



# A word from Wildwood

The goal of Friends of Wildwood is to preserve and support Wildwood Park and the Benjamin Olewine III Nature Center.

## Boardwalk Structural Analysis

It has been just over a year since the completion of the boardwalk improvements. Visitors are enjoying the three new boardwalk bridges and the adjoining streambank stabilization measures are working great. Park visitation is up this spring as users take advantage of these cornerstone amenities crucial in providing safe, accessible pathways through Wildwood's rich aquatic ecosystem.

This summer you may see consultants on site poking, digging and prodding at the boardwalk deck boards and footers as they perform a review of Wildwood's entire 0.8 mile boardwalk system. The goal is to determine any structural concerns, estimate remaining number of years left before decomposition as well as recommendations for near term and long term repairs.

This analysis is an important component in the long term planning for the Park's trail system. We look forward to sharing results later in the year!

## I'm Fine Mask Display

"I'm fine," a phrase we often say when we are not fine, is a statewide community project dedicated to sculpting mental health awareness, conversations and support through art. Initiated by co-curators Carrie Breschi (past Art In The Wild participant) and Maureen Joyce in 2019, I'm Fine consisted of a series of workshops where participants created ceramic masks that represented the outward "mask" each wears to portray, hide or minimize their emotions and mental health challenges. I'm Fine workshops have made over 1,300 masks so far. Public art installations and gallery exhibits, like this one, showcase the amazing masks and meaningful stories of the participants. A few masks themed around "Nature Heals" are on display inside the Nature Center. Take a moment to stop by and view these creative works of art, which will be available for viewing through the end of June. To learn more about this project visit <https://imfineproject.com/>



## Give Back – 25 Years of Nature!

In celebration of the Olewine Nature Center's 25th Anniversary, we are giving back to the community throughout the year to acknowledge this milestone.

This spring, a scholarship program, sponsored by Aetna Insurance, was launched to offset the cost for schools to take a field trip to Wildwood. The first recipient was Melrose Elementary School (eighty 5th graders) from Harrisburg School District. Aetna's Wellness on Wheels also attended and provided each student with a healthy snack at the start of their day, an awesome day of outdoor education and wellness backpacks filled with great information on how to live a healthy lifestyle at home. Thank you Danielle Lewis, Sustainability Coordinator for Harrisburg City Parks and Recreation, for planning behind the scenes and prepping the students for their trip. It's community partnerships like this that make us proud!



*Commissioner's Mike Pries and Justin Douglas welcome students to the Park!*

Also coming this summer (around mid July), a "Wildwood Park: An Introduction to Familiar Species" pocket guide produced by Waterford Press will be available for free at the Nature Center Front Desk for families and individuals to enjoy. And if you haven't stopped by the lower level of the Nature Center to step back in time with a few historical photos and maps, make sure to do that. Wildwood's history is rich and full of life and we are looking forward to the unfolding of the next 25 years!



*Construction of the Susquehanna Spillway tunnel to the Susquehanna River (circa 1907).*

## *A word from Wildwood*

is published quarterly by

Friends of Wildwood

100 Wildwood Way

Harrisburg, PA 17110

(717) 221-0292

explorewildwoodpark.org

E-mail: wwstaff@dauphincounty.gov

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Wildwood Park and the Benjamin Olewine III Nature Center are part of the Dauphin County Parks and Recreation Department. The Benjamin Olewine III Nature Center is open Tuesday through Sunday, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and is closed Mondays and holidays. Wildwood Park's trails are open from dawn until dusk. Programs can be viewed at [explorewildwoodpark.org/events](http://explorewildwoodpark.org/events) and questions directed to [wwstaff@dauphincounty.gov](mailto:wwstaff@dauphincounty.gov)

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## *A Word from the President*

Do you remember 1999, 25 years ago? The earth's population exceeded 6 billion. The euro currency was officially introduced in 11 European countries. The world was gripped with Y2K fears.

Another event of note happened right here in Harrisburg—the Benjamin Olewine III Nature Center was opened. Yes, our Nature Center is 25 years old this year. As its name implies, the mere existence of the Center is due to the generosity of local businessman and benefactor, Benjamin Olewine III.

The Center was developed using state-of-the-art eco-design principles of the day. Some of the methods/materials used included: solar orientation, passive air flow through the atrium, and eco-friendly finishes using recycled and upcycled materials.

Those materials and details helped to define the Center as cutting edge design in 1999, most of which survive to the present day. But because of advances in construction technology and the constant development of new building materials and eco-conscious design, some of the original materials and design details have been eclipsed with newer technology or are no longer available for repair and restoration purposes. However, the Center continues its service as a regional destination for natural exploration, study and recreation.

The Friends of Wildwood in concert with Dauphin County continue to explore and support upgrades and improvements to the Center that will address the growing needs resulting from greater use. These efforts will also address expanding the audience level of our exhibits and presented information as the extant exhibits were originally designed for an elementary school level audience. Stay tuned for an announcement in the next months of major upgrades to the Center. These upgrades will further another 25 years, at least, of education and fun for you, our visitors.

This will be an exciting time for Wildwood and the Benjamin Olewine III Nature Center, and one that we hope you will also support.

See you at Wildwood,  
Jim



## PRPS Agency of the Year Award

On March 14, the Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society (PRPS) recognized the Dauphin County Parks and Recreation Department as Agency of the Year!

The PRPS Agency of the Year Award inspires and recognizes exemplary accomplishments in positioning parks and recreation as an essential public service with meaningful community impact. The winner provides a fresh perspective on significant parks and recreation issues, shows innovation and collaboration and has demonstrated a high level of resourcefulness. DCPR is honored to serve the residents of Dauphin County by providing over 400 diverse recreation programs and managing over 1,000 acres of wetlands, forests, trails and meadows. This also includes various buildings, playgrounds, pavilions and facilities, as well as a museum, nature center and various historic sites.



*Pictured from left to right: Commissioner Mike Pries, Michelle McKeown (Program Manager), Anthea Stebbins (Director), Kayla Harbert (Northern Dauphin County Parks Manager) and Chris Rebert (Wildwood Park Manager).*

## Butterflies of North America

If you attended Wetlands Festival this spring, you may have seen an impressive collection of butterfly specimens on display that day. Recently, Wildwood Park was the recipient of a North American Butterfly Collection. The collection truly shows off the amazing biological diversity found in nature. Though not on display permanently, select times will be announced to highlight these magnificent insects. A big thank you to the family of the late Naturalist and Photographer Don Phillips for donating the collection. Thank you Gene Wingert and Randy Cassell for helping transport the display.



## Wetlands Festival Recap

Our 24th annual Wetlands Festival was held at the Park on April 27th. Despite some light rain throughout the day nearly 1,000 people stopped in the Nature Center and an estimated 1,500 visited the festival. Over 25 environmental exhibitors attended, as well as, food trucks, music by Holly Serio and Tanjo & Crow, animal presentations by Miller's Wildlife and more. Special thanks to our volunteers that helped make Wetlands Festival a success! Hope to see you at next year's festival.

## Species Spotlight: Common Gallinule

An exciting recent visitor to the shallows of the lake is the Common Gallinule, formerly known as the Common Moorhen. This bird swims like a duck and walks along shallow weedy emergent vegetation much like a coot or rail would with its long skinny toes. Along the edge it hopes to find snails, weeds and seeds from the muddy streambanks to eat. Most notably is the red shield which covers its bill ending in a yellow tip. The adult body is relatively uniform in color with white racing stripes on its flanks and white on the sides of the undertail coverts. Gallinules typically are heard vocalizing before they are seen. The nasally whining, creaking notes are a descending series of "peps". A newly hatched chick is equipped with spurs on their wings which help them climb in and out of the nest and grab onto substrate and vegetation to maneuver around. Other recent aquatic birds sighted this spring include American Coot, Common Merganser, American Bittern, Virginia Rail and 30 Glossy Ibis! Thanks Steve for capturing this one!



*Photo: Steve Dale*

## Photo Contest

Photographers, make sure to document the beauty of Dauphin County Parks this summer, taking full advantage of the green leaf out. Maybe you'll find a photo to enter into the Friends of Wildwood 2024 Photo Contest. All original, amateur photographs taken in 2024 within one of our six Dauphin County Parks are welcome. Entries can be submitted as early as November 1 to the Nature Center. We look forward to seeing the splendor of our Parks represented in print once again.

## Art In The Wild

Being in nature elicits different feelings in each of us. For some, nature can be a place to go to decompress and get away from the stress of life – whether that means exercising outside, planting a tree or listening to the sounds of nature. The theme of Art In The Wild 2024 is ‘Nature Heals’. Each Artist was challenged to design an installation that incorporated this theme into their work – and the Artists’ work featured around Wildwood Way and the Towpath Trail delivered beautifully.

For the past 12 years, Art In The Wild has been a staple at Wildwood Park in the spring and summer months. Numerous Artists have shared their creative visions with the guests of Wildwood Park and this year 17 new installations were added by Artists to the over 176 works of art that have been installed since Art In The Wild’s inception in 2013. Approximately half of the Artists for the 2024 exhibition were first-time AITW participants. The Artists were celebrated during a reception held earlier this year where Guest Evaluator and Artist, Linda Cummings, presented certain Artists’ installations with ‘special mentions’. *Linda’s special mentions listed on right side.*

These 17 installations will be on display until September 30. Visitors can vote for their favorite installations by scanning the QR code on the installation sign along the trail, inside the brochure or online. The installation with the most votes will be announced as the ‘People’s Choice’ recipient. This announcement will be made on social media.

If visitors are not able to walk the trails to see these installations in-person, Capital Area School for the Arts students are working on a video of the installations. This video will be on display at the Nature Center or online at <http://explorewildwoodpark.org>. The Friends of Wildwood are grateful to have received a Sandy Hollow Arts and Recreation for the Environment grant to help pay for the students’ field trip to Wildwood to film these installations. Additional information about each Artist can be found in a binder inside the Nature Center next to the video display.

It takes a lot of support to continue to bring Art In The Wild to Wildwood Park each year. A special THANK YOU to the Mooney Family Foundation for being the title sponsor of this event and to the BURG for their coverage of Art In The Wild. Thank you also to each and every donor, volunteer, artist and staff member who worked so hard to make this event possible.

We hope that you will support the Artists by viewing their installations either on the trail or by watching the video. Please enjoy the incredible visions that each Artist has brought to life!



- Site #1: “Nature’s Gardeners” – For Creative Use of Space and Native Materials to Celebrate a Wildwood Creature
- Site #3: “Tangle” – Thought-Provoking Interpretation of the Interconnectedness of Manufactured and Natural Systems
- Site #4: “Healing in Motion” – Vivid Evocation of the Wish to Repair Damage to Nature by Human Hands
- Site #7: “Not Body but Spirit” – Poignant Interpretation of a Personal Identification with Nature’s Curative Potential
- Site #11: “A few More Trees” – Poetic Interpretation of Natural Phenomena
- Site #12: “What No Longer Serves” – For Creative Combination of Forces of Nature, Native Materials, Technical Ingenuity and Metaphor to Interpret the Theme
- Site #15: “New Beginnings” – Tribute to the Hybrid Potential between Manmade and Natural Materials





# Upcoming Events

## Online Registration!

Program registration is online at [explorewildwoodpark.org/events/](http://explorewildwoodpark.org/events/)  
It's easy! Click on the "Events" page, scroll through the list of programs, click to register.

### Volunteer Work Days

Saturdays, June 8, July 13 & August 10

10:00 am – 1:00 pm

Take this opportunity to work outside and help Wildwood's continued park and habitat enhancement projects. Register online.

### Introduction to Wildlife Photography Workshop

Saturday, June 15

10:00 am – 11:30 am

\$12 per participant

Join wildlife photographer, Troy Bynum, owner of TB Wildlife Photography LLC, for this introductory photography workshop and unlock the secrets of digital photography! Workshop limited to 30 participants. Register online. For more information on Troy visit <https://www.tbwildlifegallery.com>

### Flower Walk: Peak of Blooming

Sunday, June 16

10:30 am – 12:00 pm

Meet volunteer Jane Earle at the North Lot. Register online.

### Damsels and Dragons... Flies, that is! Presentation

Tuesday, June 18

7:00 pm – 8:30 pm

Join Tony "Doc" Schoch for an indoor presentation. Doc is a former educator and long-time conservationist. His presentation about these iconic insects will focus on their anatomy, life cycle, indication of water quality, identification and their place in the food chain of wetland environments. Program will occur indoors. Register online.

### String Art Workshop

Saturday, June 29

10:00 am – 11:30 am

\$40 per participant

Join Horst Arts in the Olewine Pavilion to create your own string art! Participants will be supplied with a 7" x 7" pine board and can choose to color it with a coat of paint. Select from three nature-themed templates or create your own design as you hammer your nails into place. After that, it's time to add the string! This workshop is for ages 13 and up. Children 13-16 must be accompanied by an adult. Register online. For more information on Horst Arts visit <https://horstart.com/>



### East Shore Trail Hike

Sunday, June 30

1:00 pm – 3:00 pm

Enjoy a two-mile hike on the East Shore Trail led by a Naturalist. Please dress for the weather and wear sturdy hiking shoes. All ages are welcome. Register online.

### Wildwood Park Coloring Contest

Thursday, July 1 – Saturday July 31

10:00 am – 4:00 pm

Children of all ages may submit a nature-themed 8 1/2 x 11 hand drawn, portrait-style coloring page using colored pencils, crayons or markers. Submit entries in person or via email during the month of July. Please note the Nature Center is closed Mondays, and holidays. More information is available online.

### Kids Discover: PA State Species (Ages 5-10)

Saturday, July 6

10:00 am – 11:30 am

\$5 per child, chaperones are free

Can you name our PA state species? Did you know we have a state amphibian? Join a Naturalist for a fun morning of exploration and learning. Participants will get to explore animal artifacts while learning interesting facts about them. Register online.

### Kids Discover: Pollinators (Ages 5-10)

Saturday, July 13

10:00 am – 11:30 am

\$12 per child, chaperones are free

Join a Naturalist to discover the many different species that are pollinators and examine their important role in the environment, for wildlife, plants and people. Make a take-home craft that can help pollinators in our area. Register online.

### Tree Identification Walk

Sunday, July 14

1:00 pm – 2:00 pm

Free

Meet volunteer Cara Martinez-Williams outside the Nature Center. Register online.

### Flower Walk: Still More Blooms

Sundays, July 21 & August 18

10:30 am – 12:00 pm

Free

Meet volunteer Jane Earle outside the Nature Center. Register online.

### Pound the Colors of Wildwood into Cloth

Thursday, August 1

6:00 pm – 8:00 pm

\$45 per participant

Design a unique cotton pillow cover (18" x 18" pillow insert provided) using flowers and leaves from Wildwood Park. Natural dyer Carol Reed will help participants create a design and use a hammer to pound color, petals and leaf shape and veins into the cloth. A Workshop is limited to 18 participants. Register online. For more information on Carol visit <https://www.carolreed.org/>

### Intrusive Invasives at Detweiler Park

Saturday, August 3

10:00 am – 12:00 pm

\$2 per participant

Join a Naturalist for a hike at Detweiler Park to learn about unwanted invasive species that are bullying our native diversity. Participants will learn how to identify these undesirables, the impacts they have on our native plant populations and how to stop their invasion. Register online.

### Kids Discover: The 5 Senses (Ages 5-7) at Detweiler Park

Friday, August 9

10:00 am – 11:00 am

\$5 per child, chaperones are free

Smell summer blooms, listen to the birds, touch and feel trees of all kinds and more. Practice your observation skills and learn about some of the plants and animals that call Detweiler home. Register online.

### Kids Discovery: Biomimicry (Ages 8-12)

Saturday, August 10

10:00 am – 11:30 am

\$5 per child, chaperones are free

Did you ever wonder how people think of ideas for inventions, like helicopters or wind turbines?! During this program we will explore the connections between nature and inventions, take a short hike to examine the many shapes, colors and structures found in wild plants and animals and use our observations to create a design based on nature. Register online.

### Intro Nature Sketching

Saturday, August 10

1:00 pm – 3:00 pm

\$10 per participant

Join a Naturalist for an introductory look into nature sketching. This workshop is designed for youth and adults. Children 13-16 must be accompanied by an adult for the duration of the program. Registration fee includes a natural journal for each participant to take home. Meet at the Kunkel Pavilion. Register online.

### Wild Recipes: Summer Foraging in Your Backyard

Tuesday, August 13

6:00 pm – 7:30 pm

\$20 per participant

Join Naturalists at Wildwood Park to learn how to make a refreshing drink, a healthy salad and a sweet treat. Samples of each edible treat will be provided. Meet at the Olewine Pavilion. Register online.

## Volunteer Spotlight: Pat Cattuti

Pat has been visiting the Park for almost ten years. During those years, she would spend her time walking and hiking the trails. About two years ago, a close friend and former co-worker, Moe Hickey (board member), recommended she become a volunteer. Pat's schedule after retirement allowed her to have more free time to invest, so she began volunteering at the Front Desk first.

Answering questions at the Front Desk and executing daily Nature Center operations were an easy fit for Pat. Previous jobs in customer service prepared her for the task. Pat remarked on her fascination at how many people have never heard about the Park and are first time visitors. She enjoys answering questions from the public and always strives to make sure folks know where to look online for upcoming program offerings. It was a bit of a learning curve at the start, but Moe helped with that along the way.

Shortly after that, Pat began volunteering on the Art In The Wild Committee. She expressed how much she likes working with such a great group of individuals who are able to work on some really unique projects. *More on Art In The Wild on page 4.* When an opening arose on the Friends of Wildwood Board, Pat jumped at the opportunity. She appreciates the chance to represent the Friends at events like the Ned Smith Festival, serving as an ambassador recruiting new members. Pat has also helped at the Art In The Wild tent at festivals and at Wild About Dogs.

When asked why volunteer at Wildwood? Pat replied that she finds the volunteer opportunities here to be very fulfilling and that they are not a huge time commitment—typically just a half day. Giving back to the community is a good way to pass the time. Additionally, there are many opportunities to engage in individual interests. There is always something to be learned when you are here. So spread the word! Members, our efforts will only increase as we share the benefits of becoming a Friend of Wildwood and participating in the educational offerings for all ages, throughout the year. Thanks Pat, for being available as our fill-in Front Desk volunteer for weekdays and weekends. We are grateful for your time and encouraged by your tenacity and willingness to help wherever, whenever.



*Art In The Wild  
Committee Field Trip*

## Needed

Please save large peanut butter style lids that are at least half an inch deep. Staff plan to use them for craft projects during Summer Day Camps.

## Spring Service Groups

This spring we have been fortunate to have six service groups help us with projects throughout the Park. They have collectively planted over 150 trees, picked up trash throughout the Park, cleared debris from the boardwalks, pulled invasive species, weeded flower beds and much more. Many hands make light work! Thank you to all our groups this spring: Harrisburg School District, Phoenix Contact, Harrisburg Christian School, Cummins, KPMG, and Bravo Group. If you haven't seen the tree planting next to the Middle Lot, check it out on your next walk.



## Wild About Dogs Recap

On Saturday, May 11, the Friends of Wildwood hosted the third annual Wild About Dogs event. This is definitely a favorite event with the chance to see and pet so many adorable pups. Dog owners and dog lovers enjoyed visiting the new and returning vendors, eating delicious treats from the food trucks, watching demonstrations from Summit Search and Rescue and vying for some amazing raffle baskets with many items donated by the vendors. The day also included a photo board and photo booth to capture all those good boys and good girls, as well as dog caricatures by Ingrid Howard sponsored by the FOWW.

A huge thank you to the vendors and exhibitors who participated in the day: Abrams and Weakley, B&L Dogz Food Truck, Bark Boot Camp, Blue Mountain Veterinary Clinic, Britt Cole - Artist, Caring Hearts, Furry Friends, Caricatures by Ingrid, Stone Farm & Hill Kennel, Summit Search & Rescue, Sus. TWP K-9 unit - Patrolman Perry and his canine Indy, Three Dog Bakery and TO Espresso Food Truck!

## Volunteer Appreciation Dinner at Fort Hunter Park

On Tuesday, June 25 from 6:00pm–8:00pm Fort Hunter Park will host a combined volunteer appreciation dinner for volunteers from Wildwood and Fort Hunter outside on the lawn by the Centennial Barn. Enjoy an evening on us! A rain date is scheduled for later that week on Thursday, June 27.

## Birds this spring at Wildwood

On Rick & Peggy Prices's last bird walk on May 1, they saw over 46 difference species, including the usual shorebirds and ducks. Of note were Solitary Sandpipers, Lesser Yellowlegs, Bald eagle, Great-crested Flycatcher, Warbling Vireo, Red-eyed Vireo, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Baltimore Oriole, Common Yellowthroat, American Redstart, Yellow Warbler and Yellow-rumped Warbler. We also completed another successful Project FeederWatch collection during November–April, which is a citizen science project that calculates common bird sightings at household feeders.

## Run Wild for Wildwood 5K & 10K

Saturday, August 24  
8:00 am–11:00am

\$25 for 5K, \$30 for 10K

Save the Date! Choose to complete the 3.1 mile loop via running or walking once [5K] or twice [10K]. This scenic run/walk will take you on the Wildwood Way Trail around the Lake and down the Towpath Trail along the PA Canal.



To register scan the QR code with your smart phone. The price increases on August 1!

Show your support for Wildwood Park by sporting some Wildwood-themed apparel! Order at your convenience from our online store at <https://bit.ly/3LwL1uk>

Orders will take 2 weeks to process and will be available for pick-up at the Nature Center after email confirmation or shipped to you for additional costs. All sales are final and all proceeds directly benefit the projects and programs sponsored by the Friends of Wildwood.



Interested in receiving weekly emails on programming in all Dauphin County Parks? Scan this QR code with your smartphone and click on the yellow “E-Newsletter Sign-Up” Button.

## Ways to Give

All are tax deductible



### Online

Visit [explorewildwoodpark.org/donate-now](http://explorewildwoodpark.org/donate-now)



### Cash or Check



### Sponsor a Program



### Become a Member

Or give the gift of membership



### Make a Bequest



### Endowments



### Memorial Bricks

Remember a friend, or loved one



### Volunteer Your Time

## Membership Benefits

Your membership supports the ongoing programs and conservation efforts of Wildwood Park and the Benjamin Olewine III Nature Center.

Your Membership provides the following:

- Reciprocal membership with more than 100 nature centers throughout the country that participate in the Association of Nature Center Administrators
- Subscription to *A Word From Wildwood* quarterly newsletter
- 10% discount off all Nature Shop purchases
- Knowing you:
  - Support outdoor educational and recreational opportunities reaching over 100,000 people annually
  - Have a direct impact on local and migratory wildlife, wild plants and the diverse people living in our community
  - Preserve Wildwood Park, now and for future generations

## Sign up to receive the newsletter electronically

*A Word from Wildwood* can be sent electronically to Friends of Wildwood members.

Email [wwstaff@dauphincounty.gov](mailto:wwstaff@dauphincounty.gov)

**Help save paper and money! GO GREEN!**





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Harrisburg, PA 17110  
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Mark your calendars for  
these upcoming events!

Dragonfly  
Presentation  
Tues. June 18  
7:00pm—8:30pm

Aquatic Wild  
Educator  
Workshop  
Tues. Aug. 6  
9:00am—3:00pm

Run Wild for  
Wildwood  
Sat. Aug. 24  
8:00am—11:00am



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