



The Parks Reporter

Volume 5, Number 1

The Newsletter of the Friends of Waterford Park

Winter 2011

2010 SEASON-BY-SEASON

To sum up 2010, you win a few, you lose a few. This has been an up-and-down year with blizzards and drought, but overall we are making progress with our efforts in the 18.5 acres of City parkland where we work.

Winter 2010 - We found vole damage, lots of it, in the area where we planted 400 trees/shrubs in 2006. The DNR laid bait and we had the buffer mowed in January, in between major storms. We did lose 30 or more trees, roots eaten through, but we arranged to have that area mowed three times this year by a private contractor per DNR recommendation. The City also used Roundup around trees to maintain a clear area to deter the voles. In between blizzards, we cut back invasives on the south side of Rock Creek and in Rock Creek Park, hoping that Frederick Co. Noxious Weed would spray in the spring. However, they were not able to get to the park, so the invasives re-sprouted. We will work on those areas again for our winter sessions; we have spraying scheduled by City personnel for spring 2011.

Spring 2010 - Mike Kay and CCC workers planted 200 seedlings; a Scout troop planted 100, and FWP members planted another 50 or so. The survival rate appears to be quite good. We planted many red osier dogwood, cranberry viburnum, silky dogwood, red maple, sycamore and serviceberry along Rock Creek to stabilize the stream edges. We continued to work to establish a one-acre meadow, purchasing more perennial and grass seed that the DNR planted for us. The City mowed three times, with the goal of keeping large weeds from seeding while allowing perennials and grasses to develop. We planted 60 trees along Carroll Creek with MUCFC grant funds. An Eagle Scout took over the site preparation and the planting as his project; the planting was quite successful. We completed the renovation of both park entryways, planting wildflowers and small trees at one entry (with fencing to keep the groundhogs out) and planting large serviceberry and arrowwood viburnum at the other entry. Both areas are radically improved from a few years ago.

Summer 2010 - Lesley Cristol and I watered and watered and watered, using about 30 jugs, a 30 gallon bladder and a 55 gallon barrel. We also paid a contractor to water 19 gator bags weekly. As far as we can tell, we did not lose any trees to drought. Volunteer Frederick Summerserv students worked with us three days in July, mulching and clearing invasives.

Fall 2010 - We completed the installation of over 300 black mesh tree tubes, replacing green tubes that harbored wasps and mice and elevating trees that are now large enough for shelters. We completed the Carroll Creek planting (20 additional trees), planted 30 more trees on the same day with 19 volunteers participating, planted 150 seedlings from Musser Forest stock and planted 14 larger trees purchased from *Tremendous MD*. These trees included 5 pink and 5 white dogwood.

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 the President:

Winter greetings to all of the workers and supporters of FWP. I for one am ready to act like a plant and be dormant for a month or so. Before I rest, I want to recognize some of the people who made this a successful year.

We had wonderful volunteers this year, with new people joining us as some of our long-time hard workers moved, incurred new obligations or started families.

- Adam and Michele Friedman are now in NC but send their words of encouragement to us.
- The Ingram family has returned to the area and are working with us even though their new address is in Middletown.
- Brad and Amy Rowland (and son Tyler) have moved, but Brad helped us greatly by locating and delivering 375 black mesh tree shelters at low cost.
- Reid Fiester is donating his chainsaw skills on a regular basis.
- Peter Lamacchia spent hours with us, including the removing of green tree tubes and installing the black mesh tubes.
- A volunteer highlight was the November 6th planting of 47 larger trees and shrubs: we had 19 volunteers that day. You will see lots of new flags and fenced trees in the woods and along both creeks.
- Troop 799, Brookhill United Methodist Church, continued to play a vital role.
- Tyler Lowe chose the planting of 80 trees along Carroll Creek as his Eagle project. His volunteers spent days clearing the area and planting the trees.
- Poole Landscaping partnered with us, providing trees at low cost and donating the augering of holes for trees.
- As always, Lynn and Joann Leathery, Lesley Cristol and Marilyn Reedy provide ongoing labor. The Leatherys tracked 185 hours of work this year.
- Phyllis Hoyer and Nancy Speck purchased trees to supplement FWP purchases.

City and County budget cutbacks affected our efforts; we will not have the benefit of these workers to assist with hauling brush and spraying to the extent they have in the past. However, the City will provide a crew this winter to work on the brush along the path in Rock Creek and to remove some brush piles. They also bring mulch whenever we ask. The City allowed me to complete training so that I can now spot spray invasives; it's the only way to eradicate some of the stubborn honeysuckle, wisteria, bittersweet and grape vines, and it is necessary for the larger honeysuckle bushes. Look for me in the park with a backpack sprayer as soon as those nasty plants start to green up.

2011 will be a year of maintenance rather than lots of new plantings. We may plant this fall, but this spring we will just make sure the plants we have in the ground are doing well. We need to replenish the coffers; look for our renewal letter in April. Until then, have a safe winter and enjoy the park if you are able.

Ginny

p.s. Let's hope we don't get TWO FEET of snow!!! Ha!

