



***Lines Written in
Early Spring
William Wordsworth***

...The budding twigs
spread out their fan,
To catch the breezy air;
And I must think, do all I
can,
That there was pleasure
there...

Park Manager's Report

As the weather begins to break I have notice the activity in the Park beginning to increase. Trout season begins this month- April, and Turkey season will soon follow. In addition to the changing of recreational activities, we are gearing up for another great year at the Park. Soon we will have all of our seasonal employees back and will immediately start on some of the projects that we have planned for 2013. Some of those projects include: new roofs on all 12 shelters and restrooms, bike trail rehab, installation of a new water fountain at Blood Farm, sign painting, trail maintenance, and much more.

In addition to all of the projects we hope to accomplish, we will continue to provide a wide array of environmental educational programs from April to October. The Park's Environmental Interpretive Technician (Robin Baker) will start planning out this year's programming in early April. If interested, you can view upcoming events by visiting Oil Creek State Park's website. All events, dates and times will be listed under our calendar of events.

Hope to see you all in the Park,
Dave Hallman, Park Manager

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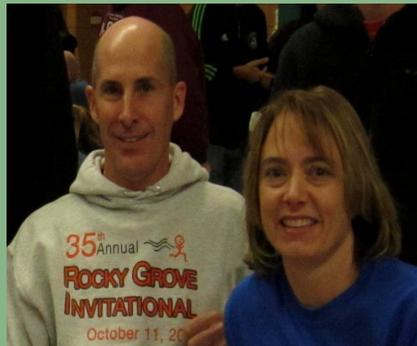
The 5th OC 100 is scheduled for October 5th 2013. On line registration began March 24th. The 100k and 50k sold out, and the 100 mile race is expected to be sold out soon (this race sold out in 5 weeks last year) .

Tom Jennings is the race director who has orchestrated this amazing event from its inception. Although Tom directs all facets of the race, he relies on others for some key components. Two of these people are Heather and Jeff Nelson of Titusville.

Heather and Jeff organize the food and supplies for all four aid stations. This is quite an undertaking when one considers the number of runners who pass through each check point and their collective needs. The following are a few examples of aid station staples which they purchase, store, and distribute: oodles and oodles of noodles, chocolate covered coffee beans, bread for toasted cheese, pop, mash potatoes, water, energy drinks (gels, powders, goos), band aids, muscle cream, aspirin, batteries, and Heather also runs aid station #1 for the duration of the race. The runners have attested to the job she does by voting her station the best 3 times out of the 4 years.

Besides all the work involved with the aid stations, Jeff physically runs the race. In the four years the race has run, he has run each race category although he concentrates on the 100k. The first year Jeff finished 1st in the 50 miler, the second year he won the 100k, the 3rd year he ran the 100 miler and came in 3rd, and last year he ran the 100k and got 2nd. Jeff also coordinates the sweeping (sag run) at the end of the race. (After having run the 100k, Jeff and a few others run the race at the end to ensure no one is left on the course.)

FRIENDS OF OIL CREEK MISSION STATEMENT :
“The Friends of Oil Creek State Park support the park’s mission to preserve, protect, and interpret our natural environment while providing recreational and educational opportunities for residents and visitors to the Region.”



An OC 100 runner in the distance entering aid station #1 –Miller Farm–last fall’s race



Oil Creek 100 Winter Practice Runs

Throughout the gray and dreary months of winter, John Warner, Paul Shevock, and I trampled over snow covered rocks, roots, and ruts on the trails that trace Oil Creek's woods. Despite the cold and endless snow this past winter, we met monthly—normally at the Petroleum Center—to run two or three sections of trail and take in the scenery that reminds me of the images evoked by Robert Frost in “Stopping by Woods in a Snowy Evening.” The runs weren't always as tranquil as the scenes in Frost's work, though. On the contrary, we found ourselves skating down mountainous descents—the only way to “safely” manage the ice-coated trails. Nonetheless, we were undeterred because, after all, we had miles to go. When we weren't risking life and limb slipping and sliding down single-track trails, we were trudging through inches upon inches of Vello-like snow—the type of snow that makes even the fittest runner feel fifty pounds heavier. At the conclusion of our latest running excursion, we found ourselves in yet another Oil Creek conundrum. Parked at Miller Farm Bridge, at the very bottom of the hill, I found myself without cell service and a Honda Civic Hybrid, a car ill-equipped to make it back to the top of Miller Farm Road to get me back home to Clarion. After two unsuccessful attempts and the motivating words of my running partners, John, Paul, and Mike



(Paul's brother), my Civic seemed to transcend its reputation as a “wimpy ride” and find that extra gear. Over the ice I cruised to the cheering of my friends back home to Clarion to share yet another memory of Oil Creek State Park. Skinned knees, sprained ankles, wind-burnt face, and a missing hubcap later, I still find myself revisiting Oil Creek on a monthly basis to hit the trails for 3-5 hours at a time on Saturday mornings. Why?

Photo by John Warner

After running the Oil Creek 100 Trail Runs in 2011, I fell in love with Oil Creek. There's something primitive about spending hours in the middle of the woods either alone or with friends testing one's strength. More than that, though, running Oil Creek's trails with countless others who have become connected to them offers something completely different than lining up for a big city marathon. The trails, and those who run them, seem to run them because there's a connectedness between them and the land that doesn't materialize on the concrete—pounded by 50,000 pairs of feet—in a major marathon. What will keep me from running the trails of Oil Creek? Aside from my Hybrid? Nothing!

By Mike Stimac

Find Us on the Web

Keep in up to date with Oil Creek activities by visiting our new website at:
www.friendsocsp.org

Also find us on facebook:
www.facebook.com/pages/Oil-Creek-State-Park/293530447356844

Spring 2013 Newsletter President's Column

Spring is here and now is perhaps the best time of the year to get out and enjoy nature. And where better to do that than Oil Creek State Park.

One of the reasons why spring is such a good time to see what nature has to offer is because it offers more now than at any other time of the year. All of nature's wildlife and plants are coming forth to begin another year and another generation. And not only are the locals stirring about, but migrant species are passing through or are coming back to start new families too.

Spring time is also just about the only time you can get a glimpse of certain animals, especially amphibians. Many of them stay under rocks, logs or the soil most of the year, but they come out to mate and lay their eggs in vernal, (meaning spring), ponds and wetlands.

Spring peepers are the first frogs to be heard in the early spring. But it takes a lot of hard looking and patience to actually find one as it sings, even when it's only a few feet in front of you.

Red efts are the terrestrial, (land loving), stage of the Red-spotted Newt's life cycle. They can often be seen walking on the forest floor or dirt roadways after a spring rain. After one to three years of this life stage they go back as Newts to the pond where they hatched so they can start another new generation.

Some frogs and salamanders, such as Spotted Salamanders, can

be seen laying eggs in vernal ponds on warm spring evenings, especially after or during a rain. The rest of the year they stay underground so it's very rare to see one then.

If you're not into herps, (reptiles and amphibians), spring is the best time to look for birds. If you go early enough there'll be fewer leaves to hide your quarry. Plus their plumage is at its brightest colors now. Don't forget to be a responsible naturalist. Never get so close to a bird's nest to cause it to abandon it, and never take any eggs out of the nest. Watch at a distance through binoculars, a spotting scope or a camera lens.

If you're extremely lucky you might stumble upon a fox den and get a chance to see the kits, (young).

Getting photographs of wildlife can be very frustrating as most like to move around quickly. But plants hold still very well unless it's windy. Sometimes you can use a jacket to block enough of the wind to get suitable shots. Photographing wildflowers is a great way to break into outdoor photography.

Spring is usually a good time of year to photograph waterfalls because of snow melt and spring rains. OCSP has at least four major falls that are worth seeking out.

Don't forget that April 13th is the first day of trout season. Although Oil Creek was once so polluted that it actually caught on fire, today it is one of the premier trout streams in the state.

So pull on a pair of waterproof boots, grab your camera and binoculars and get out there to see what OCSP has waiting for you.

Kirby F. Neubert



Meet Me in Oil Creek



During the spring and summer I spend the most of my time walking, standing, and fishing knee deep in water. My favorite place to do this is Oil Creek. You can meet me there.

You can meet me in Blood Farm where the fish seem to always be more aggressive. This is a place that has just as many great small spots to fish as the big areas... a place where the caddis hatches are thick.

You can meet me in Fry's Landing where the choppy water make a clean drift difficult to achieve. A place that if you catch it right, it can be electric, and if you get a good drift, you will be rewarded.

Meet me at in Petroleum Center where the fishing pressure is the greatest. -like playing a big sports game on the road. At Petroleum Center, you better come with your best because these fish are educated. The late season spinner falls have been epic here.

I'll meet you at Columbia Farm where you can fish any type of water, and fish it with less of a crowd. This stretch may be my favorite of all. A well fished fly can produce great fish all year long.

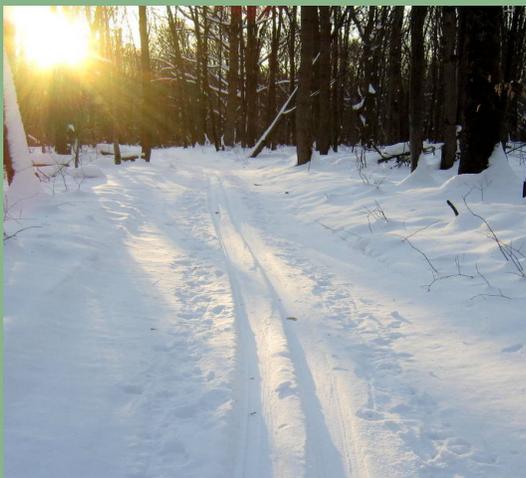
I'll meet you at my secret spots, or... maybe I won't. But chances are if you ask politely I will. Oil Creek is my favorite place to fish and I'd love to fish with you.

Bumper Woods



2013 Cross Country Ski Report

The cross country ski season got off to a great start in December with 15 straight days of super skiing on the groomed and tracked trails. Visitors came from all round; Pittsburgh, Harrisburg, Ohio, Maryland, North Carolina and even a couple from Germany who were in the area visiting for the Holidays. The ski conditions were off and on during January and February due to rain that would wipe out the snow and base each time after a good snow. However, we ended the season with a big snow storm in March and were able to set track and enjoy some record late season skiing. All in all it was a good year with over 400 visitors to the ski trails. Many people enjoyed the beauty of Oil Creek scenery and the fitness of cross country skiing this winter on our terrific ski trails.



Plans are being made for more improvements to the ski trails this year. The volunteer ski trail group put in 10 culverts last fall as well as other trail maintenance. The Friends group has purchased 20 sections of pipe for more culverts to be put in this spring and summer. We hope to get to our wet areas that were identified during the ski season. We have new trail map signs to install and also the usual trimming and clean up. **Everyone and anyone is welcome to come and join us on our ski trail maintenance days. The first 2 days are scheduled for Sunday,**

April 21 and May 5. We meet at the ski hut at 1:00 PM. Bring gloves, clippers, hand saws, shovels and pick axes if you can. Some equipment is provided.

That was a Blast!

Do you like to target shoot or hunt? Do you like to hike or run? If so, then the Friends of Oil Creek Summer Biathlon is the event for you. The summer biathlon is an event that combines the skills of shooting a .22 caliber target rifle and trail running. The 6k race is divided into three parts. The timing starts with waves of one or two runners leaving every minute and running a 1.2 mile loop mostly on the ski trail. You come into the range (located behind the ski hut) and shoot 5 shots in the prone position at a 4.5 inch metal knock down target 33 meters away. For each missed target you run a 70 meter penalty loop. Next, you run the same 1.2 mi loop and return to shoot 5 shots from the standing position. You then run any penalty loops for targets missed and finish with one more 1.2 mile loop with your final time ending at the finish line.

The Friends of Oil Creek Summer Biathlon is a fun and unique event and is the only one of its kind held at a State Park in Pennsylvania. The biathlon draws people from all over Pennsylvania as well as many other states. Our summer biathlon is the Friends Group's major fund raising event. All proceeds from our sponsors and entry fees goes right back into the park for trail maintenance, programs, and other needs. There is a mandatory

safety clinic for all first timers before the race. For

those who don't have their own rifles, rifles are provided by the Pennsylvania Biathlon Club for use the day of the race. There are awards given in 6 age groups and a prize raffle for participants who run penalty loops. Many volunteers are also needed for the event to be a success.

This year the biathlon will be held on **Saturday, August 10**. If you are interested in participating or volunteering, more information can be found on our website www.friendsocsp.org or by emailing John Sims, Race Director, at pjam@venustel.com. One young competitor summed up the biathlon last year by quoting "that was a blast!".





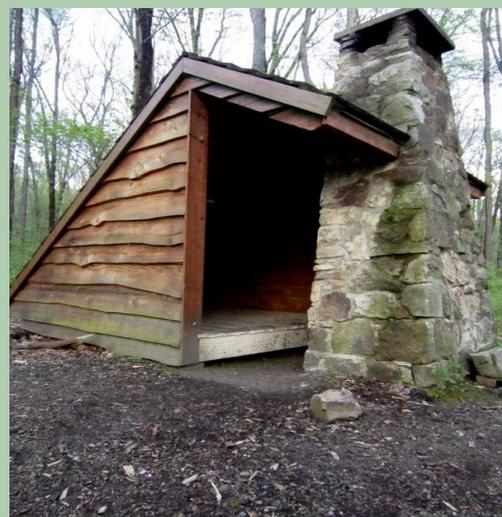
Thank YOU

The Friend's Group would like to thank everyone who renewed their membership and to thank the many new members (including the new corporations!).

The pictures around this article depict just a few of the projects your memberships have brought about. This assistance also helps with the endeavors to maintain what already exists. Your dues contribute to the trail maintenance of the Gerard trail, the bike trail, and the ski trails.

In addition, these resources help fund the "Over-The Hill Gang's" efforts to keep the trails clear and to erect and maintain the many bridges and benches along the Gerard trail.

If you haven't renewed your membership or would like to join the Friend's of Oil Creek follow the link on our web page ... www.friendsocsp.org. It is very easy and really quite affordable..single \$10, family \$25, and corporate/business/group \$100.



Support Your Friends and Community



**Pennsylvania State Park
Calendars
\$8.49 + Tax**

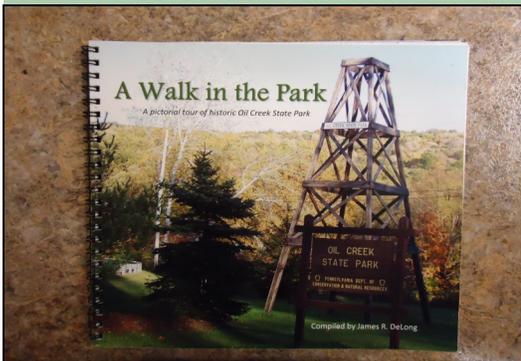
All proceeds benefit the educational programs, events and focus projects within Oil Creek State Park.

Park Office Hours:
Monday through Friday 8 AM to 4 PM
Saturday and Sunday 10 AM to 6 PM

Contact the Park Office at 814-676-5915



**Friends of Oil Creek State Park T-Shirts
\$ 15.00**



**A Walk in the Park Photo Guide
to Oil Creek State Park
\$ 15.00 + Tax**



**Oil Creek State Park Pin
\$ 5.00**



**Friends of Oil Creek Patch
\$ 3.00**



**Friends of
Oil Creek State Park**

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