



# FRIENDS OF GWYNNNS FALLS/LEAKIN PARK

1920 EAGLE DRIVE

BALTIMORE, MD 21207

[www.friendsofgwynnsfallsleakinpark.org](http://www.friendsofgwynnsfallsleakinpark.org)

Fall 2017

## Parkrun in Leakin Park

Gwynns Falls/Leakin Park has recently achieved international status by hosting a parkrun event in our fine park. parkrun is an international running program that has existed since October 2004, in fact, parkrun just celebrated its 13th anniversary in October. Presently, Saturday morning runs are held in 15 countries and we are delighted to be able to include GFLP as one of the US parkrun locations. Once you get signed up with parkrun, you may be able to find a parkrun event where ever your travels may take you. The Leakin Park group has had visitors from at least six other countries and local runners and walkers from all over the Baltimore area. Last Spring, The Friends of Gwynns Falls/Leakin Park made a commitment to provide start up funds for supplies to parkrun and on June 24, 2017, the first 5krun was held in the Winans Meadow area. The run has been repeated every Saturday since June 24, and it will continue to be held every Saturday at 9:00am, as long as there are runners eager to run and walk and a handful of volunteers to manage the low-key event. And just when you may have thought that parkrun is not for you because you are not a runner, you don't like races, you don't want to pay race fees, you would like to bring your dog to the park with you, and you don't always have a babysitter on Saturday mornings, I am letting you know that you can still participate AND IT IS FREE! All that is required to be a parkrun participant is



the desire to show up and join in the fun. WALKERS ARE WELCOME, DOGS ON A LEASH ARE WELCOME, CHILDREN ARE WELCOME (accompanied by an adult up to age 11 years), AND CHILDREN IN STROLLERS ARE WELCOME!!! Even if you don't want to run or walk on a particular Saturday, you are welcome to join us as a volunteer and/or to support your friends, neighbors, and fellow outdoor enthusiasts on a Saturday morning. Volunteer positions are simple and on most Saturdays, we are done by 10:15, 10:30 at the latest. We hope to see you soon on Saturday mornings in the Winans Meadow area on Franklinton Rd.

DETAILS: 5k timed run/walk (Winans Meadow area of GFLP) starts promptly at 9:00am, usually over by 10:15 parking close by walkers welcome dogs on leashes welcome children in strollers welcome

INFO: [parkrun.us/leakinpark](http://parkrun.us/leakinpark)



From Top left: Mother & son (Lori & Daniel) demonstrating some parkrun love! Doug & Kristy - parkrun experts have guided and supported us from the start. Iman shows up every week as a runner and volunteer. Dave Platt - A Hunting Ridge regular parkrun runner and volunteer.



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

## A NEW GARDEN FOR WINAN'S MEADOW

Marcia Froomer

The Friends of Gwynns Falls/Leakin Park and Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks have partnered to launch a new pollinator garden in front of the Cardin Pavilion in Winan's Meadow. Many FOGFLP members have provided efforts to get the garden renovated and planted. Heidi Gundeman of FOGFLP and Marcia Froomer from BCRP have taken the leads on designing, installing, and encouraging persistent maintenance to further the success of the garden.

Last spring The Friends spent a month weeding the existing garden and laying down black plastic to solarize the weeds and weed seeds over the summer months. In September, the plastic was removed and biodegradable paper mulch was placed over the garden. Fall planting was done by volunteers and a Horticulture team from BCRP. Patterson Park High Schoolers helped to plant guided by FOGFLP volunteers Sandy Crute, Janet Westcott, and Dave Risavi. Montgomery County Conservation Corps



also planted as well as a Horticulture crew who helped install the plugs.

BCRP secured a mini-grant of \$3,000 from The National Environmental Education Foundation (NEEF) which partners with organizations "...who engage in environmental education and stewardship, meaningful conservation and healthy living." This new garden will be integrated into a pollinator program for school children, teach biodiversity to all ages, and further ecological and sustainable horticultural knowledge to all visitors in Winan's Meadow.

## News from the Gwynns Falls Trail

Ed Orser

First for the good news: The Gwynns Falls Trail Advocates (successor to the Gwynns Falls Trail Council)-- the volunteer group that works to promote, maintain, and improve the trail--recently has completed a revision of the out-of-date Gwynns Falls Trail Web site. The revised site includes links to the Google Map locations for each of the 9 trailheads, as well as digital links to illustrations of the 13 kiosks and 31 interpretive panels along the route. Check it out at: <http://www.gwynnsfallstrail.org/>

New paving recently has addressed the problem of continuous root bumps on the section of trail east of the Winans Meadow parking lot--perhaps less a problem for walkers and runners, but a rude "bump" for unsuspecting cyclists.

And the mixed news: Storm-water remediation currently is underway on the Mill Race section of the trail to address the problem of severe run-off from the neighborhoods above the historic hillside route the trail follows from Windsor Mill Road

to Morris Drive. Construction may cause some closures during the fall, but the project is due for completion before winter, and the improvement is long overdue.

Then for the less than good news: The Gwynns Falls Trail Advocates, like the Friends of Gwynns Falls/Leakin Park, are very sorry by the departure of John Vickers, supervisor of maintenance for the Gwynns Falls District of the City's Park Division and a friend of both the park and the trail--thanks and best wishes, John!

And even less good news: While replacement of the Edmondson Avenue highway bridge clearly is a necessity, and keeping it open for motor traffic during construction clearly has been a priority, cyclists and pedestrians have been distressed recently to discover "closed for demolition" signs where the Gwynns Falls Trail passes beneath it. Early indications were that the City's Department of Transportation was amenable to keeping the trail open, except during posted times of demolition, but resistance from the contractor to that approach has so far not resulted in a satisfactory solution. Stay tuned, but the prospect is not promising.



## Summer Concerts in the Park

Drawing of Rufus Roundtree by Art Lien. Assorted photos of the celebration



## And the Trail Work Continues...

*George Farrant*

Under the leadership of FOGFLP President, George Farrant, trail work, clean up, and enhancement efforts have continued throughout the summer in the park. The Weekly GFLP Work Group continues to meet every Tuesday from 9:00 - 11:00am to perform a variety of tasks ranging from trail maintenance, to trash collection, to invasive vine removal to gardening, and whatever else is needed to maintain and improve the park. A special thanks goes out to Janet Westcott and her nephew, David Risavi, who have transformed the Eagle Drive Parking Lot into a serene and inviting destination. Janet and David have also contributed many more hours in other areas of the park with their gardening magic and can do attitude.

Here are highlights of the 2017 FOGFLP Work Group Accomplishments:

- 1) Crimea Parking Lot Gardens - removed all weeds mulched and planted all 6 gardens with flowers
- 2) Put in 11 steps on the Ravine Trail with help from BCRP and the Montgomery County CJC
- 3) Replaced and improved six bridges on the Ravine, Old Fort, Upper Fort and Franklinton Loop Trails with the help of Civic Works, the Student Conservation Association, and the Montgomery County CJC
- 4) Put in a hand rail on the Stream Trail by the 13 steps leading from Wetheredsville Rd with help from the SCA.
- 5) Continue to maintain 12 miles of trails in Leakin Park - clearing the trails from fallen branches, cutting back overgrowth, and removing trash.
- 6) Repainted three benches in Winans Meadow
- 7) With much help from Baltimore City Rec & Parks and under the guidance of Marcia Froomer, the Ben Cardin Pavilion Garden was torn up and replaced with native plants and is now a Pollinator Garden.
- 8) Removed more than seventy cubic yards of invasive vines along the GFT notably Franklinton and Wetheredsville portions of the trail during the summer and fall with the help of CJC and volunteers from Johns Hopkins University - Experiential Education Program.
- 9) Helped the Herb Festival raise monies for the repair and



repainting of the Chapel in the Crimea

- 10) Sponsored 8 Second Sundays and helped with the staging of three concerts in the Crimea area of the park.
- 11) Help establish parkrun in Winans Meadow. A timed 5 K run every Saturday since June 24th.
- 12) Helped keep both the Crimea and Winans Meadow area free of trash and litter
- 13) Obtained a grant to hire a consultant about improving the Visitor Experience in the park. The work has been completed and along with BCRP, we are evaluating the recommendations from the consultant.





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*Summer Concerts in the Park*

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### Funding for the Winans Chapel

*Ed Orser*

The Baltimore Herb Festival received the good news in July that its Committee for the Preservation of Winans Chapel in Leakin Park had been successful in reaching its fund-raising goal of \$225,000 for the project to address the deteriorated wooden features of the building's exterior.

The \$47,000 grant that put the financial goal over the top came from the Maryland Heritage Area Authority, a program of the Maryland Historic Trust, which recognized the historic distinctiveness of the century and a half-old Carpenter Gothic structure. Feedback indicated that reviewers were greatly impressed by the way in which the project illustrated the private/public partnerships critical to preserving historic buildings that contribute so much to character of Baltimore's parks—from Leakin to Druid Hill, Cylburn, Clifton, Patterson, and Carroll. Moreover, the increased activity in the park illustrated by the increasingly popular Second Sundays in the Park, as well as recent City investment in parking and other improvements, all helped make the case for the importance of preserving the chapel as the gateway to the park's historic campus area.

Remarkable, too, has been the range of financial sources. Building upon the funds set aside for this purpose by the Baltimore Herb Festival over its nearly thirty-year existence, these have also included major foundations, governmental entities, corporations, volunteer organizations (including the



Friends of Gwynns Falls/Leakin Park), and individuals.

This fall the project's architect is at work preparing construction plans and documents in preparation for the request for bids from contractors. The timetable calls for the construction to occur in late winter/spring, with the goal of completion in time for the 2018 Baltimore Herb Festival on May 26.

The Committee, chaired by Jo Orser, includes Heather Higgins and Mike Blair of the Baltimore Herb Festival, as well as members Art Lien, Bob O'Hatnick, Ed Orser, Ed Simmons, and Rick Smith.

(Photo caption: While in distant views the Chapel retains its picturesque qualities, close-ups reveal the urgent need for work to preserve the exterior.)