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Welcome to summer in the Wissahickon! For the first time, FOW conducted a hybrid Annual Members Meeting, thrilled to be back in person at Valley Green Inn after two years, but also pleased to welcome our friends who preferred to attend online. We recognized the immense achievements and guidance of five dynamos who completed their terms; while their board service ends, their friendship will endure, and we look forward to working with the two new directors who joined us. Guest speaker Maurice Sampson II, the Eastern Pennsylvania Director for Clean Water Action (CWA), whose work was integral to the passage of Philadelphia’s plastic shopping bag ban, discussed CWA’s work and the history of the Clean Water Act, which was enacted 50 years ago this year. If you missed the meeting, read the recap on p. 3.

This year also marks the twentieth anniversary of the Lenape Nation of Pennsylvania’s Rising Nation River Journey, the topic of a recent Valley Talk (p. 6). FOW was privileged to be one of the first signers of the Lenape Nation’s Treaty of Renewed Friendship at the inaugural event in 2002. We will again be honored at this year’s River Journey when we receive the Passing of the Wampum in a special ceremony.

Speaker Adam DePaul of the Lenape Nation noted that the “relationships established by the first River Journey generated a cooperative spirit that has turned into real action to protect our rivers, wetlands, and forest.”

This sense of purpose and partnership has been at the heart of FOW’s mission since its founding nearly a century ago and continues to drive our work, with individuals and organizations.

This sense of purpose and partnership has been at the heart of FOW’s mission since its founding nearly a century ago and continues to drive our work, with individuals and organizations, such as our collaboration in bringing Leave No Trace (LNT) principles to the park. Read about FOW’s latest LNT efforts on p. 5 and join us in earning the Wissahickon Gold Standard status as a national model for practicing and promoting LNT best practices, as well as participating in another community collaboration, Weavers Way Ambler Community Fridge (p. 13).

Be sure to read our digital Annual Report for 2021. The link is available on p. 2. And if you’re looking for things to do in the park this summer, consider these FOW activities:

- Biennial Photo Contest (p. 2)
- 7th Annual All Trails Challenge (p. 7)
- Habitat Monitoring Scavenger Hunt (p. 9)
- Trail Ambassador Walks & Talks (p. 14)

Let's continue to be great friends!

Ruffian Tittmann, Executive Director
SAVE ROOM FOR OUR
ICE CREAM SOCIAL.

FALL VALLEY TALK
SEPTEMBER 13
6 PM

Historic Postcards of the Wissahickon
with David Bower

SAVE THE DATE

GIVE US YOUR BEST SHOTS
The deadline for submissions to FOW’s Biennial Wissahickon Photo Contest is October 14. Returning as co-sponsors with FOW are Wissahickon Trails and the Woodmere Art Museum.
To celebrate the Wissahickon as a park for all seasons, the four entry categories are spring, summer, fall, and winter. Prizes awarded will be $150 for Best in Show, $75 for People’s Choice, and $50 for First Place in each of the categories. Winners will be announced on October 28.
Visit https://fow.org/photocontest2022/ for complete rules and details, and to submit your entries.

2021 ANNUAL REPORT NOW AVAILABLE

August 2022
Watch FOW’s social media and web calendar for the exact date and details.

FOW’S 2021 DIGITAL-ONLY ANNUAL REPORT IS AVAILABLE FOR DOWNLOAD AT FOW.ORG/ABOUT-FOW

2021 ANNUAL REPORT NOW AVAILABLE

Friends of the Wissahickon • Summer 2022
The 2022 Annual Members Meeting was FOW’s first hybrid event. It was hosted in person at the Valley Green Inn for the first time since 2019, while simultaneously streaming live on Zoom. (While we faced some technical difficulties for our online guests, we learned some valuable lessons and look forward to hosting successful hybrid events in the future!) It was also the first in-person Annual Members Meeting for our Executive Director Ruffian Tittmann.

The theme for the evening was “We’re back!” In welcoming everyone, board President Alyssa Edwards said that after restrictions from COVID, FOW is back stronger than ever, and acknowledged gratitude for all those who “continue to drive FOW forward in a truly spectacular way.”

Outgoing Treasurer Jim Walker confirmed that FOW is also strong financially, owing in part to a loan forgiveness program. Jim emphasized that not only is our cushion of operating funds well over the three-to-six month standard goal of nonprofit organizations like FOW, it is the highest since he became treasurer in 2015.

After recognizing staff for their significant efforts in 2021 and this year, Ruffian proceeded to illustrate the many ways that FOW is back, providing updates about the organization’s gradual return to “business as usual” with regular volunteer days, large-scale events, free Trail Ambassador hikes, habitat restoration, and plans for long-term infrastructure projects. Ruffian spoke on FOW’s important work, both in and out of the park, and provided an update on our continued commitment building diversity, equity, and inclusion within the organization.

Ruffian introduced guest speaker Maurice M. Sampson II, the Eastern Pennsylvania Director for Clean Water Action since 2016. Maurice is a fearless environmental activist whose environmental justice career started when he was 15 years old (the same year Earth Day was officially established!) He has worn many hats over his career, such as serving among the nation’s first recycling coordinators for the cities of Newark and Philly.

As a private citizen, he led the Recycle NOW Philadelphia campaign bringing curbside recycling to all of Philadelphia for the first time in 2007. In his current position with Clean Water Action, he drafted the bill and facilitated political support leading to the passage of the City of Philadelphia’s plastic shopping bag ban.

In his speech to audience members, Maurice Sampson said, “Friends of the Wissahickon stands as a model and inspiration to conservation groups everywhere,” and “...speaking for my unborn grandchildren, I want to express my gratitude for your adherence to your mission, ‘to conserve the natural beauty and wildness of the Wissahickon Valley and stimulate public interest therein.’”

Maurice gave an impassioned speech sharing the history and importance of the Clean Water Act, which turned 50 this year. He stressed the need to strengthen the Clean Water Act over the next 50 years, specifically through addressing non-point sources of pollution (like stormwater runoff that carries contaminants from agricultural fields). Maurice closed his speech by urging FOW to keep expanding its membership so we can continue our invaluable stewardship work in the Wissahickon Valley Park.
Thanks

TO OUR OUTGOING BOARD MEMBERS

We are grateful to the following individuals for their transformative contributions to FOW’s Board of Directors. We are grateful for everything they accomplished with FOW, and we seek to continue their legacy as we move toward a century of stewardship. We will miss their many talents and dedication but will value their continued friendship.

EMILY DAESCHLIER has served on FOW’s board since 2012. With degrees in physical geography and horticulture, Emily worked for the National Park Service in the Everglades on water quality issues, as well as for the Academy of Natural Sciences, where she co-authored the book *Groundwater Contamination in the United States* (1987). She has owned a gardening business and worked at several nurseries. Emily brought this wealth of practical experience to her role as chair of the Habitat Committee, giving it a more hands-on presence in the field. Emily’s approachable style and acute observational skills forged a strong connection between FOW’s strategy and planning and its work on the ground.

JOANNE DAHME has been an FOW board member since 2019, a role to which she brought decades of experience in watershed-related management and advocacy. Joanne spent more than 40 years with the Philadelphia Water Department, leading its Public Affairs Division, directing the development and implementation of regional watershed partnerships, and being a founding member of the Tookany/Tacony-Frankford (TTF) Watershed Partnership. Joanne recently launched a consultancy specializing in water resources education and communication. FOW is grateful to have been the recipient of Joanne’s extensive knowledge, and we look forward to working with her through her ongoing board positions with TTF and the Schuylkill Center for Environmental Education.

NINA GALLAGHER, PH.D., has served on FOW’s board since 2015, most recently as chair of the Infrastructure Committee. She is currently a senior user experience (UX) researcher at Google in New York. Nina’s professional expertise in the areas of survey and instrument design, in-person interviews, and program evaluation has led to better evaluation of FOW’s impact as we plan for the future.

JIM WALKER has been a member of FOW’s board since 2015 and has served as its treasurer since then, excluding a hiatus from 2018–2019. His financial acumen as a retired senior executive of PNC Bank, where he served as general manager of its ATM Group, helped increase FOW’s financial stability, a critical asset especially during the unique challenges brought on by the pandemic. As he leaves board service, his leadership as an officer leaves FOW bigger, better, and financially stronger. Jim plans to continue volunteering with the Structures Crew, which he joined over a year ago, as well as serving in other FOW capacities, such as on the Finance Committee.

SUSIE WILMERDING has been a longstanding presence on FOW’s board, having served from 2004 to 2012, and then again from 2015 to the present. An environmentalist, she most recently served on the Habitat Committee, after two years as its chair. Susie has been a wonderful supporter of and resource for FOW’s habitat efforts. During her earlier period on the board, Susie encouraged FOW to address habitat restoration, especially along trail corridors, which led to the implementation of the Sustainable Trails Initiative. Additionally, through her interest in forest management, she connected FOW to several experts in the field.

FOW board president Alyssa Edwards kicks off FOW’s first hybrid 2022 Annual Meeting at the Valley Green Inn.

More Board News. . .

We are pleased to welcome two new board members:

Kevin Grant, a senior wealth advisor with Tompkins Financial Advisors, has been serving on FOW’s Budget and Finance Committee since June 2021. Kevin holds his Series 7, Series 63, and Series 65 FINRA registrations, and is licensed as an agent for life, accident, disability, and health insurance. Additionally, he is a Chartered Retirement Planning Counselor (CRPC), awarded through the College for Financial Planning. Previously, he was a financial solutions advisor-service president for Bank of America Merrill Lynch.

Lula Defersha, the campaign director for the Philadelphia Parks Alliance, is a nonprofit leader who has spent the past 12 years working as a community collaborator, facilitator, advocate, and youth development specialist. She holds a certification from the Executive Program in Social Impact Strategy from the University of Pennsylvania, a Conflict Resolution Certification from Cornell University, a Certification by the International Coach Federation, and a Leading Diverse Teams and Organizations Certification from the University of Michigan. Additionally, Lula sits on the Board of Directors of the Ethiopian Community Association and Ethio-Philly Mental Health.

Five directors were renewed for three more years: Adam DePaul and Darium Poke, after completing their first term; Kevin Berkoff, John Meigs, and Hooman Parsia, beginning their second terms.
"Collaboration is key to creating a cleaner Wissahickon," said Executive Director Ruffian Tittmann to a group of FOW’s partners gathered at a recent online summit about making a concerted effort to promote the principles of Leave No Trace (LNT) in Wissahickon Valley Park. She asked the partners, including Philadelphia Parks & Recreation, Wissahickon Trails, and the Philadelphia Police Department, to use their networks and communication channels to amplify FOW’s LNT messaging. The primary focus for the 2022 season, based on LNT recommendations, is reducing litter and having visitors stay on designated trails. Efforts to help park users enjoy themselves and be safe (e.g., removing valuables from cars and locking them to protect against break-ins) remain a constant.

Last July, FOW hosted a Hot Spot Weekend of education, events and activities with LNT, after the national organization selected the park as a “hot spot” because of the impacts of high visitorship. The designation recognizes that the park is suffering from severe human-related impacts (excessive trash, pet waste, habitat degradation, visitor conflicts, and more) intensified by ever-growing popularity. Currently, more than two million park users visit the Wissahickon annually, with the greatest concentration over the summer months. But the LNT designation comes with the belief that change is possible.

The Hot Spot Weekend provided an opportunity to learn together as a community about what works to reduce these impacts, and how to speak to these issues so that everyone who visits the Wissahickon feels welcome and is inspired to become more invested in conserving this special urban green space.

The event marked the beginning of a movement, a commitment, to making a concerted effort and developing more communication about LNT culture around the Wissahickon. This summer, visitors will see signs of LNT throughout the park—literally. FOW is launching a campaign of engaging and informative signage to inform visitors about how they can make less of an imprint and more of a positive impact in the Wissahickon. With a positive tone, these signs will focus more on “why” and “how to” rather than “what not to do.”

The momentum around the LNT Hot Spot designation in the park continues to grow with the selection of FOW and the Wissahickon as a host site for sessions of the Greater & Greener International Urban Parks Conference on June 21. For more than a decade, Greater & Greener has been the leading international conference for urban park leaders and advocates to explore the role of parks and recreation in addressing some of the biggest challenges facing twenty-first-century cities. The FOW staff was honored to lead a workshop in the park’s primary LNT Hot Spot of the greater Valley Green/Devil’s Pool area about an overall strategy for balancing the environmental needs of this popular natural area with the importance of human experience.

Through our commitment to stewardship that helps preserve and protect the natural landscape, and by demonstrating the highest level of practicing and promoting LNT ethics, FOW is hoping to achieve LNT’s Gold Standard status for Wissahickon Valley Park. LNT’s highest standard, the designation would distinguish the Wissahickon as the country’s first urban park to be recognized as “an exemplary model for other public lands.”

Let’s work together as a community to help the Wissahickon achieve the winning status it deserves.

The FOW staff was honored to lead a workshop and conduct several tours throughout the Wissahickon as part of the 2022 Greater & Greener International Urban Parks Conference in June.
FOW welcomed Adam DePaul, Tribal Council Member, Storykeeper, and Coordinator of the Rising Nation River Journey for the Lenape Nation of Pennsylvania at a Virtual Valley Talk in May. A member of FOW’s board, DePaul shared a brief history of the Lenape Nation and discussed the upcoming Rising Nation River Journey this summer.

The Lenape Nation of Pennsylvania launched the Rising Nation River Journey in 2002, initially in response to increasing pollution in the Lenape Sipu (Delaware River) and to engage like-minded individuals and organizations such as FOW to join them in addressing the problem. The Lenape Nation invites participants to sign a Treaty of Renewed Friendship that acknowledges the Lenape’s traditions and their role as stewards of their ancestral homeland. FOW was among the first signers and continues a close partnership with the Lenape Nation.

“The River Journey was intended as a one-time event, but the relationships established on that first journey generated a cooperative spirit that turned into real action to protect our rivers, wetlands, and forest,” said DePaul. Since then, the event has been held every four years over the past two decades.

The goals of the River Journey are two-fold: (1) to replace misinformed narratives about Lenape history that talk about erasure, and replace them with the true story of the Lenape people who stayed in the Commonwealth and are now proudly proclaiming the practice of ancestral traditions, culture, and spiritual beliefs; and (2) to raise awareness of the Lenape Nation’s numerous projects to provide practical ways for all citizens to respect and protect the Lenape homeland for future generations.

The next River Journey takes place from July 30 to August 20. The paddle down the Delaware River begins at the mouth of the river near Hancock, New York, and ends in Cape May, New Jersey, with stops along the way for treaty signings. The public is invited to paddle with members of the Lenape Nation any time during the River Journey or join in treaty signing at stops along the way, which tentatively include East Falls and Swarthmore College in mid-August. Besides presentations on the Lenape people, language, and culture, the event provides a platform for partners to network and spread information about what they’re doing.

Signing the treaty signifies recognition of the Lenape as the indigenous people of the “Lenapehoking” and commitment to acting as good stewards of the land in any way they can.

The event’s timing this year is especially meaningful given the fiftieth anniversary in 2022 of the Clean Water Act, the nation’s first comprehensive legislation protecting water quality.

The River Journey celebration includes the ceremonial passing of wampum to a partner whose work especially embodies the mission of the tradition. That person or organization then keeps it for four years, and then passes the honor at the next River Journey to a new partner, which this year will be FOW on August 16 at Haverford College!!

Click here for more information about the 2022 Rising Nation River Journey and how to participate.

The River Journey was intended as a one-time event, but the relationships established on that first journey generated a cooperative spirit that turned into real action to protect our rivers, wetlands, and forest.

—Adam DePaul
In 2016, Friends of the Wissahickon launched the All Trails Challenge (ATC) to encourage park visitors to explore Wissahickon Valley Park’s 1,800 acres and 50+ trails while supporting FOW’s extensive conservation work. Since then, this event has grown, both in participation and funds raised, to maintain the delicate balance between sustaining a healthy ecosystem and being a welcoming, accessible recreational resource for the millions of visitors who love the park.

You don’t have to complete all 50 miles (although some have) or be an athlete to join the ATC, and it’s not a race. There are many reasons why families, friends, and individuals of all ages and fitness levels join to hike, walk, run, bike or horseback ride through the Wissahickon.

In honor of the ATC’s seventh year, here are seven of the most popular ones:

- Help the park
- Personal challenge
- Physical, mental & emotional wellbeing
- Improved motivation
- Experience nature
- Explore more of the Wissahickon’s history, geology, and points of interest
- Connect with like-minded people

Will you take the Challenge?!

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SAVE THESE DATES FOR THE 7TH ANNUAL ALL TRAILS CHALLENGE

**Tuesday, August 9**
Information session (virtual)
Learn about the ATC, including mileage tracking and hike apps, setup for your fundraising page, tips for getting donors, sharing updates with friends and family, safety best practices (in keeping with the latest COVID-19 recommendations), and more. Register here.

**Monday, August 22**
Start date for FOW members

**Tuesday, September 6**
General start date.
(Also in September, ATC launch party at Chestnut Hill Brewing Co. Stay tuned for details.)

**Tuesday, November 29**
Last day to compete

Once you register as an ATC Challenger and start sharing your progress, you’re well on the path toward fabulous prizes for mileage and more! Along the way, while ATC Challengers help fundraise for FOW’s trail improvement projects, they’ll be getting cool swag and building a Challenger community at ATC events. (All participants must register with a minimum of $50 raised or contributed to be eligible to compete for any prizes.)

Find out how to participate at fow.org/event/2022atc1/, and visit often to find out about giveaways and prizes. Keep up with the ATC fun by following @FOWissahickon and #FOWAllTrails on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

This year, FOW is proud to welcome back Univest, Kouvenda Media, Chestnut Hill Brewing, and University of Pennsylvania Master of Environmental Science and University of Pennsylvania Master of Science in Applied Geosciences. If you are interested in becoming a sponsor for this popular event, contact Maeve Pollack at pollack@fow.org.
Spring delivered us the usual mix of storms and inconsistent temperatures, but fortunately, in between all of the rain and wind, we were able to accomplish a lot of great work in the park.

Volunteer Service Days returned in full swing on most Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Saturday mornings. These events are beacons to like-minded folks, drawing them together to care for the park. Some of our larger projects included Earth Day at Harvey Street, where we cleaned up and beautified the trailheads and the Henry Houston Statue; large-scale litter clean-ups on Bell’s Mill Road and Lincoln Drive (in partnership with Philadelphia Parks & Recreation and the Philadelphia Streets Department); and plantings at Hermitage Mansion and the slopes along the Monster Trail. We’ve also concentrated a lot of our efforts on spring clean-outs of drains and major stormwater infrastructure in the park.

FOW has a lot more work to do this summer, so we’re always looking for extra hands. Our Volunteer Service Days are open to all and don’t require experience. We provide the tools, gloves, and instruction—you just have to show up! Check out our upcoming Volunteer Service Days here: fow.org/volunteering/workinthepark.

Joining us for many spring stewardship projects were school groups from Episcopal Academy, as well as corporate groups with amazing turn outs, from Xylem, Univest, Green Mountain Energy, Hamilton Lane, and Victrex. If you are part of a business or organization interested in a private service project in the Wissahickon, read more here: fow.org/volunteering/corporate-groups/.

Our Wissaheroes (the self-led cleanup program FOW started during the early days of the pandemic) is still going strong, with over 700 pounds of trash removed from the park in just the first five months of 2022 alone. This is an easy way to show some love for the park on your own schedule. Check out the details here: fow.org/volunteering/clean-up/

Our newly trained Trail Ambassadors and Crew Leaders hit the ground running by jumping into outreach and fieldwork. Trail Ambassadors have been out almost every day of the week, providing information, education, and outreach to park users on hiking shifts, outreach tables, guided walks and talks, and assisting at our larger Volunteer Service Days. Crew Leaders have been co-leading all the service days and spent an entire morning cleaning and sharpening our tools for the season. This year, after COVID-related delays, FOW launched an exciting new initiative with our Crew Leaders: we assign groups to oversee small sections of the park, cut back invasive plant species, and improve trails.

A select group of Crew Leaders have also been working with us to clear the many downed trees on our natural surface trails. Helping us with this Sisyphean task is a new partnership with PowerCorpsPHL, an immersive City of Philadelphia workforce development initiative for young adults. Twice a month, FOW has been spending a day with their second-year fellows, removing an average of seven fallen trees from the trails per workday.

Last but not least, our tight-knit Structures Crew continues to meet every Tuesday morning to make repairs to fences, benches, and many other structures in the park.
FIELD STEWARDSHIP UPDATE

Use eBird to find:
- Green Heron
- Red-bellied Woodpecker
- Blue-gray Gnatcatcher

Use iNaturalist to find:
- Monarch Butterfly
- Carolina Mantis

FOW put this year’s Earth Day 2022 theme of “Invest in our planet” into action in Germantown when staff, volunteers, and neighbors gathered to steward a small but lovely section of Wissahickon Valley Park. They removed litter, beautified trailheads, and cut back invasive plant species around the historic Harvey Street Trailhead. Their efforts were part of the Germantown Neighborhood Connection Project, an FOW capital improvement project that addresses the need for safe, enjoyable pedestrian access to quality outdoor recreation close to home. This project is funded in part by the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and Councilmember Bass, in partnership with Philadelphia Parks & Recreation (PPR), with additional financial support from the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) and Sensodyne.

HABITAT MONITORING: SUMMER

FOW’s community-based science program continues this summer. Take a look at the map and photos below to help guide your summer habitat monitoring. Consult FOW’s habitat monitoring page on our website for more details and instructions, and consider printing the photo page and bringing it to the park to check off what you find along the way.

SPECIES SCAVENGER HUNT

What lives in Wissahickon Valley Park? Help us find out!

The Summer 2022 Habitat Monitoring Zone is along the Wissahickon Creek on the northeast side of Wissahickon Valley Park. Check out fow.org/volunteering/habitat for more details!
NEW STAFF MEMBERS

In her LinkedIn profile, Christina Bassler said she was thrilled to assume her new role as FOW’s communications coordinator considering how much she loves Philadelphia and its parks. It’s a fitting next step from her previous position as communications associate at Philadelphia Parks & Recreation.

Applying her strong background in developing and implementing social media strategies, Christina is responsible for overseeing FOW’s digital presence on its Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn accounts, sharing news of what’s going on at FOW and in the Wissahickon. She also manages website updates and writes the weekly e-newsletter and blog, as well as content for the Virtual Valley. Christina, who has a demonstrated history of working in the nonprofit and hospitality industry, earned a bachelor’s degree in English and philosophy from Gettysburg College and is working on a dual master’s degree program in international peace and conflict resolution and public health. She enjoys cooking, tending to her plants, and watching horror movies.

Melanie-Monaye Sanders has joined the FOW team as development assistant, responsible for processing gifts and handling membership correspondence. Melanie’s primary role is to ensure that donations and membership dues are processed and allocated in a timely manner. In addition to gifts, Melanie is also responsible for the communications that go out to members regarding everything from merchandise to maps. In this position, Melanie is directly involved in the fundraising that helps conserve the natural beauty of the park and preserve its history as well.

Melanie comes to FOW after several years as a membership specialist with the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society. Melanie earned an AA in humanities at Mercer County Community College and a BA in history from Temple University. While earning her degrees, her nonprofit work was focused on museums and public history, and she spent time working as a gallery guide, visitor’s services assistant at the Barnes Foundation, and social media coordinator for the New Jersey Historic Trust. Melanie is originally a native of West Michigan and a recent Philadelphia transplant. She is an avid reader, a self-proclaimed cider connoisseur, and loves to travel.

As FOW’s new volunteer program coordinator, Amelia Marren divides her time between office and fieldwork. She co-leads Volunteer Service Days with other staff members and manages FOW’s engagement-related volunteer programs, including the Trail Ambassador program, Wissaheroes, and the forthcoming Junior Stewards program.

Amelia has cultivated her passion for nurturing sustainable communities through her previous work experience and education. Before joining FOW, she was at the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, first as a member of the community gardens and trees field staff, and then as land stewardship coordinator. Prior to that, she served as a member of the conservation corps for the Rocky Mountain Conservancy in Estes Park, Colorado.

Amelia earned a BA in growth and structure of cities, with a minor in environmental studies from Bryn Mawr College, which included a semester abroad at University College Dublin School of Architecture, Planning and Environmental Policy, where she studied city/urban community and regional planning. She enjoys hiking, gardening, cooking, traveling, and exploring new places to eat and visit.

FOW IS HIRING

Friends of the Wissahickon is seeking a full-time Field Coordinator to work as part of our field stewardship team. This individual will be the main point person for our infrastructure-related work, including trail building and maintenance, maintaining and coordinating repairs to our machines, and building and repairing historic and manmade structures. Primary responsibilities also involve volunteer-related work, such as leading specialized volunteers on trail work and structure repair projects, co-leading Volunteer Service Days with other FOW staff members, and handling volunteer training.

Ideal candidates should have similar work experience, demonstrate strong interpersonal and communication skills, be motivated, and be able to work successfully as an individual and as part of a team.

Considering the often-changing nature of FOW’s fieldwork, this person should be able to plan and keep to deadlines, while also staying flexible to respond to last minute changes. While this position is largely field-based, applicants should be comfortable with technology, data collection, and electronic communication.

Schedule: 40 hours per week on a Tuesday-Saturday schedule.

To learn more about and apply for this position, visit fow.org/about-fow-2-2/jobs/.
A t sunset, on a night close to the dates of each full moons throughout the year, we host a hike to watch the moonrise through the forest trees and in the sky over the meadow.

Much of the science surrounding the night sky has eluded me, as much as I try to understand its mysteries. But, despite the light pollution that lightens our night sky, we often get a solid glimpse of not just the moon, but also the brightest stars and planets.

The moon appears full because the Earth is directly between it and the sun. When the moon is opposite the sun, we are in position to see the whole, daylit side of the moon all at once. My favorite part of the full phase of the moon is that it rises at sunset and sets at sunrise, so you can watch both at the same time if your views of the east and west skies are obstruction free. Unfortunately, our view of this simultaneous rise and set in Andorra Meadow has been blocked in the west with new construction. But we continue to look for a spot in the Wissahickon to witness the moonset and moonrise together again. Until then, we focus on its rising.

Each season the moonlight reveals new features on our hikes. In winter and spring, the leafless trees show off the curves and bends in their branches—sometimes even revealing the silhouette of an owl. The spring is also an active time, when mating toad songs and the scent of crabapple blossoms fill the air. In fall, we enjoy the new chill in the air and the crunch of fallen leaves as we walk. The moon lights up their peak color changes and creates moon shadows at our feet.

Summer is one of the best times for full moon hikes. We always roast marshmallows and gather to talk with old and new friends. For me, the summer moons are more special because they are accompanied by the glow of the lightning bugs, and the chirps of the crickets and katydids. Just when you think the mosquitoes are going to eat you up, the bats overhead eat them first. Speaking of eating, when the wineberries, or wine raspberries, are ripe, usually in July, stopping to snack is a must.

Summer hikes satisfy all the senses. The bright moon is just one part of this multifaceted outdoor experience. Some nights, the clouds cover the moon to create a new masterpiece with the moonlight or to hide it so we can focus our attention on other happenings in the night that we may have otherwise missed.

We spend so much of our time in the Wissahickon in the sun that we often forget about the life it lives at night. Joining us on a full moon hike is a perfect way to see it in a new light.

This summer, these are the dates of our full moon hikes:

- Wednesday, July 13, 8 p.m. | This hike will follow our Phood Phorest Volunteer Evening & Kombucha Happy Hour.
- Wednesday, August 10, 7 p.m. | This hike is titled “Auntie Adventures: Twilight Hike & Campfire,” but all adults and children are welcome.

Christina Moresi, M.Ed., is an Environmental Education Planner at the Wissahickon Environmental Center.
July

**Phood Phorest Volunteer Evening & Kombucha Happy Hour**
**Wednesday, July 13 | 5 – 8 p.m.**
Lend a hand as we mulch, plant, weed, harvest, clear invasive plants, water, and other seasonal tasks in our Philadelphia Orchard Project Food Forest. (Full moon hike to follow.) **Adults & teens only.**

**Full Moon Hike**
**Wednesday, July 13 | 8 – 9:30 p.m.**
Gather around the campfire and roast marshmallows before we hike by the light of the full moon and enjoy the peaceful sights and sounds of the summer forest. Discover the tree silhouettes against the moonlit sky, listen for the sounds of nocturnal animals, and watch the lightning bugs flicker from soil to sky. **Adults & teens only.**

**Wineberry Wild**
**TBA Closer to Harvest**
In this summer edition of Kids Explore, we will head out for a special expedition to find and eat. Wineberries are a raspberry-like fruit, which is highly invasive in the Wissahickon but delicious to eat. **All ages.**

August

**Auntie Adventures: Twilight Hike & Campfire**
**Wednesday, August 10 | 7 – 8:30 p.m.**
Piblings bring your niblings* of any relation on a nighttime forest adventure. Hike to the meadow, listen for nighttime sounds, and enjoy marshmallows around a campfire. **Best for children 6 years & up.** *We also encourage grandparents, adult siblings, etc. to join us and give your kids’ the evening off, as well as parents looking for nature time with your kids.*

September

**Andorra “Nursery”**
**Thursday, September 15 | 10 – 11:00 a.m.**
Bring your little one for an hour of discovery at the Tree House. Each month we will explore a new topic that celebrates the season. **Ages 12-36 months with a caregiver. $5 per child per lesson.**

**Tree House Tots**
**Thursday, September 15 | 1 – 2 p.m.**
Bring your little one for an hour of discovery at the Tree House. Each month we will explore a new topic that celebrates the season. **Ages 3-5 with a caregiver. $5 per child per lesson**

Apple Pressing on Forbidden Drive
**Saturday, September 24 | 11 a.m. – 3 p.m.**
Join us on Forbidden Drive (across from Cedars House Café) for this annual celebration of autumn. Help make fresh apple cider using an old-fashioned cider press. Enjoy a taste of the finished cider and homemade apple butter, and vote on your favorite apple variety. **No registration; stop by any time during the event. All ages.**
The Ambler Community Fridge celebrated its first anniversary in May. The only one in Montgomery County, the Community Fridge is a collaborative effort between Germantown Academy and Weavers Way Co-op. Catherine Shuron, a senior at Germantown Academy, wanted to create a community resource to help the food insecure population in suburban communities. Weavers Way was excited to be part of this project, as it aligns with the community outreach values of the Co-op.

When the fridge was installed in May 2021, the Co-op was excited about joining the food resource network in Ambler to provide access to fresh food for community members in need. We worked hard not only to get the word out to them about the fridge and its high quality, basic food items, but also to recruit volunteers to help us stock and maintain the fridge.

With its proximity to the Co-op store in Ambler, we can regularly stock farm-fresh (and often organic) fruits and veggies, local dairy products, fresh bread, and eggs. We have a pantry cupboard next to the fridge that has canned goods, grains, pasta, and coffee.

To encourage shoppers to buy food for the fridge and the pantry, we display special shelf tags. We strive to ensure the same combination of products every time the fridge is stocked. In the beginning, we restocked a few times a week; now we do it daily, sometimes twice a day.

We wouldn’t be able to offer the Community Fridge as a resource without the help of our wonderful volunteers. Case in point: Over the past year, Torrey, with his mom Michelle, have monitored the fridge on weeknights; they clean it, check on the food, and throw away items that are expired or no longer edible.

“The Community Fridge is a perfect opportunity for Torrey to volunteer and give back to the community,” said Michelle. “Community service is such an important experience for kids, and I love that this project has given Torrey the chance to be a part of something from its beginning.”

Torrey added that he likes cleaning the fridge, checking the expiration dates, and organizing the food on the shelves so it’s easy to see everything. Several times people have stopped by while he and Michelle were cleaning the fridge and ask what they were doing. One woman who had been aware of the program became inspired to ask what was most needed so she could pick up some items while she did her shopping at Weavers Way. Another time, a family stopped by with unopened items leftover from a party they hosted.

“I have seen several folks drop off food packages, and the fridge seems to be used a lot, as it almost always needs to be restocked,” said Nancy Ignatin, another volunteer who inventories the fridge, freezer, and canned goods cupboard twice a week. We have also seen people on Facebook encouraging others to donate to the fridge or use it as a resource when needed. Families of Germantown Academy students stock the fridge on weekends, and the Weavers Way Ambler staff help by ordering fresh, seasonal food in bulk and donating any surplus food from their departments. This truly is a community fridge.

The Weavers Way Ambler Community Fridge and pantry operate 100 percent on contributions. We accept monetary donations via Venmo @ wwccommunityfridge or at the Ambler store’s checkout stations. Thank you for your support!

Nima Koliwad is Weavers Way’s Community Outreach and Communications Coordinator. Weavers Way Co-op members earn working member credit by volunteering for FOW.
**Kid-Friendly Hike**
with Marv Schwartz

**JULY 9 | 10 AM – 12:30 PM**  
Meet at Valley Green Inn.

This hike takes participants downstream along Forbidden Drive, as we talk about the history, geology, and wildlife of the Wissahickon. Visit the Livezeys Dam, Gorgas Creek Cave, and Fingerspan Bridge. We will stop to enjoy a snack, continue past the Livezeys House, and visit Devil’s Pool upon return to the Inn. Children and dogs are welcome. Level: moderate (some inclines/declines, uneven surfaces). 2.5 miles

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**The Wissahickon in July**
with Andi Wingert & Deb Hollein

**JULY 15 | 9 AM – 12 PM**  
Meet at Wigard Ave. parking lot.

Join us for an exploration of the park in July. We may spot some wineberries, a nonnative plant that yields a delicious treat. We will look for other native plants such as jewelweed. There are some strenuous climbs and rocky ascents and descents. Children 12+ are welcome when accompanied by an adult. Please, no dogs other than service animals. Level: moderate (some inclines/declines, uneven surfaces). 3 miles

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**Silent Sunset Cruise**
with Amy Yuter

**AUGUST 21 | 6:30 – 8 PM**  
Meet at Blue Bell Park.

Join us on a mindful, silent, and moderately paced saunter. We’ll have moments to connect and share with other participants throughout our contemplative journey. Enjoy a full sensory experience as the sun sets on these beautiful trails. Adults and youth 16+ are welcome. Pace will be set by the group. Level: moderate (some inclines/declines, uneven surfaces). 2.5 miles

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**Kids Nature Hike**
with Anne Williams

**AUGUST 28 | 10 – 11/11:30 AM**  
Meet at Houston Meadow.

Join Anne in sharing the sights, sounds, and feelings of exploring nature in the Wissahickon. This short hike will include some fun group activities and sharing, guided observations, perhaps a song or story, and the joy of being outside in the fresh air together! Terrain may be rocky, so strollers are discouraged, and dogs are not permitted. Children 3–6 are welcome when accompanied by an adult. Level: moderate (some inclines/declines, uneven surfaces). 1 mile

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**The Wissahickon in August**
with Andi Wingert & Deb Hollein

**AUGUST 19 | 9 AM – 12 PM**  
Meet at Cedars House Café on Forbidden Drive.

On this hike we’ll take note of how the flora and fauna changes during summer’s last full month. We’ll also visit some sites of historical interest. There are some strenuous climbs and rocky ascents and descents. Children 12+ are welcome when accompanied by an adult. Please, no dogs other than service animals. Level: difficult (many inclines/declines, uneven surfaces). 3.5 miles

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**Photo by Bradley Maule**

Hikes marked with 🌱 qualify for the All Trails Challenge.
UPCOMING FREE VIRTUAL AND/OR IN-PERSON PROGRAMS

Watershed Education Lessons
These lessons are best for third graders and up. They can be presented virtually or safely distanced in person.

General Watershed and Book-Based Lessons
Table-top model shows how pollution enters our waterways.

Drinking Water Treatment or Sewage Treatment
Learn how water from our rivers is cleaned and made safe for drinking, and how dirty water is cleaned and sent back to the river.

Fun in the Meadow: FREE Community Programs for Everyone
These family-friendly programs offer a way to explore new parks and green spaces and engage in fun activities. Registration is requested but not required, and an adult must attend with children.

All programs take place from 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. on the following Saturdays at Houston Meadow (meet at the playground):

- July 9 - Storybook Walks with Binocular I Spy
- August 13 - Beginner Geocaching & Stories
- September 10 - DIY Craft & Stories
- October 8 - Storybook Walks & Nature Games

Story Times

It’s All About Water
Water-related stories for school children up to grade five.

Little Friends of the Wissahickon
For children in kindergarten through second grade. Participants receive a Certificate of Participation and a prize pack that includes a copy of the Good Night Wissahickon Valley Park board book.

Register for these programs at: www.letsgooutdoors.net/lgo-fow-community-engagement.html
GIVING

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

**STOCK**
Consider giving a gift of stock. Our DTC # is 0062 and our Vanguard Brokerage Acct # is 23501307.

**JOIN FOW’S SUSTAINER PROGRAM**
Support ongoing stewardship through our monthly membership program (and receive a special thank-you gift). Visit fow.org/sustainerprogram

**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.

SECURE THE WISSAHICKON’S FUTURE: MAKE IT PART OF YOUR LEGACY
As a membership-based nonprofit, Friends of the Wissahickon depends on gifts and grants from individuals and organizations to continue important work throughout Wissahickon Valley Park. One of the most transformational ways individuals can make a lasting contribution to FOW is through The 1924 Society.

The 1924 Society is a group of committed individuals who have included FOW in their wills or have named FOW in their estate planning. Created by the late Albert Neff (1929–2005), a Philadelphia resident with a passion and love for the wilderness of the Wissahickon, The 1924 Society honors and recognizes the commitment of our friends to ensure that Wissahickon Valley Park is here for generations to come.

Contributions from members of The 1924 Society make a lasting impact. Over the past decade, these friends have invested over $500,000 to help fulfill FOW’s ongoing stewardship mission in Wissahickon Valley Park. Support from these thoughtful individuals helps provide the robust educational programming and stewardship efforts needed to protect the water quality of the Wissahickon Creek and preserve the native habitat throughout the 1,800-acre park.

Members of The 1924 Society, who include FOW in their estate plans or wills, receive a lifetime membership, invitations to special events, and advanced information about FOW programs and projects. Learn more about The 1924 Society at fow.org/1924society or contact Sarah Marley at marley@fow.org.
**CROSSWORD**

**Across**
3. Small critters that have six legs.
7. Branches have many of these attached to them.
9. Leaves are attached to these.
10. The outer covering of trees.
11. Person who travels through the forest.
13. A fleshy fungus that grows in the dark.
14. This feathered bird cannot move its eyes, and can twist its head 180 degrees.

**Down**
1. An evergreen tree that produces pine cones.
2. This large animal enjoys eating honey and fish.
4. These plants are large and covered with bark and leaves.
5. A type of tree that produces acorns.
6. This medium-sized animal has antlers.
7. The thickest part of a tree.
8. A nut that drops from oak trees and that squirrels enjoy.
10. White trees that have thin bark.
12. A relative of dogs, larger than foxes and travels in packs.
13. A type of tree that produces sap, used to make syrup.

**COLOR**
MAZE
Help Owl, Fox, and Squirrel get to this summer’s Friends of the Wissahickon Ice Cream Social!

FOX’S SCAVENGER HUNT
Go for a hike this summer in Wissahickon Valley Park and help Fox find everything on his list.