



FRIENDS OF WOOSTER MEMORIAL PARK

P.O. Box 1776, Wooster, OH 44691
www.friendsofwmp.com

SEPTEMBER 2015

VOLUNTEERS MAKE IT HAPPEN AT THE PARK THIS SUMMER



Enthusiastic group of College of Wooster 1st-year students pull invasive plants on the Kenwood Acres during their in-service on 8/29/15 (Photo by John Abt).

Over 100 volunteers helped Friends of Wooster Memorial Park (FWMP) and the City complete dozens of projects at Wooster Memorial Park (WMP) since April's Annual Meeting. Projects ranged from planting native plants and removing invasive ones on Kenwood Acres, to re-installing sign posts, clearing tree falls on trails, rerouting trails, painting blazes on trees, and picking up glass. Volunteers have contributed more than 675 work hours to improve the park. We encourage you to read on for more details and thank you to all who support WMP.

Please check out our last two public events for 2015, and we hope you get to enjoy the brilliant colors of fall in and around the park.

LAST TWO PUBLIC EVENTS OF 2015 – PLEASE JOIN US

SALAMANDERS OF WMP, SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 27 AT 2:00PM

It is always a special treat when our resident amphibian expert takes us on a hike to find different species of salamanders in WMP. This event is “catch and release”. We will keep the salamanders long enough for everyone to get a good look... and then we will return the critters to their moist dark homes under rocks and logs.



Photo by Edith Swank.



Photo by Edith Swank.

FALL FOLIAGE AT WMP, SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17 AT 1:30PM

This hike will celebrate the beauty of fall colors at WMP. As you walk the trails along the ridges of the Rathburn Run valley, you will have an opportunity to see the brilliantly-colored fall foliage from all directions. The hike will be 3.5 miles long, and will cross Rathburn Run twice.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President: Cathy Herms, 330-465-2725 ♦ Vice President: Shelley Schrier, 330-262-9307
Secretary: Edith Swank, 330-263-6766 ♦ Treasurer: John Parker, 330-345-7511
Directors-at-Large: John Abt, 330-464-7715, Dan Buehler, 330-465-7588; Greg Wiles, 330-464-1067

AT THE PARK

When a Tree Falls in WMP – FWMP Board Member John Parker and his tree clearing crew will find it and clear it away! With two different-sized chain saws, John can handle most jobs. Some big trees came down across the trails this year, keeping the crew very busy.



Outer Trail erosion along the Run (John Parker).

Power of Water & Trail Reroutes – Erosion continues to impact the trails in the park. FWMP had to re-route two different trail sections this summer, one along the upper Trillium Trail and one along the east Outer Trail. WMP is ever changing.

Annual Mowing Plan – FWMP has developed an annual mowing regime for the farm field, Monitor Bank Parcel, and Education Area prairie. These open fields provide a unique habitat for birds, insects, and other wildlife. Mowing will prevent shrubs and trees from taking over. The plan is to mow the Monitor Bank Parcel every year, and to divide the other two sites into sections and mow each section every 3 years.

Pavilion Gets a Fresh Coat – The Education Area pavilion got a fresh coat of paint this summer. COW students painted the lower portions of the pavilion during their August workday, and then FWMP volunteers borrowed scaffolding from the City and finished off the hard-to-reach areas over the last couple weeks. It looks great!



Freshly painted Education Area pavilion (John Abt).

KENWOOD ACRES IMPROVEMENTS



An oak seedling hidden in the grass.

A Forest Down Under – What happened to the 7,500 tree seedlings planted by FWMP volunteers and Twinsberry Tree Farm on the Kenwood this spring? They’re hiding down under... the weeds. The tall grasses actually provided an excellent summer shelter, and obscured the seedlings from nibbling animals. Some trees did not survive, but a large number did and have set good buds for next year. We will do a formal census in spring 2016 to determine the number and distribution of live trees.

A Prairie Down Under – The mixed prairie planted this spring on 7 acres of the Kenwood is establishing nicely. Just like the tree seedlings, many of the prairie plants are hidden by the grassy weeds. But the prairie plants are taking hold, and we had some nice blooms. It will be exciting to watch the prairie develop and mature over time.



Lemon mint

Black-eyed Susan

Partridge pea

Indian blanket

New Scenic Overlook – In August, Johnny Scott of BSA Troop 66 installed a wooden overlook in the central woods of Kenwood Acres for his Eagle Scout project. Measuring 20 feet wide by 11 feet deep, the overlook provides spectacular views of two side-ravines as they converge and continue north across the Trillium Trail and into the Rathburn Run. Johnny’s project was ambitious, and he ran into a few technical snags that delayed installation. But Johnny persevered and has an amazing overlook to show for his efforts!



New overlook and the scenic view (John Parker).

Clean-up of Future Silver Road Entrance – The old homestead site along Silver Road is another step closer to becoming an official alternate entrance for WMP. Over the summer, FWMP hired Nieman Excavating to dig out and haul away remnant concrete and debris from the farmhouse demolition. They also filled the old dug well. Then



Now that it is cleaned up, this area would make a nice picnic spot (Shelley Schrier).

during a COW workday at the end of August, students raked up smaller debris and planted grass seed. The hope is to locate a parking area and a kiosk on this site. And there’s a little area among some trees that could make a nice picnic area (or as John Parker calls it, his “little slice of heaven”).



Clean up in process (John Parker).

Future Gravel Parking Area & Kiosk – The Board has begun plans for a 10 to 15 car gravel parking area on Kenwood’s old homestead site. Funds will come from FWMP’s Wayne County Community Foundation and Laura B. Frick Trust grants received last December for Kenwood improvements. In addition, Scout Mike Rossiter with Troop 922 has agreed to build a kiosk on the Kenwood for his Eagle Scout project. Before moving ahead with either project, the Board will wait to hear about the outcome of our ODNR Recreational Trails Fund grant.



COW students enjoy their workday at WMP (John Abt).

WMP BENEFITS FROM COW WORKDAY

WMP lucked out again this year and was a work site for College of Wooster’s New Student Orientation Program. Each year, COW first-year students take time to provide service to our community as part of their first week. On August 29, 88 COW students volunteered 2 hours to do a wide a variety of projects, such as rerouting trails, removing invasive plants, painting blazes on trees, painting the pavilion in the Education Area, planting grass, picking up glass and other debris, installing switchbacks and clearing water bars. Fifteen FWMP members volunteered their time to supervise these activities. Thank you to all who participated!

ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH WORKDAY

As part of the celebration of their 150th anniversary, 26 members of Zion Lutheran Church volunteered their service to WMP on June 6. They helped with a variety of activities, including painting blazes on trees, removing invasive plants and installing tree guards on newly planted trees. Thank you to Church volunteers for their efforts. A good time was had by all.

ANOTHER GREAT YEAR OF TRAIL RUNNING EVENTS AT WMP

Brian Polen of Vertical Runner in downtown Wooster and his Wooster Running Club organized another full season of trail running events at WMP, with proceeds from two events going to benefit the park. The runners have also helped the park by becoming FWMP members and volunteering for trail projects. Thank you!

- Together We'll Trample ALS Trail Run, June 13 (to benefit the NE Ohio ALS Chapter)
- Run Unplugged 5k Trail Series, July (4-week trail series to benefit WMP)
- "Running is Fun" Kids Running Camp, July/Aug (6-week training camp for ages 5-12)
- Trail Monster Mini Series Season Finale, August 8 (to benefit WMP)
- Vertical Runner Trail Running Festival, August 29 (free event)
- Thursday night Trails! (free informal trail run every Thursday night)



Trail Monster Mini Series Finale (C. Herms).



Kids are excited to run during the Kids Running Camp (Dan Buehler).

MANY WELL-ATTENDED PUBLIC PROGRAMS

The Education & Public Awareness Committee offered many exciting public programs this year, including an Education Ravine walk, wildflower walk and birding walk in the spring, a Walk the New Kenwood Property and Walk (in) Rathburn Run in the summer, and a Perseid Meteor Watch in mid-August. Thank you to our event leaders, and to Committee members, Edith Swank (chair), John Abt and Mary Hetrick, for their great work in planning these events.

GENEROUS DONATIONS OF PAINT & SUPPLIES



Thank you to Sherwin Williams on Burbank Road for generously providing paint for trail blazes at a substantial discount. We especially thank Assistant Manager Cheryl Zajackowski for her patience and helpful guidance in choosing colors. We also want to thank Wooster Brush for supplying paint brushes and pans to repaint the Education Area pavilion during the recent COW workday.

GOOD SAMARITANS WELL MEANING, BUT

Over the years, some people who use WMP have made 'improvements' to the park and trails without contacting the FWMP Board. While we appreciate their efforts, we need to ensure that all management activities are within the scope of WMP's conservation easement and the goals we have for managing the park.

This summer, a well-meaning park user put a lot of effort into raking or blowing leaves and debris off many of the trails. While this may make it easier to follow trails, the practice is not in the best interest of the park. According to Harry Hoitink, a retired Plant Pathology Professor from OARDC, *"leaf litter and small twigs in forests play a critical role in maintenance of the structure of the soil. This organic matter serves as food for small insects, fungi, bacteria and other microorganisms (known as a food web) that maintain soil porosity and drainage properties but also moisture retention. The litter also reduces soil erosion on trails."* Removing litter from trails actually causes them to be more slippery when wet and harder and drier during droughts. For WMP, the Board has determined that the best plan is to remove large branches and tree trunks from trails, but to leave all other organic matter in place. And over the years, the Board has made a concerted effort to keep all trail routes clearly marked by painting blazes on trees and posting signs at trail junctions. We also update the map regularly.



Leaf litter on trails helps reduce trail erosion (Shelly Schrier).

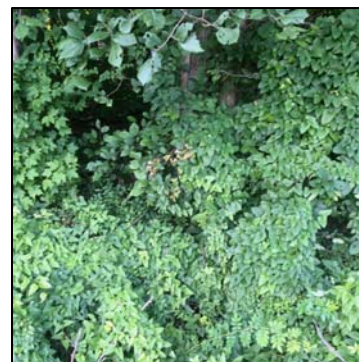
Another change was made when someone rerouted part of the Kenwood Trail. Moving trails can be problematic as well. Some trails closely border private property, and we do not want to go beyond our property without permission. Also, moving a trail may unwittingly harm rare plants. When trails need to be rerouted, like the Trillium and Outer Trails this summer, the Board spends a significant amount of time to plan, evaluate and approve the reroutes.

If you have concerns and/or think improvements are needed, please contact Shelley Schrier, co-chair of the Trail Committee, at sschrier@sssnet.com; 330-262-9307 or any other Board Member. And we are always looking for more volunteers to add to our helper list!

INVASIVE PLANT SPOTTERS HELP PROTECT PARK'S NATURAL INTEGRITY



Two new invasives were spotted this year, thank you to the vigilance of Plant Committee members. John Abt alerted the group to a large amount of cressleaf groundsel (photo on left) blooming on the Kenwood this spring. Harry Hoitink found an impressive patch of Chinese yam (photo on right by Harry) blanketing a portion of Kenwood's wood edge. Volunteers dealt with the groundsel by hoeing, and COW students tackled the invasive yam in August.



In addition, the Invasive Plant Warriors were back this spring to pull garlic mustard, and Harry, John Parker, WMP neighbor Gary Bickel and other volunteers spent many hours controlling Canada thistle, common burdock, multiflora rose and other summer invasives. All these collective efforts are paying off and are helping to protect the park's natural integrity.

THANK YOU TO THE CITY

The FWMP Board would like to thank Andrew Guidetti and the City of Wooster for their continuing cooperation and support throughout the seasons. FWMP accomplished a huge amount of work this summer, and that success would not have been possible without the help of the City. Andrew and crew supplied tooling, paint and other supplies for our projects this year. He also printed a fresh supply of trails maps, and is in the process of printing an updated version of the large aluminum park map to hang in the kiosk at Silver Road. The City and FWMP make a great team, and WMP is in great shape because of it!

ADDITIONAL THANK YOU'S

Many people and organizations have supported the park and/or FWMP this year through generous contributions of time, sweat, resources and/or other means, and we are deeply grateful. We have tried to include everyone on this list. For any helpers inadvertently omitted, our apologies and sincere thanks.



Mushrooms by Edith Swank.

FWMP Members

John Abt
 Jenni Adams
 Chuck Armbruster
 Gary Bickel
 Tim Breiner
 Rob Brown
 Dan Buehler
 Nancy Burkholder
 Heather Dennis
 Nick Downer
 Roger Downer
 Jeanne Durkalski
 Jeanne Fedyck
 Mike Gabalski
 Bob Haugh
 Kris Hawke
 Cathy Herms
 Harry Hoitink
 Melissa Leary
 Paul Martin
 Christine Montelione
 Jay Mosley
 Cindy Parker
 John Parker
 Shelley Schrier
 Gerald Stair
 Duane Steiner
 Edith Swank
 Jon Swank
 Peter Swank
 Greg Wiles

City Staff

Andrew Guidetti (manager)
 Jeff Buck
 Eli Troyer
 Dan Yarnell
 Ted Zech

Zion Lutheran Church

Ted Crawford
 Bill Donley
 Bob & Susan Elges
 Dennis & Donna Humphrey
 Michelle Johnson
 Tom Long
 Julie Mennes
 Karolyn Miller
 Susan Mykrantz
 Ben & Tim Nolt
 Art Oswald
 Pastor Ann Paynter
 Brian Picking
 Mary Ann & Stan Post
 Isaac Ridenaur
 Linda Roberts
 Mike Saner
 Gage Smekau
 Brenda Wagers
 Randy Wengerd
 Larry & Ruth Wetz

1st Amendment Public House

Alison Eby
 Susan Urasky

College of Wooster

Carolyn Buxton
 Kevin Lowry
 88 First-year Students

OARDC

Pia Arismendi Golborne
 Ben Robinson

Community Service

Michael Ball
 Jerre Finley
 Jim Hegarty
 Gary Maynard
 Dan Merillat
 David Yuhanick

Others

The Noble Foundation
 Ron Holtman (Killbuck
 Watershed Land Trust)
 Brian Polen (Vertical Runner)
 Nieman Excavating