



# THE DAM NEWSLETTER

A PUBLICATION OF THE FRIENDS OF RAYSTOWN LAKE

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## Spring 2020

Well, it has been quite an interesting spring at Raystown Lake to say the least. Unfortunately, Raystown has not been immune to cancellations, closures and postponements like everywhere else in the world, but we are certainly expecting the summer months to be quite busy and hopefully return us to some sense of normalcy.

The Corps staff has reopened the campgrounds and the Mountain Biking Skills Park, but other major events and facilities, such as the Visitors Center, will remain closed or cancelled until further notice. The Corps has been working hard to get facilities reopened, but also must prioritize everyone's safety, including the visiting public, employees, contractors, volunteers and the local community as well!

The public's patience and understanding is greatly appreciated during these unprecedented times!

**FRIENDS OF  
RAYSTOWN LAKE  
P.O. BOX 87  
HESSTON, PA 16647**

### Board of Directors

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Cooperative Agency  
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Raystown Lake Project  
6145 Seven Points Road  
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(814) 658-3405



### **Park Manager**

Jude Harrington

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# New Supervisory Ranger at Raystown

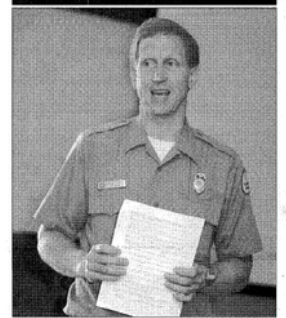
For those of you who don't already know, we are very excited to announce that Raystown Lake has a new supervisory Park Ranger, Allen Gwinn! Allen has been a USACE Park Ranger at Raystown since 1995, and has played a vital role in countless projects and improvements, including the construction and design of the Allegrippis Trail System, the creation of the Mountain Biking Skills Park, the establishment of the Greenside Pathway rubber trail, the installment of Marklesburg Fire Company's underwater camera, and much more.

Allen continuously demonstrates leadership and fosters teamwork as he mentors and guides both permanent and seasonal staff throughout their time at Raystown. Allen's humor and commitment to his principles have endeared him to co-workers, visitors, and partners. He is a founding member of the Friends of Raystown and has continuously contributed to their cause. Needless to say, Allen is a significant driving force in the ongoing success of Raystown Lake and we are so excited to have him serving in this new role. Be sure to congratulate him when you get the chance!

Written by Rachael Gwinn (his daughter)



**Lake's history presented**



In yet another observance of the 40th anniversary of the construction of the Raystown Dam, park ranger Allen Gwinn presented a history of the Raystown Dam and Raystown Lake to local Rotarians at the June 3 luncheon meeting of the Huntingdon Rotary Club. Gwinn stated although many locals were distressed to lose their residences to the new dam in the late 1960s, its construction has had many long-lasting benefits to our area, including flood control, recreation, tourism and hydroelectric power generation. In fact, if the dam had not been under construction when Hurricane Agnes struck in 1972, the damage downstream would have been much more significant than it already was.

## Captain's Quarters

by Ron Rabena, President

Well we are in the 55th day of the big shutdown and it is the 9th of May and it is snowing outside. By now everyone knows that a lot of activities at Raystown are cancelled but the lake is still open for boating and other outdoor activities. The Friends have not met in April and May due to the limitations although the officers are handling the day to day business. The Raystown Mountain Bike Festival was also cancelled, although a lot of registrations are being carried over to next year's event. The Allegrippis Trails are open along with the Greenside Pathway and Old Loggers Trail at Seven Points. The Raycep program for this year has also been cancelled. Putt's camp will reopen along with the rest of the campgrounds. My personal opinion is that this virus will be a problem for a long time unless a vaccine is made to stop it. Until then enjoy the outdoors and stay safe. Better days are ahead!





# Facility Improvements

During the off season, the Corps has been working to make improvements at various facilities across the project, including new restrooms at Shy Beaver, Corbin's Island, and Nancy's Camp. Additionally, campsite improvements have been completed on sites 35-42 in Susquehannock Campground as part of a multi-year, ongoing restoration plan.



## *They Grow Up So Fast...*



2 years ago, the pair of Bald Eagles that nest at the Raystown Lake Dam rebuilt their nest in a large pine tree above the Hydropower Plant. This new location allows birders to have an eye-level view of the nest from the road on the dam, providing the unique opportunity to peer into the nest and watch the 2 eaglets grow up. The pictures that observers have taken are astounding and provide us a timeline from hatching to (almost) fledging, as seen below.



Photo by Cindy Fisher

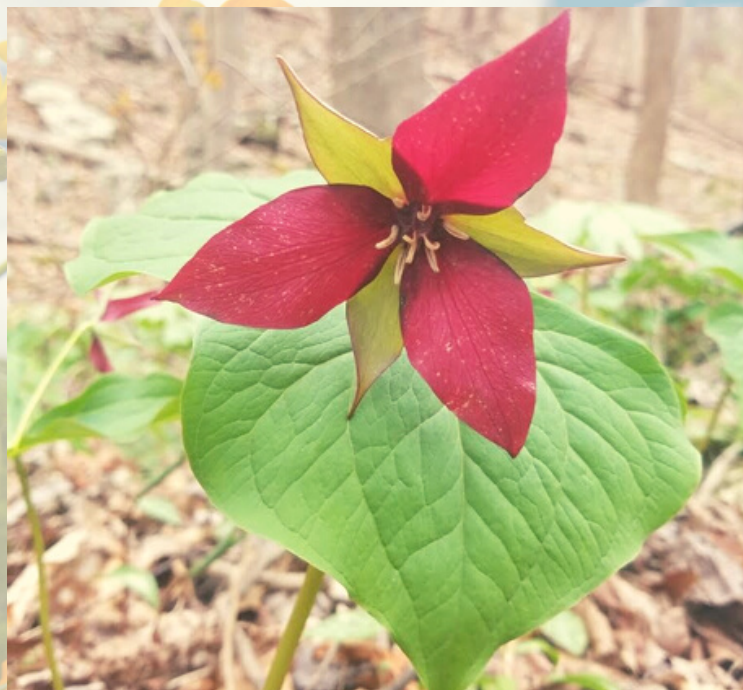


Photo by Cindy Fisher



## UPCOMING EVENTS

- **CAMPGROUND OPENING:** All campgrounds reopened on June 4th.
- **SKILLS PARK OPENING:** The mountain bike skills park reopened June 3th.
- **PUTT'S CAMP:** Now that the campgrounds are reopening, Putt's Camp will also reopen soon!
- **BEACHES:** Closed until further notice.
- **VISITOR CENTER:** Closed until further notice
- **AMPHITHEATER:** Large group events cancelled/postponed until further notice.



Above: Red Trillium seen near Tatman Run Recreation Area

- **YOGA AT THE LAKE (TENTATIVE):** Join us Saturdays at 10 AM for FREE yoga sessions guided by Tracy Lake (RYT-200) beginning in July.
- **BIRDING PADDLE (TENTATIVE):** Do some bird watching from the water as you paddle with a Park Ranger- July 24th, 6PM
- **FRL MEETINGS:** The Friends of Raystown Lake will hold monthly board meetings on Thursdays, June 11th, July 9th and Aug 13th. Meetings will begin at 7:00 pm. Location TBD.

### Membership Application

Please complete this application and send it along with a check payable to:

Friends of Raystown Lake  
PO Box 87  
Hesston, Pa 16647

- ☐ New Member   ☐ Renewal
- ☐ Special Friend \$500 (lifetime)
- ☐ Individual Friend \$10/year
- ☐ Family Friend \$15/year
- ☐ Club / Organization Friend \$25/year
- ☐ Business Friend \$50/year
- ☐ Corporate Friend \$100/year

Extra Embroidered Patches: \_\_\_\_\_  
@ \$3.00 each

Extra Decals: \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$1.00 each

Pins: \_\_\_\_\_ @ 5.00 each

Donation: \_\_\_\_\_

Please send my quarterly newsletter by email

Total Amount Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Thank You !



Donate now with..

**PayPal**

### Membership Reminder

Please consider your **2020** membership ! Our memberships are set up on a calendar basis—January through December. As you may know, the bulk of our operating budget comes from membership fees. Please help to keep FRL strong and renew your membership today.



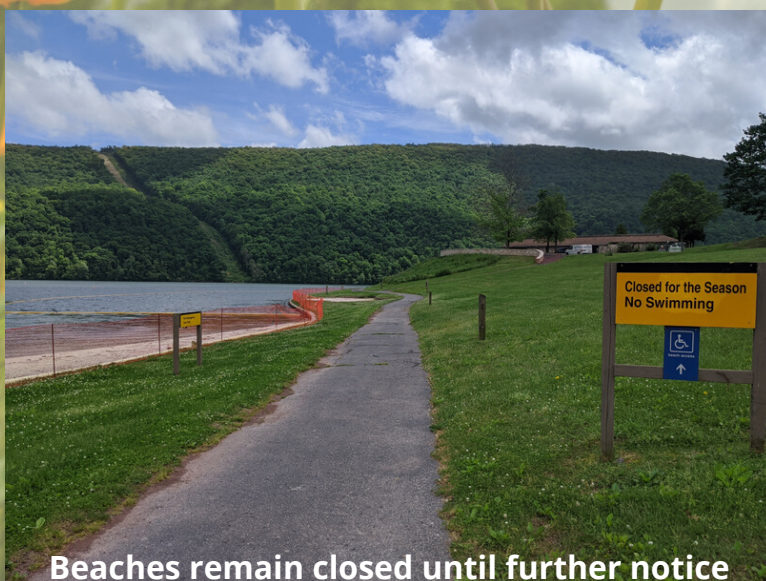
# COVID-19 Updates and Impacts

The Baltimore District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has announced the phased reopening approach of Raystown Lake facilities, which will begin with:

- The following restrooms reopened on **May 22**: Corbin's Island, Raystown Lake Dam, Snyder's Run, Aitch, James Creek, Tatman Run (Boat Launch only) and Weaver Falls, Pine Howard Miller (near Redbud Shelter) and Seven Points Boat Launch 1 & 2
- Raystown Lake Mountain Biking Skills Park in Seven Points Recreation Area reopened **June 3**
- Army Corps-managed campground facilities reopened on **June 4**, including all Seven Points Campground Loops, Nancy's Camp Boat-to-Shore, and Susquehannock Campground.
  - Individuals wishing to make camping reservations may resume making online reservations after Monday, **June 1st** by visiting [www.recreation.gov](http://www.recreation.gov).
- Day-use facilities and lake access areas remain open, such as boat launches, picnic areas, fishing piers, and viewing areas. All of the trails are currently available for bikers, hikers and runners.

The Raystown Lake Visitors Center, Seven Points Beach, Tatman Run Beach and group picnic shelters will remain CLOSED to the public at this time. An official date for the reopening of these facilities has not yet been determined. All special events and group gatherings, including fishing tournaments, have also been cancelled until further notice.

Although the public has expressed frustration regarding these reopening procedures, it is important to keep in mind that there are guidelines the Corps must meet before facilities may reopen. These guidelines are intended to protect the health and safety of Raystown Lake visitors. Additionally, the USACE district office in Baltimore has given Raystown these directives (which are mostly centered around CDC guidelines), and Raystown's team must "check all the boxes," so to say, before reopening any additional facilities, such as the Seven Points Beach.



Beaches remain closed until further notice



All campgrounds reopened June 4th



# Allegrippis Action

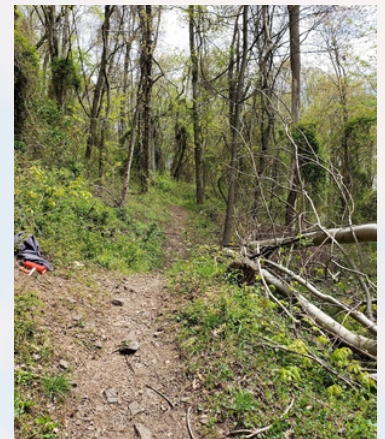
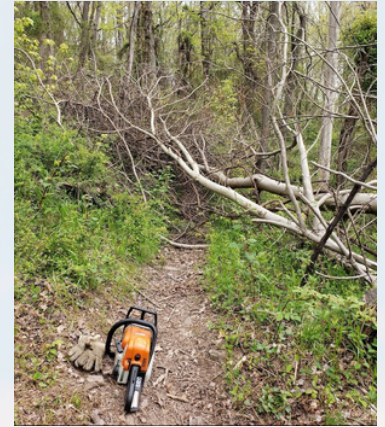
By Brent Rader (FRL Board Member & Allegrippis Volunteer)

It seems that COVID-19 has touched every part of our lives, and the Allegrippis Trails are no exception. We were forced to postpone our inaugural Raystown Bike Fest until May 2021. Even with this postponement, the trails have seen heavy use this spring as most folks are looking for some way to get out of the house. At the same time, social distancing measures have prevented our normal gatherings for trail maintenance. The need for maintenance continues, however. Early spring wind storms downed many trees in the area of the trails, sometimes making them impassable. Thanks to the diligent efforts of several volunteers, the trails have been cleared and made safe for users. Thank you to the volunteers that handled these issues.

Volunteers also prepared the Raystown Mountain Bike Skills Park for opening by repairing some erosion damage. The skills park has remained closed later than normal because of the propensity for folks to gather there. As restrictions ease, it should reopen. Watch for an announcement.

We've recently started utilizing the Trailforks mapping app, popular in the mountain biking community, which has made trail maintenance in the times of COVID-19 restrictions much easier. This app allows users to flag maintenance issues, which can then be corrected. Users submit a trail report, in which they can include a geotag and a photo of the problem. This information can then be used to guide our volunteers directly to the issue via GPS. This saves time, and allows our volunteers to attend to problems more rapidly. If you're a user of the trails, give this app a try.

Hopefully, as COVID-19 restrictions become less stringent, we'll be able to host group workdays. We can use these times to better assess issues and handle longer-term repair projects. Watch our Allegrippis Trails Facebook page for more info on upcoming trail work, and for news related to the trails.



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