

## The year in review

2018 certainly was different! January began with cold that had frozen the creek in December. Then temperatures moderated and we did our usual patrolling of the woods, cutting and pulling invasives and marking cut vines with tape. Frederick Noxious Weed Control came early spring and treated the vines we had marked to prevent re-growth. Aiden Bedwell began his Eagle project with a January site visit to prepare the plan. FWP “bees” did some initial clearing of the project area (above the bridge at the Baughmans Lane end of the park). We cut back the larger honeysuckle and transplanted three small native trees. In March a crew of 30 scouts and adults got rid of all the honeysuckle stumps and invasive groundcovers. In April, a crew built a retaining wall and five yards of topsoil were added to level the hillside. In May, perennials and shrubs were planted and the area was mulched. A fantastic Eagle project to rehab a long-neglected area. Thank you Aiden and your volunteers.

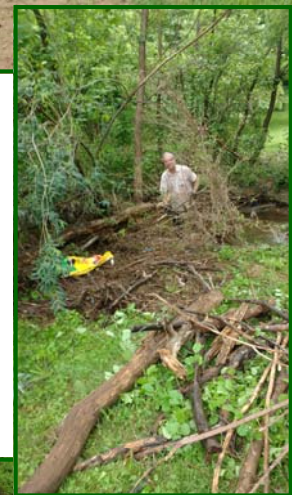
Spring was also a busy planting time for FWP volunteers. Jen Willoughby and her intern Yash planned a Food Forest planting to focus on native plants with fruits suitable not only for wildlife but also for human consumption. We planted three areas of shrubs and trees in April. Hazelnuts, serviceberries, pawpaws and elderberries will be there for the picking in a year or two – if you can get them before the birds, fox, possums, turkeys.... FWP mulched, fenced and planned to water these regularly.

But spring took a nasty turn with the mid-May flooding. We spent the next month straightening shrubs, finding trash and fences, and pulling debris away from tree trunks to prevent rot. This was the worst flood that I recall since 2004. Let’s hope it doesn’t happen again anytime soon. 13 of the 15 young pawpaws near the Baughmans end bridge were washed away along with a few other shrubs, even a few along the paved path. Luckily the new winterberry and American hollies and the two new pecans planted along the path all made it through unscathed. The new City planting along the east end of the old sewer line took a hit; many of those trees had to be replaced. As part of the shared-use project, many plants including dozens of winterberry hollies are now along the path on both sides of the Carrol Creek bridge and in the triangle area where the path goes toward Waterford.

A new bench and shade plants near the middle bridge are the result of donations made by friends in memory of Roberta Gardella. Many people attended the bench dedication in August. Park users enjoy a nice place to sit in



The west end of the park was hard hit by the May flood, with soil washed from the creek and debris on trees.



Post-flood cleanup was a huge job.



Pawpaws washed away in the flood.

the shade.

Summer and fall brought a couple of drier weeks but mainly rainy ones. We only watered new plants three times this year. The turtle area looked especially good with the native grasses really filling in.

We did not get to enjoy a flock of turkeys this year. Adults crossed under Rt. 15 and raised their young in Baker Park this year. But we have spotted adults in Waterford this fall. Maybe they will return next year.

As always we have groups to help us. Astrazeneca, Hood Environmental Club, Subaru Enthusiasts and one more Eagle project (pulling invasives and weeding & mulching

*(Continued on page 3)*



This fall we cut and treated dozens of walnuts that squirrels had planted in the meadow.



New bench by the middle bridge



Most of the trees planted three years ago with a City riparian area grant are thriving. This white walnut (butternut) is a fairly rare tree, seems to be doing well.



When the support posts for the Welcome to Waterford Park sign rotted, we cut the hollyhock to the ground. The City replaced the sign and the hollyhock grew back.



The black-crowned night herons that nest in Baker Park visit our fishing spots



The winterberry hollies will provide winter food.

(Continued from page 1)

around trees) give our worker bees much needed assistance.

FWP received quite an unexpected honor this fall from the International Society of Arboriculture. We received one of four Gold Leaf awards for the Mid-Atlantic region for our ongoing commitment to the park. Thanks to Jen Willoughby for nominating us.

As winter approaches and the native plants go into dormancy, the green invasives stand out. It's the perfect time for the worker bees to locate and remove the invasive honeysuckles, bittersweet, clematis, burning bush, etc. This task will provide exercise and fellowship for the next few months for the hardy worker bees.

### Who makes the group successful?

Donnie Rohrback, wildlife specialist with the MD DNR has for years provided advice and labor to keep the meadow beautiful and native. This year he sprayed the non-native grasses that were out-competing the native species. Without Donnie, the meadow would be a disaster. Again this year we received a much-appreciated grant from the William E. Cross Foundation, Inc. for our general operating expenses. The Food Forest plants were funded by a grant from the Maryland Urban and Community Forest Committee. Charlie Johnson generously purchased three dogwoods from Stadler Nursery and had them planted by the nursery. These trees are between the bridge and the co-ops. A plaque in memory of Charlie's son will be added in 2019.

Our crew of worker bees devote hundreds of hours to the down-and-dirty tasks. Even with this rainy year we are close to 600 hours as I write this in mid-November. Joe Ganley is always there to handle the heavy lifting in addition to walking the park and alerting us to things that need attention. Hunter Riley and wife Erin have contributed in many ways; watering crew, weedwhacking, weeding, whatever needs doing. Kathy Soria and Rachel Zigler took on the task of birdhouse monitoring and cleaning. Sue Rausch makes sure the turtle and hibiscus areas are weeded. Many other "bees" show up for weekend or weekday sessions. What a great dedicated group.

Ginny Brace  
FWP President



Before the Scouts began their work, FWP "bees" prepped the area for them



Scouts planted shrubs and trees in May.



Completed Eagle scout project

## Fall Color



[www.FriendsOfWaterfordPark.org](http://www.FriendsOfWaterfordPark.org)

By late October the fall colors were glorious



Turtle Area in the Fall

## Looking Ahead

The City project to stabilize the creek banks and slow the water flow is underway by the time you read this. The completion deadline is March 1. Any needed replanting can be done after that date.

We are determined to have regular maintenance of our planted areas – Meadowdale Lane entrance, fenced area behind the co-ops, donor bench and Eagle project areas. Sue and Pat already maintain the turtle and hibiscus areas. Stay tuned as we work out details, hopefully in coordination with the City.

Many of our trees are large enough that the deer will not rub them. Fence removal is a task for winter and early spring. New pawpaws will replace the ones that washed away.

A City crew will stabilize the curve closest to Route 15 if it is ever dry enough for their equipment!

Late spring will be our third ash tree treatment. We are saving close to three dozen trees, all the ones with canopy potential. Thanks to the yearly distribution from our fund at the Community Foundation as well as prior donations, we have the money needed for this year's treatment.

Monitoring the woods for invasives and weeding/mulching around trees in the open remain our major ongoing tasks. As the DNR told us years ago, this is not a project, it's a process. Fortunately we see so much improvement that we enjoy keeping Waterford Park a place that impresses those who come here.

Onward to 2019!

### FWP, Inc. Board of Directors

Ginny Brace, *president*

Rachel Zigler, *vice-president*

Kathy Soria, *secretary*

Pat Lloyd, *treasurer (Welcome Pat)*

Karen Berkheimer Morton, *director*

Dan Yates, *director*

Kathy Fay, *liaison, Friends of Baker Park*



Birdhouses require cleaning and weekly checking to keep the sparrows away



Rachel Zigler with the arborist society plaque

**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.*

*FWP is a 501(c)(3) MD Corporation. Guiding Principle: Do No Harm.*