

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 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.

What did we do in 2009?

We made progress on several fronts. We had a sparse working crew during the hot months, but we managed to keep the donated trees watered. The "we" in that sentence is mainly Lesley Cristol - she often filled the FWP water bladder five times in a week.

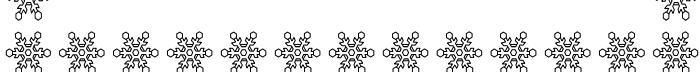
FWP purchased this year a yellow buckeye and a Kentucky coffee tree. Lesley donated two horse chestnut cultivars known for their beautiful red flowers. Within two days the deer had damaged them, so they are now secure behind fencing on the "hill" in Waterford Park. This fall the large sugar maples donated by Ruppert Nurseries in 2008 put on a wonderful show of color. Also, the worker bees remulched all of the large trees. As part of the City's effort to increase tree canopy, their contractor planted 50 large trees this fall at the east end of the park. The species planted are: red oak, chestnut oak, pin oak,



Brrrrrrr!

As I write this in mid-January, the cold weather continues.

We have not had any of our winter worker bee sessions yet. However, the winter is young, and as soon as the wind stops howling and the thermometer gets above freezing, we'll be out there!



FWP Board Members

Ginny Brace - President

Lynn Leathery - Vice-President

Ellen Dean - Secretary

Linda Berkheimer - Treasurer

Bobby Rickman - Administration

Chris Judd - Liaison to the Friends of Baker Park

Kathy Fay - member of the board of the
Friends of Baker Park, our fiscal agent.

Kathy attends our board meetings as the liaison from FOBP.

We meet the 3rd Wednesday of most months.

Meetings are open.

Please contact Ginny at
info@friendsofwaterfordpark.org
or (301) 682-6135

If you would like to attend a meeting
to confirm time and place.

hackberry, sweetgum, American elm and red maple. The City's contractor will water and maintain these trees for two years.

Funded largely by donations from two members, we purchased two steel benches. The City installed them on slabs and also placed slabs under the two stone benches we had purchased previously. The new benches are two different heights, so everyone should be able to find a comfortable seat in the park. Adam and Michelle Friedman and Nick Berlotti made a walkway from the path to one of the stone benches because the bench is in an area that retains water in rainy periods. City mowers can go right over the walkway.

We worked to protect buffer and forest area trees, adding fencing or tubes to at least another hundred trees. The deer managed to demolish a few of the fences but ignored most of the trees. Next year we are going to put sturdier fencing around the evergreens and sumac, the deer favorites.

The youth volunteers from Volunteer Frederick's SummerServ program worked hard again with us this July. They spread mulch, installed fencing and planted shrubs with us. We really appreciate having their energy on those hot summer Monday mornings.

Both entryways into the parks are looking better. We are coordinating with Poole Landscaping to complete the Baughmans Lane entry area. The serviceberry, viburnum, pine and chokeberry will let people know they are coming to park areas that are cared for. We have been mulching the Meadowdale entry area and planting wildflowers, ferns and shrubs. Both entryways are works in progress but are coming along nicely.

Try as we might, we have not been able to control weeds in the one acre meadow in Waterford Park. This year ragweed, clover and horseweed gave us problems. MD DNR sprayed in August and we asked the City to mow in September. At the Irvine Native Plants Seminar this year, we heard a lecture about meadow planting. The speaker recommended that the meadow be mowed to 6" once a month for the first year after seeding. Our board had approved the purchase of more seed and we will try this method in 2010.

We continue to inform park users about our plants and projects through the kiosk in Waterford Park and with laminated signs in various spots. Because we do not have a volunteer who focuses on these tasks, our educational efforts were not as strong this year.

We want to do a better job next year.

FWP Online

Visit www.friendsofwaterfordpark.org to keep up with our latest events, view pictures of past projects, download a membership form for a friend, and much more.



I prefer winter and fall, when you feel the bone structure of the landscape - the loneliness of it, the dead feeling of winter. Something waits beneath it, the whole story doesn't show. ~ Andrew Wyeth

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*

Friends of Waterford Park

C/O Ginny Brace

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Frederick, MD 21702

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.