



# The Parks Reporter

The Newsletter of the Friends of Waterford Park

Winter 2014/15

## **FWP - A Year in Review**

This year has been a time of great change. The death of our treasurer, Linda Berkheimer, was a great loss not just for FWP but for the wider community. Our most involved volunteer and vice-president, Bill Einloth, moved to Virginia this summer. Both of those people were invaluable contributors to the success of FWP. In addition, our focus in recent months has been divided between park work and planning/administrative tasks. Some things, however, remain constant. Our membership remains strong and our “worker bees” and other volunteer groups continue to come out and do the planting, trash pickup and invasives control/removal that have been our focus for the past nine years.

## **Park projects involving local, City and state personnel**

We had several meetings with City officials and the engineering firm that will complete the shared-use path in 2015. One major development in that process is that the “old sewer line” along the creek is no longer required to be a 40-foot cleared easement; the mowed path will be reduced to a 10 foot path for City equipment. Approximately 50 trees will be planted in the former easement area to fulfill the reforestation requirements of the project.

We met with Jen Willoughby, the new City Sustainability Manager, to discuss her proposed grant application to stabilize the stream banks between the middle and downstream bridges. Hopefully this project will be funded and completed in time to save some of the large trees continue to be undercut by swift storm water.

We also coordinated with the City sewer department. These men spent several days in the park clearing fallen trees from the creek and clearing



The February 2014 ice storm caused tremendous damage in the park.

brush from the woods between the creek and the old sewer line.

We are also communicating with the contractor who in 2015 will plant the \$20,000 worth of trees associated with the City’s grant funds. It is our goal to have native trees that will thrive in our soils and that will benefit wildlife in addition to buffering the two creeks in the parks.

Another project in the works is the revitalization of the central part of the meadow. The weeds were winning, and Donnie Rohrbach of the MD DNR has begun to implement his plan to spray and replant this section.

Last year members donated over \$3,000 designated for clearing the woods of broken branches, fallen trees, etc. that were the result of ice storms. We hired a contractor; they will complete their work as ground conditions permit over the winter.

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**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.

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We are also working with our terrific volunteer and Eagle Scout candidate, Kevin Jaramillo. He plans to form a team to complete two mulched paths through sections of the woods, something that many members have requested.

Finally, the Berkheimer family designated that memorial gifts in memory of Linda Berkheimer come to FWP to benefit the park. We held a general membership meeting in July where approximately 30 members gathered to hold board elections and to discuss possible park projects and best uses for these funds.

### **Park volunteer worker accomplishments**

Although the above planning activities required many hours of time, we were able to get out in the park and do what we love best; continue to transform this park into a native landscape for the enjoyment of people and the benefit of wildlife. The year did not begin well for the worker bees; you may recall last winter was one snowstorm after another with sub-freezing temperatures through March. We only managed about 50 hours for the first three months of year. April was the start of improving conditions. Tremendous MD, the state nursery, donated 25 trees to our group. HEAT, the Hood environmental club, planted those trees mainly along Carroll Creek. This fall that group returned to plant 30 understory trees/shrubs and to clear invasive honeysuckle and wineberry. Several friends of Linda Berkheimer planted a memorial grove of trees and shrubs near the green benches. In preparation for the 2015 planting, our FWP worker bees along with the tree contractor and the sewer department have removed invasives and brush piles. We weeded and mulched the several dozen large trees we have planted in the field, edged and fenced the area behind the co-ops, worked to reduce weeds in the meadow, pruned and tended to fences and shelters and the Meadowdale and Baughmans entrances areas, watered new plants and picked up trash from the woods and stream. As of the end of November, we recorded over 430 hours of manual labor.



This area along the sewer line, now cleared, used to be a massive pile of brush. Now it is ready for new trees.



Final steps in restoration of the area behind the co-ops. It is now cleared, planted and fenced.



View of the cleared area after Hood students worked on the adjacent understory and plantings.

### **“Covering our ashes” project for 2015.**

Last year we asked for your help to hire professionals to improve the forested areas. You responded very generously, and the work should be completed in the next couple of months. Our wet areas can be a challenge for contractor equipment.

This year we have an opportunity to raise funds to save several of the large ash trees in the park. The emerald ash-borer, an insect from Asia, has swept through several states and devastated the ash populations; it is now in Frederick County. You will surely hear more about this in the coming months. Green ash is one of the largest species in our park. Untreated trees will most likely die within a few years. The treatment is effective but expensive for large trees. It must be repeated every 2 years for approximately 10 years. The 10 year cost to save 5 of our largest ashes along the paved paths will be about \$10,000. We are reaching out to two state agencies for grant funds and to the City (which will bear the cost of removing these trees if they are allowed to die). Members have pledged \$700 after just one conversation in the woods. On our membership form this year we will ask your support. Will you help save these trees? We welcome your comments and/or donations at any time.



View of dead locusts and brush near the new bridge. Contractors will clear the understory of brush and take out the bent over mulberry and one locust trunk (on the right side).

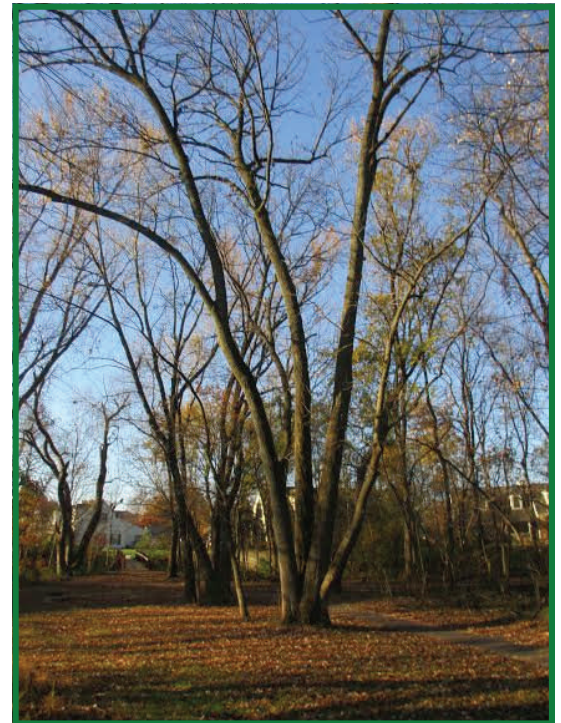
When that part of the locust falls, it will fall on the path and on other trees.

### **Who are the worker bees?**

People like Lesley Cristol and the Leathery's have been helping in the park since 2005. Some of our former workers have moved, but new people have stepped in. These days you will find Alice Meiners, Sue and Brad Stokes, Margaret Pierre-Nanan and Kevin Jaramillo working on a regular basis. Many others come out as their schedules permit, including Sheila McFarland, Peter Brehm, Rachel Zigler, Chris Wise, Anne Kenny, Corey Stottlemyer, Kathy Soria and Andy Driscoll.

### **Officers of the Friends of Waterford Park**

President	Ginny Brace
Vice-president	Rachel Zigler
Secretary	Kathy Soria
Treasurer	Alice Meiners



One of the large ashes along the paved path