

Friends of Schuylkill River Park



Winter 2009

www.fsrp.org

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Announcements...

Taney Baseball Registration:
January, 2010.

Not a FSRP member?
Visit www.fsrp.org, click on "ABOUT US," then click "Membership", print and complete Membership Form, and follow mailing instructions.

Join us on
facebook

Are you a facebook member?
Join our facebook group (just search for Friends of Schuylkill River Park) and keep updated on park events, view photos, and meet others who use Schuylkill River Park.

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For 2009 Fall Festival...3rd Rain Date's a Charm!

Not to be deterred by Two Nor'easters in one weekend and a rainy Saturday the next, friends, neighbors, kids, and dogs came out in droves for the annual FSRP Fall Festival on Sunday, October 25. It was worth the wait.

With unseasonably warm temperatures -- and under gloriously sunny skies (finally!) -- kids decorated pumpkins, bounced in the SUPER Moon Bounce, played games for prizes, and decorated cupcakes. Signature DJs, Inc. kept everyone moving (and hoola-hooping!) to the latest pop hits. As always, Arnie and the line Dancers charmed festival goers with their synchronized moves.

Despite the changing festival dates, more vendors than any previous year's festival were kept busy as grownups meandered by an eclectic mix of art, crafts, dog and pet supplies, hand-made clothing and jewelry, plants and flowers, and more.

The food court featured the usual fun fare from FSRP including drinks, hot

dogs, hamburgers, hummus, popcorn, cotton candy, and home-baked goods. This year vegetarians had more selection with the addition of a new vendor, Veg-N-Go -- who along with coffee vendor, Beauty Shop Café, donated a portion of their sales to FSRP.

The fabulous and enticing silent auction - added last year - proved to be even more popular this year, with almost twice as much money raised! And more local businesses donated silent auction AND raffle prizes than ever!

The Fall Festival not only gets bigger, but better, and we think more fun - every year. It would not be possible without the vendors, raffle donors, silent auction donors, festival underwriting donors, entertainment donors, FSRP Board members, and last but not least, the volunteers who give generously of their time. All are essential to the success of the Fall Festival, the only fundraising event for the park that we all enjoy so much.

2009 Wrap Up

A busy and productive year has left our park looking better than ever. Across the park and recreation areas, trees were fertilized, mulched, pruned, and treated for insect pests. Nine new trees were professionally planted to replace dead and damaged trees. We maintained the existing gardens at the Spruce St. entrance, and established a new garden in the playground area.

Neighborhood residents and community group volunteers turned out for 6 park clean-up days to sweep paths, rake leaves, weed, paint, and make repairs.

You may have noticed work going on with the park benches this Spring; using volunteer labor, we renovated 19 park benches and 10 dog run benches with new wood, hardware and paint. Later, a new bench was purchased to

replace an old broken bench that had been removed. At the rec center area, we procured a bulletin board for notices, and new tennis nets for the courts.

To compensate for the closing of the nearby O'Connor city pool, we assisted with cleaning the gargoyle fountain and getting it back into operation. In addition, a water misting system was constructed on the trellis structure to provide a cooling respite against the summer heat. During the Fall, a drinking fountain was purchased and installed in the rec center plaza area. Over \$26,000 was spent on these improvements and maintenance activities, most of the funds coming from hundreds of generous individual donors who contribute to preserve our urban green space.

Operation “Leash ‘Em Up”

If you are a frequent visitor to Schuylkill River Park, you may have noticed that there has been an increase in the number of off-leash dogs running outside of the Dog Run in the park, specifically in the grassy bowl area in the center of the park. These off-leash dogs and their owners have unknowingly created a great deal of friction among other park stakeholders. As a result, Friends of Schuylkill River Park (FSRP) has received numerous emails and letters with complaints regarding the situation. The fact that one of the best dog runs in the city is nearby but going underutilized by these off-leash dogs has only served to heighten the aggravation.

In response to this public outcry, FSRP is undertaking an educational initiative, code named **Operation “Leash ‘Em Up.”** This program is designed to increase awareness of the issues and challenges facing us all in this situation and to take steps to educate people on how to be more considerate park users. If you are a dog owner, please take a few moments to read the following comments and consider your own behavior and how it may impact your fellow park users.

Some people are afraid of dogs – Many times we hear people explain that their dog is perfectly friendly when we ask them to leash up their pet. Your dog may well be perfectly friendly. However, an off-leash dog running up to a person that is afraid of dogs can be terrifying, regardless of whether the dog is harmless or not.

Dogs can be unpredictable – Both children & adults have been knocked to the ground, sometimes with injuries, and had food snatched away by rambunctious dogs in the park. Additionally, “friendly” off-leash dogs have run up to other leashed dogs and started fights with them as well as disrupted sunbathers & picnickers. Also keep in mind that the leashed dog that your dog runs up to may not be “friendly” and may react aggressively to your off-leash dog.

Dogs have instinctual chasing & hunting behaviors – When presented with a jogger or a bike rider in the park, many off-leash dogs will often give chase, which is intimidating and dangerous to the safety of the runner/biker. On some occasions, the dogs have run into the surrounding streets and

have been hit by cars. Can you imagine how upsetting it would be to accidentally run over someone’s beloved pet because they were off leash?

Off leash dogs at play contribute to destruction of grassy areas – The off-leash dogs playing in the central bowl area of the park in damp conditions are one of the main contributors to the destruction of the grass in that area, creating a mud hole when it rains and an unsightly dirt patch when it is dry. This area, often utilized for sunbathing, badminton, Frisbee, football games and picnicking during the spring/summer/fall months, is consequently rendered less useful for these activities as a result.

It is against the law to have an unleashed dog outside of the Dog Run – All dogs are required to be on leash at all times in all areas of the City of Philadelphia, unless otherwise indicated. If your dog is off-leash, you are breaking the law and could be ticketed if a Park Ranger witnesses your infraction. Please bring your pet into the “Best of Philly” Schuylkill River Park Dog Run where they can run freely and you won’t be breaking the law.

Friends of Schuylkill River Park will be posting signs in the park reminding dog owners to leash up their pets in consideration of their fellow park users. Members of the SRP Dog Owners Association will also be talking with friends and neighbors making them aware of the issues and asking for their compliance. If you have any questions, comments or suggestions in this regard, please send us an email.

As city dwellers, it is incumbent upon us to share our limited public space with our neighbors in a considerate and thoughtful manner. Please do your part to be considerate of your fellow Philadelphians, both two and four footed, and make sure you “Leash ‘Em Up” in Schuylkill River Park when you are outside of the Dog Run. Thank you in advance for your attention to and compliance with our request.

Peg Connor
President, Friends of Schuylkill River Park & proud owner of Jake, the Jack Russell Terrier, who loves the Schuylkill River Park Small Dog Run

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.

Join the 2010 Fall Festival

If you are interested in donating a raffle or silent auction item, being a vendor, or volunteering for the 2010 festival, please email us or visit our website.

K9 Grass Demo

Coming soon, a sample of ‘K9 Grass’ will be installed in the large dog run. For more about this product check out www.k9grass.com.

Recreation Courtyard Fountain Installation Complete



Visit
www.fsrp.org

For more information, photos, and to keep updated on events.

