

Friends of Schuylkill River Park



Summer 2009

www.fsrp.org

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Save the Date...

UKElite Soccer Camps: June 15-19 and August 17-21. For more information, visit www.markwardplayground.com or www.ukelite.com

FSRP Annual Meeting: June 24th, 7:30pm at the Markward Recreation Center. All are welcome.

Markward Summer Camp: July 6-August 14, registration is still open but filling up fast. Visit www.markwardplayground.com for more info.

Ceramics Classes: Start in October at the Markward Recreation Center.

FSRP Fall Festival: October 17

FSRP Board of Directors

Peg Connor, President
Sean O'Rourke, Vice President
Mark Frazza, Treasurer
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Park News...

Many improvements have occurred in our Park over the past several months. Here are just a few of the projects with which we have been involved: First, much attention has been given to our urban forest. Our arborists have pruned, fertilized, and planted all spring long and we are pleased now to have every street tree "pit" planted surrounding our park, with more trees coming in the near future. We have begun some tree rehabilitation in the Taney Field Area, which will continue over the next year. We have also initiated a comprehensive tree health maintenance program, designed to ensure that healthy trees stay healthy. Second, nineteen benches in the park and ten benches in the Dog Run have been refurbished by 100% volunteer labor. We were able to refurbish about 10 benches for the same

cost as purchasing 1 new bench. Third, we held three work days for the community at large this spring. On these days, children planted flowers at 25th and Spruce and at the Markward Recreation Center entrance, bike racks and posts were painted, paths were swept, benches were cleaned and sealed, stones were moved in the dog run, and countless other improvements were made. Fourth, we have begun the planning stages of addressing some long-standing park issues, most importantly renovations to the Markward Recreation Center Bathrooms; re-grading and re-seeding of Taney Field; and installing "heavy-duty" outside water fountains on Taney Field and near the Playground. We would appreciate assistance with and comments on these projects. They are important, but costly endeavors.

Dog Run Update...

Our Dog Run reached its 10 year milestone in July of 2008. Any sunny afternoon one will find lots of spectators standing at the fence enjoying the playful activity inside the Run. Many breed meet-ups come to our Run on a monthly basis. The Pug people also have their Annual Pug-oween. Maureen Chambley holds free behavior classes in the Run every Saturday morning from 9 AM-10AM. We were recognized in the May issue of Philadelphia Magazine as "the only place in the park system where a leash isn't required" and in the Novem-

ber 2008 issue of USAirways magazine as a "must-do" place for people with dogs. We recently lost our beautiful willow tree but have replaced it with a flowering cherry. We will be upgrading the surface and the fountain in the near future.

Check our website, www.phillyfido.net for the latest happenings. The next Dog Owners' Association Meeting will be on Wednesday, June 10th, 7:30 PM at Markward Recreation Center. Everyone is welcome to attend. (No dogs allowed in the building).

The Friends of Schuylkill River Park is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt 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.

Partners in Tree Planting...

Planting trees is a costly endeavor and it takes several partners to make the plantings possible. We wish to thank all those who have helped in the process. You may also note that each tree is marked with a placard indicating who funded the planting as well as the tree's latin and common names.

The Philadelphia School (<http://www.tpschool.org/>)

As a small part of their 2009 Earth Day Celebration, the students and teachers at The Philadelphia School raised funds for the Friends of Schuylkill River Park. These funds will be applied to the planting of an Okame Cherry Tree (*Prunus x incam*) adjacent to Taney Field. This is the same cultivar of flowering cherry tree (no actual cherry fruits) for which Washington, DC is famous. The tree should be planted by the end of June. TPS has been a long time partner of our Park, planting 1,000 bulbs in Fall 2008 for example, and we are most grateful for all they do to support us.

Center City Residents' Association (<http://www.centercityresidents.org/>)

As you may know, CCRA will pay for approximately 1/2 the cost of street trees planted by its members on their properties. You may not know that CCRA pays for 1/2 of almost every single tree that we plant in Schuylkill River Park. Their generosity truly has made these plantings happen and helped not only to beautify our park, but to Green and improve our entire neighborhood.

Awbury Arboretum (<http://www.awbury.org/>)

Our tree planting is conducted by the expert arborist, Steve Pascavitch at Aw-

bury Arboretum, a non-profit organization. In addition to planting trees, Steve's organization has as part of its mission to provide valuable job training in horticulture to apprentices who move on to positions in related fields. If you ever need advice on which tree to plant where, Steve is the person to call at 215-849-2855

Bartlett Tree Experts (<http://www.bartlett.com/>)

You may have seen contractors from Bartlett around the Park. They do much of the "dirty work" in preparation for planting, such as removing a dead tree, stump grinding a tree "pit" to allow a new tree to fit in, and eventually tree fertilization. We are very thankful for their expert arborist John Studdy, who provides us with tremendous advice and who you will often see volunteering his time on Park work days to conduct tree pruning and tree health checkups.

Fairmount Park Commission (<http://www.fairmountpark.org/>)

The FPC has the ultimate responsibility for managing tree work in all parks and on all street trees city-wide. Budget cuts and a lack of necessary increases over the years have made their task difficult, leaving the funding of much tree work to Friends Groups. Still, the FPC manages to accomplish amazing things with limited funds. Sam Curry, our district manager, has arranged removal of a few of the most dangerous trees from our Park and street tree pits—these would have been extremely expensive for us to contract removal. We also work with them extensively to obtain permits for all other work we do.

Playground Update...

A small fence will be installed around the Tot Lot Gardens to help keep the plantings safe from wandering footsteps. You should see this appear sometime in June or July along with a renewal of the pachysandra. Last fall we began planting grass seed to replace some of the playground's bare areas, a project that will continue in fall 2009. It is a difficult place to establish young grass because of the

high traffic and the high initial watering demands. We could use help watering if you might have a few moments free. Finally, the Playground Committee has begun the initial design phase for some landscaping around the trees in the playground area. As always, we appreciate comments from all Park users regarding improvements that might be made to the playground or to the Park as a whole.

FSRP Annual Meeting...

The FSRP annual meeting, which is open to all members, will take place on June 24 at 7:30pm in the Markward Recreation Center. We would love to see you there and hear your comments and suggestions for Park improvements.

Varda's Memorial Bench...

In the near future, a memorial bench will be installed in Schuylkill River Park in memory of Varda Arnoni.

Varda was a passionate animal-lover who enjoyed sitting in the park with her dog, Tallulah. We hope that people seeing the plaque on this bench, will take a moment to remember Varda and her great kindness to animals. We're sure she would have appreciated this honor made on her behalf.

New Tennis Nets...

New tennis nets, donated by Peg Connor & Prince Sports, Inc., have been installed on the tennis courts.

Visit... www.fsrp.org

For more information, photos, and to keep updated on Park Happenings, visit our website at: www.fsrp.org