A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

The coming of fall may signal the end of long, lazy days and breaks from work and school, but with its golden light and brilliant foliage, fall also brings one of the most idyllic seasons in the Wissahickon. What better way to experience this beautiful time of year in the woods than by participating in FOW’s third annual All Trails Challenge (ATC)? See more about participating in this fun, family-friendly activity for people of all skill and fitness levels on p. 4. It’s a chance to see the full extent of our park’s amazing network of 50+ scenic trails, while supporting FOW’s ongoing conservation work. The ATC kicked off on September 4 and runs (or walks, bikes, or horseback rides!) through November 27, so there’s plenty of time to take the Challenge.

The Wissahickon’s natural beauty doesn’t just happen; it takes a lot of effort and careful planning to maintain and improve it and keep the trails safe. At our Annual Meeting held in June (p. 6), scientists from the Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University presented plans they’re drafting for a Habitat Management Plan for the Wissahickon Valley’s diverse landscape and biology. The pullout feature on p. 9 outlines their presentation in more detail. Fostering an ecologically diverse and functional habitat is the third area of focus in FOW’s comprehensive Strategic Blueprint 2018-2020. (The summer newsletter outlined some of our public engagement opportunities, while the spring issue presented plans for five priority projects, part of the Sustainable Trails Initiative to create and maintain safe and attractive infrastructure.)

Managing the park’s land has a direct impact on the water quality in the vital Wissahickon watershed, from the creek to all its tributaries. Mark October 24 on your calendar to learn about the latest progress on the Wissahickon Clean Water Partnership and a new approach to improving water quality. Details are on p. 7.

Speaking of water quality, trash in the park continues to be an issue, especially around Devil’s Pool. Despite all the heat and rain, our staff and volunteer work crews continued their yeoman’s work over the summer; a cleanup wrap-up is on p. 14. FOW’s new seasonal outreach assistants and local police patrolling the trails on dirt bikes (pp. 14-15) provided an added presence to promote safety.

This summer also saw the temporary, weekends-only closure of Devil’s Pool access trails by Philadelphia Parks & Recreation. PPR’s decision to temporarily close these trails came in response to the social media-driven popularity of the site, with daily visitor rates of more than 1,200 people to Devil’s Pool during peak holidays and weekends as measured by FOW’s trail counters. While acknowledged not to be a long-term solution to the problem, the intent of these temporary trail closures is to redistribute the surge in visitors to areas of the park better served by emergency response crews. A longer-term solution to the overuse of the Devil’s Pool area will require investments in both infrastructure and programming to better serve the park-using public. FOW invites you to share your feedback on this issue at fow.org/DevilsPool. FOW will share all of the information gathered through this survey with the city’s Devil’s Pool Task Force.

There are lots of fun and educational FOW-sponsored activities to choose from this fall—from Valley Talks to Winter in the Wissahickon—listed throughout this newsletter. The days may be getting shorter, but there’s never a shortage of things to do in our beloved park or ways to help keep it safe and beautiful. Whether you attend events, volunteer for a workday, or join the All Trails Challenge, you’re supporting FOW and we greatly appreciate it!

Jeff Harbison, President
FALL VALLEY TALKS

Lectures begin at 6 p.m. at the Valley Green Inn. They are free for FOW members (check your e-mail for your registration link or contact renn@fow.org to register) and $10 for non-members. Registration is recommended as seating is limited. A complimentary wine and cheese reception is offered. Valley Talks are sponsored by Chestnut Hill Hospital.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 25
What the Catfish Saw: Climate Change in the Wissahickon with Dr. Pouné Saberi

The northeast region is getting wetter and hotter from human-induced climate change. Animals and plants are not the only ones affected by the trend toward extreme weather patterns. Climate change has been impacting human health and is now recognized as one of the greatest public health threats of our time. In this lecture, we learn about the ways climate change makes us sick.

Pouné Saberi, MD, MPH, and President of the Board of Directors, Physicians for Social Responsibility, specializes in Occupational and Environmental Medicine. She received her medical degree and a master's in public health from Tufts University School of Medicine in Boston, and completed a residency in family medicine at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania. Her current work focuses on health impacts of climate change and fossil fuel-based energy sources.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 23
Bird-Window Collisions with Keith Russell

It's estimated that 360 million to one billion birds collide with windows in the U.S. every year, making bird window collisions one of the most significant conservation issues affecting birds today. This talk will cover the causes of bird collisions with windows, especially on residential buildings, and what can be done to prevent them.

Keith Russell is the Program Manager for Urban Conservation for Audubon Pennsylvania. Based in Philadelphia, he works on a variety of bird conservation issues including bird collisions with man-made structures, birds and nocturnal lights, non-native plants, and migration stopover habitat. A research associate of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University, Russell has received a number of awards including the 2016 American Birding Association's Ludlow Griscom Award for Outstanding Contributions to Regional Ornithology.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 6
The Green Amendment: Securing Our Right to a Healthy Environment with Maya van Rossum

Environmental activist Maya van Rossum will discuss her new best-selling book of the same name and how people can become more engaged with environmental and water advocacy relating to the Wissahickon watershed. She is currently advancing The Green Amendment Movement, seeking to secure constitutional protection for environmental rights nationwide. Maya van Rossum has served as the Delaware Riverkeeper and leader for the Delaware Riverkeeper Network since 1994, and also serves on a number of the region’s water quality committees. She is a leader among her peers and currently serves as an Advisory Board member for the Clean Water Network (2014), a convener of water protection organizations from across the nation.

(Rescheduled from weather-cancelled May program)
TAKE THE CHALLENGE

See and Support the Entire Wissahickon September 4 to November 27, 2018

Did you know that Wissahickon Valley Park has 50+ miles of scenic trails? Most visitors, even the regulars, rarely use all of them. Now is your chance to explore new ground while supporting the work that conserves the park’s beauty and history by joining FOW’s Third Annual All Trails Challenge (ATC).

ATC isn’t a race, and you don’t have to be a conditioned athlete to take part in it. It’s a family-friendly activity that invites people of all ages and fitness levels (and their four-legged friends) to hike, walk, run, bike, or horseback ride to every corner of the beautiful Wissahickon over a four-month period.

Friends, family, and coworkers can join in your effort by sponsoring you. More than 245 people participated in the ATC 2017, completing over 5,000 miles and raising $29,000 for the preservation of Wissahickon Valley Park.

The ATC 2018 kicked off August 20 for members (September 4 for nonmembers), and runs through November 27.

HOW TO PARTICIPATE

STEP 1 - Register for the ATC 2018. All ATC participants must register with a minimum of $50 raised or contributed to be eligible to compete for prizes based on miles completed.

STEP 2 - Track your mileage with a handy fitness tracking app like Strava, FitBit, or Map My Fitness, and sync it with your fundraising page. Or manually upload it to your Everyday Hero Supporter Page.

STEP 3 - Start logging miles and raising money for Wissahickon Valley Park.

STEP 4 - Spread the word! Create a fundraising page and share updates with friends and family via e-mail and social media.

Keep up with the ATC fun by following @FOWissahickon on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

Visit fow.org/alltrailschallenge often for more details about updates, special ATC activities, qualifying FOW hikes, and prizes, such as mileage and fundraising incentives and giveaways.

HIKE UP YOUR MILEAGE

Hikes listed throughout the newsletter and marked with ➤ can help you accrue mileage toward your ATC goal!

GUIDED HIKES WITH LORRAINE, ATC COORDINATOR

Kid-Friendly Hike with Lorraine & JR • September 22 • 10 am – Meet Lorraine and ATC sponsor JR, of Old York Advisors of Raymond James, at The Cedars House for a kid-friendly hike up Forbidden Drive. We’ll end with apple pressing.

➤ 1 mile

Hike on the Orange Trails • September 29 • 10 am – We will meet at the Orange Trailhead and hike to Kitchen’s Lane.

➤ 1.5 miles

Along the Andorra Meadow • October 6 • 10 am – Meet at the Wissahickon Environmental Center. We will take a chill walk around the Andorra Meadow.

➤ 2 miles

To the Covered Bridge • October 20 • 10 am – Meet at Lower Bell’s Mill Road parking lot. Let’s take a hike over to the historic Red Covered Bridge, and ease on down the Yellow Trail.

➤ 1.5 miles

Ahh . . . the Mt. Airy Trail • November 11 • 10 am – One of my favorite locations. Meet at the Mt. Airy Trailhead, mosey on over to the frog pond, and then do some hiking.

➤ 1 mile

Last Call! Last Hike of the Challenge • November 27 • 10 am – Meet at the Valley Green Inn. We’ll take a stroll on the 2018 Trail of the Year Forbidden Drive.

➤ 2 miles

SPECIAL DATES

HAPPY HOUR FOR $100+
ATC FUNDRAISERS

OCTOBER 2 | 6-7:30 PM - EARTH BREAD + BREWERY

A thank-you to all those who raised $100 or more so far!

#GIVINGTUESDAY | NOVEMBER 27

Join us on the ATC’s last day. This is a great opportunity for participants to boost their fundraising totals, and for all FOW supporters to make a donation to FOW.

FINALE PARTY NOVEMBER 29 | 6-7:30 PM

Prizes, DJ party, food, and fun!
Friday, October 12th
Wissahickon Environmental Center
5-8 PM
More information at fow.org
Rain or shine
Presented by
With additional support from
Beer donated by
Friends of the Wissahickon

Thank you to our sponsors!

COMMITTED TO CARING FOR YOU WITHIN 30 MINUTES OF YOUR ARRIVAL.

LESS WAITING. QUALITY CARE.

30 MINUTE E.R. ADVANTAGE™

COMMITTED TO CARING FOR YOU WITHIN 30 MINUTES OF YOUR ARRIVAL.
Despite a thunderstorm that at times forced the speakers to shout, even over a microphone, the 2018 Annual Meeting drew a full house to the Valley Green Inn to celebrate FOW’s many accomplishments last year and to learn about what is on the horizon.

President Jeff Harbison recognized the collective effort of everyone who gives so much to keep the Wissahickon the treasure that it is, and all the different ways that people make a difference in the park, whether they work behind the scenes or out on the trails. He praised the donors, government organizations, and all those working hard to raise funds to make the park even better.

FOW Treasurer Richard Kremnick offered a case in point in his report: FOW raised $1.8 million in 2017, $700,000 of which was from membership. He also thanked the Budget and Finance Committee for their efforts, noting that it’s imperative for every member to act as a goodwill ambassador for FOW.

Four new board officers were elected this year, who will serve seven-year terms until 2025:

- **Kevin Berkoff** has dedicated the past 15 years to teaching seventh grade science and physical education at the William Penn Charter School, and served as its aquatics director and aquatic club president. He is also owner of Swimtek, LLC/SwimAmerica of Greater Philadelphia.

- **Michael Marchino** spent his career raising funds and awareness for international public health and philanthropic initiatives. He retired last fall after 27 years with the global poverty-fighting organization CARE, most recently as senior director of development at its Philadelphia office.

- **John Meigs** is a returning member of the FOW Board. A partner at Saul Ewing, he has been with the firm for nearly 50 years, concentrating his practice in estate planning and estate and trust administration.

- **Hooman Parsia** is president of Further Enterprise Solutions in Blue Bell, a multi-million-dollar wireless consulting firm which he founded in 2002. He leads operations and strategic direction for the company, which operates in every state in America.

Executive Director Maura McCarthy referred the membership to the Annual Report for details on FOW’s accomplishments in 2017, before announcing the evening’s guest speakers; Will Ryan, PhD, a Restoration Ecologist; Rich Horwitz, PhD, a Community/Population Ecologist; and Mike Campagna, a Data Scientist. All are researchers from the Patrick Center at the Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University. They shared some of the forward-thinking research they are doing and the data they’ve assessed from around the region for the Ecological Land Management (ELM) Plan they are developing. This park-wide assessment and mapping of critical habitat zones will impact and influence the direction of FOW’s land management decisions in the Wissahickon Valley.

The presentation wrapped up with what the speakers referred to as a mini crowdsourcing session. In previewing his database for stakeholder engagement, Data Scientist Mike Campagna said that the best resources for data collection are those people who use the park frequently. They can provide comments on the best or worst park areas and suggest improvements based on their experiences, which will contribute to the team’s ability to begin making broad statements about which impacts and restoration and protection activities are most important.

Perhaps the biggest highlight of the evening was a beautiful double rainbow that emerged after the heavy rain, greeting participants as they left the information-packed meeting.
SHIRLEY GRACIE
An FOW member since 1980, Shirley served multiple terms on FOW’s Board of Directors over a period of 30 years. She was vice president several times and, drawing from her experience as a realtor, was cochair of the FOW Easement Committee (with the Chestnut Hill Conservancy), for 10 years. Under her leadership, the program grew into one of the greatest forces for open land conservation in the municipal areas surrounding the City of Philadelphia. From 2002 to 2010, Shirley served as chair of the Valley Green Inn Oversight Committee. She has also been a committed member of the Membership and Advocacy Committees and the Joint Water Resources Committee (with WVWA), and played a vital role in discussions of forest understory, biking, and park use.

Reminding the audience at the Annual Meeting that they were sitting in the Shirley Gracie Pavilion at the Valley Green Inn, and calling her one of FOW’s most serious birders, Executive Director Maura McCarthy underscored Gracie’s leadership in shepherding the organization toward better ecological practices.

“Shirley has infused a naturalist spirit into FOW throughout her entire tenure. An ardent lover of nature, she has been a champion for the natural environment and ensured that FOW has stayed laser-focused on our values to conserve the natural beauty and wildness of the Wissahickon,” said McCarthy. “She has been a personal mentor of mine and I am grateful for her involvement, which I hope continues for many years.”

JOHN KELLY
Kelly is a financial services and media executive who focused on business, development, and marketing for more than 20 years. An FOW Board Member since 2011, he served on the Sustainable Trails Initiative Oversight Committee, and, most recently, on the Budget and Finance Committee.

In citing Kelly’s contributions to FOW at the Annual Meeting, Executive Director Maura McCarthy noted his financial guidance and oversight of FOW’s long-term planning, noting how he helped develop the Investment Committee to bring in additional funds on behalf of the Budget and Finance Committee. McCarthy highlighted Kelly’s characteristic “zest and style” in recalling that he chaired fundraising parties for the organization and often hosted them in his home.

“Jack has been a hugely stabilizing force in planning for FOW’s future and an amazing booster in our community, as well as bringing our message to the city at large,” said McCarthy. “Jack put a new urgency on our thinking about the future. He left an enduring legacy of energy and enthusiasm to our development and public outreach. We expect to see him in the park and at FOW events for many years to come.”

At Univest, we’ve dedicated ourselves to supporting the communities we serve for more than 140 years, holding true to the values and principles that helped shape us. It’s why wherever you are in life or business, you can bank here to get there.

COMMUNITIES CONNECTING FOR A CLEAN WISSAHICKON
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 24 / 6:30 - 8:30 PM
Springside Chestnut Hill Academy, Cherokee Campus

A panel of regional and local stakeholders will share progress on the Wissahickon Clean Water Partnership and discuss the watershed-wide research and planning that will result in a new holistic approach to improving water quality.

THIS EVENT IS FREE & OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.

Hosted by
Sponsored by

Learn more at fow.org or wvwa.org
**WHAT’S GOING ON IN THE WISSAHICKON**

By Peg Shaw, Director of Land Management

**TRAIL MAINTENANCE BY LOCATION**

For **Forbidden Drive**: This summer’s SCA crew cleared drainage along Forbidden Drive, and FOW led a team of volunteers to cut and remove invasive plants and continue drainage maintenance efforts.

For **White Trail at Mt. Airy Avenue**: As part of our Earth Day activities, a group of six volunteers rock armored and improved the drainage along 30 feet of trail where it approaches the Mt. Airy Connector Trail.

For **Connector Trails Between Hermitage and Sumac Streets**: For Love Your Park Day in June, FOW staff led 13 volunteers in making improvements along 708 feet of these vital trail connections for the Wissahickon neighborhood of Roxborough. Tasks included drain clearing, de-berming, rock armoring, and construction of several knicks (a type of outsloped drain) and grade reversals.

For **Orange Trail Downstream from Livzey Lane**: FOW staff and eight volunteers used a Saturday workday to build a new 25-foot wooden footbridge over an eroded gully in order to provide safe passage. Uncontrolled stormwater flows running off Livzey Lane uphill is the source of this gully. The crew investigated these conditions and devised plans to correct the situation and stabilize the gully. This work is scheduled for early 2019.

For **Yellow Trail Between Wises’ Mill Road and Pachella Field**: FOW staff led 17 volunteers over three Thursday morning workdays in performing trail maintenance along 1,473 feet of trail. Tasks included rock armoring wet trail segments, clearing drains, de-berming drainageways, and clearing site lines.

For **Yellow Trail in Houston Meadow**: FOW staff and 30 volunteers worked two Saturday workdays, and will be working two more, to implement a variety of trail improvements along 2,000 feet of trail across both the northern and southern sections of the meadow. Our goals were to improve drainage, decrease erosion, and eliminate trail widening by installing step logs, chokes, and drainage dips.

For **Mt. Airy Connector Trail**: FOW Staff and 50 volunteers worked numerous days to close 1,200 linear feet of the old connector trail between Mt. Airy Avenue and Monastery Stables.

For **Glen Fern at the Bottom of Livezey Lane**: Every year, Northern water snakes return to reproduce in Wissahickon Valley Park. These nonvenomous snakes are native to the park. To protect their habitat at Glen Fern, FOW teamed up with Craig Johnson, of Interpret Green, and Carol Adams, both residents of Glen Fern, to create and install informational signage and protective fencing. We encourage everyone to respect our wildlife, observe from a distance, and not disturb them.

For **ANDORRA STORMWATER MANAGEMENT & SEDIMENT REDUCTION**

Construction of this green stormwater infrastructure project began in March and was completed in June. It was designed to decrease sediment loads in the Wissahickon Creek by capturing and infiltrating surface stormwater flows throughout an 11-acre subwatershed above and including the Wissahickon Environmental Center.

For **STORM CLEANUP**

A heavy June 4 storm saturated the slopes along the White Trail at the downstream intersection with Livezey Lane. This caused a section of the hillside to pull away and slide down, creating a five-foot-wide gap along the edge of the trail. FOW closed this 30-foot length of trail and created a reroute to avoid this dangerous area. The FOW Structures Crew has also been very busy replacing fence rails along Forbidden Drive that were damaged by storms.

**FORBIDDEN DRIVE TRAIL & STREAMBANK STABILIZATION**

Construction is scheduled to begin October 1 and extend through December 31, 2018. The project area consists of three streambank collapse sites along Forbidden Drive and is designed to stabilize and reforest the streambank, utilizing a combination of rock armoring at the base, vegetated soil lifts, and plantings on the upper slopes. Park visitors should heed construction safety signage. FOW will keep the public informed of all park impacts as construction begins.

**HABITAT IMPROVEMENTS AND PROTECTION**

For **White Trail Behind Monastery Stables**: FOW Crew Leaders led 30 volunteers in removing a quarter acre of invasive plants at the intersection of the White Trail and the connector trail. This was the second consecutive year we removed invasive plants here, expanding the work site to 75 feet on each side of the trail.

For **Wissahickon Environmental Center (Tree House)**: FOW staff and volunteers installed 150 native trees and shrubs under the canopy in front of the Tree House near the trailheads and parking lot. Members of FOW’s Structures Crew completed the planting by installing deer exclusion fencing.

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In the last two issues of the newsletter, we presented two of the three interlocking areas of strategic priority outlined in FOW’s Strategic Blueprint 2018-2020: infrastructure (and the Sustainable Trails Initiative) and engagement. This new pullout feature explores the third of these priority areas, which focuses on fostering an ecologically diverse and functional habitat in Wissahickon Valley Park. FOW’s Ecological Land Management (ELM) Plan incorporates scientific management principles that respect native flora and fauna, while promoting stewardship that engages park users in three connected programmatic areas: land management, wildlife, and watershed stewardship.

For the remainder of 2018, FOW will focus on the development of a Parks & Recreation-approved (PPR) final draft of the ELM Plan. This plan is being developed by a team of researchers from the Patrick Center at the Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University, who are exploring ways of studying aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems that solve real world problems. The Academy’s research will tie in FOW’s Wissahickon habitat management goals and methodologies with the work being done throughout Philadelphia and the region by partners large and small, ensuring that our efforts will be of use to plant and animal populations (and communities) within and well outside of Wissahickon Valley Park boundaries. Will Ryan, PhD, a Restoration Ecologist, Rich Horwitz, PhD, a Community/Population Ecologist, and Mike Campagna, a Data Scientist, are completing a detailed park-wide assessment and mapping of critical habitat zones that will guide FOW’s land management decisions in the Wissahickon Valley. They’ll be evaluating and making recommendations for conservation and restoration throughout the park, and creating three broad areas of focus for our work in the coming decades. The Academy-generated Ecological Land Management Plan will identify and map the following:

- **Areas of PRESERVATION**, where we want to protect and maintain existing conditions
- **Areas of RESTORATION**, where we want to foster the appearance or resurgence of key species using specified land management practices
- **Areas of ACCESS**, where there are concentrations of park users, and habitat management priorities must be balanced against infrastructure needs

In its final format, the ELM Plan will also provide preferred land management techniques for current and future use in the Wissahickon, outline what data collection is needed to monitor program success, and suggest how to integrate this data with program and project development into the future.

**Land Management 2.0**

This new plan is a much-needed update to the National Lands Restoration and Environmental Education Program (NLREEP), which was developed by PPR and the Academy of Natural Sciences 20 years ago. The NLREEP plan outlined a decade’s worth of efforts to restore portions of the natural landscape throughout Philadelphia’s parkland, including Wissahickon Valley Park.

Clearly a lot has changed in the Wissahickon since the turn of the century. Park use has greatly increased–more than 1.2 million visitors were counted annually in 2011/2012, and recent anecdotal counts suggest this number may have increased in the intervening years by as much as 15-25 percent. There are new invasive pests to contend with (like the spotted lanternfly and emerald ash borer), an increasingly fragile tree canopy, pervasive stormwater impacts, and new challenges from climate change stressors. Building on NLREEP, the ELM Plan will look at the entire Wissahickon, not just the natural areas, but also the built environment that encompasses and impacts it.

One of the elements FOW wants to incorporate into current land management techniques is some intentionality around what we, as a community, stand for and what we want to preserve. That’s why the Academy team is asking targeted questions: What are the existing set of conditions in the park? How do they relate to conditions outside the park? What data do we have, what data do we need, and how do we use it to shift and guide our thinking, methodologies, and strategies moving forward? The ELM Plan will use the data collected by the Academy to provide outlines and guiding principles for our future work. And, as always, FOW will look to PPR for the guidance and oversight needed to articulate and achieve our shared goals, and to the community of park users for the feedback, resources, and volunteer manpower needed to implement our land management programming.

**ELM Plan Components**

**COLLECTING DATA & IDENTIFYING DATA GAPS**

Assembling the data that already exists about this much-studied park and waterway was the first step in the Academy team’s process. They have identified data sources from more than 30 different entities spanning a half century. The team also identified data gaps that need to be filled with future monitoring and programming, and did targeted field research in the Wissahickon to supplement existing data.

**DEVELOPING GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

Working with FOW and PPR staff, the Academy team developed the following guiding principles:

- All parkland has ecological as well as human value—there are no throwaway spaces in the Wissahickon
- Monitoring key species (plant and animal) creates benchmarks for success
- All forests need management, but not all forests need the same kind. FOW seeks to do the most good with the least cost, and the least harm to habitat
Focus on edges among park zones
Break the park into management units that focus on specific areas and issues
Balance immediate objectives with those for the near future, but have an aspirational long-term vision for the coming decades

Identifying Hydrological Catchment Areas
There are a lot of factors outside the park boundary that impact the forest and tributaries of the Wissahickon. The Academy's approach to creating land management units divides the park into hydrological catchments—geographic areas based on the major tributaries feeding into the Wissahickon. This allows us to evaluate which adjacent lands have the highest impacts on Wissahickon Valley Park, and target partnership activities and messaging with landowners that have the greatest impact on the park habitat.

Defining and Prescribing Management Activities
Other plan components involve defining and prescribing active restoration activities, including the following:
- Invasive plant management
- Invasive pest control
- Fostering of diverse native plant communities
- Wildlife management
- Stormwater management
- Soil stabilization
- Habitat management objectives and strategies specific to areas adjacent to entrances, trails, access roads, and other “high traffic” locations.

In his address to the FOW membership about the ELM Plan at our Annual Members Meeting this June, Dr. Horwitz noted that one of the great things about Wissahickon Valley Park is the many ways you can access it, and that the ELM Plan will help to mitigate the impacts of porous public access on a fragile habitat.

Meeting New Challenges by Engaging the Public
“We hope to prescribe areas of future data collection and, with increased interest from volunteers and park visitors, there is a real opportunity to utilize more citizen scientists who are currently using the park to collect data and look at changes year to year,” said Dr. Ryan. That process began at the Annual Meeting, at which the Data Scientist Mike Campagna began collecting observations and suggestions from participants.

Friends of the Wissahickon's $45,000 ELM Plan, funded by a grant from the William Penn Foundation, is expected to be complete by the end of the year or early 2019. This report will inform our future stewardship priorities, highlight FOW's rising key partnerships, and provide a guideline for FOW's future volunteer engagement programming. Just as the Wissahickon Valley is constantly changing, so will new challenges continue to emerge. But with a solid ELM Plan, we will be ready.
OUR PLACE IN THE WOODS:
What’s Your Favorite Habitat Feature in the Wissahickon?

Tony Croasdale, PPR Environmental Education Planner
To me, no other animal symbolizes the Wissahickon better than the wood duck. I have never seen more wood ducks in any one place at one time than you can see from Valley Green in spring. The ample tree cavities in the park’s large trees provide the perfect conditions for a large breeding population.

Christina Moresi, PPR Environmental Education Planner at Andorra Tree House, FOW Member
I love our sugar maple trees that produce a sweet winter sap that gives us at the Wissahickon Environmental Center the opportunity to bring groups and other guests out in the winter to learn the process of making maple syrup [and taking it] from tree to table.

Sarah Marley, FOW Development and Outreach Director
One of my favorite plants is the poplar tree, because its leaves are so distinct and easy to identify and it produces beautiful yellow flowers in the spring.

David Bower, FOW Volunteer, former PPR Stewardship Coordinator
My favorite bird is the pileated woodpecker. I’ve seen them along the creek near the Blue Stone Bridge and in the woods along the Yellow Trail below Houston Meadow. They’re big and colorful, with a very distinctive call, and just uncommon enough that they’re always exciting to see.

Wendy Willard, FOW Trail Ambassador and Crew Leader
While my favorite tree has to be the oak (I even have a hound dog named Quercus), the view that sticks with me is from the top of the ridge near the Tree House, looking across the Wissahickon at those magnificent sycamores. Their white trunks and spreading branches really stand out from that perspective.
Ceremony Celebrates Forbidden Drive:

2018 TRAIL OF THE YEAR

In February, the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) designated Forbidden Drive the 2018 Trail of the Year. On a warm day in June, FOW took to the trail to celebrate this honor with everyone who loves and supports this precious resource and works tirelessly to preserve it for generations to come. Key speakers joining FOW Executive Director Maura McCarthy were Pennsylvania DCNR Secretary Cindy Adams Dunn, City of Philadelphia Managing Director Michael DiBerardinis, and Pennsylvania Trails Advisory Committee Member-at-Large Henry Stroud, who discussed the trail's importance to the city and the region.

“This trail truly is among so many Fairmount Park gems, and one that shines brightest for the thousands of hikers, bikers, anglers, and others who travel it each year,” Dunn told the audience gathered on Forbidden Drive in front of the Valley Green Inn. “All this would not be possible without the longtime, unwavering support of one group. For decades, Friends of the Wissahickon has been working hard to make a great trail even better.”

Added McCarthy, “We’re thrilled that the beautiful and historic Forbidden Drive has received this honor. The name belies this urban oasis that welcomes visitors of all ages to enjoy the wonders of nature that FOW works to conserve.”

The program was followed by a commemorative tree planting and guided hikes on birding and park history.

Gathered at the newly installed sign marking Forbidden Drive as 2018 Trail of the Year are (from left): Numa F. St. Louis, District Representative for Congressman Dwight Evans; David Pope, Friends of the Wissahickon board member; Maura McCarthy, Executive Director, Friends of the Wissahickon; Cindy Adams Dunn, Secretary, Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources; Michael DiBerardinis, Managing Director, City of Philadelphia; Stephanie Craighead, Director of Planning, Preservation and Property Management, Philadelphia Parks & Recreations, and Friends of the Wissahickon board member; and Henry Stroud, Member-at-Large, Pennsylvania Trails Advisory Committee. Photo by Charles Uniatowski

FOW STAFF UPDATES

FOW bid a fond farewell to John Holback, Field Operations Manager, who left in August to begin a new adventure in California. His relationship with FOW began in 2014 as a Trail Ambassador, and then he became Volunteer Coordinator and Field Operations Coordinator before taking on his latest role two years ago. Through these varied positions, Holback left his mark on the FOW community at large. The many projects he worked on include leading the construction of the Yellow Trail–Summit Avenue reroute, developing the bluebird box monitoring program, and managing the organization of the new pole barn facilities. His friendliness and talent as an educator attracted countless volunteers into the Wissahickon and kept them coming back. He was a tireless, skilled team member who routinely went above and beyond to get the job done. We wish him much good luck!

Succeeding Holback is Hoan Tran as FOW’s new Field Operations Manager, responsible for overseeing the work of the Field Coordinator, Field Assistants, and volunteer groups. He also conducts trails assessments and leads volunteer workdays. Before joining FOW, Tran held several positions through the Student Conservation Association: Community Engagement Specialist Intern at the John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge at Tinicum; Project Leader with the Pennsylvania Outdoor Corps; Endangered Wildlife Technician at Haleakala National Park in Hawaii; and a Crew Member with the Idaho Conservation Corps. Tran also served as a U.S. Forest Service Forestry Service Technician–Fuels and Fire–with the North Fork Fire Department in Idaho. A graduate of Temple University with a BA in Environmental Studies, Tran holds certifications in National Incident Management Systems, U.S. Forest Service Sawyer, and Forestry Wildland Firefighting. He enjoys rock climbing, camping, canoeing, hiking on trails with his dog, and doing crafts like wood-leatherwork.
It’s been a hot and rainy summer, but that didn’t stop our army of volunteers from continuing to make Wissahickon Valley Park a better place. Along with their walking trail shifts and information tables, our Trail Ambassadors have led nearly 20 guided hikes this season, including a hike for a group of about 40 students from Steppingstone Scholars (for talented underserved students in the Philadelphia region). Our Structures Crew has been busy building and repairing fences, benches, and bird boxes. Crew Leaders have continued to be instrumental in public workday assistance, tool maintenance, and completing the trail reroute by the Mt. Airy Avenue Trailhead.

And, of course, after every storm that blasts through, our dedicated Volunteer Sawyers clear the fallen trees—more than 90 cleared this year to date. To put that number in perspective, 50 trees were cleared in all of 2017! Late-season storms keep adding to this number, and with hurricane season upon us, there may still be a significant amount of work to do straight through to the end of the year.

It’s been a fantastic season of volunteer workdays. More than 300 volunteers have come out for our recurring Thursday and Saturday workdays. With their hard work, we’ve accomplished a lot in the park, including building a new footbridge over a gully on the Orange Trail and making some wonderful improvements to the tread and drainage on the Houston Meadow Trail.

Summer months are often synonymous with trash cleanups in the park, and this year was no exception. We dedicated our Thursday afternoons to maintaining Devil’s Pool, one of the most beautiful—but heavily used—areas of the park. This season our volunteers have collected 2,900+ pounds of trash and more than 1,400 pounds of recycling from Devil’s Pool. There were days when the Student Conservation Association (SCA) summer crew members helped removed trash weighing more than 500 pounds. They also were a big help in our graffiti removal effort around Devil’s Pool. A special thanks goes to our sponsors at Berkshire Bank, who came out for a private workday.

Speaking of corporate sponsors, we also had a fantastic group from ZS Associates who volunteered with us to collect 1,500 pounds of trash from beneath the Henry Avenue Bridge and along the Orange Trail near the Gorgas Lane entrance. If your company is interested in helping us keep the Wissahickon beautiful, see my contact information below.

If you’d like to get involved, there’s always work to do in the park. FOW has a lot of workdays scheduled—visit fow.org for a complete list. We’re also recruiting for the 2019 class of Trail Ambassadors, Crew Leaders, and Volunteer Sawyers. Whether you’d like to help out on an occasional or a regular basis, extra hands are always needed and welcome. Contact Volunteer Coordinator Shawn Green at green@fow.org for more information on getting involved in the park.

FOW’s new Seasonal Outreach Assistants were front and center at some of the most popular locations in the park to help spread three overarching messages to visitors: have fun, stay safe, and help keep the park beautiful during the summer and all year long. Pictured (from left) are Amari Brawner, Julia Schalles, Cheyenne Beaver, and Julia Raskin.

### FALL SUPER SATURDAYS!

FOW is looking for extra hands to help keep the trails safe and beautiful by removing tree debris and picking up trash at these specially-designated cleanup events:

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 29**
**NATIONAL PUBLIC LANDS DAY**
Trail Maintenance in Andorra. Meet at the Wissahickon Environmental Center at 9 am.

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 10**
**FALL LOVE YOUR PARK DAY**
Two planting locations: Mt. Airy Avenue and Summit Avenue Trails. Both start at 9 am.

Visit fow.org for more information and to register to volunteer.

### TA Field Report

**Ambassadors:** Marv Schwartz & Lee Kowalski  
**Date:** 7/11/18  
**Shift Time:** 10 am–12:30 pm  
**Zones:** A (Northwestern Ave. to Rex Ave.)

**Dogs Off Leash:** 0  
**Dogs On Leash:** 10

A beautiful day in the neighborhood (Marv just saw the Mister Rogers documentary). We travelled Forbidden Drive from Northwestern Ave. to Rex Ave., and then returned on the Orange Trail to Bell’s Mill Road and back on Forbidden Drive. Feeling geological, we had some fun sifting through trail sand looking for numerous freed garter snakes. A woman on the Orange Trail asked us who was responsible for the clearing of fallen trees, and we gave credit to the excellent work of FOW’s trained Volunteer Sawyers. All large tree trunks across this trail have been removed, and we heard a chainsaw on a nearby trail.

Standing on the Rex Ave. bridge, we observed a family of wood ducks (mom and mini kids) trailing immediately behind a large snapping turtle. Some moved in front of the turtle, but they all dramatically and urgently took off after he lunged at them. Several groups were out strolling, picnicking, and hiking the trails on this rare low-humidity day.
EILEEN & GORDON BEST

How did you decide to volunteer with FOW?
We did two or three hikes with Maura when we first moved here. We met a few staff members on the hikes and were encouraged to volunteer. And we thought it was a good way to meet people, being new to the area.

What do you love about Wissahickon Valley Park?
We feel when we’re at the park, we’re not in the city any longer. There are so many areas to explore; it’s like a new experience every time we hike. We love how the park is so clean and well maintained, and always being improved. We also love that it has such a great history.

What is it like to volunteer as a couple?
Very easy. We plan hikes and do most scheduled activities together. Gordon is really good at map reading, and Eileen is not, but there’s usually consensus as to where we’ll hike each time.

How do you think FOW contributes to the Philadelphia community?
Through good stewardship of the Wissahickon. People from all over the city visit and enjoy the park. By offering hikes on various topics led by Trail Ambassadors, FOW expands knowledge of the park and nature in general. FOW’s talks at Valley Green Inn are another way they get the community involved.

What is your favorite spot in the park?
Gordon’s [favorite spot] is right in front of the Valley Green Inn. There are ducks and geese and snakes usually sunning themselves. There are people to talk to there, and it’s a good starting off point. Eileen likes the small creeks that ripple and gurgle. On the path that starts at Houston Meadow, there are a few small bridges over such creeks. She likes to sit and watch and listen—so peaceful!

PATROLLING THE TRAILS FOR SAFETY

There’s a lot to be said for dirt bikes. They’re small, nimble, and made for off-roading. That’s why the 5th and 14th police districts are using them to increase their visibility in Wissahickon Valley Park. Officers on dirt bikes—officially called the on/off-road motorcycle patrol—can cover more ground, literally, on the park’s varied terrain than by car, bicycle, or on foot, and more quickly, too. The 14th district is patrolling the east side of Wissahickon Creek from Northwestern Avenue to the Falls Bridge below Walnut Lane, while the 5th district is covering the parking lots at Bell’s Mill and Wises’ Mill roads. Although the creek technically divides the two districts, the dirt bike patrol overlaps in some areas, such as at Devil’s Pool and the Valley Green Inn parking lot, to increase coverage, particularly during the warmer months when park usage is highest.

This is not the on/off-road motorcycle patrol’s first run in the park. They were used a few years ago but not as widely as now. District officers reviewed crime patterns and determined that there was a service gap in the park. Despite FOW’s best efforts, car break-ins and thefts, and injuries related to illegal swimming and diving in Devil’s Pool, are an ongoing problem. These are in addition to the issue of illegal parking, especially on weekends. Cars blocking access to emergency vehicles and equipment can add precious minutes getting to an ill or injured park visitor.

The 14th district’s Police Lieutenant William Schmid and the 5th district’s Commanding Officer Captain John Moroney agree that safety is the primary mission of the on/off-road motorcycle patrol.

“We’re here to promote security for everyone who uses the park. We want to make our presence known, so people see us and feel safe and can enjoy the park and its beautiful sights,” said the officers.

They remind park visitors:
• Don’t become a victim of car break-ins and thefts, the top crime problems in the park. Take precautions, and lock up your valuables or take them with you.
• If you have a question or see something suspicious, don’t hesitate to flag down an officer.

Overall feedback about the on/off-bike motorcycle patrol has been positive. Lieutenant Schmid reported that people have told him that seeing the increase in officers patrolling on dirt bikes along the trails has really helped to increase a feeling of security in the remote areas of the park.

“The extra effort put forth by these officers is greatly needed and appreciated,” said FOW Executive Director Maura McCarthy.
Registration is recommended for all hikes (required if indicated) so that participants can be informed of weather or other emergency cancellations. Unless otherwise specified, 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. 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 an adult. Walks are cancelled in heavy rain or icy conditions. Visit fow.org to register and for updates.

Note: Hikes listed with include mileage eligible for All Trails Challenge (ATC) participants.

**Hotels, Cabins, Inns & Bridges with Kimberly Quinn**

- **3 miles**
- **Sunday, September 23 • 12-2 pm**
- **Meet at Crefeld Street Trailhead.**

With this hike, you'll get a little bit of everything! We'll explore a little over 3 miles of trails starting at the Lavender Trail in Chestnut Hill, connecting to the White Trail to visit the Tedyuscung Statue, cross over the Rex Avenue Bridge onto Forbidden Drive, and cross over the Covered Bridge. From here we'll explore the Orange Trail and return to the Lavender Trail. Learn about the history of the bridges, Depression Era trails, and hotels that once stood in this area. Amazing views from high and low! Level: moderate. Children welcome with an adult.

**Twilight Moonrise & Sunset Walk with Margaret Kinney & Kris Soffa (PA Naturalist)**

- **2.5 miles**
- **Monday, September 24 • 6-8 pm**
- **Meet at Houston Playground (900 Graylyn Lane).**

Welcome Autumn with a twilight walk to watch the full moon rise over the Houston Meadow just at sunset. Observe the stillness and astronomical balance as we say goodbye to summer. Be prepared to walk quietly on uneven trails in the dark. Bring a flashlight. Level: moderate. No pets. Ages: 12+ with adult.

**Pokemon GO Hike with Kevin Eikov**

- **2.5 miles**
- **Sunday, September 30 • 2-4 pm**
- **Meet at Historic Rittenhouse Town (Use 6034 Wissahickon Avenue for GPS driving directions).**

Imagine a video game that gets you up and out of the house. That's Pokémon Go. Calling all children, teens, and adults players to join Kevin in hunting and catching Pokémon in the park. Share Pokémon stories, battle in a gym or possibly a raid, and just enjoy the park as you walk and talk. Bring your own smart device with Pokémon Go game. Level: moderate.

**Bat Night: A Celebration of Bats & How We Can Protect Them with JoAnne Woods (Andorra Library) & Kris Soffa (PA Naturalist)**

- **2.5 miles**
- **Tuesday, October 2 • 6-8 pm**
- **Meet at the Wissahickon Environmental Center/Tree House.**

Why do bats matter and how can we support the habitat they depend upon? Join us for some batty fun with this celebration of the role of bats in nature. This is your chance to learn more about these fascinating nocturnal creatures. Listen to their chirping on our Bat Seeker-Echolocation device and partake in a bat count. Be prepared to walk quietly on woodland trails in the dark and bring a flashlight. Experience with bat monitoring is not required. Level: moderate. No pets. Ages: Children 12+ with adult.

**Meanderings in the Wissahickon with Shelly Brick**

- **Fridays, October 5, November 2, November 30 • 1-3 pm**
- **October 5-Meet at Allen Lane & Wayne Avenue.**
- **November 2-Meet at Kitchen’s Lane parking area.**
- **November 30-Meet at Chestnut Hill Avenue Trailhead.**

Join Shelly Brick for a hike through our beautiful park. We will explore a variety of locations and “talk story,” a Hawaiian tradition. All ages are welcome, and the pace will be set by the group.

**Trees of the Wissahickon: Andorra Meadow with Jenny Prince**

- **Sunday, October 7 • 2-3:30 pm**
- **Meet at the Wissahickon Environmental Center.**

Come enjoy and discover more about the trees in Andorra Meadow. On this hike, we’ll look closely at tree features and learn how to describe them. It’s early autumn, so we will be looking a lot at the leaves—are they opposite or alternate? Simple or compound? We will practice using a dichotomous key to help us identify them. Distance will be determined by the group. Level: easy.

**New Moon Contemplative Forest Walk with Sarah Gabriel**

- **Monday, October 8 • 5:30-7:30 pm**
- **Location and other details will be provided to registrants in advance of the hike.**

Unplug, quiet the chatter, activate all your senses and tune-in to the diversity of the worlds beyond yourself. The Japanese call it shinrin-yoku, or forest bathing, and the practice is gaining traction all over the world. Join us for a nighttime (new moon) contemplative walk in the Wissahickon. We’ll start and end with a few minutes of talking—including some suggestions on how to spend our time in the woods. But mostly you’ll just have quiet time to connect with natural rhythms, rejuvenate your body, and nourish your soul. Sarah Gabriel has been involved with promoting human sustainability for three decades. Level: easy.

**Trails Less Traveled IX: The Henry Avenue Bridge with Gerry Schweiger**

- **3 miles**
- **Sunday, October 14 • 1-3:30 pm**
- **Meet at the parking lot at Gypsy Lane near the Northbound Lincoln Drive intersection with Gypsy. The lot is opposite Wissahickon Hall.**

Using the magnificent Henry Avenue Bridge as a linchpin and some little-used trails on both sides of the creek, we will engage in a unique look at the lower Wissahickon Valley. Level: moderate.

**Mother Wissahickon Series: Progressive Relaxation at WEC with Kevin Eikov**

- **Sundays, October 14, November 25, December 9 • 3:30-5 pm**
- **Meet on the back porch of the Wissahickon Environmental Center/Tree House.**

Prepare yourself for rebirth and renewal as TA Kevin Eikov leads you into a stress-free zone of profound relaxation. Be prepared to experience deep relaxation and rejuvenation. Bring 2 blankets and a pillow. Suitable for children 13+ who can lie still and follow directions.

**Mother Wissahickon Series: Toleration Statue Hike with Kevin Eikov**

- **2.5 miles**
- **Sunday, October 19 • 10 am-12 pm**
- **Meet at Historic Rittenhouse Town (Use 6034 Wissahickon Avenue for GPS driving directions).**

Learn what Mother Wissahickon has to teach all visitors to the park as we walk to the Toleration Statue. Meet at the lower parking lot at Historic Rittenhouse Town. We will walk down to the Ten Box along Forbidden Drive, cross the Kitchen’s Lane Bridge, and follow the Orange Trail to the Toleration Statue. There is some elevation gain on the Orange Trail and some difficulty in climbing to the statue. Level: moderate.

**Kid Friendly Hike with Marv Schwartz**

- **2.2 miles**
- **Saturday, October 20 • 10 am-12 pm**
- **Saturday, November 17 • 10 am-12 pm**
- **Meet at Valley Green Inn.**

This hike takes participants along Forbidden Drive and on wooded trails with interesting geologic formations. Visit the Livezey Dam, Gorgas Creek Cave, and Fingerpan Bridge. We will stop to enjoy our snacks and continue on to Devil’s Pool and Pee Wee Rock on return to the Valley Green Inn. Level: easy to moderate.
Veteran’s Day Hike to the Toleration Statue with Kevin Eikov

2.5 miles
Sunday, November 11 • 10 am-12 pm
Meet at Historic Rittenhouse Town lower parking lot (use 6034 Wissahickon Ave. for GPS driving directions).

Join fellow veteran and TA Kevin Eikov as we travel from Rittenhouse Town to the Toleration Statute. We’ll enjoy the beautiful fall foliage as we walk down to Ten Box along Forbidden Drive, cross Kitchen’s Lane Bridge, then follow the Orange Trail to the Toleration Statue. There is some elevation gain on the Orange Trail and some difficulty in climbing to the statue. Level: moderate+.

Trails Less Traveled XI: The Fingerspan Bridge With Gerry Schweiger

3 miles
Sunday, November 11 • 1-3:30 pm
Meet at the Mt. Airy Avenue Trailhead.
We will visit Jody Pinto’s spectacular work of art that doubles as a functioning bridge over a 50-foot chasm in the Orange Trail. From there we’ll make a very difficult 100-year climb over a connector trail to Climber’s Rock for a spectacular view of the Creek. Level: moderate+.

Mother Wissahickon Series: Baptismal Pool Hike with Meditations with Kevin Eikov

2.5 miles
Friday, November 16 • 10 am-12 pm
Meet at Historic Rittenhouse Town (use 6034 Wissahickon Ave. for GPS driving directions).
Learn the secret meditations of Mother Wissahickon as Trail Ambassador Kevin leads a short meditation at Historic Rittenhouse Town before walking down Forbidden Drive to the Baptismal Pool. We’ll do a second mindfulness meditation at the Baptismal site and then return on the Orange Trail past the Toleration Statue. Level: mild to moderate+.

Drumstick Ramble with Ted Apple

6 miles
Thursday, November 22 • 9 am-12 pm
Meet at Historic Rittenhouse Town (use 6034 Wissahickon Ave. for GPS driving directions).
Join us for a Thanksgiving morning exercise walk. We’ll hike about six miles along the White and Yellow trails to work up an appetite for Thanksgiving dinner! Level: strenuous.

Trails Less Traveled VIII: Something Old, Something New with Gerry Schweiger

2.75 miles
Friday, November 23 • 1-3:30 pm
Meet at the “Cherokee” Parking Lot of Springside Chestnut Hill Academy (SCH) adjacent to the SCH athletic fields.
We will visit SCH’s new hiking trails and various trails that will take us to the Magargee Dam. From there we’ll connect to the abandoned old White Trail and climb to locations overlooking the Hartwell Run Gorge and the Wissahickon Creek. This hike is at moderate level but includes one strenuous climb and difficult footing at the Magargee Dam. Level: moderate+.

Trails Less Traveled X: The Houston Statue & Monoshone Trail with Gerry Schweiger

2 miles
Sunday, December 2 • 1-3:30 pm
Meet at Johnson Street between Lincoln Drive and Wissahickon Avenue. Enter Johnson from Wissahickon and park as close as possible to Lincoln.
One of the park’s three statues is never visited: the statue of park benefactor Henry Houston. The area is strangled by Lincoln Drive and Wissahickon Avenue. Enter Johnson from Wissahickon and park as close as possible to Lincoln. Level: moderate+.

Cholesterol—Friend or Foe?

Saturday, October 13
Come together to explore issues around food, health, and well-being while exercising in our beautiful park and sharing a meal together. We will take a brisk walk to the Covered Bridge and back to get our heart rates up and our endorphins pumped! Over lunch we’ll discuss the deep impact our microbiome has on health and disease.

What is Healthy Eating?

Saturday, November 10
Come together to explore issues around food, health, and well-being while exercising in our beautiful park and sharing a meal together. We will take a brisk walk to the Covered Bridge and back to get our heart rates up and our endorphins pumped. Over lunch we’ll discuss cholesterol, its role in human health and the myths we have been fed.

Lunch Bunch Walks with Linda Stern, MD

Linda is a retired physician who has a passion for looking at health from different points of view and wants to hear from you.
All walks are held from 10 am – 1 pm and meet at The Cedars House Café.
Level: easy.

Morning Meditation with Linda Stern, MD

Lunch for all talks is not included, and outside food is not permitted in the restaurant. Participants are responsible for their own lunch and encouraged to purchase it in advance at The Cedars House Café.

Our Microbiome

Saturday, September 29
Come together to explore issues around food, health, and well-being while exercising in our beautiful park and sharing a meal together. We will take a brisk walk to the Covered Bridge and back to get our heart rates up and our endorphins pumped! Over lunch we’ll discuss cholesterol, its role in human health and the myths we have been fed.

What is Healthy Eating?

Saturday, November 10
Come together to explore issues around food, health, and well-being while exercising in our beautiful park and sharing a meal together. We will take a brisk walk to the Covered Bridge and back to get our heart rates up and our endorphins pumped. Over lunch we’ll discuss healthy eating. Humans consume hundreds of different diets. What do healthy ones have in common? How can you choose a diet right for you?
A Winning Trifecta: SUMMER, KIDS, AND ICE CREAM

FOW celebrated its 12th Annual Ice Cream Social in Wissahickon Valley Park outside The Cedars House Café on Forbidden Drive. Everyone who joined FOW on August 15 enjoyed free ice cream (courtesy of Bredenbeck’s Bakery), the exciting sounds of the Saantis Davis Drum Ensemble, games, and nature crafts, with help from FOW and Wissahickon Environmental Center staff.

BIENNIAL WISSAHICKON PHOTO CONTEST

DEADLINE FOR ENTRIES: OCTOBER 15

Winners will be announced October 29, and their photos will be displayed in an exhibit to be held at the FOW office. Visit fow.org for complete rules and details.

WINTER IN THE WISSAHICKON

WREATH-MAKING WORKSHOP

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 1
TWO SESSIONS: 10 AM-NOON OR 1-3 PM
VALLEY GREEN INN

Celebrate the fun and beauty of the holiday season at FOW’s annual wreath-making workshop. Enjoy roasted chestnuts, hot apple cider, and a light breakfast or lunch buffet at Valley Green Inn. Decorate your holiday wreath with fresh western juniper with blueberries, incense cedar with yellow tips, holly with red berries, and assorted pine cones and ornaments. Children can make nature gifts for animals and enjoy a winter woods hike. Tickets will be sold on a first-come, first-served basis to FOW members.

Tickets

FOW Members:
Family (2 adults, 2 children, 1 wreath, breakfast/lunch): $100
Adult (1 adult, 1 wreath, breakfast/lunch): $45
Child (1 child, breakfast/lunch): $20

Non-FOW Members:
If space allows, tickets will be offered to non-FOW members, and include a one-year membership:
Family: $145 • Adult: $90 • Child: $20

TO BUY TICKETS AND FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT FOW.ORG.
IN THE WISSAHICKON

Trail Ambassador Walks & Talks
Registration is recommended for all hikes (required if indicated) so that participants can be informed of weather or other emergency cancellations. Unless otherwise specified, walks may be on rocky, rugged trails that may be wet or slippery. Wear sturdy shoes or hiking boots and protect yourself against poisonous 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 canceled in heavy rain or icy conditions. Visit www.fow.org to register and get updates.

MORE INFORMATION ON P. 16 AND AT FOW.ORG

Hikes in the Wissahickon

Trail Ambassador Walks & Talks

2018

with Gerry Schweiger

Friday, November 23 • 1-3:30 pm
Meet at the “Cheerleader” Parking Lot of Sprague Chestnut Hill Academy (SCHA) adjacent to the SCHA athletic fields. We’ll visit SCHA’s new hiking trails on our way to the Magargee Dam. From there we’ll connect to the abandoned old White Trail and climb to locations overlooking the Hartley Run Gorge and the Wissahickon Creek. This hike includes one strenuous climb and difficult footing at the Magargee Dam. Level: moderate.

Trails Less Traveled X: The Houston Statue & Monoshone Trail with Gerry Schweiger
Sunday, December 2 • 1-3:00 pm
Meet at John Johnson St. between Lincoln Drive and Wissahickon Ave. Enter Johnson from Wissahickon and park as close as possible to Houston. The area is strangled by Lincoln Drive traffic. We’ll use the Monoshone Trail (and a secret neighborhood trail) to avoid this obstacle and visit Houston. Level: moderate.

Mother Wissahickon Series: Mindfulness Meditation Hike to Herman’s Cave with Kevin Eikov
Friday, December 7 • 10 am-12 pm
Meet at Historic Rittenhouse Town (June 6034 Wissahickon Ave. for GPS). TA Kevin Eikov leads a hike from Historic Rittenhouse Town to Herman’s Cave and back. During the hike we’ll practice mindfulness meditation of the Level: easy.

Giving

There are several ways to make meaningful gifts to advance FOW’s mission.

United Way Donations
Friends of the Wissahickon can receive donations through the United Way. If your employer offers United Way giving and you would like to designate Friends of the Wissahickon as your beneficiary, please use our option code #9882.

Amazon Smile
If you shop on Amazon.com, use AmazonSmile (smile.amazon.com) and select Friends of the Wissahickon as the nonprofit organization you would like to support. The AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5 percent of the purchase price from your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to FOW.

Stock
Consider giving a stock of our. Our DTC # is 0062 and our Vanguard Brokerage Acc # is 23501307.

Friends of the Wissahickon • Fall 2018

Trails Less Traveled VIII: Something Old, Something New with Gerry Schweiger
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CALENDAR OF EVENTS IN THE WISSAHICKON

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES
FALL PARK CLEANUPS WITH FOW! SEE P. 14

TUESDAYS
Join us for structure repair and construction from 9 am to 1 pm. For more information or to volunteer, contact Field Operations Manager Hoan Tran at 215-361-2347.

THURSDAYS
Join FowT on Thursdays for a morning of trail maintenance in the park! Work will consist of regular trail maintenance projects including repairing drains and grade reversals, repairing stone work, narrowing widened trails, and emergency trail repairs. Meet at Pachella Field (6751 Henry Ave.) at 9:30 am and plan on being on the trails starting at 9:45 and back at Pachella by 1 pm. For more information or to volunteer, contact Volunteer Coordinator Shawn Green at green@fow.org.

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. Visit fow.org/volunteering for more information.

THIRD SATURDAY OF THE MONTH
Join Friends of Cresheim Trail to improve the trails in the Cresheim Creek area. Meet at the entrance at Lincoln Drive and Allen’s Lane at 10 am. wear sturdy shoes, long pants, and long sleeves to protect against poison oak. For more information or to volunteer, contact Friends of Cresheim Trail at info@cresheimtrail.org or 215-715-9159.

WISSAHICKON VALLEY WATERSHED ASSOCIATION
WWW offers many public programs as part of its mission to protect the quality and beauty of the Wissahickon Creek and to enhance life in the Wissahickon Watershed. Located at 12 Morris Road in Ambler. More info at wvwa.org.

RUNNING CLUBS
EVERY THURSDAY
Wissahickon Wanderers Trail Run. 4-5 miles. Starts 6:30 pm sharp at Valley Green Inn. No Fees. All runners, speeds, drill levels welcome! Fun food and cash bar afterwards courtesy of the Valley Green Inn. For updates and more info visit wissahickonrunners.org.

EVERY SATURDAY
Shawmont Running Club. Starts at Northwestern Ave. & Andorra Rd. (north end of Forbidden Drive). From the 2nd Saturday in May through the 2nd Saturday in October, start at 7:30 am. From 3rd Saturday in October through 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 shawmontrunningclub.com.

WISSAHICKON VALLEY ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER
Programs are FREE and begin at the Tree House; unless otherwise noted. Registration required for most programs; registering early is recommended at treehousewisc.org.

FULL MOON HIKE • MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 24 7 PM
Hike by the light of the full and enjoy the peaceful sounds of the darkened forest. Discover the tree silhouettes against the moonlit sky, listen to the crunching sounds of the fallen leaves, or maybe hear the hoot of an owl. Space is limited. Adults only.

APPLE PRESSING ON FORBIDDEN DRIVE • SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 21 11 AM
Join us on Forbidden Drive (near Northwestern Ave.) for the annual celebration of autumn. Help make fresh apple cider using an old-fashioned cider press. Toss an apple in, take a turn at the crank, and watch as the cider pours out. Enjoy a taste of the finished product… fresh & delicious apple cider! No registration. All ages. Rain or Shine.

KIDS EXPLORER–MEADOW MAGIC • SATURDAY, OCTOBER 13 11 AM
Ready for your kids just to be kids in the woods? Led by our staff, equipped with a few Band-Aids, the kids will go climbing over fallen trees, scrambling over rocks, running through fields, playing in the leaves, and much more! Ages 6-12. Drop-Off optional.

WISCONSIN HIKING WITH MURA THE EXPLORER
Last Friday of every month 10 am
Join Fow Executive Director Maura McCarthy for a hike on the last Friday of each month. She will tour a different section of the Wissahickon during each hike and talk about her park experiences, as well as point out any recent improvements by Fow. Bring your hiking shoes and be ready to share your favorite Wissahickon stories with her! Registration is recommended. For more information and to register, visit fow.org.

FOR A LISTING OF MORE EVENTS, VISIT FOW.ORG/EVENTS.
JOIN US ON FACEBOOK, TWITTER, AND INSTAGRAM

- Friends of the Wissahickon Membership Form –

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

MEMBERSHIP LEVEL

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

- Hat
- Good Night Wissahickon Valley Park
- Please keep the premium and use the entire membership fee for the Park.

T-Shirt (circle size)

| Children | S | M | L |
| Map (black) | S | M | L | XL |
| Covered Bridge (red) | S | M | L | XL | XXL |
| Adult Frog (white) | S | M | L | XL | XXL |

All members receive a map of Wissahickon Valley Park, invitations to all events, delivery of our quarterly newsletter, and a membership card to claim discounts for meals at Valley Green Inn (dinners Mon-Fri), The Cedars House Café, and FOW merchandise. In addition to these benefits, Basic members receive a calendar (at year’s end). Family members receive all Basic member benefits plus a choice of two kids’ T-shirts OR one children’s book. Contributing members and above receive all Basic member benefits plus a choice of a hat OR T-shirt.

Method of Payment

- Check Enclosed (payable to Friends of the Wissahickon)
- Charge my
- VISA  Mastercard  AmX  Discover
- Auto-renew my membership annually (credit card info. required)

Card Number__________________________ Expiration Date____________________

Please return to: 40 W. Evergreen Ave., Suite 108, Philadelphia, PA 19118-3324  •  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.

Future calendar listings for the newsletter may be placed by contacting Friends of the Wissahickon at 215-247-0417 or office@fow.org.

The Calendar of Events in the Wissahickon may also be viewed at fow.org/events, which contains updates on our events, including cancellations.

HISTORIC RITTENHOUSE TOWN
Historic RittenhouseTown offers classes, workshops, and events for individuals and families to learn about the craft of hand papermaking and other aspects of Colonial life at the original Rittenhouse Family Homestead. Located on Lincoln Drive at Rittenhouse Street. Info. at 215-438-5711, programs@rittenhousetown.org, or rittenhousetown.org.