

A word from Wildwood

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

Nature Center Re-opened!

Saturday, March 14, 2020 seemed like any other day at the Olewine Nature Center. Participants were busy in the lab creating the perfect spring wreath to add to their seasonal décor, volunteers worked outside on various clean-up projects as they attended the first Volunteer Work Day of the year, guests were milling about in the Exhibit Hall and making purchases in the Nature Shop. It was business as usual from where we stood.

However, that afternoon plans would change dramatically. Under the guidance of the Dauphin County Commissioners, Parks & Recreation staff made the decision to close the Nature Center the following day.

Since then, all Wildwood Park staff were either furloughed indefinitely or part-time, programs were canceled for the rest of the spring, summer and most of the fall, school groups were missed and the Nature Center as a whole remained dormant. During the closure, full-time staff continued to work bi-weekly to bring programming to the community as best they could virtually.

Fast forward to Tuesday, September 15, 2020 almost exactly five months later, the Olewine Nature Center re-opened.

There was very little fuss or grand to-do. We simply opened the doors and the people came in. At the start, the building capacity was limited to 25 people, socially distanced, wearing masks. It felt so good to hear the return of pitter patter feet throughout the Exhibit Hall, to answer the ever popular animal identification questions and to receive 2020 Photo Contest submissions from participating photographers. We were officially back!

It was not until the end of September that Front Desk volunteers returned as well as part-time educators. Building capacity was increased and masks and social distancing continued to be enforced.

If you haven't yet stopped in, we would love to see you soon!



Photo: Volunteers—Rick, Peggy & Ann are happy to return to the Nature Center



New Additions

- Great Blue Heron Mount flying above in the Nature Shop
- New merchandise in Nature Shop
- New Decade Panel for 2010-2020
- Summer Coloring Contest submissions on display

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Friends of Wildwood

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DAUPHIN COUNTY
PENNSYLVANIA
PARKS & RECREATION

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 www.wildwoodlake.org and questions directed to wwstaff@dauphinc.org.

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Savanna Lenker, Part-time Environmental Educator

Jessica Picone, Part-time Environmental Educator

A Word from the President

As we continue to navigate through these challenging times and the on-going mitigation efforts brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, it seems like cabin fever may be inevitable as we head into winter and 2021. Remember that you can safely escape from your house and visit Wildwood. The trails and boardwalks remain open year-round. Check out the winter residents of the Park, as not all of the wildlife hibernate, and enjoy some fresh air. Please use caution and remember to wear masks and social distance, when appropriate.

Warm up with a visit to the Nature Center to view the 2020 Photo Contest entries, which will be available for viewing from December 16 through January 27. The talented amateur photographers always put on a great display of the many scenes from the Park throughout the year. More on page 6.

And just because we can't gather in groups doesn't mean we're putting the annual Winter Lecture Series on-hold. Instead, this year you'll be able to enjoy them from the comfort of your home as the lectures will be presented virtually. The 2021 lectures will continue to highlight the Pennsylvania State Species. More details on page 4. I know I'll be looking forward to learning more about the state species and hearing all of the great questions the audience provides.

As we've found out in 2020, there are alternate ways of doing things and many things have been adapted to make them safe and enjoyable for many. At the same time, many were reminded of the importance of Wildwood to the community.

The Friends recently held their first Virtual Annual Meeting. We were able to reflect on our accomplishments for the year and look to the future opportunities we have and how we will continue to support Wildwood for many years to come. More on page 3.

As you shop for holiday gifts, consider shopping local and in a less-crowded location. The Nature Shop inside the Olewine Nature Center may be that perfect place. All Nature Shop proceeds support the Friends. For those who prefer a hands-off shopping experience, consider purchasing a gift membership for a loved one or making a donation to Wildwood on Giving Tuesday, December 1st. Both of these options can be completed online or via mail. More information on page 4.

We thank you for your on-going support, stay tuned for some exciting changes coming in 2021!

Stay safe, Heather

New Logos

The Friends of Wildwood Board is pleased to share their new logo created by Pixel & Hammer. A special committee consisting of five board members carefully reviewed and developed these logos over the past several months and are very pleased to share the outcome with you. The next phase is to take the logo and its branding theme and apply it to website design. Things are moving along and progress is being made. Stay tuned for more upcoming updates!



Friends' Annual Meeting

Friends of Wildwood recently held their first ever Virtual Annual Meeting, thanks to the help of OfficeSuite HD. Various presenters reviewed Friends' 2020 achievements. Highlights include:

- Completed Visitor Amenity Improvements Project
- Shared progress on the Wildwood Restoration Project
- Reviewed the Save The Boardwalk initiative
- Held and supported programs that reached a diverse audience
- Maintained an active membership of nearly 300 members!
- Partnered to address truck parking concerns along Industrial Road
- Provided vital volunteer support to Wildwood

President Heather Dock and all thanked outgoing board members Moe Hickey and Shawn Scott for years of service and leadership! We wish them well as they rotate off the board and onto new adventures.

The Friends of Wildwood Board of Directors were thrilled to welcome new board members Jessica Shilladay and Mary Bigelow.

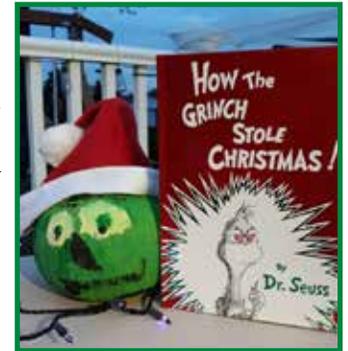
Jessica is employed at the PA Department of Environmental Protection. Mary is a returning board member, retired science teacher and administrator with a PhD in Industrial Systems. Both are dedicated long-time nature center volunteers.



Photo of a Male Purple Finch:
Karen Carlson

Pumpkin Decorating Contest Winner

The public showed up with some incredibly decorated pumpkins. Pumpkin photos were submitted to Wildwood Staff the last two weeks of October. And we are pleased to announce Harley as this year's winner. She decorated her pumpkin as The Grinch from Dr. Seuss' beloved book "How the Grinch Stole Christmas." A special thanks to all who contributed!



Gang's All Here!

After what feels like months of separation, Wildwood staff including our part-time educators are reunited and back in action! It feels so good to be back in full staff, ready to provide the community with numerous environmental education opportunities for the whole family.

Purple Finch Sighting

A male and female/immature Purple Finch were spotted in late October at the feeders behind the Nature Center. This bird is commonly mistaken for a House Finch. Here are a few subtle differences to help you tell them apart. When telling the difference between a male House Finch and a male Purple Finch the tell tale signs are in the back of the head and the streaking in the wings. A male Purple Finch has extensive red on its head and wings. A male House Finch has brownish wings with distinct white streaking. Female/immature Purple Finches have bold white eyebrows" and bold



Photo of a Female/immature Purple Finch: Steve Dale

dark streaks on their whitish belly. Female House Finches have plain gray streaks with little patterning.

Overall the size of the bill is unique between species. Purple Finch have heavy triangular bills and House Finch have stubby bills with curved culmen or the upper ridge of the bird's bill. What a fun sighting at Wildwood.

Virtual Winter Lecture

Back by popular demand is the Friends of Wildwood, Winter Lecture Series. Brought to you virtually this year, the series will continue with last year's theme, Spotlight on Pennsylvania State Species.

Picking up where we left off last year, topics will include: Our State Fish: Brook Trout, Our State Insect: Firefly, Our State Flower: Mountain Laurel, and Mushrooms, since PA is known as the Mushroom State!



- *January 12, 2021:* Mountain Laurel Our State Flower by DCNR Ecologist Kelly Sitch
- *January 26, 2021:* Brook Trout Our State Fish by PA Fish and Boat Commission Fisheries Manager Jason Detar
- *February 9, 2021:* Fireflies Our State Insect by PA Firefly Festival Inc.
- *February 23, 2021:* Mushrooms

Visit wildwoodlake.org/events for more information on how to register in the next couple weeks.

Holiday Gift Ideas

Memberships make great holiday gifts. In addition, memberships support the ongoing environmental education programs and conservation efforts of Wildwood Park and the Olewine Nature Center.

The Nature Shop has Field Guides, Greeting/Holiday Cards, Children's Books/Toys and Hand Crafted Gifts including: Puzzles, Bird Houses, Painted Tiles, Jewelry, Journals, and Carved Birds.



Virtual Programs

If you haven't yet "liked" Dauphin County Park's and Recreation's Facebook page, you are missing out! Daily posts include fun animal facts, educational videos, program information and much more! A world of entertainment is at your fingertips.

Follow the link below to "like" our page <https://www.facebook.com/DauphinCountyParksRecreation>. And share with your friends.



North Boardwalk Update & Giving Tuesday Challenge

Progress has been made toward raising funds to address a damaged section of the North Boardwalk. A sum of \$15,000 was raised from donations/pledges to date, but to build this new section of boardwalk, we need to raise an additional \$35,000 to meet our goal. We are thrilled to recognize Kristen Olewine Milke & Benjamin Olewine IV as project lead donors. In addition to private donations, we received significant contributions from the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and Friends of Wildwood.



Photo of damaged North Boardwalk



On December 1, 2020, the Friends will participate in a Giving Tuesday Challenge. *The goal for Giving Tuesday is for at least 50 people to make a donation of any amount that day.* For more information about the Giving Tuesday Challenge check out our website, the Dauphin County Parks and Recreation Facebook page, and your email. We sincerely hope that you will consider helping us to meet our goal by giving any amount on that day. Help us "Save The Boardwalk!"

Upcoming Events

Online Registration!

Program registration is online at www.wildwoodlake.org. It's easy! Click on the "Events" page, scroll through the list of programs, click on the link to register.

Masks and social distancing required for all in person programs.

Wildwood Photography Contest

Submissions accepted now through Tuesday, December 1, 2020

Art In The Wild

Applications accepted now through January 22, 2021

Project FeederWatch

Saturday, December 5

10:00 am - 12:00 pm

Free

Stop by the Nature Center to count the birds at our feeders. Join a naturalist to help observe, monitor and record the number of bird species that visit feeders throughout the winter months. Register online.

Natural Ornaments

Sunday, December 6 & 13

10:00 am, 11:30am, 1:00pm and 2:30pm

\$5 per participant

Everyone is invited to create Holiday Ornaments using pinecones, tree cookies, thistle and a vast array of other natural materials. Workshop times are an hour in length and limited to 12 participants. Register online.

Winter Discovery

December 12 - January 16 (closed Mondays & holidays)

10:00 am - 4:00 pm

Free

Ever wonder where animals go during the winter? Stop by the Nature Center to learn about what the wildlife is up to in the winter months! Winter Discovery will include a variety of self-guided indoor and outdoor stations with information about wintertime in the park, take home items and interactive activities about animal behaviors in winter. The outdoor stations [new this year] include signs along the Delta Boardwalk to enhance your winter walk.

Winter Walk at Detweiler Park

Tuesday, December 15

2:00 pm - 4:00 pm

Free

Join a naturalist for a hike at Detweiler Park with a focus on tree bark and berries. Become familiar with a variety of common species. Please dress accordingly. Register online.

Kids Discover: Owls

Saturday, January 30

10:00 am - 11:30 pm (4-6 years)

1:30 pm - 3:00 pm (7-10 years)

\$8 per child, parents are free

Guess WHOOO? Listen to a fun story about owls and learn what makes these nocturnal raptors unique. Explore what owls eat by becoming a lab scientist and dissecting an owl pellet. Includes dissection materials. Register online.

Kids Discover: Groundhogs

Saturday, February 6

10:00 am - 11:30 pm (4-6 years)

1:30 pm - 3:00 pm (7-10 years)

\$5 per child, parents are free

Will Phil see his shadow and announce 6 more weeks of winter? Where do animals spend the winter? Join a naturalist to discover more about groundhogs. A walk will follow, where we will search for signs of other burrowing animals. Register online.

Art In The Wild Call to Artists

Calling all artists to participate in *Art In The Wild*, Wildwood's outdoor environmental art exhibit. This year's theme is Reimaging. Participation is open to anyone wishing to submit an idea.

Applications are due January 22, 2021, applications may be obtained online or at the Nature Center Front Desk.

GIVING TUESDAY



Wildwood Park

DECEMBER 1, 2020

Kids Discover: Animals and Their Tracks

Saturday, February 20

10:00 am - 11:30 pm (4-6 years)

1:30 pm - 3:00 pm (7-10 years)

\$5 per child, parents are free

Join a naturalist to learn the art of tracking. The program starts in the classroom with information on track identification and walking patterns. Then head outside for a tracking foray to explore park trails in search of a variety of animal tracks. Dress for the weather. Register online.

Kids Discover: Snowflakes

Saturday, February 27

10:00 am - 11:30 pm (4-6 years)

1:30 pm - 3:00 pm (7-10 years)

\$5 per child, parents are free

Did you know every snowflake is different? Join a naturalist to learn all about where snowflakes come from and how they are formed. Make your own unique snowflake and discover the size of the largest snowflake ever found! Dress for the weather. Register online.

Volunteer Spotlight: Rudy Gornik

Rudy has been volunteering at Wildwood Park since the Olewine Nature Center opened in 1999. His mother used to talk fondly of the Park, remembering her zoo visits as a young girl with her girlfriends. Rudy grew up in south Harrisburg and would not explore the Park on his own until he got older. He first started walking here in the 1980's.

At that time, the Nature Center did not exist, neither did the Olewine Pavilion or the outdoor Public Restrooms. But the people still came. He can remember Harrisburg artists painting, fishermen fishing and photographers vying for the perfect shot– sounds familiar. Some things change, and others remain the same.

As a volunteer Rudy has mainly served at the Front Desk, assisting with clerical needs and answering the phone. His favorite thing about volunteering at the Front Desk is meeting new people. He has met people from all over the world in his time volunteering, from Russia, Italy, Ireland, Austria, Scotland to the continental United States. It is amazing, he remarked, that Wildwood seems like a destination spot for people looking for natural settings.

Rudy has also volunteered as a trail trimmer, taking care of the trails while answering questions from the public as he takes his daily walk. He mostly walks Wildwood Way and the Towpath but will venture onto the East Shore Trail and Tall Timbers on occasion if the weather permits.

Wildwood is simply his favorite place, where he can relax– a respite during hard times where you can unwind and escape your troubles.

If you have met Rudy before, you know his parting gift is always a good joke, from his staple “Watch the ice” on a hot summer day to “What do you call a squirrel’s nest? A nutcracker’s suite” he is sure to make you smile!



Photo Rudy (right) leading the way on a fall Walk for Wildwood: Shannon O’Shea

In Memory of Elsie Kenno

Elsie Kenno, a long-time volunteer and dear friend of Wildwood, recently passed away after a life full of love and adventure. She was a dedicated volunteer of the Park since 1989, before the Nature Center was built.

An amazing and strong woman, Elsie’s joyful, upbeat presence will be dearly missed. On August 23, 2013 Elsie was recognized by the Dauphin County Commissioners for her many years of service as a volunteer.

Thank you Elsie!



Seeking Volunteers

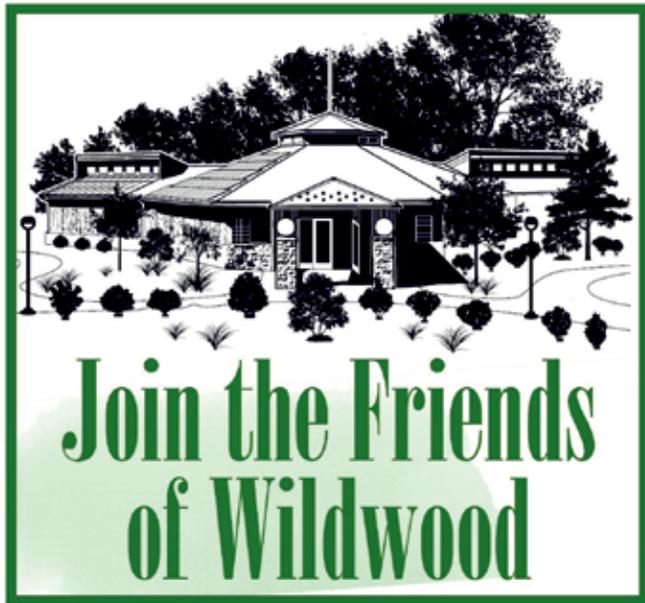
The Olewine Nature Center is looking for Front Desk volunteers for weekdays and weekends. Front Desk volunteers are an essential part of the Nature Center. They meet and greet visitors, answer phone calls, process Nature Shop sales along with various other jobs. Interested volunteers should email kwarsheski@dauphinc.org.

2020 Photo Contest

The Friends of Wildwood are seeking original, amateur photographs taken within Wildwood Park for the 2020 Photo Contest. It’s not too late to submit your photos. Anyone can do it–it’s easy, fun and free.



Entry brochures, including contest eligibility and rules are available online or at the Nature Center Front Desk. The photo submission deadline is Tuesday, December 1, 2020.



Please consider joining the Friends and their efforts by becoming a member. With the recent surge of park visitation, now more than ever the value of greenspaces seems essential to the health of our community. Please consider joining today by visiting www.wildwoodlake.org

We are pleased to announce the Olewine Nature Center has resumed normal hours
Tuesday–Sunday
10:00 am–4:00 pm

Sign up to receive the newsletter electronically
A Word from Wildwood
 can be sent electronically to Friends of Wildwood members.
 Email wwstaff@dauphinc.org.



Help save paper and money! GO GREEN!

Thinking of Giving to Wildwood?

Here are 7 easy ways to give to Wildwood.
 All are tax deductible.
 Details at www.wildwoodlake.org/support

1. **Become a Member** or give the gift of membership
2. Make a Donation
3. Make a Bequest
4. Purchase a Memorial Brick
5. Contribute to Wildwood’s Endowment
6. Sponsor a Program
7. Volunteer your Time



Membership Benefits

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

Your Membership provides the following:

- Reciprocal membership with more than 125 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 Gift Shop purchases
- Knowing you
 - support Environmental Education programs reaching 10,000 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.

Have you considered Wildwood Park in your estate planning?

The Friends of Wildwood Lake Nature Center, Inc. is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization listed with the PA Bureau of Charitable Organizations, and incorporated within the Commonwealth of PA. It is an advocate for Wildwood Park through preservation, education and financial support.

Friends of Wildwood
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www.wildwoodlake.org

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Mark your calendars for
these upcoming events!

Giving Tuesday
Tues. Dec. 1

Natural
Ornaments
Sun. Dec. 6 & 13

Photo Contest
Display
Dec. 16 - Jan. 27
10:00 am - 4:00 pm
[closed Mondays & holidays]



30% Recycled post-consumer fiber