

Friends of Schuylkill River Park



Spring 2013

www.fsrp.org

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Philadelphia, PA 19103
fsrporg@gmail.com

Announcements

Markward Recreation Center- Spring 2013:

- Yoga Mondays at 7pm
- Ceramics Tuesdays at 7pm
- Meditation Thursdays at 6:30pm
- Garden Club Fridays at 4pm
- Youth Tennis (10 and under) Saturdays from 2pm-4pm
- Taney Youth Baseball Opening Day Saturday April 2 at 9am

October 19, 2013: FSRP Fall Festival

FSRP Board of Directors

Lynne Hopper, President
Derek Freres, Vice President
Sean O'Rourke, Vice President
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Susan Halpern, Secretary
Carolyn Duffy, Membership
Suzanne Reichwein



Finding Love in Schuylkill River Park

Dava had lived in the neighborhood for about 4 years and Aaron for about 4 days, but luckily they both were enjoying Schuylkill River Park on one lovely August Saturday afternoon in 2010.

Dava decided to go do some work in the park and chose a comfortable bench to set up her outside office. Aaron and his dog were taking a stroll through the park after hitting up the dog park for some ball. When Aaron walked by and saw an attractive woman sitting quietly on a bench working on her computer, he approached her and asked about the internet connection in the park. They ended up talking for awhile and Dava was really glad he had an adorable dog which made her feel better about giving her phone number to a random guy she met in the park.

Fast forward to two and a half years later and the park that Aaron and Dava met in has gone through a ton of renovations – new dog run, new grass, new trees, and new benches! Dava and Aaron have also been through a lot – a long distance relationship for awhile and the addition of another furry child to their family. They now live together a few blocks from Schuylkill River Park and venture there often with their pups. Aaron proposed a few months ago and they will be married this spring. Of all the amazing gifts Aaron has given Dava over the time they have known one another – the best one by far – is the new bench where they first met- a

dedication to them, to love and to the great fortune of finding one another in the park.

**The inscription reads:
Celebrate Love
You might even find love
while sitting right here
We did
Dava & Aaron, 2013**

The moral of this story is that you never know who you might meet in Schuylkill River Park. Dava and Aaron hope that their bench dedication will enable and inspire others to find love where they did!

Free Street Trees

Would you like a free tree in front of a property you own - a home or business? The Friends of Schuylkill River Park *Tree Tenders* covers the area bordered by the Schuylkill River and Broad between Walnut and South. We work with TreeVitalize to plant trees for free, including cement cutting, within our bounds. Support from CCRA allows us to also grind stumps for free. For more information and to download an application, visit:

www.fsrp.org/treetenders

The Friends of Schuylkill River Park is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. The official registration and financial information of The Friends of Schuylkill River Park may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll-free, within Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

Volunteer Spotlight: Sheila Cavanaugh

Q: Do you live in the neighborhood or do you come from a distance to use the park? How often do you find yourself in Schuylkill River Park?

I moved within 2 blocks of the park a bit more than 2 years ago, but I didn't even know it existed. Friends that helped me move mentioned that they thought there was a "cool" park nearby. We investigated and they couldn't have been more right. Beckett and I are at the park at least twice a day, sometimes even more when there is work to be done, like filling the poop bag dispensers or changing bulletin boards.

Q: What are your favorite features in the park? Which do you use the most?

I guess I gave that away—we love the dog parks! But in the spring I often bring a sketch pad down to the front of the garden area and sit under the cherry blossoms and draw.

Q: How do you think the dog run looks after the renovation? Does it suit your dogs' needs?

I helped with some of plans for the large dog run because I had a big dog then. After my dog died unexpectedly, I got a small dog and we both love the small dog run! Friends that have seen pictures of my dog in the spectacular dog run have come to Philly just to see it for themselves. They can't believe what an amazing resource we have right in the middle of the city.

Q: I know you have been very active at promoting the "No children under 11" rule in the dog park, but I also know that you really like kids. Can you explain to some people that may not understand why it is so important that small children not be in (either the large or small) dog park?

When I was six, my cousins and I were sitting around with their dog. We all jumped up to start another game and the dog jumped up too. The dog's tooth

caught the corner of my eye, which started bleeding profusely and at some point it wasn't clear whether I would be able to see out of that eye. I still have that scar and that memory. Accidents can happen when dogs and kids are together, especially when the dogs and kids are unfamiliar to each other. It's important that families respect the dogs' space and likewise that dog owners keep their dogs on a leash whenever they're not in the dog park.

Q: Have you ever volunteered at the park? For which events?

I am an avid volunteer at the park. I saw a sign in April of 2011 advertising a park clean-up. I introduced myself to Carolyn Duffy, said "Hi, My dog and I love it here. How can we help?" Since then I've helped with all (or almost all) of the cleanups, the Fall Festival, newsletter mailings, at the membership tables and I've become a Tree Tender.

Q: What is your favorite season in the park? Why?

I think I love Spring most of all. In New England, where I used to live, spring is often late, muddy and rainy, Here in Philly, I watch the flowers bloom, the leaves unfold, and smell the scents of new life springing forth... all in our park!

Q: FSRP raises money to beautify, improve and maintain the park. If you could suggest any improvements or additions to the park, what would they be?

I would love to see the Schuylkill River revitalized. I've heard that it has come a long way but there is so much more that we can do! Planting trees and bushes and plants helps filter the waters feeding into the river, throwing garbage into waste receptacles instead of tossing them on the ground where they would blow into the river, clearing debris from drains all helps to clean up both the park and the river, etc. Why not shoot for having the best park in the country, as well as in Philadelphia?

Sponsor a Bench

With the replacement of all Park Benches occurring as part of the Pedestrian Bridge Construction, the Friends of Schuylkill River Park has a limited time opportunity for perpetual bench sponsorships. Sponsorships are available for \$2,000 and include a placard with wording of your choosing. The benches can be for dedication, appreciation, memorial of people or pets, and other uses. If you are interested in a sponsorship, please contact: fsrporg@gmail.com

We have sold several sponsorships thus far and many of the placards have been installed. Once all installed benches are sold, the opportunity will end.

Where were we? Where are we?

Where are we going?

A lot has changed since the summer of 2006 when FSRP completed a Master Plan for our Schuylkill River Park, prepared with the help of Salt Design Studio and a large Community Task Force representing as many of the diverse stakeholders who use the Park as we could gather around a table at one time. You can read the complete report to appreciate the process on our website but this article wants to review the highlights, speak to our accomplishments, and suggest a future.

No planning path is a straight line. Even the best made plans change over time due to a host of issues and contingencies and our 2006 Master Plan is no different. (Remember FSRP can only do what it can afford to do. We are reliant on a multitude of funding sources: the annual membership fees of all of you, larger individual contributions, our fundraising events: the Fall Festival and Spring Eat Drink Be Green, whatever institutional grants/ donations/ contributions that we can identify / apply for / and win, and finally the Department of Parks and Recreation.) In some regards we have not strayed too far from the general direction outlined in the Plan.

The 2006 Master Plan identified 5 Park Improvement Projects, prioritized them from 1 to 5, and outlined their scope. Let's see where we are.

Playground Renovations.

We did it!

In fact the catalyst for the Master Plan was the desire to renovate the playground. The overall plan was created to validate the need to work on the playground and to understand the needs of the rest of the park. Funds were raised and the playground equipment and exterior surface were replaced soon after the Master Plan was completed. It was a testimony to the Board at the time at how quickly the funds were raised to see this project happen. And thousands of kids have laughed and cried, climbed and fallen, ran and crawled all over the playgrounds with shouts and laughter to make even the most cynical adult smile at the energy and joy!

Climbing wall, Renovation and Replanting of small lawn, the Bowl and Spruce Street Bowl.

We did most of it and more!

It wasn't a straight line but the Bowl is now a newly sodded lawn that no longer drains to a low muddy point in the middle but rather is gentle inclined irrigated lawn of green grass. When the Pedestrian Bridge was built FSRP was instrumental in looking after the interests of all Park users. We accepted the use of the Bowl as the staging area for the construction team with the understanding that afterwards the bowl would be re-graded, irrigated, and planted with sod and additional trees along the edge.

The small lawn and climbing wall were not addressed. We

needed to keep this area open when so much of the Park was closed during the Bridge and Playing Field construction. And frankly we are not sure the climbing wall is appropriate. The allee of trees along Spruce Street is complete. In fact FSRP spends thousands of dollars a year on tree work throughout the entire Park. Not only does FSRP trim, prune, remove and maintain the existing canopy, we also plant new trees in the Park. We have added additional street trees along the entire Park's sidewalk perimeter. And by the way, FSRP has created a tree tenders program that plants street trees throughout the entire Southwest Center City neighborhood twice a year. FSRP understands the value of the tree canopy and open green space in the Park and the neighborhood.

25th and Spruce Street Entrance.

We did it! (sort of)

With the staging area of the Pedestrian Bridge destroying this entrance to the Park FSRP was able to have all the planting beds restored, replanted, and ringed with new fencing as part of the project. Though no money was allotted for the more elaborate gateway as drawn in the Masterplan we knew this entrance had to be refurbished in a quality manner. And though the drawing in the Masterplan showed a rather elaborate gateway the real message of the Masterplan was the importance of establishing a strong gateway at every entrance into the park. And rather than try to do this with larger physical (and costly) structures we figured that at least green planting beds would be appropriate. So it with the patronage and generosity of Rich and Kris Pinola we were able to build new planting beds, fencing and landscaping at the 25th and Delancey Entrance.

We also recognize that we should consider similar entry improvements at 26th and Delancey Streets. And of course we have big plans at the entrance at Taney and Pine Streets in association with Markward Recreation Center. The entrances to the Park set the standard and create the demeanor for the entire Park. We want Park users to be proud of walking into the Park and respectful and appreciative of the grounds.

Shad Fountain and Plaza.

We are working on it.

Through the help of the Community Design Collaborative and another group of neighborhood constituents and city agencies we developed a sustainable design for the Plaza in front of the playground, the portico of Markward Recreation Center, and the entrance at Taney and Pine Streets. You can read all about the effort and design of this Gateway on our website. We have also received \$150,000 from Former Council President Anna Verna's / Councilman Kenyatta Johnson's offices to kick start the project by funding the construction drawings. We have also received the commitment of the Philadelphia Water Department to help

Where we are?... (continued)

with the underground storm water management along the streets at the same entrance. This is a big project that we will spend the next couple of years trying to tackle.

River Promenade and Pedestrian Bridge.

Yes, it's here!

We knew it was going to happen whether we wanted it or not which is why it was on our list. It might have been inevitable but it wasn't easy. Yet the bridge, the new dog runs, the site lighting, the great lawn, and all the ancillary amenities surrounding the project are complete. It makes that end of the Park seem new, doesn't it? FSRP worked tirelessly from the beginning to insure that its insertion into the Park would be the least intrusive as possible, and that the changes would improve as many of the existing features of the Park that we all love and use. Everyone's patience is to be applauded!

What else has happened in the meantime?

The Tot Lot Playground Turf Revitalization

FSRP has been slowly improving the perimeter of the Tot Lot and playground by planting sod and extending the irrigation lines in all the barren areas between the fences and the playground areas. We have removed dangerous trees and trimmed others while extending the soft edges of the playground for all the kids to enjoy.

Bench Refreshments

We have replaced the wood seats and backs on the existing benches throughout the Park. Slowly but surely, from the Park benches to the dugout benches, new seats are being provided. We want to encourage people to use the park and to enjoy the ability to rest in the natural setting.

Schuylkill Pocket Veterans Memorial Field Renovation

We have re-graded, irrigated, sodded and secured the playing field used by the neighborhood, the numerous team sport leagues (baseball, softball, soccer, and Frisbee), and local school teams. This was a tremendous undertaking and we appreciate everyone's patience while the field was closed for refurbishment and the winter closings necessary to keep the grass healthy during the playing seasons.

What's next for the Park?

FSRP has a couple of small projects in its sights. The trees in the open planters adjacent to the basketball courts have reached their life expectancy and in the near future they will need to be replaced. The strip of land between the playground and the paved area needs to be re-graded, irrigated, planted, and a retaining wall and fence added.

And finally we want to see the Gateway and Markward Plaza through to completion. Though we expect a tremendous effort to find the funds to complete the project this will be a significant project that will not only repair some of the most problematic areas in our park it will also provide a new entrance experience at Taney and Pine, improve the portico at Markward, and provide a more welcoming and useable Plaza.

And when are we finished?

Obviously the work and projects will never be complete but soon enough it will be time to revisit the Master Plan where we will reach out to you again to listen to your ideas for the future needs and plans for our Park. And thanks to everyone for accompanying us on this journey. We could not have gotten this far without your support. And what we continue to accomplish in the future will truly be the result of your engagement, participation, and ownership of the Schuylkill River Park. We know you love and enjoy it as much as we do!

Did you know?

In Late Fall 2012, FSRP purchased 2 additional benches for the new dog runs to help ensure adequate seating for all (this is in addition to the 4 we previously purchased for the dog runs).

In Winter 2013, FSRP refurbished the benches in the dugouts on Schuylkill Pocket Veterans Memorial Field.

Each year FSRP invests over \$10,000 to maintain Schuylkill Pocket Veterans Memorial Field.



A Few FSRP Past Project Include:

- Purchase Many New Park Benches
- Paint Fencing and Bathrooms at O'Connor Pool
- Renovate and Maintain Schuylkill Pocket Veterans Memorial Field
- Replace All Markward Playground Equipment
- Coordinate Improvements to 25th and Delancey
- Invest more than \$50,000 into the Park's Urban Forest
- Renovate and Maintain Playground Landscape
- Install Drinking Fountains
- Plant Thousands of Spring Bulbs
- Plan major improvements to the courtyard outside Markward

FSRP is a partner of...

**PHILADELPHIA
PARKS &
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Christmas Tree Recycling

Christmas Tree Recycling has come to a neighborhood near you!

On Saturday January 5th FSRP had their first Xmas Tree recycling day. Around 200 trees were chipped. Neighbors brought in their trees tied to the roofs of cars or dragged down the street. People commented that one could find their way to the recycling place by following the trail of pine needles or the fabulous pine scent.

And who knew that the chipper would attract people of all ages. The 'chipper guys' stock piled the trees until there were a good number of them to run the chipper engine for a while. This resulted in much anticipation by kids and adults alike waiting to see the trees get chipped.

Northern Liberties Neighborhood Association (NLNA) started the city's first tree cycling event five years ago. NLNA now

coordinates the tree cycling event for at least 11 locations. The total intake of xmas trees for all locations was approximately 2700. That is 2700 trees kept out of landfills. All mulched trees were put to good use – FSRP gave our mulch to Smith Playground and Schuylkill Banks.

Thank you goes out to Bartlett Tree Experts for donating their chipper, Gavin's Café for donating coffee, all the volunteers who helped unload trees and took donations, The Philadelphia School for helping to organize and of course NLNA for being the umbrella organizers. A special shout out goes to our neighbor Brian Moores for taking the initiative and time to organize a pick up route for those who couldn't bring their trees to us for a variety of reasons.

Keep an eye out for this event next year!

Trinity at 22nd

Spirituality • Compassion • Culture

Trinity Memorial Church

I find great joy in our TMC community and the shared witness of our faith journeys! ~ Teri

Community OutReach Partnership

Communicare gave me the chance to set up a computer for Ms. J., who is 82 and blind. She was excited by her new toy and I was inspired – I hope that I'm still eager to take on something new when I'm 82! ~ Sharon

Trinity Center for Urban Life

Trinity Center is a beating art-heart. I love it for bringing our neighborhood a world of artistic variety, expression and inspiration. ~ Sue

**The Center of Your Neighborhood
at the corner of 22nd & Spruce Sts.**

2212 Spruce St.
Philadelphia, PA 19103
215-732-2515



Trinity Memorial Church



trinityat22nd.org

We Appreciate Our Supporters

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Community Design Collaborative
Councilwoman Anna Verna
Councilman Kenyatta Johnson
Representative Babette Josephs
Krista and Rich Pinola
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EAT, DRINK, & BE GREEN 2012

Gold Sponsors (\$2,500)

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PECO Energy
Krista and Rich Pinola

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Leslie Sudock
Ed Bronstein Gallery
Fare Restaurant
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Hello World
InterAct Theatre Company
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Jo Douglas
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Mythos Restaurant
National Museum of American Jewish History
Nourish Ur Life
Opportunity Barks
Osteria Procaccini
Ozzie Perez Salon
Paul Jones Open Studio
Philadelphia Phillies
Philadelphia Running Company
Philadelphia Theater Company
Philly Power Yoga
Picnic
PJ Pancake House
Prince Tennis
Rittenhouse Women's Wellness Cente
Salon on 4th
Star Pilates
Studio Christensen
Thrive Pilates
Treat Me Good Dog Bakery
Waterworks Restaurant

FALL FESTIVAL 2012

Food, Drink, Prizes, Supplies

Dmitri's
Just Dogs! Gourmet
Sarah Hicks (cupcakes)
Gavin's Café
Pepsico
South Square Market
Tall Pines
Veg-N-Go
The Philadelphia School

Entertainment

MacGuffin Theatre & Film Co.
United States Tennis Association

Silent Auction Donors

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Blick Art Raffle Stuff
Cornerstone B&B
Dmitri's
Holly Waters (Sweat)
Eye Candy Vision
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Rosenbach Museum
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Raffle Donors

1812 Productions
4 Sisters Nail Salon
Arden Theatre
Bicycle Therapy
CCRA House Tour
Grace
Fairmount Park Conservancy
Landmark Theater (Ritz)
Metropolitan Bakery
More than Just Ice Cream
Nook Café Bakery and Coffee Bar
Pooches Choice - Woof Grooming
Puptales
Rittenhouse Square Pet Supply