



The Parks Reporter

Volume 2, Number 2

The Newsletter of the Friends of Waterford Park

Fall 2008

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...

As FWP begins its fourth year, I am happy to say I am enjoying the group and the experience more than ever. Good thing, because as DNR forester Phil Pannill says, it's a process, not just a project.

I'm not sure what the best part of FWP is for me. It's a toss up. I have learned a lot, made new friends and rekindled my enthusiasm for the outdoors.

I have really enjoyed learning about native plants and why they are so vital for the environment. The greatest amount of learning for me has been about the invasive species. When I was getting my master's in outdoor education in 1971, invasive plants was not a topic of concern – I had never heard of hops or Japanese honeysuckle. When we began FWP, we had no idea we would need to remove most of the lower-growing plants **in the woods** (the understory). We were just going to add some colorful natives that were wild-life-beneficial to the existing park. With the help of the MD Dept. of Natural Resources, we learned about the invasives and received training and grant monies to fight them.

The people involved with FWP make all the work enjoyable. The "worker bees" are all out there for the greater good, and we just do whatever we can, joking as we work. It's much more fun than I would have imagined

because of the people. Also, many people send me emails or stop me in the park to chat. They tell me how much they appreciate our work. So many FWP members are not physically able to do the park work, but you support FWP's efforts behind the scenes, financially, with suggestions and with words of encouragement. We have approximately 70 individuals and families as FWP members - a strong organization.

Finally, why do I (and others) put in so many hours in the park? The key is doing something for which you have a passion. I marveled at the Olympians who trained for years for a few seconds or minutes of competition.

They are doing something that they want to do. So are we. The rewards are many. Just take a look at the pictures from 2004-2006 that are in this newsletter to see how much the park has changed in a short time.

Thanks for the opportunity to lead FWP. As always, keep your comments, both positive and constructive, coming our way.

Ginny

*Autumn is a second spring
when every leaf is a flower.*

~ Albert Camus ~

Park Projects Spring and Summer 2008

Our spring 2008 newsletter announced several projects. These projects were in general quite successful. Here is a recap of the activities from March to September, 2008.

A segment highlighting FWP's work was filmed in late March and did in fact appear on **MD Public TV** in April. We never heard from MPT regarding any volunteer hours donated by people who saw the show, but we at least got the exposure and showed others about our two-fold approach – out with the bad (invasives) and in with the good (native plants).

We also had a fine time participating in **the Big Sweep** in late April – some of us waded the creek and some walked the shoreline along Rock Creek from Baughman's Lane down to the Rt. 15 culvert – lots of trash as evidenced by the photo of our cart loaded with orange bags. We raised close to \$500, most of it from FWP members. We put flyers at all of the bulletin boards in Crystal Park hoping to gain support from those residents, but that did not happen. The discouraging thing is that with the next heavy rain, more trash from upstream washed into our area of the creek. We will continue to have stream clean-ups at least once a year to keep the worst of the trash from snagging on the creekbanks.

(Continued on Page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

We planted many trees and shrubs in March (for MPT filming), in April (with the Potomac Conservancy) and also in May. Most of the plants have done well, although we lost again this year many of the barerooted trees planted in tree tubes out in the open. We lost most of the pagoda dogwoods planted in the woods (were the trees bad or does this species not like our soil?) so we will not try any more of these. On the bright side, the gray dogwoods and many other species we planted in prior years seem to have done well here. As we plan additional plantings, we will increase the numbers of the species that are thriving.

This summer we planted sweetspire donated by the Reedy's near the bridge closest to Route 15. We planted additional wildflowers along the path in August. Many of our summer "worker bee" sessions involved weeding, making sure our trees and shrubs had space to thrive.

The new seed we purchased for the meadow in 2008 is still sitting in a cool spot waiting to be planted – the field was too wet for the entire spring and early summer. By the time it dried enough to get a truck in there, it was too late to put in the seed. Fortunately, last year's seed produced color from April on through the summer and early fall. The DNR did spray to control crabgrass in June in most of the meadow. We also hope the DNR can apply pre-emergent crabgrass killer in spring, 2009. The moist spring must have been ideal for ragweed. We tried to control this bumper crop, but we needed the City to mow a portion of the meadow in late August because we did not have the manpower to do a complete job. Next spring the City will mow the meadow and we will hopefully get the new seed in.

We watered the donor trees as needed as well as new evergreens in the buffer and new plants in the woods. August was the only dry month, so watering was not too huge a job this year.

We have been working to protect our trees and shrubs from deer; last year they ruined several of the large trees and a dozen or more in the buffer. They are also eating some of the shrubs. If we can get these shrubs and trees taller, they can survive deer browse. We have gotten some used fencing, purchased some and were given many tree tubes by the City. Our goal is to protect as many of the plants as we can from browsing and from deer rub.

We spent FWP funds for more permanent signage for many of our wildflowers, shrubs and trees. We also installed some temporary signs throughout the park that we will take down this fall. Park users seem to enjoy knowing about the plants. Next year we hope to add to the number of permanent signs.

As always, we worked to clear out dead invasives, focusing this year on the Rock Creek streambank. We pull out mile-a-minute, garlic mustard and hops as best we can. Some of the newly-discovered porcelainberry was sprayed, and we clipped back other plants as we found them to try to prevent them from fruiting this year. Next year the spraying effort will continue.

We had some much-welcomed help from youth enrolled in Volunteer Frederick programs. They worked with us on three occasions. Brad Rowland lent his chainsaw skills to us many times. Many FWP members contributed as they were able throughout the year. Some, like the Rickmans, Linda Berkheimer and Doug Reedy, contribute "behind the scenes" while others such as the Leathersys, Lesley Cristol, Marilyn Reedy and Karen Disque, to name a few, contribute in the park. We received donations for fencing, two large donation for benches with backs, donations for plants and many general donations from our members.

Fall Work Schedule

Ongoing

Tuesdays, Fridays and Saturdays at 8:30 am. We will begin at 9 am when the weather gets cooler.

If you want us to plan an evening session, contact Ginny at:

ginny4ftp@aol.com or
(301) 682- 6135.

We'll be glad to add some evening times.

Scheduled events

Anyone can attend our board meetings the third Wednesday of each month at 7 pm. At 1604 Rock Creek Drive.

Sat. Oct. 4 at 9 am

Planting 40 trees and shrubs: 32 one-gallon plants and 8 three-gallon plants. Then mulching and watering. Meet at the kiosk.

Sat. Oct. 25 at 9 am

"Make A Difference Day"

John Smucker is bringing Volunteer Frederick workers to the park. We hope to plant about 100 trees. John will auger the holes, so very little digging required. FWP members needed to work alongside the youth.

Please let Ginny know if you can attend either of the scheduled events.

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.

In seed time learn, in harvest teach, in winter enjoy. ~ William Blake ~

Sewer Connection - Project April 2004



Sewer Connection Project February 2005



FWP's First Project
Pulling Japanese Hops along
Rock Creek



May 2006 - Pulling the garlic mustard along the path. The woods were solid green - all invasives!



Our first planting at the cut through at Carroll Creek





Spring 2006 - Mulching the rocky area at the West end of Waterford Park



Spring 2006 - Our Biggest project
The Carroll Creek buffer - 375 trees & shrubs.



~ *FWP Board* ~

President – Ginny Brace

Vice-President – Lynn Leathery

Secretary – Liz Brown (interim)

Treasurer – Linda Berkheimer

Liaison to the Friends of Baker Park – Chris Judd

Admin. Committee Chair – Bobby Rickman

Wish list:

- ☛ A permanent secretary.
Thanks to Lesley Cristol and Liz Brown for taking minutes until we find a permanent secretary.
- ☛ Someone to maintain the kiosk. Ginny can provide materials, pictures, etc.
- ☛ Someone to take charge of the signage project.

Special Thanks to:

- ☛ Chris Judd - for hauling the plants from the nurseries to the park. We couldn't plan these big planting days without Chris, his truck and his trailer to get the plants here.
- ☛ The City of Frederick - for keeping us supplied with mulch, for mowing the ragweed we could not get clipped, for mowing the buffer on a regular basis and for always listening to our concerns and requests.
- ☛ Charlie Rickman - for constructing sides for the trailer, cutting the 4x4's for signage and for the plastic piping that protected our birdhouses from raccoons this year. He has every tool known to mankind, and loans them to FWP without hesitation whenever we ask.
- ☛ Karen Disque - for donating the 4x4's that hold our signs.
- ☛ Lesley Cristol - for watering faithfully every week.
- ☛ Several FWP members - for picking up trash daily as they walk the park. You know who you are!
- ☛ Arlie Graham, Liz Brown, Candis Smith, Barb Dunnington & Evelyn Orndorff - for the snacks for our Volunteer Frederick workers.
- ☛ Linda Berkheimer - for the use of her cooler full of water when we have groups in the park.
- ☛ Bob Skeens - for picking up the donated fencing.
- ☛ Buck Wisner - for his third year of collecting cans and getting them to the recycling center.
- ☛ FWP board members - a great group that pitches in whenever there is a need.



Our "haul" from
Rock Creek during the
Big Sweep - April, 2008.

"Winter, a lingering season, is a time to gather golden moments, embark upon a sentimental journey, and enjoy every idle hour."

John Boswell