



FRIENDS OF GWYNNNS FALLS/ LEAKIN PARK

1920 EAGLE DRIVE

BALTIMORE, MD 21207

<http://friendsofgwynnsfallsleakinpark.org>

MARTIN LUTHER KING SERVICE DAY

Antonio Carpenter, John Enny

Outward Bound, the Friends of Gwynns Falls/Leakin Park, and the Ancient and Wisdom Teachings Spiritual Lodge provided the leadership that transformed the Martin Luther King, Jr., holiday from a day OFF to a day ON. Service was the word that drew 70 volunteers, ages 9-71 years, from as far away as Falls Church, Virginia and Washington, D.C. to work in small groups on a variety of projects in various locations within the park. It was a day where the sun shone brightly and layers of January-type clothing were removed in less than an hour.

And work they did—removing invasive vines, some as large as your arm, and overgrown native species that were choking trees, picking up trash and blown down tree limbs, performing rehabilitative trail maintenance, removing very large tree pieces from trails, clearly defining a trail and covering it with mulch, removing vines from a historic wall, and removing pieces of discarded picnic tables to the trash area.

Working together provided opportunity for fellowship with others who only remained a stranger for a short time, and opportunity to talk about future efforts to support park maintenance.



BALTIMORE CITY PARKS, OUR PASSION 2010 PHOTO CONTEST

Attention all shutterbugs and shutterbug wannabes! Get your cameras ready and keep your eyes peeled for just the right subject, lighting, and angle. Your opportunity for fame is here!

The Friends are sponsoring an amateur photography contest this spring to find the best photos capturing the beauty and the variety of fun and activity within city park boundaries. Photos displaying natural life (plants, animals, insects), events, landscapes or structures taken in ANY Baltimore park will fit the entry guidelines. There are two different age categories—young people under 18, and adults 18 and over—so all persons except professional photographers are eligible.

If you don't yet have photos to submit, the three-month span from mid-February to mid-May provides opportunities to capture seasonal differences on film. Participants may enter more than once if the additional submissions are for different topical categories.

First and second place winners in

Photography

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A BUNCH OF HORSE NONSENSE

Rick Smith

It is about time to clear up the facts about the horse stable in Leakin Park.

There actually have been two stables from two different periods of time. The original was built by Thomas Winans in the 1850s when he laid out his plan for the Crimea Estate. Because he was an avid horseman, he built a very large comfortable horse stable and a round barn in close proximity. The barn was quite unique in that it had a bird house encircling the base of the roof. Winans also built a horse track in the open flat area off Windsor Mill Road—the current site of the athletic fields. He was the owner of many fine horses but none were more prized than his fleet-footed, pure white Russian stallion, Zynock, who held record of 2:31 minutes for the mile. The Winans barn and stable stood, although in decline, until the 1940s when Baltimore City purchased the estate. Soon after, both structures were dismantled.

After Leakin Park was established, interest developed in a new riding facility, and in 1956 the Park Board considered a proposal for the city to build a stable there. In nearby Franklinton Captain J. Perry Downing ran the Belvedere Riding Academy, and his stable was about to be



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HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE

Roberta Sharper

Although the fourth annual Holiday Open House in the Orianda Mansion was held a week later in December than originally scheduled, due to the 21 inch snow storm, over 80 visitors joined in seasonal festivities in the historic mansion. Decorations and refreshments attracted participants to all levels of the building.

The theme for the Open House was "One Park, Many Hands," with park organizations and supporters contributing in a variety of ways. The halls were decked with holly, and Christmas trees were trimmed with unique orna-

ments symbolizing the different organizations. The many hands included the Friends of Orianda House, Ancient Wisdom Teaching Spiritual Lodge, Baltimore Chesapeake Bay Outward Bound, Carrie Murray Nature Center, Friends of Gwynns Falls/Leakin Park, Gwynns Falls Trail Council, Parks and People Foundation, Baltimore City Police, and members of the Korean-American community.

A representative from each park group spoke briefly about the organization's activities and pointed out its particular tree and the significance of the symbols. Carolyn Wainwright, President of the Recreation and Parks Board, praised the organizations for the work they do in and for the park and she commented that she wished that

others might follow the example.

At the conclusion of the presentations in the ballroom, guests were free to move about the building at their leisure for displays from several groups and to listen to a presentation about the history of the Winans family by Guy Hager. Other special features of the evening were a photo gallery and animal visitors from the Carrie Murray Center.

Thanks to everyone who worked so diligently to make the Open House a success despite schedule changes. Special thanks to the supplemental work crew, the park maintenance crews and their supervisors, and to those who made donations to support activities of the park.

The health of the trees and garden in the lawn area adjacent to the Orianda House has been a primary focus of the Board of the Friends in 2009. A cursory inspection last spring produced concern. The careful survey that followed made clear that the trees were sadly but dramatically showing the effects of years of neglect. There were two standing dead trees, several close to death and others indeterminate because of the massive vines that covered them. The dead trees were marked in consultation with Baltimore's Department of Forestry. Hours and hours of work by volunteers from the Friends, AmeriCorps and the MLK Service Day followed to remove smothering vines and determine the degree of life under the invasive green foliage. Some trees were beyond hope and others just misshapen as the tree struggled to survive. It was such a good feeling to "free" a tree and see the natural shape.

GARDEN AND TREE CARE

Jo Orser

In November and December, the forestry division cut the



marked dead trees and the ones whose survival, as determined by the forester, was minimal. At the time of this newsletter, low stumps remain but promises of removal have been made. New trees have been ordered and, come spring,

young replacement trees will be planted.

Attention has also been given to the garden in front of the Orianda House. Again, it was a situation of years of neglect so that brambles, briars, young saplings--you name it--had taken over the azaleas, boxwoods and dogwoods. Volunteers armed with hand clippers, loppers, hand saws, rakes and supported by strong backs have made a dramatic difference in the appearance of the garden this fall and the expectation is high that spring will bring an area more colorful and garden-like in appearance.

The Department of Recreation and Parks has made it clear that with recent budget cuts, few funds are available for park grounds beyond routine maintenance. Volunteers must step in, and, on this HUGE project, volunteers are doing the job!



WATERSHED GROUPS MERGE:

Scott Pelton

The Baltimore Harbor Watershed Association, Baltimore Harbor Watershed Association, Gwynns Falls Watershed Association, Herring Run Watershed and the Jones Falls Watershed Association have adopted resolutions signaling their intent to merge into one organization — the Baltimore Water Alliance.

The intent of the restructuring is to enhance organizational effectiveness toward the mission of improvement of water quality in the Baltimore metropolitan area. Pursuit of that common goal will require stronger emphasis to be placed on policy issues such as storm water management and advocacy for better implementation of the Clean Water Act. At the same time the new group remains committed to maintaining contact with their grass-roots constituencies--the local parks, stream tributaries, neighborhoods and schools with which they have worked for many years.

During the transition period the board and staff is being managed by Fran Flanigan, former Executive Director of the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay, on a pro bono basis. It is anticipated that all steps toward the merger will be completed by April and that a new executive director will be on board by June, 2010. The new organization will strive to become the “go to” place for information about water related issues in the Baltimore region.

BEST TRAINS IN BALTIMORE

Craig Close and Heide Grundmann

Since 1985 the Chesapeake and Allegheny Live Steamers (CALs) miniature trains have been a popular attraction from April to November on the Second Sundays of each month in Gwynns Falls/Leakin Park. Although the lines sometimes seem comparable in length to Disney

Land, they move rather quickly and there is no rule against going to the back of the line for a second or third time. Riders come

from all over the Baltimore region and as far away as D.C. and Pennsylvania. A unique feature that has begun to emerge is families creating special picnics and birthday parties around the train rides. While the rides are free, donations are greatly appreciated for the constant maintenance of the trains and the continual improvements to the grounds. For many, the rides and other activities in the park become a full day outing.

The dedicated volunteers take their responsibilities and obligations

to the public very seriously. They run their trains professionally with station safety announcements, safety flags carried by conductors, and whistles and horns on the locomotives. The steam engines are maintained and inspected to state standards, and the track and braking systems on the passenger cars are also inspected by state personnel.

Society members are always working on repairing and renewing the 3300



feet of track (over two-thirds of a mile!) as well as other parts of the total facility. For the past four years members have been replacing the entire loop of double track with plastic ties that will last longer than the current members. There was a stretch of track where trains ran both ways on a single track with special operating rules and a special switchman to prevent any unfortunate “conflicts.” The last short stretch will be rebuilt early in 2010. All Aboard! Starting in April.!

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



Photo Contest, cont.

each category will be announced May 21, 2010. Each will receive a monetary prize but it's the fame, not the wealth, that counts in this contest. Contest judges will have extensive photographic experience. An exhibit of winning and honorable mention photographs will be on display at the Orianda Mansion in Gwynns Falls/Leakin Park during June and July at scheduled times.

Check the Friends of Gwynns Falls/Leakin Park website (<http://friendsofgwynnsfallsleakinpark.org>) for additional information and for the application. Submission deadline is May 15, 2010.

ANNUAL MEETING

Friends of Gwynns Falls/
Leakin Park

March 28, 2010, 3 P.M.— 5 P.M.
at the Orianda House

Speaker: Bryan MacKay, Author

[Baltimore Trails, A Guide for
Hikers and Mountain Bikers](#)

CITY FARMS INFORMATION

Baltimore City Farms

Urban garden spots located in
Gwynns Falls/Leakin Park

For information or to apply call
410-396-0180.

Horse Nonsense, cont.

razed for a road that would connect with the new federal Social Security building. At the same time, Forest Park Avenue, lined on both sides by a stone wall, was being straightened and widened. What better use of this natural stone than for the construction of the new horse stable at Leakin Park? An owner willing to rent and manage the city-owned stables, and recycling at its best!

As a young boy in the 1960s, I walked past the stables on my way to school. I watched as horse riding on the trails in Leakin Park declined and the stables passed in and out of different management until they were closed completely. After a fire burned the two-story section and the roof in the late 1980s, all that is left today are the solid stone walls of the second stable.

