

THE FRIENDS OF
RIDLEY CREEK
STATE PARK



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The Friends

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NEW BRIDGE INSTALLED ON THE YELLOW TRAIL

July brought a most unusual and damaging weather event to the park.

An estimated four inches of rain fell in one hour in a very localized area not far behind the mansion. It scoured the land and created a gully, nearly obliterating the Yellow trail. It swept away a footbridge, the remnants of which have yet to be found. It severely damaged another footbridge where the Yellow trail crosses Big Run.

This footbridge was taken out of service until the Friends trail crew replaced it on September 5.

Dedicated volunteers stayed through the afternoon to complete the project, which was approved by Park manager Mike Kutzmonich. It is similar to the footbridge on the Orange trail, but at 16 feet in span it is 4 feet longer.

While one crew was securing supports known as cribs for the bridge,

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FRIENDS OF RCSP VOICEMAIL

PLEASE CONTACT YOUR FRIENDS AT ANY TIME WITH YOUR COMMENTS AND/OR QUESTIONS.
LEAVE A MESSAGE AT 484-442-0223, AND SOMEONE WILL GET BACK TO YOU ASAP!

New Bridge from Page 1

another crew constructed the framework for the bridge itself, under the supervision of Mark Kern, Trails co-Chair. "It's all about the cribbing," said Gary Sawyer, Trails co-Chair. "In a high water event, a footbridge needs a stable crib to rest on." Once in place, decking and railing were installed. Mark also helped the crew remove the damaged bridge.

All materials were purchased by the Friends. Materials were pre-cut and delivered to the work site before the volunteer trail day. The Park Maintenance Department used their truck to deliver the 16-foot boards that are the main support for the bridge.

By early afternoon, with the end in sight, Paul Mickle



carried refreshments to the work site for the volunteer crew members. It was a long day, but the rewards were great for all involved.

everyone's timely assistance in replacing this important trail bridge.

This article was contributed by Gary Sawyer, Trails co-Chair.

Our thanks to the volunteers, the support of the Friends, and the Park for



Admiring the finished bridge: left to right, Mark Kern, Gary Sawyers, Deborah Samans, and Tim Higgins.

NEW INDOOR EQUESTRIAN ARENA AT RIDLEY

The grand opening of the Ridley Creek State Park indoor equestrian arena was held on September 2, 2015. Park Manager Mike Kutzmonich hosted the event and

Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) Secretary Cindy Adams Dunn spoke about the Pennsylvania park system and how Ridley is a jewel in the park system crown. The structure was designed and

built by King Construction of Lancaster, PA with ground breaking on October 19, 2014 and project completion on May 15, 2015. The indoor arena is 90' x 200' with a sand, rubber, and fiber dust-free footing. It has 29 windows and two large doors to help with air flow, and contains a spectator

platform to allow parents and friends to watch the riders. Instead of using metal on the outside, DCNR chose to use hardy board to make it esthetically match

to ride and learn about responsibility, and to share a special bond with horses. The Chidesters maintain HVF with the highest standards of safety for horse and rider,

as well as maintaining the grander and beauty of the property. The horses are a reminder of an earlier day in the history of the park and many park visitors enjoy watching the horses and petting them over the fence. The park has 4.7



the other buildings.

The indoor arena has been a dream of Tom and Ellie Chidester, owners of Hidden Valley Farm, Inc. (HVF), who operate the stable and equestrian facility under agreement with the state. They offer horse boarding and English riding lessons, teaching young people

miles of equestrian trails and HVF riders and their horses enjoy the park year around. Now, the indoor arena allows riding and lessons to continue in the winter months and during inclement weather.

This article was contributed by Friends member Anita Naylor, who is also a member of the Pennsylvania Equine Council.

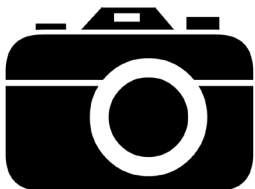


PHOTO CONTEST MOVED TO SPRING

We are planning to hold our annual Photo Contest next spring. The award ceremony will probably be sometime in May of 2016. More details will be available on our website and in the

next newsletter. Flyers will be posted in the park. Start gathering your summer and fall pictures and be ready to take winter and early spring pictures, so you'll be ready to submit your entries. **Young people are especially encouraged to enter the contest.**

The photo contest has always been one of our most popular fundraisers, while also raising awareness of the Friends. Everybody loves to see the park represented in beautiful pictures!

OPPORTUNITY TO ADOPT A TRAIL

The Friends of Ridley Creek State Park has 3 openings for trail adopters, people who love the park and the park trail system and want to adopt one section of the more than 12 miles of trails in the park.

Adopters should be willing to walk their section of trail two times a month, approximately, observing the trail overall condition, noting and reporting any conditions that need attention, such as blow-downs, erosion problems, tripping hazards or any other safety issues, and clip back encroaching vegetation during the growing season. Tools necessary to accomplish the above can be loaned to the adopter by the Friends. Adopters can “work” on their section

of trail whenever it is convenient to them – in the evening, on weekends, or any day that they have time.

This is a great opportunity to give back to the park and enjoy contributing to the upkeep of our “jewel in the suburbs.” Tim Higgins, Adopt-a-Trail Chair, says, “I have adopted a trail section for the past 7 years and look forward to continuing doing so for another 7.”

If you are interested in finding out more about this fun and worthwhile project, please contact Tim through the website www.friendsofrcsp.org or on his cell 610-608-4388.

This article was contributed by Tim Higgins, Board member of the Friends.

REPAVING PROJECT ON THE MULTI-USE TRAIL

If you’ve been to the park lately, you have noticed the repaving and culvert drainage work that was done on a section of the Multi-Use Trail (MUT) between July and September. According to Park Manager Mike Kutzmonich, this 0.8 mile section of the MUT was repaved with a \$300,000 state grant. Further, this is Phase I of the project, which he hopes will be

continued. Storm damage has undermined the Diogenes Bridge (named after the Jeffords’ prized horse, whose winnings were used to finance the bridge). The bridge links the MUT with the trail leading to the Mansion and is now closed to vehicular traffic, but it will be fixed. Park users welcome these improvements!

OPENING FOR A TREASURER

Here’s an opportunity to contribute to the park: The Board of the Friends of Ridley Creek State Park is seeking a candidate to fill the position of Treasurer. Basic bookkeeping skills are helpful; a background in accounting is not required. A computer is necessary to successfully do the job.

The Treasurer’s tasks take about 10 hours a month and at least one trip to the park office. Deposits are processed and sent to Pennsylvania Parks & Forests Foundation (PPFF) at Camp Hill, Pa. as necessary. Check requests, after Board approval, are sent to the park manager for approval. In the past, quarterly reports have been issued to the Board and an annual reconciliation is sent to PPFF.

Interested candidates should contact the Board through our website members@friendsofrcsp.org or call Tim Higgins, 610-608-4388.



Friends President Jack Miller and Friends Vice-President Joan Nikelsky (pictured), along with Board member Paul Mickle, staffed a table at the Media Food & Craft Fair on October 11, 2015. We displayed photographs of trail work projects, gave out Friends brochures and park maps, recruited possible volunteers, talked to people interested in the park, and collected some donations.

PENNSYLVANIA PARKS & FORESTS PHOTO CONTEST

Congratulations to Elizabeth Duckworth and Thomas Caldwell, who won prizes in the recent "Through the Seasons" Photo Contest held by the Pennsylvania Parks & Forests Foundation (PPFF). They both submitted pictures of Ridley Creek State Park. Elizabeth won Second Place in the Nature Up Close category and Thomas won First Place

in the Historical Gems category. The contest is held annually and is open to all Pennsylvanians who have taken pictures at any of the parks and forests in the state. The prize winning photos have been printed in PPFF's Fall 2015 newsletter, Penn's Stewards, and can also be viewed on PPFF's Facebook page at

<http://bit.ly/2015ppffphotocontestwinners>.

You can click on each picture to see the photographer's name, the prize they won, and the park or forest depicted. For the Ridley Creek photos, Elizabeth's is on the right end, four rows down; Thomas' is on the left end, three rows down.