feeding the ducks at Valley Green, taking hikes to Tedyuscung, and enjoying family walks on Forbidden Drive. After high school, I left the area for ten years and came back after having developed a love for mountain biking. I feel fortunate to have such close access to these amazing trails. Even though I live in Center City now, getting into the Wissahickon is a priority for me every week, in every season. It's such an asset to our City, and the perfect escape from the business of city life. I support FOW because the protection and preservation of the park greatly increases the quality of my life.—Nina Hoe

Nina Hoe is an FOW Board Member and a Study Director at the Institute for Survey Research (ISR) at Temple University.

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Wissahickon Day on April 24

Celebrate the history of Forbidden Drive at the 95th Annual Wissahickon Day Parade on Sunday, April 24, 2016. The horse show begins at 10:00 a.m. at the Northwestern Equestrian Facility, followed by a horse and carriage parade down Forbidden Drive. Sponsored by Movie Tavern, the parade will pass Valley Green Inn at approximately 12:30 p.m. A professional storyteller will entertain children and a Fancy Hat Contest will be part of this free family-friendly event. Spectators will learn the history of how Forbidden Drive got its name, or you can take a peek now at WissahickonDay.org and learn for yourself!

Photo courtesy of Chestnut Hill Historical Society
PARTNERS IN STEWARDSHIP:
Friends of Carpenter’s Woods

by Linda Goschke, Friends of Carpenter’s Woods

Carpenter’s Woods has had a great year of new growth and successful activities. Dozens of new trees have been planted, the meadow trails have been rerouted, a new meadow is starting to emerge, a lovely area for observing Carpenter’s Run in the shade has been created, and the Friends of Carpenter’s Woods (FoCW) has had a well-attended series of trail walks and activities matching a variety of interests.

Louise Barteau, creator of the tree project GROVE, reports that the area appears to be flourishing. Volunteers recently removed the protective fence, now that they are certain that the native trees, shrubs, and other plantings can hold their own, and are keeping the Japanese knotweed in check in that area. More ground cover planting is planned for the spring.

The Meadow Rejuvenation Project is well underway. David Bower of Philadelphia Parks & Recreation led volunteers on several workdays as they blazed a new, pleasantly shady trail that makes a loop around the meadow. This trail offers views of the meadow from all sides, a new view of the lower hillside, and observation and meditation areas to view the meadow and spring. Wildlife has already begun to move into this improved edge habitat, as lots of butterflies and other insects, songbirds, and aquatic animals have been seen. FoCW expects to add more pollinator-friendly native plants to the meadow this coming year.

Through the generous efforts of volunteers, new saplings were planted along the edges of the woods and in the marshy areas near Carpenter’s Run. FoCW looks forward to adding more trees once the ground thaws. Look for signs on the kiosks for opportunities to help with planting.

Kiosk refurbishment has started with new cork on the Ellet Trail Kiosk, thanks to John Goschke. Volunteers are needed to help with the other kiosks in the spring.

FoCW welcomes our new Outreach and Development Coordinators, Austin Egan and John Janick. They are bringing fresh ideas for communication and networking. Marcy Abhou, who developed and led the wonderful children’s Bird Pageant in May 2015, is taking over some secretarial responsibilities for the organization. In addition, FoCW is starting a newsletter and is looking for stories that may be of interest to those who use Carpenter’s Woods. Please contact FoCW (info@focw.org) if you have story ideas and are interested in writing for the newsletter.

Linda Goschke is President of Friends of Carpenter’s Woods. Volunteers are welcome to join FoCW. For more information, visit www.focw.org or email info@focw.org.

Listening to the Eagles

Novice birders may not expect to see many birds in the winter, but that doesn’t hold true when you go with local bird expert Ruth Pfeffer of Birding with Ruth. FOW hosted another exciting birding adventure on December 12, 2015, to the Conowingo Dam in Maryland. The group spent a cold but sunny day observing at least 50 Bald Eagles and 29 other bird species. “One of the highlights for everyone was listening to the eagles,” said Peffer. “There were several eagles calling and young eagles responding.” Lunch was served at the Susquehanna River State Park, and then it was on to Perryville, where the group viewed thousands of tundra swans and a few hundred Ducks.

What they saw!

- American Black Duck
- American Crow
- Bald Eagle
- Black Vulture
- Brant
- Canada Goose
- Carolina Chickadee
- Carolina Wren
- Common Grackle
- Double-crested Comorant
- Downy Woodpecker
- Fish Crow
- Great Comorant
- Great Black-backed Gull
- Great Blue Heron
- Hooded Merganser
- Herring Gull
- Mallard
- Peregrine Falcon
- Pied-billed Grebe
- Pileated Woodpecker
- Red-bellied Woodpecker
- Red-winged Blackbird
- Ring-billed Gull
- Rock Pigeon
- Ruby-crowned Kinglet
- Tufted Titmouse
- Tundra Swan
- Turkey Vulture

Photo by Ruth Pfeffer
**It’s Spring! Avoid Muddy Trails**

It’s Mud Season in Wissahickon Valley Park, and FOW is urging park users to refrain from using muddy trails. If you are leaving prints (hoof, tire, or boot), the trail is too wet to use. On wet days FOW recommends using Forbidden Drive, which features a wide gravel surface that can be used in any weather condition. If you approach a muddy spot on the trail, continue to hike or ride through it, rather than around it, which widens the trail and can cause damage to the surrounding habitat.

According to FOW Project Manager Henry Stroud, all the upper trails can become muddy in the spring and are highly susceptible to erosion and long-term damage, especially trails that face north and do not receive much sunlight. As the ground thaws it releases water and the trail surface loosens. If disturbed before they have time to adequately dry, the trails become muddy, which causes damage and accelerates erosion.

Park users can also consult the Map of the Wissahickon Valley Park for alternative trails. Maps are available from FOW at fow.org/visit-the-park/maps.

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**Bike the Hill Sunday, April 17**

Join the Chestnut Hill Business District, Friends of the Wissahickon, Chestnut Hill Historical Society, and SEPTA for two exciting bike tours at 10:30 am and 12:15 pm. End the day with a stroll along Germantown Ave. and lunch at one of the Hill’s many great restaurants.

FOW will lead a bike tour along Forbidden Drive. Along the way, bikers will see unique historical points of interest, including Valley Green Inn. Or join the Historical Society for a Mid-Century Architecture Bike Tour, which will take riders past several of the most extraordinary houses of the mid-20th Century.

For more information, times, and tickets, visit chestnuthillpa.com. Bike tours cost $10/per person. Space is limited. Tours will begin at the Chestnut Hill West SEPTA Train Station. Bring your own bike.

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**Appalachian Mountain Club Delaware Valley Chapter**
www.amcdv.org

**Wissahickon Gorge Wandering.** A brisk-paced hike of 5-7 miles on various trails throughout the Wissahickon Gorge. The distance of the hike will be dependent on conditions and speed of the group. Meet at 9:00 am by Valley Green Inn. Bring water, snacks, and a flashlight. Bad weather cancels. If doubtful, please check the status of the hike before 5:30 pm at www.amcdv.org/AMCCalendar.php or contact the leader: David Stein, 215-508-5915. Mar. 7, 14, 21, 28, Apr. 4, 11, 18, 25.

**Tuesday Nights in the Wissahickon.** Casual social hike through hills of Wissahickon Gorge. Bring water and a flashlight. Bad weather cancels. If doubtful, please check the status of the hike before 5:30 pm at www.amcdv.org/AMCCalendar.php or contact the leader: David Stein, 215-508-5915; Pat Nascimento, 610-639-3670. Mar. 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, Apr. 5, 12, 19, 26.

**Wissahickon Wednesday.** Moderate paced hike through the Wissahickon Gorge. Bring rain jacket, at least a quart of water, and lunch. Meet at Germantown and Rex Avenues at 10:30 am. Take the Chestnut Hill East or West train if possible. Leader: Liz Fox, 215-432-6747, lizfox333@hotmail.com. Sign up with leader: Mar. 9, 16, 23, 30, Apr. 6, 13, 20, 27, May 4, 11, 18.

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**Philaventures www.wagay.org**

Last Sunday of Month Wissahickon Hike. Alas last Sunday 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.

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**Batona Hiking Club www.batonaikingclub.org**

**Sunday, April 3, Hills of the Wissahickon.** 6 or 13 miles - your choice. Meet at Valley Green Inn at 9:30 am. Come out for a great long (2 loops) or short (1 loop) hike. Each loop will be 6-7 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 the St. Martin’s station and walk to Springfield Ave. Call leader by 6:00 pm Saturday evening for pick-up on Springfield Ave. at 9:00 am. Cost: $1.00. Leader: Barry Shapiro, 215-673-4717.

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**Friends of the Wissahickon • Spring 2016**
**Volunteer Opportunities**

**Third Sunday of Every Month**

Wissahickon Restoration Volunteers (WRV) lead a service project from 10 am–12 pm as part of their on-going reforestation activities. Project details and directions to the worksite will be posted on the WRV website at least one week prior to the event: www.wissahickonrestorationvolunteers.org. For more info. to RSVP, contact Volunteer Coordinator John Holback at holback@fow.org or 215-247-0417 x107.

**Every Tuesday**

Friends of the Wissahickon volunteers repair and build structures in the Wissahickon from 5 to 7 pm. For more info. and to register, contact Volunteer Coordinator John Holback at holback@fow.org or 215-247-0417 x107.

**Every Wednesday**

Friends of the Wissahickon volunteers repair and build structures in the Wissahickon from 5 to 7 pm. For more info. and to register, contact Volunteer Coordinator John Holback at holback@fow.org or 215-247-0417 x107.

**Every Saturday**

Friends of the Wissahickon worksdays in the park are held most Saturdays from 9am–1pm, unless it is a holiday or there is inclement weather. Projects include trail maintenance, invasive weed removal, planting, and cleanups. Visit www.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 x107.

**First Saturday of Every Month**

Wissahickon Restoration Volunteers (WRV) lead a service project from 10 am–12 pm as part of their on-going reforestation activities. Project details and directions to the worksite will be posted on the WRV website at least one week prior to the event: www.wissahickonrestorationvolunteers.org. For more info. and to RSVP, contact WRV at 215-951-0330, ext. 2101 or wrv.info@rhd.org.

**Second Saturday of Every Month**

Wissahickon Restoration Volunteers (WRV) lead a service project from 10 am–12 pm as part of their on-going reforestation activities. Project details and directions to the worksite will be posted on the WRV website at least one week prior to the event: www.wissahickonrestorationvolunteers.org. For more info. and to RSVP, contact WRV at 215-951-0330, ext. 2101 or wrv.info@rhd.org.

**First Thursday of Every Month**

Friends of Cresheim Trail conducts ongoing workshops in order to enhance the evolving trail system in the Cresheim Creek area. Meet at the entrance at Lincoln Drive and Allen Lane at 10 am. Volunteers should wear hiking shoes or clogs and bring a picnic lunch. The group is ready to take on whatever needs to be done that week. Always a good time! Contact Volunteer Coordinator John Holback at holback@fow.org or 215-247-0417 x107.

**Every Thursday**

Wissahickon Wanderers Trail Runs, 4-5 miles. Starts 6:30pm sharp at Valley Green Inn. No fees. All runners, speeds, skill levels welcome! Fun food and Cash Bar afterwards courtesy of the Valley Green Inn. For updates and more info visit www.wanderersrunningclub.org

**Every Thursday**

Shawmont Running Club. Starts at Northwest Ave. & Andorra Rd. (north end of Fort生殖 Drive). From 2nd Saturday in May thru 2nd Saturday in Oct. Oct. start at 7:30 am. From 3rd Saturday in Oct thru 1st Saturday in May start at 8 am. Distances are at the discretion of runners. All levels welcome. Emphasis is on fun! More info. at www.shawmontrunningclub.com

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**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*
- $1000 Society of Generous Friends*
- $2500
- $5000
- $10,000 or above

*Choice of:
- Hat
- T-Shirt (circle size)
  - Children: S M L
  - Red Bird: Women: S M L
  - Warbler & Map: Adult M L XL XXL
  - Adult XL
- $1000 or more receive all benefits of Basic membership plus choice of hat or T-shirt (M, L, XL).

**Method of Payment**

- Cash Enclosed (payable to the Friends of the Wissahickon)
- Charge my
  - VISA
  - Mastercard
  - AmX
  - Discover
- Card Number__________________________________________
- Expiration Date________________________
- Signature__________________________________________

**Please return to:** 8708 Germantown Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19118 • tel 215-247-0417 • office@fow.org • www.fow.org

Contributions to the 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.