

THE FRIENDS OF  
RIDLEY CREEK  
STATE PARK



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Editor  
Joan Nikelsky

Designer  
Cathleen Bolduc

# The Friends

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## JOIN THE STREAMS CLEANUP PROJECT ON APRIL 21!

The Friends of Ridley Creek State Park will be celebrating Earth Day Weekend this year by working with the Chester Ridley Crum (CRC) Watershed Association at their 21st Annual CRC Streams Cleanup. The event will be on Saturday, April 21,

Gradyville Road from the east, this bridge is at the bottom of the hill just before the Ridley Creek State Park entrance. The equestrian trail runs under the bridge at this location. For safety reasons we do not intend to clean up along Gradyville Road. There will be a CRC Event sign placed on the bridge to make the area easy to find.



from 9:00 AM to 11:30 AM. Our work area will be the bridge on Gradyville Road where the road crosses over Ridley Creek. We are recruiting Friends volunteers to clean up the stream and banks on both sides of the bridge and we invite you to be one of them!

If you volunteer, you will be provided with work gloves, bottled water, and granola bars. You will also receive a CRC T-shirt for your participation. You should wear a long sleeve shirt, long pants, and be prepared to wade through the Creek to complete our mission.

We will clear the creek of any debris and place it in trash bags for collection by CRC. Trash bags will be placed along Gradyville Road for pickup at the end of the event. Once we clear the area around and under the bridge and place our collected trash for pickup,

When traveling down

*cont. on page 6*

FRIENDS OF RCSP VOICEMAIL

PLEASE CONTACT YOUR FRIENDS AT ANY TIME WITH YOUR COMMENTS AND/OR QUESTIONS. LEAVE A MESSAGE AT 484-442-0223, AND SOMEONE WILL GET BACK TO YOU ASAP!

# MEET OUR PARK MANAGER PHILLIP SCHMIDT

There's a new guy in town -- well, not actually new since he's a native Philadelphian! Please welcome Phillip Schmidt as our new Park Manager. Phillip comes to us from Caledonia State Park- which is just west of Gettysburg- where he served as Park Manager.

So, why did he head back this way, besides the fact that our park is amazing? He wanted to be closer to friends and family, of course. And like any true Philadelphian, when I asked him where he went to school, he told me Lincoln High School, then went on to tell me Penn State where he studied Wildlife & Fishery Science. Saying your high school first is always a dead giveaway!

An interesting fact as we get to know Phillip better - back in 2003 he was part of a project that took GPS readings from the field and created park maps. Two guesses at who helped create the Ridley Creek State Park maps we use today? I hope you guessed Phillip! So, needless to say, he's been all over the park and trails and he really loves them.

Phillip gave a big shout out to our Friends group and volunteers who help maintain the trails and help keep the park so beautiful. He said, "Our budget is so small, and there is so much to do, we couldn't accomplish it all without our volunteers. We appreciate

on this land. It's our job to protect it."

Phillips has a couple of short term goals he has set for himself and his team: (1) Get some of the invasive species to a managed level (friends...I think he's calling) and (2) Getting the history of the Park out to the

community and visitors. Two good goals to be sure. So, if you're ready to help, Phillip will put you to work!

If you haven't already, we hope you get a chance to meet Phillip - he's a great addition to our Park system. His enthusiasm for Ridley is palpable and his love for the outdoors abundant, "This is the best job ever. As a manager it's fun to plan what's going to happen at the park and see the change happen. What more could I ask for? I absolutely love this job!"



everything they do for us."

Taking the job here at Ridley Creek holds interesting challenges for Phillip. He talked about being way out in the country and protecting those lands, but then brought it closer to home. "This is more of an urban setting, so it's so important to make sure people are not encroaching

Now that he's back home and settling in - a dog just might be in the future of this new park manager. We will see. In the meantime, welcome Phillip! We are glad you're here.

*Lauren Bacigalupi is a member of the Friends of Ridley Creek State Park.*

# RIDLEY CREEK STATE PARK ASH TREE

## REMOVAL PROJECT

In case you've been to the park recently and wondered about so many trees being cut down, here's the scoop - Ridley Creek State Park has many ash trees throughout the park which are dramatically impacted by the emerald ash borer, an invasive wood-boring insect. This insect kills nearly every ash tree in a forest stand once it becomes infected. These dead trees then pose a hazard to anyone and anything in the surrounding area. With the many severe storms we have had in the last several years, these trees can and will come down at the most inopportune times. It's better to take them down under control rather than have the trees come down on their own.

In early January, in cooperation with the Bureau of Forestry of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), Ridley Creek State Park started an ash tree harvest. The timber salvage sale is being used to remove ash and hazardous trees at various areas throughout the park, mainly in areas of higher usage such as picnic and pavilion areas, around the historic Hunting Hill Mansion, and along the heavily used Multi-Use Trail. Overseen by DCNR's Bureau of Forestry, the salvage harvest effort will entail retention of all other healthy, hardwood tree species in the area.

As of March 1st, most of the work has been completed. At this point, the rest of the work will take place in the forest stands along the north section of Sandy Flash Drive. Because of this, that section of road will remain closed for the duration of the project. The tree felling and removal is expected to be completed by May 2018. Once removal is complete, re-planting plans will be implemented.

The emerald ash borer infests all ash species. The larvae live and feed just under the tree bark. This damage disrupts the transport of water and nutrients between the roots, leaves, and growing tissues, causing a rapid decline and death of the tree. The structural traits of ash, those that also make ash an excellent wood for baseball bats, render dying trees hazardous. When branches break off or trees come down it is often quick and unpredictable -- resembling a baseball bat shattering.

Pennsylvania's 17 million acres of forestland provide critical values to society, including clean water, recreation opportunities, plant and animal habitat, and raw materials for a long-established forest



products industry, said DCNR Secretary Cindy Adams Dunn. She added that "active monitoring and management for invasive species such as the emerald ash borer is essential if Pennsylvania forests are to survive the last several decades of changing climate, land-use patterns, declines in forest health, and the economic recession that threaten forest-related values and reduce the number of forest-based jobs."

*This article was contributed by Park Manager Phillip Schmidt.*

# EXPLORING PENNSYLVANIA'S PARKS:

## HYNER VIEW STATE PARK

So far in this State Parks Series we have looked at several very special places found within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. This time around is no different -- Hyner View State Park is a unique treasure like the others. This time we are going to Clinton County in North Central Pennsylvania. Being only 6 acres, Hyner View doesn't win many accolades for its size; however, it does provide its own one-of-a-kind charm through its vertical presence.

The focal point is a lookout terrace built by the Civilian

Conservation Corps during the Depression Era. The stone platform sits high on a hillside at the end of a long winding road that twists its way up the mountain and through the woods for over 4 miles. Once visitors arrive at the top, however, they are greeted with a dramatic 1,300 foot drop to the valley floor below. From the observation deck you can see for miles in many directions. The most notable feature is the west branch of the Susquehanna River winding across the valley floor. At one point Route 120 crosses the river and parallels the shoreline for a

neat perspective of passing motorists on the roadway below.

For those who are not keen on heights, Hyner View may take a few moments to warm up to. However, even visitors who don't find the 1,300 ft drop off to be vertigo-inducing may likely be taken aback by some of the park's frequent users: hang-gliders who "hang out" just below the stone platform on wooden decks. On any day with decent weather and moderate to no wind you will almost certainly see several pilots waiting until just the right environmental conditions





underneath on the valley floor, a strong thermal environment is created and the rising heat noticeably lifts the gliders upward and higher into the sky. The Hyner View hang-gliders appropriately refer to them as “train thermals.”

Over the years Hyner View State Park has brought many people up the winding mountain road to the observation platform high on the hillside. There have been marriage proposals and a few weddings. Even when the clouds drop down and cover the valley with fog blocking the view, there is still a very distinct charm about the place. If the 6 acres isn't enough room to play and hang-gliding isn't your thing, Hyner View State Park is only 5 miles away from Hyner Run State Park.

At around 180 acres, there is plenty of space to house Hyner Run's various amenities and activities including a campground, swimming pool, and office that manages both parks. So no matter what your interests are, chances are very good that just about anyone can find something to enjoy on a visit to the region of Hyner View State Park in Northern Pennsylvania.

*This article is fourth in a series about other state parks in Pennsylvania, contributed by Friends Board member, the much-traveled Paul Mickle.*

are met to launch their aircrafts into flight. When the wind and surrounding conditions are met, it just takes a couple of gentle steps off the wooden deck to embark on a thrilling tour of the whole valley from high up in the sky above.

The town of Renovo, about 6 miles to the west, tucked behind the base of a neighboring mountain, was originally established by the Philadelphia and Erie railroad as it was the mid-point between the two cities by rail. Built as an industrial town, it was marketed as a resort destination due to its direct access to the outside world and larger cities through the network of railways. The economy thrived with tourists and a population of over 5,000. Today, however, it has sadly followed suit of many other small towns with dwindling populations and depressed economies. Over-timbering of the land initially led to the demise of its thriving industrial productivity.

In the 1960s the railway relocated much of its operations to other cities around the state like Pittsburgh and Altoona. The rail yard is still there, though, and freight trains come and go regularly, but with a population around 1,200, Renovo is not the “resort” destination it once was. Nevertheless, visitors to Hyner View State Park can still make the short drive to explore this unique town in the mountains.

The freight trains provide an unexpected benefit to the hang-gliding crowd. Hang-gliding appears to be a free-falling activity in which the pilot and aircraft gently glide downwards until eventually landing safely on the ground. This is only part of the concept. When the thermal environment is conducive, the pilot can actually ride the air upwards, high above the initial launching point. Whenever a train is passing

## FRIENDS OF RIDLEY PHOTO CONTEST 2018

Amateur photographers! Are you getting ready for the 2018 Friends Photo Contest? For the third year, we will hold the award ceremony for the annual photo contest in June - this time on Wednesday, June 27 at 6:00 pm. We'll hold it outdoors weather-permitting; if not, inside the park mansion is an option.

There will be several cash awards in adult and youth categories and we want to encourage young photographers under the age of 18 to enter. We are allowing up to 3 entries per person. The entry fee will vary based on the number of submitted photos - the

first 2 photos for \$10 each, and a 3rd photo for \$5.

Look for the contest rules, entry form, and updated information on the Friends website [www.FriendsofRCSP.org](http://www.FriendsofRCSP.org). Flyers have been posted in the park and on the bulletin boards of the Multi-Use Trail. The submission deadline for photos eligible to win prizes is Wednesday, June 20, one week prior to the award ceremony, to allow time for judging. Late entries will be accepted up to Tuesday, June 26, and will be posted at the award ceremony, but will not be eligible for prizes.

Photos of all seasons are welcome. So gather your

pictures and submit your best entries. The photo contest has always been one of our most popular fundraisers, while also raising awareness of the park and the Friends.

Come and bring your family and friends to this free event, the award ceremony on Wednesday, June 27, to look at all the beautiful pictures of our park. Light refreshments will be served. We will also have a collection box for canned food items for the local Food Bank; bring a donation if you can. See you there!

## PPFF's PHOTO CONTEST

The Friends of Ridley Creek State Park is a chapter of the Pennsylvania Parks & Forests Foundation (PPFF). In addition to the Friends of Ridley's photo contest, PPFF has an annual photo contest. Here's another opportunity for you to enter and win with your pictures of our park, or, for that matter, any state park or forest in

Pennsylvania.

Photos must be submitted by September 5, 2018 to PPFF. Three prizes will be awarded in each of 5 categories, as well as Best in Show, Critic's Choice, and People's Choice. The categories this year are: Fun in the Outdoors; Beauty All Around; Dogs in the Outdoors; The Built

Environment (buildings, bridges, towers, etc.); Young Photographers (aged 12-17). So there are many opportunities to win an award!

For a complete list of rules and submission details, go to [www.PaParksAndForests.org](http://www.PaParksAndForests.org).

*Streams Cleanup cont. from cover*

we are free to leave and go home. There will be a thank you picnic at a future date for all volunteers who participated - when you are not covered in mud!

To access our work site, please enter Ridley Creek State Park at the Gradyville Road entrance (from Providence Road). Proceed

to Area 8 at the top of the hill near the horse farm and go to the trailer parking area. Walk downhill on the equestrian trail, along the pasture fence, to Ridley Creek and you will be at the bridge. We can access both sides of the bridge from the trail under the bridge and can wade across Ridley Creek to clean up the entire area. Parking along Gradyville Road

is limited and dangerous for discharging passengers. Please be safe and go to the suggested parking location at Area 8.

To sign up for this event, please visit [www.crcwatersheds.org](http://www.crcwatersheds.org) to ensure we have a T-shirt and supplies for you.

*This article was contributed by Friends President Jack Miller.*

# COME TO THE FRIENDS PICNIC JUNE 2

Our annual member and volunteer appreciation picnic this year will be on Saturday June 2 at noon, rain or shine, after the trail workday. The picnic is open to all trail workers and members of the Friends of Ridley Creek State Park and will include the annual election for Friends officers.

Meet us at Pavilion 8, which is a sheltered site off Sandy Flash Drive at the top of the hill, next to the horse farm building. The picnic treats are compliments of the Friends:

hamburgers, hot dogs, potato salad, coleslaw, beverages, and other fare. People are welcome to bring a dessert or other dish to share.

The annual meeting will include officer elections. Current members of the Friends of Ridley Creek State Park and newly signed up members will be able to vote. The President and Vice-President positions (currently held by Jack Miller and Joan Nikelsky) will be up for election or re-election. We are also seeking a

Treasurer and hope to find someone before the annual meeting. Anyone interested in serving should e-mail [members@friendsofrcsp.org](mailto:members@friendsofrcsp.org) or call Joan at 610-352-5685.

Please RSVP for the picnic so we can plan the food. E-mail [members@friendsofrcsp.org](mailto:members@friendsofrcsp.org) or call Joan at the number above by Wednesday, May 30, if you can. We hope to see you there!

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**MONTHLY TRAIL WORK. MEET AT PARK OFFICE**

FIRST SATURDAY OF EACH MONTH, 9AM.

**CRC STREAMS CLEANUP**

SATURDAY APRIL 21ST, SEE ARTICLE FOR DETAILS

**FREE PICNIC FOR FRIENDS MEMBERS AND TRAIL WORKERS**

SATURDAY, JUNE 2ND, NOON AT PAVILION 8

**DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTING ENTRIES ELIGIBLE FOR AWARDS OF PHOTO CONTEST**

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 20TH UNTIL 4PM AT PARK OFFICE

**AWARD CEREMONY FOR THE FRIENDS PHOTO CONTEST - OPEN TO PUBLIC**

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 27TH, 6PM IN MANSION AREA

**DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTING ENTRIES TO THE PPF PHOTO CONTEST**

WEDNESDAY, SEPT 5TH, SEE [PA Parks and Forests.org](http://PA Parks and Forests.org)