



FRIENDS OF GWYNNS FALLS/LEAKIN PARK

1920 EAGLE DRIVE

BALTIMORE, MD 21207

www.friendsofgwynnsfallsleakinpark.org

Fall 2016

Bus Route to Gwynns Falls/Leakin Park

Ed Orser

When W. W. Bryant got a job as a Baltimore City bus driver in 1966, the route he was assigned was the #15. A relative newcomer to the city, he simply followed directions westward, only to be surprised when he passed by the Eagle Drive entrance to the Leakin Park section and was amazed by the inviting green open space he saw. Having grown up as an athlete for whom physical fitness was always an important part of his routine, he resolved to make use of the park's trails. For years he ran them, then he jogged them, and today, in his 70s, he has slowed to a walk—but he's still a regular and devoted park user.

Willard Washington (though always known as "W. W.") grew up in the small North Carolina hamlet of Warsaw, where he played sports and, in his high school years, drove school buses. Leaving the South in his early 20s, he first moved to New York, then to Baltimore. His early residence was on the Edmondson Village hill, but about the same time he took the bus job, he moved near Leakin Park to the Wakefield Apartments, where he was one of the first African American residents.

He and two friends trained for the Baltimore Marathon, running from Leakin Park to Howard County and back. Having played football for the semi-pro Baltimore Rams, he volunteered to coach youth football teams in Northwest Baltimore, using Leakin Park's trails for fitness runs. W. W. chuckled as he recalled that the run back up the Crimea section's "impossible hill" often made clear which boys were in shape and which were not!



W.W. Bryant points to where his bus route led him to a lifelong of physical fitness in Leakin Park.

Bryant retired in 2012. Not only did he drive bus routes for much of his career, but on a number of occasions he became an officer in Baltimore Local 1300 of the Amalgamated Transit Union, at one point serving as its vice-president. The union not only sought improved working conditions for its members, but also held special events, including a "bus rodeo," which he remembers fondly for the way that drivers had to maneuver their vehicles around challenging obstacles.

Still a regular Leakin Park walker, W. W. Bryant continues to be amazed that such an "outstanding, fabulous" park is located "right in the middle of the city."

Editor's Note

My apologies for the delay in getting out this edition of the newsletter. There is much more that I would like to include and it will have to wait for the next edition due in February 2017. Your ideas and contributions to the newsletter are welcome and I look forward to hearing from you.

Bridget McCusker - mccbrid@gmail.com



Follow The Friends of Gwynns Falls Leakin Park on Twitter (@FOGFLPMEDIA or @FOGFLP or on Instagram (FOGFLPMEDIA)

Building Adventure

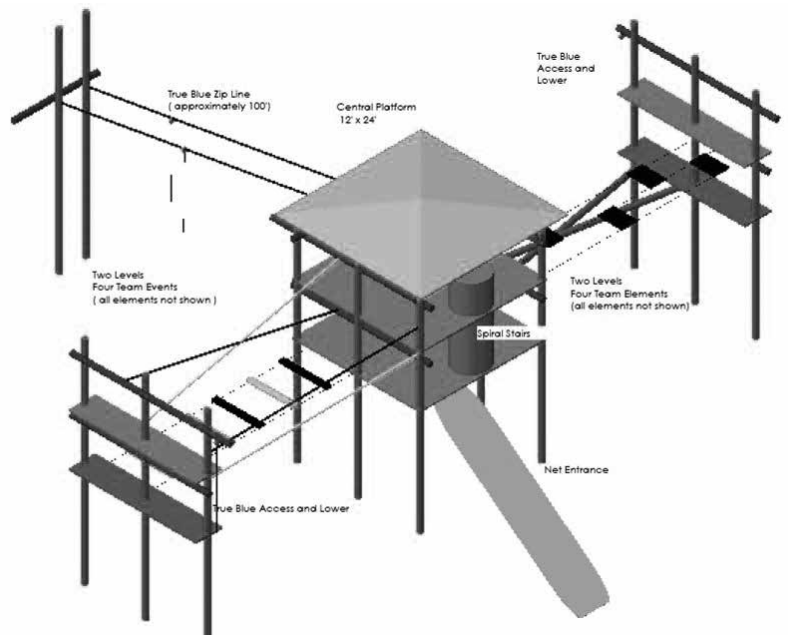
Liz Milhollen

The Outward Bound School is very happy to announce that groundbreaking on our new challenge course elements will begin the first week of October. The funding for this enhancement is a portion of Maryland Department of Natural Resources Program Open Space funds awarded to Baltimore City Recreation and Parks in 2014 for use at Gwynn's Falls/Leakin Park.

The new challenge course elements will be both in the air and on the ground. The largest eye catching structure, the Aerial Team's Course, will be recessed in the woods between the trail house and Outward Bound's Office building. It will be a 50-foot-tall, double level platform with a red roof designed to match the other roofs of the Winans estate. This structure will have eight unique aerial challenges that must be traversed as a team. After all the challenge and team building, the group will get a large dose of adrenaline as they 'zip' off the highest platform to the ground.

Our challenge course is designed to enhance personal and group growth through team challenges that improve communication, cooperation, and problem-solving skills. Outward Bound instructors bring the experience to life by keeping people focused, engaged, and connected. All of our programs use an experiential education approach, meaning that individuals and teams will learn by actively participating in the challenges placed before them.

The entire challenge course is intended to give individuals a chance to step outside of their comfort zone. Whether



overcoming a fear of heights, communicating with classmates, leading their colleagues, or simply getting to know new people, challenge courses offer a different challenge for everyone. Outward Bound's Police Youth Challenge Program (PYC) which brings BCD of Police and Baltimore City school students together for a team building program to breakdown negative stereotypes held for each other will use the new challenge course on their visit to the park.

Once construction begins it should take six weeks to complete, weather dependent. Outward Bound plans to have the Aerial Teams course open during festivals and Second Sundays in 2017.

Treasurer's Report

Joy Goodie

The 2015-2016 year has been extremely eventful for the Friends. We have been busy making improvements to the park and advocating for the park while beautifying, maintaining, and supporting activities that afford opportunities for park utilization. We are in the process of increasing our membership and encourage everyone to spread our love of the park and invite friends and family to support our organization. Don't forget that your giving is tax deductible and Friends of Gwynns Falls/Leakin Park is a 501c3 charitable organization; especially as it gets closer to the end of the year and tax time.

We have received funding from a number of grants for which we are grateful in addition to our members and other community organizations who continue to support us. The Friends are especially grateful for a \$2000. grant from the Rails to Trails Conservancy to help us connect our park to communities and corridors to build healthier places and healthier people. The Friends wish to thank to Jim Brown of Rails to Trails for connecting us to this resource and acquiring

the funding. We are also appreciative of the Sidney Hollander Jr. estate (David's father) for the generous donation of \$1000. as well as the \$1200. donation from The Mountain Cub of Maryland to enable improvements of our boardwalk and trails.

In addition to all of the donations we received, we were also fortunate enough to make a \$5000. donation to the Baltimore Herb Festival toward their efforts for the restoration of the historic Winans Chapel in the park.

Finally, we are truly excited by our new \$15,000. grant given by the Baltimore Heritage Area Association allowing the Friends in cooperation with the Department of Recreation and Parks to have professional help with the planning for the future Interpretation and Visitor Experience Center in Winans Meadow. Many thanks to Fran Spero, Department of Recreation and Parks, for including us in this important mission. We are excited about this opportunity and will need your help with volunteer hours for our in-kind service delivery. We continue to seek out donations and appreciate all contributions large and small to support our mission and thank you in advance.

July 30 Flood and Winans Meadow Area

George Farrant

The big flood on July 30, 2016, when we got 4.5 inches of rain in less than two hours, caused lots of damage to both Franklinton Road and the Winans Meadow area of Leakin Park. Franklinton Road was filled with debris and part of the Gwynns Falls Trail, next to Franklinton Road, buckled and had lots of stones and debris on the bike path. That section of the trail was cleared by FOGFLP but the trail is still buckled in places.



The Winans Meadow area was severely damaged as the Dead Run rose from the dead and overflowed both the bridges to the Ben Cardin Pavilion and the small walking bridge East of the parking lot. The river flowed into the parking lot depositing lots of logs and debris. The GFT just over the bridge was washed away with the tar and stones pushed 50 yards down river leaving a three-foot deep gap. Two boardwalks in Winans meadow were severely damaged. BCRP did a fantastic job of cleaning up the area,

cutting damaged trees, removing most of the debris, and partially restoring some of the GFT that was damaged. The parking lot to the meadow was closed during most of August to accommodate all the big machinery used in the cleanup. We are still waiting for the DOT to finish repairs and re-tar the damaged portion of the trail approaching the Ben Cardin Pavilion. Many events that had been planned for the Pavilion in August had to be canceled. Although the GFT

has not been completely repaired, bicycles and vehicles have access to the trail and pavilion. Repairs to the boardwalk that leads to the Ravine Trail are works in progress. FOGFLP suffered a lot of damage to the tool shed it uses as the roof is leaking and lots of mud is left on the floor. All of the tools had to be washed, re-oiled and sharpened. Mother Nature surely made her mark in our park.

Where to Find Information About Park Activities and Events

Friends of Gwynns Falls/Leakin Park - friendsofgwynnsfallsleakinpark.org

Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks - bcrp.baltimore.gov

Baltimore Bird Club - baltimorebirdclub.org

Gwynns Falls Trail - gwynnsfallstrail.org

Carrie Murray Nature Center - carriemurraynaturecenter.org

Outward Bound - outwardboundbaltimore.org

Parks and People Foundation - parksandpeople.org

And last but not least, Tuesday Trail Work in Gwynns Falls/Leakin Park continues on Tuesdays, from 9:00-11:00am. Contact George at (410) 566-2101 or Jo at (410) 566-2230 for info.



A family enjoys Second Sunday in the Park



To become a member of the Friends of Gwynns Falls/Leakin Park, please send this completed form along with your check* to: Friends of Gwynns Falls/Leakin Park, 1920 Eagle Drive, Baltimore, Md. 21207.

LEVEL: Individual _____ \$10 Family _____ \$20 Nonprofit _____ \$25 Patron _____ \$100 Sustainer _____ \$250

NAME _____ PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

E-MAIL _____

*Contributions to FOGFLP are tax deductible.



Friends of Gwynns Falls/Leakin Park
1920 Eagle Drive
Baltimore, MD 21207
www.friendsofgwynnsfallsleakinpark



Mushroom Festival enthusiasts. More to come in our next issue.

Fall 2016

Wetland Trail Re-route

George Farrant

The Wetland Trail just above the board walk was re-routed this year with the help of Eric Crawford from MORE (Riding Bikes and Building Trails), FOGFLP volunteers, and the Student Conservation Association, who carried out the major portion of the work during the month of July. The re-routed portions of the trail were made in order to avoid sections of the trail that continuously wash out during heavy rains. The re-route is more sustainable and adds a few bends on the trail. The trails starts at the Carrie Murray Nature Center, goes down the boardwalk to Hutton Road, crosses Hutton and continues through the woods to Windsor Mill Road and the intersection of Windsor Mill and the Gwynns Falls Trail.



GET CONNECTED!

Here is how to get connected to Gwynns Falls/Leakin Park and all of Baltimore's Parks:

Join Baltimore Parks Meet Up. www.meetup.com. Sign up and log in. It's free and you will be connected to events and happenings in all of our parks.

Follow The Friends of Gwynns Falls Leakin Park on Facebook, www.friendsofgwynnsfallsleakinpark.org

Follow The Friends of Gwynns Falls Leakin Park on Instagram (FOGFLPMEDIA Check images and videos of Gwynns Falls and Leakin Park. Post your park pictures, use #gwynnsfallsleakinpark or #sylvanhideaway

Follow The Friends of Gwynns Falls Leakin Park on Twitter (@FOGFLPMEDIA or @FOGFLP)

Hope to see you in the park or on the internet!