



The Parks Reporter

Volume 4, Number 1

The Newsletter of the Friends of Waterford Park

Winter 2010

Purpose: Friends of Waterford Park, a volunteer-staffed community service organization, is dedicated to the development of Waterford Park and Rock Creek Park as passive neighborhood parks by adding to and making improvements to the park landscaping and fostering neighborhood involvement in the development of the passive neighborhood parks.

Guiding Principle: Do No Harm.

From your president...

The light at the end of the tunnel...

In the past four years, our volunteers (coordinating with the City of Frederick, the MD Department of Natural Resources and Frederick County Noxious Weed Control) have opened up much of the wooded area in the parks, clearing out the invasives, letting the light shine on the forest floor. We've planted hundreds of plants, from seedlings to 7-foot trees. Seeds of native plants have sprouted, some in abundance. We have areas with trout lily, Solomon seal and Virginia waterleaf and hundreds of pokeberry, wing-stemmed ironweed and touch-me-nots. Seedlings of hackberry, hickory and box elder are appearing. We are making great progress. I believe that in the next two years we can complete the initial invasives removal and planting of the remaining wooded areas. Here is the timeline as I see it:

Winter, 2009-2010 -

Complete the clearing of the understory along Carroll Creek. The invasives have all been sprayed, and more than half have already been removed or cut back to the ground.

On the south side of Rock Creek Park (Baughmans Lane to the first bridge) the City will cut back the invasives as well as dead limbs and branches. The City and FWP have spoken with the landowner whose property adjoins the park, and all parties are in agreement about the work the City will do. FWP

appreciates the City's willingness to clear this area with their men and machines.

On the Waterford side of Rock Creek, a tree service hired by the Waterford HOA cleared the woods near the middle bridge. FWP volunteers will cut back invasives along the creek below the retaining wall down to the third bridge.

Spring/Summer 2010 -

Along Carroll Creek, FWP will plant 5-7 ft. trees and the MD DNR will plant seedlings of shade-tolerant shrubs and trees. FWP will again apply for funding from the MD Urban and Community Forests Committee for the trees and tubes and fencing.

On the south side of Rock Creek from Baughmans Lane all the way to the third bridge, Frederick Co. Noxious Weed Control will spray the invasives that have been cut back. This includes the English ivy that grows near the downstream bridge and the ailanthus stumps on Waterford property near the middle bridge. Their spraying will be funded by FWP and by the Waterford HOA.

FWP will continue to monitor our plantings in the woods. We will try to keep the pokeberry, ironweed and touch-me-nots a few feet away from these; we're glad the natives are thriving, but we want our plants to thrive also! We will plant additional 5-7 ft. trees where needed and as funds permit.

Fall 2010 through Spring 2011 -

FWP most likely in coordination with the MD DNR will plant the areas that were sprayed in spring 2010.

As long as our group exists, our volunteers will monitor the invasives population, pulling vines and small honeysuckle as they sprout and keeping the shrubs along the creeks cut back. (These are not sprayed be-

cause of their proximity to the water; keeping them clipped back prevents them from producing large quantities of fruit.) But - the hardest work should be over by the end of 2011.

We do see the light at the end of the tunnel.

What's happening with the bike path?

With the City's funding concerns, it is not surprising that the path is not yet progressing on the west side of Rt. 15. Because of the huge cost of completing a tunnel under the Rosemont Ave. ramp to southbound 15, the City is considering using the third existing conduit under 15 at the creek. I asked Mayor Holtzinger for an update to include in this newsletter. Here is his response:

We have not received the final word on using the third conduit. MDE seemed to be a bit hesitant, but it was for reasons that do not seem to be in their purview. We are still pursuing it, but also looking for possible grant money to do the tunnel if that needs to happen. Even if we get approval to use the third conduit, we will create an alternate route up along Rosemont.

Thus, while we continue on pursuing approval and/or funds to get to the west side, we are starting construction of the extension from Fairview to Rt 15 with in-house forces.

We need workers!

The changes that have occurred in the parks in the last four years are the result of wonderful support from approximately 70 members. Many of you are not able to do the work involved but show your support with dues, donations and many kind words. We have members outside the neighborhoods and as far away as Colorado and Massachusetts, people who want our work to continue. Fortunately, in the first two years the Boy Scouts from Troop 799 did yeoman's work in the park. We have had SummerServ youth for three years and some volunteer groups that have completed special projects. However, the ongoing tasks are done by about a dozen FWP volunteers. We do it because we enjoy it, but for a variety of reasons, some of our most dedicated people are not able to continue to give the hours they have in the past. Groups such as ours must reach new people to remain viable.

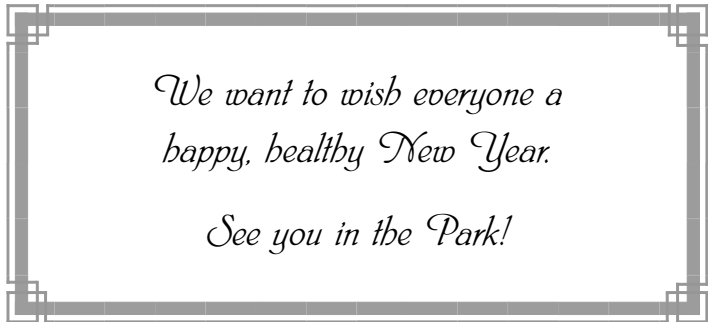
If you have ideas for how we can increase our volunteer base, please let us know. We do plan to prepare a tri-fold brochure for the kiosk and to distribute in the neighborhoods close to the parks. For example, we have not advertised in Crystal Park for two years and there has been turnover in those units. We will also send brochures to personnel in the schools and to Scout troops. All ideas for how to make the brochure effective will be gratefully accepted and considered.

January, 2010 update

If it's not one thing, it's another....

Several of us went to the Carroll Creek buffer recently just to tidy up, pound in stakes that had heaved in the frost, etc. – we found instead a new pest in the park – voles. They ate the entire root system on several trees and girdled many trees. I confess this is the first time I have been really upset. All the work we have done to help those trees along.....

Fortunately, Mike Kay of the MD DNR obtained City approval to put bait in long tubes accessible only to the rodents. This is cutting back the population. We are exploring two methods of keeping the grass short around the remaining trees, the key to avoiding vole damage. Keep those donations coming – hiring a mower or purchasing mulch collars both take some funds. But we do not want to lose the 150 or so remaining trees.



*We want to wish everyone a
happy, healthy New Year.*

See you in the Park!

Over the river and through the wood, To grandfather's house we go; The horse knows the way, To carry the sleigh, Through the white and drifted snow. - Mrs. Lydia Maria Child

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Winter must be cold for those
with no warm memories.
From the movie *An Affair to Remember*

Special thanks to...

Michelle and Adam Friedman – for lots of youthful ‘worker bee’ help in 2009.

Nancy McCartney – for her donation of rebar for our tree fencing efforts.

Charlie Rickman – for lending his knowledge and skills for many projects. Whenever I call, he is willing to help.

Mike Kay, MD DNR Forester – for bringing the MCC volunteers to the park for the spring planting and for always answering our questions.

The City of Frederick – Roelkey Myers, Tom Rippeon and Jim Wheeldon – We always need to have something trimmed or mowed or hauled away. They always listen to our requests and grant them, whenever they can.

Phyllis Hoyer - for her donations of trees, shrubs and perennials for the north side of Rock Creek behind the co-ops. The donations include a sourwood, two sweetbay magnolia and a fringetree. Phyllis also marked porcelainberry throughout the parks to assist the Weed Control personnel.