

The Natural Observer

News from the Governor Dick Environmental Center



Autumn, 2020

Hooray for the Praying Mantis!



It's Almost Time

For the FOREST FABLE

Join Artist-in-Residence Karen Beall in creating a permanent ceramic work of art for the Environmental Center. Rebecca Urban from Lebanon Valley College will share her knowledge of the different species of trees in the Park and after the walk, Karen will guide participants through the process of making individual clay tiles with bark, leaf, seed, and flower impressions of each tree.

There are two dates to choose from: October 3 or October 4, 12:30 to 4:00 p.m. All participants will then return on October 10 from 12:30 to 2:00 p.m. to complete the project. Group size is limited so be sure to register early. There is no fee for participating thanks to a generous grant from the Mt. Gretna Arts Council.

Park Trivia: The elevation gain from the Environmental Center to the Tower is 279 feet.



When you find a feather on the ground while outdoors, you can go online to: fws.gov/lab/featheratlas to identify the bird that molted it. Remember, it is illegal to collect feathers from migratory birds.

WE  VOLUNTEERS

Our volunteers have logged more than 200 hours in 2020, and they're not through yet!

From our TRAILS CORRESPONDENT

The Park at Governor Dick is one of the many local parks seeing a large increase in visitors over the past few months. As a result, some of our trails are experiencing extensive erosion. At the start of summer the Park established a Trails Task Force with representatives from our many user groups: hikers, mountain bikers, horseback riders, and climbers. This task force is working together to improve the sustainability of our trails so that everyone can continue to visit and enjoy the Park.

To achieve this goal, we are working to naturalize the damaged trails, rerouting if necessary and planting trees and shrubs to protect against erosion. We will share trail conservation information by posting signs and through the Governor Dick Facebook page and website as well as here in the quarterly newsletter. You may have noticed new trail signs with reminders and cautions, courtesy of SAMBA (Susquehanna Area Mountain Bike Association). On October 10, work will begin on the trails 15, 13, 5, and 4, trails that the Task Force deemed priorities.

How can you help?

1. Take our survey.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/gdickusersurvey>

We would like to know more about our visitors, your favorite trails, your favorite time of year to visit, and more. The survey is available at the Environmental Center, on the website and Facebook, and at trail heads.

2. Be knowledgeable Read and follow trail postings. Your actions influence plants, trails, animals and other people.

Happy trails!

Thank you,

Sarah Shirk



Thank you, Donors!

We wish to acknowledge those who have supported the Governor Dick Environmental Center this summer with their generous gifts.

Liam and Debbie O'Rourke\$500.00

Donald Hess and Keith Dickerson donated \$200.00 in honor of their cousins Mark and Laurie Stone. Donald wrote, "Our grandparents lived in a small cottage on Black Lane, thus Mt. Gretna has been our 'ancestral summer home' for many generations. Hiking to Governor Dick has always been a favorite family activity whenever we would get together. We are truly thankful for all that you are doing to preserve the Tower and surrounding woodlands, and the history of Clarence Schock and Governor Dick."

Ashlea Good, one of our volunteers \$65.91

We were thrilled that Gretna Music held several events here that were well received. The first was a storyteller, followed by three music programs in August and September. Gretna Music donated \$400.00.

Matt Walsh's employer, Conestoga Log Cabins, matched Matt's volunteer time at the Park with a \$60 donation.

Your donations are tax deductible and support a great Lebanon County resource.

Thank you!

Q. What do you call a wet bear?

A. A drizzly bear!



Here's another way to support our mission:



BECOME A MEMBER OF GOVERNOR DICK PARK!

The Governor Dick Environmental Center is a 501(c)(3) IRS-approved nonprofit organization. You are invited to support our environmental education programs and resource conservation work through your membership donation. All contributions are tax deductible for income tax purposes. Contact the office for more information.

Membership Categories

- Student.....\$15
- Individual.....\$20
- Family.....\$30
- Rock Solid Friend.....\$100
- Steward.....\$500

Donors contributing \$100 or more will receive a Memorial Brick in their honor for our sidewalk!

A Place for Recreation



During this year of stress and new restrictions due to Covid 19, outdoor activities have increased over 100% in many parks and state forests. It is the right solution because time spent outdoors boosts our immune systems, lowers blood pressure, slows our heart rates, and lowers cortisol levels, a stress hormone.

Since we have begun our survey, we have received some questions about "RC cars." One of the questions on the survey asks what you like to do when you come to the Park, and among hiking and biking options is the RC car category. Maybe you have come across these hobbyists as they drive their remote-controlled vehicles over the obstacles bikers negotiate, hikers step over, and children find fun for leaping and playing "hot lava." These trucks and

cars bounce and crawl along in their own off-road style, sometimes rolling on to their sides, challenged to get over the next boulder, up the steep hill, and beyond the trail-blocking roots. They seem to be having a lot of fun, leaving the "real world" behind for a couple hours of "driving" in the forest. We appreciate their low impact on the trails and their consideration when they move aside for faster travelers. The guys below spent most of a day enjoying their hobby and the beautiful weather.

Clockwise around the table: Brian Reigle, Bryan Hughes, Matt Snell, Jim Darrach, Matt Reigle, Jeff Brubaker



See this on the trail?



KILL IT!

Many of you have contacted us about seeing these beautiful but destructive insects, and we are aware of our spotted lanternfly problem. We have tried sprays from garden centers as well as a homemade mix of rubbing alcohol and Dawn dish soap. Some die, but not enough. And so many are out of reach. Squash them when you can. Even one less is a good thing! Oh! They're large, but they don't bite or sting.

Adopt A Trail

Half of our trails are adopted by folks who agree to trim them, pick up litter, remove debris, and let us know if trees are blocking the trail. Thanks to our new adopters: Todd Nicholas has adopted trails 4 and 9. Rod Manweiler has adopted trail 12.

Things to Do



Check our website for up-to-the-minute additions and changes.

Please register for our events by calling the office and leaving your name and phone number clearly. You may also send us an e-mail.

Sept. 27, 1:00 p.m. –Golden Eagle Hikers History Hike. 2 miles.

Oct. 3 OR Oct. 4; 12:30-4:00 p.m. – Forest Fable Art Project. Also, Oct. 10, 12:30-2:00 p.m. Must be registered.

Oct. 4, 1:00-4:00 p.m. – Music on the Porch bluegrass jam. Bring a lawn chair.

Oct. 10, 9:00 a.m. – Volunteer Work Day on trails.

Oct. 15, 7:15 p.m. – Monthly Board meeting.

Oct. 16, 10:00 a.m. – Toddlers in Tow. For children ages 2 to 5 years.

Oct.. 25, 1:30 p.m. – Golden Eagle Hikers.

Nov. 1, 1:00-4:00 p.m. – Music on the Porch bluegrass jam.

Nov. 8, 8:00 a.m. – Fitness Hike.

Nov. 15, 10:00 a.m. – DVOA Orienteering Event. Fee charged.

Nov. 15, 11:00 a.m. – Beginning Orienteering Class. Please register.

Nov.19, 7:15 p.m. – Monthly Board meeting.

Nov. 20, 10:00 a.m. – Toddlers in Tow. For children ages 2 to 5 years.

Nov. 21, 8:00 a.m. – 10th Annual Bouldering Competition.

Nov. 22, 1:30 p.m. – Golden Eagle Hikers.

Dec. 6, 1:00 – 4:00 p.m. – Music by the Fireplace Christmas Sing Along.

Dec. 12, 1:00 p.m. – Christmas Scavenger Hike. \$5 per person. Prizes.

To contact us:

*Clarence Schock Memorial Park at Gov. Dick
P.O. Box 161, Mt. Gretna, PA 17064

*3283 Pinch Rd., Lebanon, PA (diagonally across from the State Game Lands parking lot)

*Phone: (717) 964-3808

*Email: governordick@hotmail.com

*Web: www.parkatgovernordick.org

