

The Friends

VOL XI ISSUE 2

FALL/ WINTER 2018



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

VOLUNTEERS	1
MEDIA FAIR	3
PHILLIP SCHMIDT	3
FRIENDS PHOTO CONTEST 2018 WINNERS	4
LITTLE PINE STATE PARK.....	5
FRIENDS PICNIC ELECTION RESULTS	6

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

MONTHLY TRAIL WORK

First Saturday of each month, 9AM.



MEDIA FOOD & CRAFTS FESTIVAL

October 7 - 9AM- 5PM

(Rain date Sunday, October 14th)

See article for details.

FRIENDS OF RIDLEY CREEK STATE PARK NEWSLETTER

Editor..... Joan Nikelsky

Design.....Mark Dougherty

Volunteers are the Friends of Ridley Creek State Park

by Friends President Jack Miller

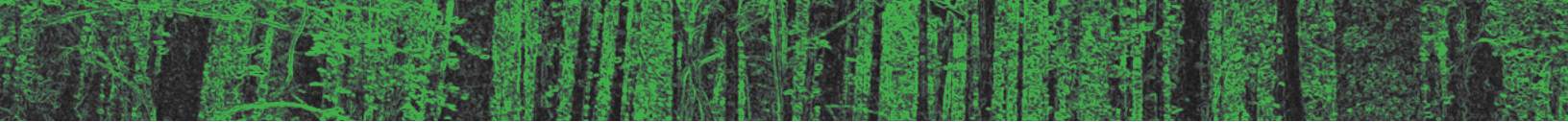


The Friends of Ridley Creek State Park is a volunteer group of people who have many reasons to love the park and want to give something back to the object of their affection. The more volunteers we have on board with us, the more we can accomplish for our park.

The Friends group is a chapter of the Pennsylvania Parks & Forests Foundation (PPFF), a state nonprofit organization that provides operational guidelines and insurance coverage for all the chapters under its umbrella. Many of the volunteers help out alone, such as the trail adopters. After being trained and supplied with tools, they maintain a section of their chosen hiking trail on their own schedule.

Other volunteers come out at 9 am on the first Saturday of each month, meeting at the ranger station end of the mansion. From there we disperse across the park to address larger problem areas that a single trail maintainer cannot handle alone, or we may build a bridge or tackle a blown down tree as a team. It is amazing what a group of 15 to 20 people can accomplish in a few hours.

continued page 2



Volunteers continued

The Friends also has a Board that generally meets on the first Wednesday of the month at the Mansion (check our website calendar at www.friendsofrcsp.org for specific dates). The Board members and officers fill positions required by PPF guidelines to maintain a viable Friends group and keep our insurance coverage. Board members are volunteers who may or may not have special skills and who help out where they can. Over the years we have worked with some wonderful people who gave freely of their time and talents to do what they could. Many have since moved on, but we recall their marvelous contributions and are happy whenever we see them in the park or at other events.

Our past webmaster recently returned from the vacation to define a lifetime. Ted Uhlman bicycled from Astoria, Oregon to the east coast. He started on July 4, 2018 at the Astoria Fourth of July celebration and worked his way back home. He kept a blog with photos as he traveled from state to state (www.crazyguyonabike.com/doc/20949). Our past Treasurer and newsletter formatter, Cate Bolduc, has relocated to Las Vegas to be near her family and is reported to be settled in to her new warm environment. We appreciate their contributions to our group; we miss them both and still count them as Friends.

Many years ago, Ted set up the Friends website as an appendage to his other web accounts and when he “retired” as webmaster, two new volunteers came to us offering their help, Kim Braun and Nick Holik. They are not like other volunteers who “learn as they go.” Kim and Nick know all about computers and websites.

Not long after Ted started his cross country trip, we received notice that the Friends website would be shut down in less than two weeks! Naturally, we panicked and thought all was lost. Ted was the existing web site owner, but he was out of town and not able to fix the situation. Fortunately, Kim and Nick knew what to do. Before the old site could crash, Kim and Nick had transferred all of the information, address list, photos, website links, and the like from the old server to a new site. Once that was done, they immediately took advantage of the new web server capabilities and started making improvements. I do not believe anyone noticed any down time or loss of information during this traumatic time.

One recent improvement is that if a visitor to the Friends website (www.friendsofrcsp.org) wants to contact any officer or committee leader, such as Photo Contest Coordinator, Trails Chair, or Treasurer, that email is directed to the person currently holding that position. This newsletter is being sent out to our electronic recipients using the new mailing list. We are truly grateful to Kim and Nick for providing the Friends with our own independent website and knowing what to do. If the Friends had to hire a computer firm to accomplish this work, we would not be building hiking trail bridges or purchasing tubes to protect the new tree plantings from the deer.

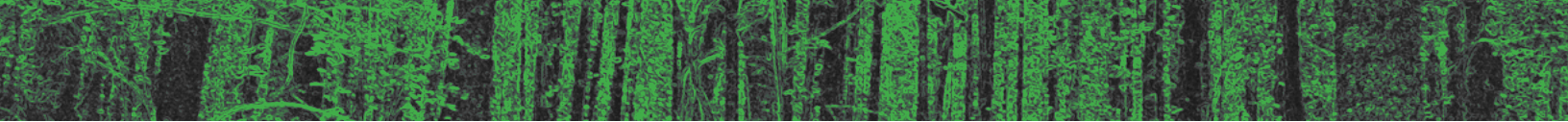
Our Treasurer position has been filled by Dave Case who volunteered and was confirmed by a vote of the Friends membership at our June 4 annual membership picnic. Dave has been a regular at many Friends events and has also served as a photo

contest judge. Again, following the PPF requirements and some great tutoring by retired Treasurer, Tim Higgins, the important Treasurer position has been filled by a very capable person.

The formatting of the Friends newsletter is now being done by a new volunteer, Mark Dougherty, a graphic designer. The computer program used by Cate Bolduc for the previous newsletters is being replaced with a new format for this newsletter. If you have enjoyed the look of the past newsletters, you will not be disappointed with this new format. Mark will no doubt create a newsletter that will keep you visually entertained as you read through the articles. One innovation is the addition of interactive features so that you can click on links, URLs, and email addresses and have them open in your browser or email program.

We sincerely appreciate all of our volunteers, past and present. The Friends of Ridley Creek State Park depends on volunteers to help maintain the hiking trails in the park, which is our main task. The Friends have hosted an annual photo contest for the past 15 years and we have sponsored many social and educational events over the years. In 2012, we held a 40th anniversary celebration event of the opening of Ridley Creek State Park. Now we are beginning to discuss plans for a 50th anniversary celebration for August of 2022.

Please join us and let us know if you want to give something back to the park president@friendsofrcsp.org. We are anxious to hear your ideas and to work with you. Thank you.



Media Fair October 7 and Opportunity to Volunteer

Come one come all to the annual Media Food & Craft Fair on Sunday, October 7 (rain date Sunday, October 14) from 9 am to 5 pm. Why? The Friends of Ridley Creek State Park will be staffing a table there, as we have done in previous years, complete with displays and photographs of trail work projects, Friends brochures, and park maps.

We also talk to people interested in the park, give you an opportunity to sign up for our email list, collect donations, and recruit new members. We have lovely mugs with our logo on them to give to those joining or renewing their membership. The Fair is a popular event every Fall in Media, with 40 restaurants, 75 craft vendors, live music, and games for children. We hope to see you there!

Better yet, if you are able to spend a little time, join our tabling effort by volunteering to sit at our table for an hour or so, to allow other Friends table volunteers to take some time off to see the rest of the Fair. It's fun. Meet people. Everyone wins! Contact Jack Miller president@friendsofrcsp.org.



The Friends of Ridley Creek State Park staffing a table at a previous Media Food & Craft Fair. Pictured are President Jack Miller and Vice-President Joan Nikelsky.

Just Checkin' in with Park Manager, Phillip Schmidt

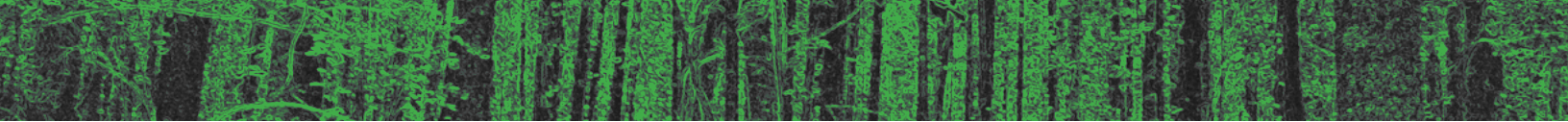
by Friends member Lauren Bacigalupi

It's been 10 months since Phillip Schmidt took over as the head of Ridley Creek State Park. So much has happened, in addition to adjusting to his new position, we thought it would be great to check in with him and see how it's going.

Many of us have seen the Ash Tree Removal Project in progress and have wondered what was going on. What you may not know is that the emerald ash borer has become an issue in our area and some were spotted in our beloved park. These little buggers pose a threat not only to our ash trees, but to our visitors because once they attack a tree, that tree is weakened and can easily fall. The plan to remove the trees was actually in place before Phillip came on board, but his team has had to deal with the actual project as it happened.

continued page 3





Phillip Schmidt continued

Why take the trees down before they are infected? “Once a tree is infested, the wood is no longer valuable and just gets wasted,” says Phillip, “not to mention the risk to our visitors at that point with falling trees. By getting ahead of the problem, we were able to have loggers take the trees down and pay the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for the wood. Some of those funds are then funneled back to us here in the park.” That sounds great, except the loggers left more than a bit of clean up for Phillip and his small, mighty crew. When asked if he could use a little help doing clean up, he smiled big. I think that is a hint for all of us reading this article!

So, Phillip - what are some of the most exciting things you are working on now? “We have so much going on, but our Pollination Garden will be a great addition to our park,” he

responds. “Thanks to a generous donor, we were able to create this space right at the connecting trail by the bike bridge. It will not only attract butterflies and hummingbirds, but will help our native plants thrive.” So be sure to check that out on your next hike!

He and his team are also working on a permanent/semi-permanent spot for his Environmental Education Specialist, Gary Stolz, to hold classes open to the public, local groups, and schools. During a recent Saturday Friends clean-up, we started clearing a spot where they were holding a small class on owl education.

In preparation for hunting season, Phillip and his team are currently busy hanging signs to keep other visitors safe. You wouldn’t think that would take much until you talk to him and realize visitors have to be able to see those signs no matter which way they

turn, so they have to be meticulous in each one placed. By the way, the park will be closed November 29th and December 6th (both Thursdays if you were wondering) for shotgun-only deer hunting. Bow and arrow hunting starts earlier on the other side of Gradyville Road.

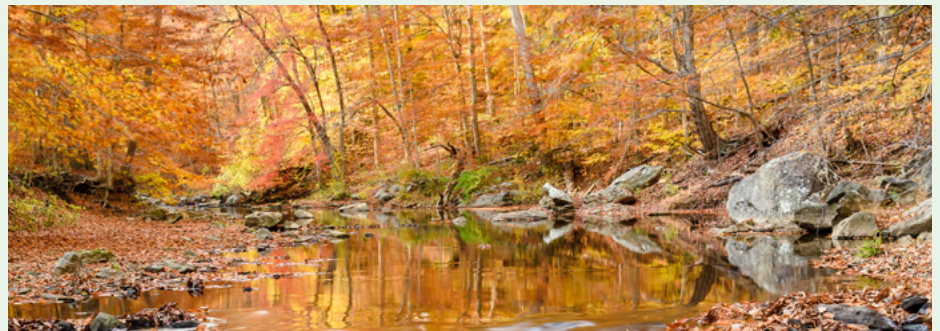
All the busyness of the park aside, Phillip says he loves his new gig and being back in town near his family. Learning to juggle all the partnerships in the park, taking part in studies with local universities and other state parks, and becoming the tree and bird identifying savant has made for an exciting first year so far.

As the Friends of Ridley Creek, we can continue doing the great work we do and bring more volunteers into the park. Ok, we can do that! Thanks for the chat, Phillip. We’ll check in again soon.

FRIENDS OF RIDLEY’S PHOTO CONTEST 2018 AWARDS

In keeping with tradition here at Ridley Creek State Park, the 2018 Photo Contest Ceremony was held on June 27th, 2018 at the Mansion. Aside from no youth entries, there was a pleasant turnout with all sorts of beautiful photos showcasing the special places found in the park.

The first place winning photo was taken by Shannon Rearden and was titled, “In Depth Fern.” The second place prize winning photo was named “Seasonal Babblings” and entered by Darin Hayton. Bradford Richman won third place with his photo “Serenity” and there was an honorable mention given to Mary



“November in the Park” Darin Hayton

Beth Mundy for “The Soulful Cemetery Sentry.” Unfortunately, the ceremony was held on a day with questionable weather so it was indoors, but otherwise still as enjoyable as years past.

If you missed the award ceremony, be sure to check out the photos that were submitted electronically to our website

www.FriendsofRCSP.org. Click the highlighted link to our url and you can peruse many of this year’s photographs.

The 2019 Photo Contest is projected to start collecting entries next spring, so feel free to start gathering your potential submissions.



Exploring Pennsylvania's Parks: Little Pine State Park

This article is fifth in a series about other state parks in Pennsylvania, contributed by Friends Board member, the much-traveled Paul Mickle.

When traveling across rural Pennsylvania, it's not hard to find opportunities to explore the outdoors. In many cases it can be difficult to find much of anything else to do. But as we have covered in previous articles, there is a very diverse collection of state parks strewn across Pennsylvania. Some have dramatic attractions or offer special one-of-a-kind experiences, but there are some that are simply special for offering solitude and a hideaway off "the beaten path." Little Pine State Park does just that.

At 2,158 acres, Little Pine is about 500 acres smaller than Ridley Creek, but as it borders Tiadaghton State Forest, the sea of lush greenery is seemingly endless. Little Pine State Park is located in western Lycoming County in North Central Pennsylvania. Like Ridley Creek it has a stream running through it. The stream is actually a tributary off the nearby

Little Pine Creek. Around 1950 the 4.2 mile tributary was dammed up to create the 94 acre Little Pine Lake. Ever since then, the Lake and its shores have provided both flood control and all sorts of recreational activities. In the summer, park visitors can go swimming, fishing, and boating, then switch over to tobogganing and ice fishing in the winter months, provided the ice thickness reaches 4 inches. Those looking to venture away from the water get to explore the incredible network of hiking trails throughout the park and nearby Tiadaghton State Forest.

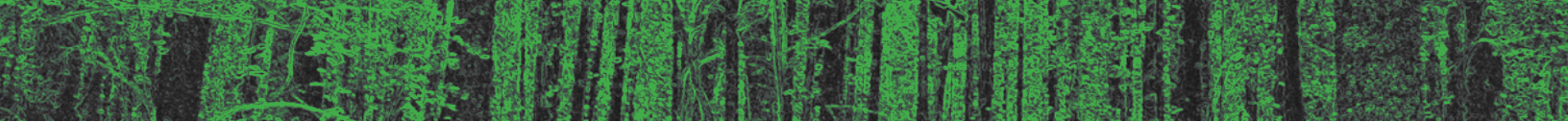
Generally speaking, Little Pine State Park sits in a rural valley away from developed areas with the nearest town being 15 miles away in Jersey Shore, PA. This makes camping more of a necessity for those looking to experience more of the parks amenities. Fortunately, there is a

modernized campground with various accommodations available, ranging from tent sites to cabins.

Historically, the name Little Pine came from the vast presence of white pine trees throughout the region and on the property. Sadly, the original generation did not survive the lumber era: the land was clear cut and the pine trees were literally sold down the river to the then lumbering boom town of Williamsport in the early 1900s. Today white pine trees can still be found in Little Pine State Park, but nowadays there is a strong blend of other hardwoods that make the white pine's presence hardly notable.

Even though the white pine may not be the most descriptive name, Little Pine State Park still manages to have a special charm all to itself. For those who make the trip and speak with other visitors, it is clear that it

continued page 6



Little Pine State Park continued

has a loyal following of people that return year after year. These are the kinds of traditions that demonstrate the allure and uniqueness of the region. So while it may not have a big dramatic focal point like some of the other state parks, quiet places like Little Pine State Park can be worth a visit as well.

LITTLE PINE STATE PARK

4205 Little Pine Creek Road
Waterville, PA 17776-9705
Phone: 570-753-6000

MAPS

HISTORY

NEARBY ATTRACTIONS

JUNE 2018 ANNUAL PICNIC AND ELECTION

We are pleased to announce the 2018 election results. At the annual picnic, the members present voted to re-elect Jack Miller as President, Joan Nikelsky as Vice-President, and to elect Dave Case as Treasurer.

A presentation was made to the park administration of the Friends' purchase of a canopy for the use of the park's Environmental Education Specialist, Gary Stolz, for displaying his educational materials at events. In addition, the Friends bought fencing to enclose an area needing protection in the park. These were gifts made possible by our members' fees and donations. All your contributions help!