

The Natural Observer



Governor Dick Park



SUMMER, 2019

Mindfulness

What is it? Merriam-Webster defines it as “the practice of maintaining a nonjudgmental state or heightened or complete awareness of one’s thoughts, emotions, or experiences on a moment-to-moment basis.” Merriam-Webster more simply defines it as “the quality or state of being mindful.”

In July and August we will be hosting six **Mindfulness Hikes** led by bio-medical scientist and mindfulness practitioner Deborah Early, PhD. Deborah is certified as a meditation teacher and also holds certifications in the areas of medicinal botanics, clinical aromatherapy, and as a forest therapy guide.

What is forest therapy, you might ask. It is not the same as hiking because you are not trying to get “there” but being mindful of “here.” The pace is slow so that your senses can be focused on the forest around you and under your feet and close at hand. Forest bathing or “shinrin-yoku,” a name coined by Tomohide Akiyama in 1982, is a way to reap the health benefits of spending time in a forested area, enhancing health, wellness, and happiness.

Nature is good for you. Many, many studies have proven it. Deborah has been practicing mindfulness in nature for many years and is excited to share the benefits with others. It will be

a great way to savor summer, de-stress, and connect with nature. The trail length will be about one half mile and easy to moderate in difficulty. Wear close-toed shoes and bring water. These hikes are for adults and children over age 10. The cost is \$3.00 per person.

See the “Things to Do” section for dates or visit our website at www.parkatgovernordick.org.



Thank you to **Dick Turnbaugh**, a volunteer who lives so close by he comes at a moment’s notice when we need help.

Thank you to **Harry Brown** who has kept our birds well fed with his bird seed donations.

Thank you to **the volunteers** who sweat, get dirty and sometimes a little bloodied, and who get their exercise blazing and trimming and working so hard. You should be here to receive the compliments on trails that are well kept and a park that is beautifully maintained.

Thank you, **Milton Hershey School**, for sending a group of teens for a day of trail trimming.

Thank you, **Nielson Corporation**. Every year a large group comes for a work day. This year they trimmed almost 3 miles of trails on a COOL day.

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Boardwalk Update

Scores of you have come to the park to walk our new ADA-accessible boardwalk only to find it is still closed. When the project was begun in December, we had a finish date of May 31. As with any major undertaking there were little setbacks that forced us to push back the opening date. We apologize for the inconvenience it has been for so many of you making a special trip here to walk on it. We anticipate by the end of June being able to say, "It's open!" Thank you for your support of this project and for your patience.

\$3,000!

Thank you to the individuals and organizations that have sponsored a memorial brick for the new sidewalk. We have raised \$3,000 thus far (after campaign expenses). The brick campaign will continue through this year with the goal of lining the length of the new sidewalk. And we welcome you to be a part of the legacy!

Adopt-a-Trail

Duane and Erin Johnson have been caretakers of trail 11 for 5 years through our Adopt-a-Trail program. Thank you, Duane and Erin, for your faithful work on that stretch of trail.

Our "Adopt-a-Trail" program began in 2011. Volunteers stepped forward to assist the Park's trail committee in maintaining the more than 15 miles of trails. Trail 11 is currently the only adopted trail as previous volunteers relinquished the care of their trails because of other responsibilities. We are enlisting the help of new trail caretakers.

As an "Adopt-a-Trail" volunteer you should hike the full length of your adopted trail at least 6 times throughout the year to remove wind fallen limbs 6 inches and under, prune the trail to a 6-foot wide

corridor, clean the trail of any trash or other debris, and check for visibility of blazes. You are not permitted to use power tools so large trees down on your trail would need to be reported to the office manager.

Stop by the office to tell us which trail you would like to adopt and to fill out a form. Commitment is for a year only – but we will keep you busy much longer if you like!

If you see one of these....



.....kill them!

Be on the lookout for the spotted lanternfly. The adult, a plant hopper and not a fly or moth, is pictured on the right. An egg mass is shown on the left. The early nymph is black with white dots and the older nymph is red with white dots. Put them in a baggie with hand sanitizer, seal it, and throw it away. (Egg mass photo courtesy of Penn State Extension. Other photos courtesy of the PA Department of Agriculture.)

Didja know black bears have 42 teeth and opossums have 50?



An evening event is being planned for July 27 pending West Cornwall Township's approval of a bonfire. WellSpan Good Samaritan Hospital of Lebanon is partnering with us for our first *Summer Nocturne* with a hike to the tower beginning at 7:00 p.m. There will be snacks and games and marshmallow roasting. August 3 is the rain date. A special e-mail will be sent to all on our list as to whether this event will go on.

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Things to Do

All programs are free unless stated otherwise.
Meet at the Environmental Center on Pinch Rd.
Registration is required: call 964-3808 or e-mail
governordick@hotmail.com.

Calendar subject to change. Check our website for up-to-the-minute information.

June 22, 10:30 a.m. – Hello, Summer! Toddler Hike for ages 2 to 5 years.

June 23, 1:30 p.m. – Golden Eagle Hikers. 2-3 miles at a gentle pace for folks over age 50.

June 30, 2:00 p.m. – A Snake's Birthday. Must RSVP so we have enough cupcakes.

July 6, 10:30 a.m. – Pond Scoop. Pond creatures investigation. Group size limited. MUST register.

July 7, 1:00 - 4:00 p.m. – Music on the Porch bluegrass jam.

July 12, 10:30 a.m. – Summer Story Forest. Story and activities outdoors. All ages welcome.

July 12, 3:00 p.m. – Mindfulness Hike. Experience forest bathing.

July 13, 9:00 a.m. – Noon – 2nd Saturday Volunteer Work Morning.

July 14, 8:00 a.m. – Fitness Hike.

July 18, 7:15 p.m. – Monthly Board meeting.

July 20, 3:00 p.m. – Mindfulness Hike. More forest bathing.

July 26, 10:30 a.m. – Summer Story Forest. Story and activities in the forest. All ages.

July 27, 8:00 a.m. – Mindfulness Hike.

July 27, 1:00 p.m. – Nature Journaling: Exploring the Treetops.

July 28, 1:30 p.m. – Golden Eagle Hikers. 2-3 miles at a gentle pace for folks over age 50.

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

August 9, 8:00 a.m. – Mindfulness Hike.

August 9, 10:30 a.m. – Summer Story Forest. Story and activities in the forest. All ages.

August 10, 9:00 a.m. – Noon. 2nd Saturday Volunteer Work Morning.

August 15, 3:00 p.m. – Mindfulness Hike.

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

August 18, 8:00 a.m. – Fitness Hike.

August 23, 10:30 a.m. – Summer Story Forest.

August 24, 1:00 p.m. – Mindfulness Hike.

August 25, 1:30 p.m. – Golden Eagle Hikers. 2-3 miles at a gentle pace for folks over age 50.

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

Sept. 7, 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. – Bouldering Clinic. Learn to rock climb. Rain date: Sept. 8.

Sept. 13, 10:00 a.m. – Toddlers in Tow for children ages 2 to 5 years.

Sept. 14, 9:00 a.m. – Noon. 2nd Saturday Volunteer Work Morning.

Sept. 14, 1:00 p.m. – East Penn Mushroomers Mushroom Walk.

Sept. 15, 8:00 a.m. – Fitness Hike.

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

Didja know it's against the law to hug a tree in China?

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image courtesy of www.hstrail.org

The Guide to the Horse-Shoe Trail guidebook and accompanying maps are available at the Environmental Center for \$15. The Horse-Shoe Trail goes through Governor Dick Park, and it has an interesting history. Check it out!

FROM THE ARCHIVES....

....Summer, 2008 newsletter issue.

Safety First

Many people plan fun vacations and trips to unknown places during the summer months yet fail to put safety into their plans. Following is a partial list of “Guidelines for safety in outdoor activities” taken from the book *Hey, Ranger* by Jim Burnett, 2005. If you are planning some outdoor fun this summer, be sure to follow these guidelines.

1. Start smart – get information from on-site staff, not someone who was there 5 years ago. For example, “Is the river high?”
2. Be weather wise – check the local weather for the area you’ll be in. Be prepared for predicted weather and unexpected changes.
3. Watch your watch – do you have enough time to enjoy the activity and complete it safely?
4. Don’t leave home without it! Learn what the 10 essentials are and carry them with you.
5. Be a groupie – keep the group together. Don’t say, “Go ahead, I’ll catch up.”
6. Avoid the technology trap! Don’t let modern gadgets or gear get you in over your head.

7. Know when to say “When.” Don’t let a once in a lifetime activity be the end of your life. If you’re the leader, be able to make good decisions.
8. Don’t “go for the gusto.” Beware of alcohol and drugs. They cloud judgment and coordination.
9. Don’t take unnecessary chances. Obey warning signs, guardrails and special advisories. They are there for a reason.
10. Don’t feed or get too close to wild animals.
11. Be sensible about security. Use common sense and safeguard valuables (and yourself).
12. Don’t just do something, sit there. If you realize you are lost, stay put and wait for rescue.
13. Know your plans and when you expect to be back. Tell someone your plans so Search and Rescue knows when to start and where to look for you. Stick to your plans.

Have a safe
summer hiking
season!

To contact us:

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