

# FRIENDS OF OIL CREEK STATE PARK



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"The smell of that buttered toast simply talked to Toad, and with no uncertain voice; talked of warm kitchens, of breakfasts on bright frosty mornings, of cosy parlour firesides on winter evenings, when one's ramble was over and slipped feet were propped on the fender, of the purring of contented cats, and the twitter of sleepy canaries."  
*The Wind in the Willows*  
 Kenneth Grahame



## Park Manager's Report

I consider myself to be an avid outdoors man. I would describe myself as a lifelong archer, but one that also enjoys all aspects of hunting and fishing. With hunting season coming to an end, this is the time of year that I begin to scout and prepare for next year's archery season. I do so by paying attention to deer trails in the snow. Where they travel now will be an indicator of where they will travel during the hunting season. I am also getting ready to start looking for shed antlers.

Unlike horns, which do not fall off and continue to grow for the remainder of that animal's life, antlers are shed each winter, and the process of growing new antlers immediately starts over. I began shed hunting when I was in my early twenties, and it is something that I have enjoyed ever since. Deer typically begin to shed their antlers in mid to late winter. However, I have found them as early as late November. I describe shed hunting like a big Easter egg hunt. Only the eggs are in the woods and are camouflage, not red, blue, or yellow. Point being, they can be very difficult to find. When you find one, it is very rewarding. I have been known to giggle like a school boy after finding a shed. My wife thinks I am nuts. Only those of you that share my same passion know how I feel.

When looking for sheds, I pay attention to where the deer have been spending their time during the winter, which is usually in bedding areas and feeding areas. I like to spend most of my time looking in hemlock stands. Over the years I have found nearly 100 sheds or so, and I would say that 85% of them were lying under hemlock trees. Deer love to bed in hemlock or thick stands of conifers for these reasons: the snow is not as deep underneath them, and the temperature is actually a few degrees warmer. Another place that is worth a look is in fields where the deer may be digging around for leftover corn or greens. However, if the snow is too deep, they will most likely stay inside the woods browsing on brush and other woody vegetation.

When asked about shed hunting, the first thing I tell people is that you need to have nothing else on your mind other than looking for antlers. Keep your eyes glued to the ground and take your time. Shed hunting is a great way to get some exercise during the winter months. It can also be very rewarding. Last year I was able to find 15 sheds, which is good for me. Among those was a match set of antlers that I found nearly 300 yards apart from each other. The neat thing about those antlers was that I was able to harvest that buck during the last archery season. It was interesting to see just how much a buck's antlers can grow from one year to the next.

I will leave you all with one other fact that you may not know... Antlers are the fastest growing tissue on the earth. They can grow up to one inch per day. Happy hunting!

Dave Hallman  
 Park Manager



Keep up to Date  
 with  
 Oil Creek Activities  
 By visiting our  
 Website  
[www.friendocsp.org](http://www.friendocsp.org)



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 Friends of Oil Creek State Park are a chapter of the Pennsylvania Parks and Forest Foundation



Veteran *OC100 runner* Adam Peterson has shared the following...

For a lot of us runners, the winter season is a time to let our bodies heal from the strenuous trail running season. Many of us also get back to the basics of weight training and yoga as well. Cross country skiing is one sport that I just started this year and found that it is a perfect low impact workout that is very beneficial to runners and a lot of fun!

In addition, my friends and I (or sometimes just by myself) continue to hike or run the trails in the winter. We really enjoy night runs (or hikes) which are truly beautiful.

This past New Year’s Eve, we had a great 5 mile run at midnight. Afterwards we had snacks in the lodge. We plan on making that event an annual tradition.



A New Year’s Runner, Ultra Dog Rocky.



Adam and his friends staying in shape during the winter

# Chicks-in-the-Sticks

Our Chicks-in-the-Sticks event was a tremendous success last September! We had 79 ladies attend and participate in the activities that were offered. The vast majority of them can't wait to do it again this year. So we're moving it up to June 13<sup>th</sup> so they don't have to wait so long!

One of the reasons we're moving it ahead is so school activities won't be as big of a conflict for some people. Another reason is so the women can have a longer period of time in warmer weather to continue on with the things they've just learned.

At this writing the committee is just getting started putting together this year's event. Last year's instructors were also very pleased with the way everything turned out and want to do it again this year. Much of it will be the same as last year, but we're hoping to add a few more activities. We're taking a look at the questionnaires that were filled



out after last year's event to see what you ladies liked and preferred about it, and what areas we maybe can improve on.

We're going to need some volunteers to help put this all together. If you'd like to help with the preliminary things, you can do so and still attend and participate in the day's events too. We had some women who did that last year. Or maybe you have some ideas or questions you'd like to share with us. Contact Kirby Neubert at (814) 677-4633 or the park office at (814) 676-5915. If no answer, leave a message and we'll get back to you.

We look forward to seeing YOU there!!!

# Jan/Feb Night Ski



## January/February Night Ski

- January 31st
- Meet at Ski Lodge
- 7PM

This is a Special Groundhog Ski

### Events include:

- Groundhog Stew
- Snow Dance  
(In hopes of more snow of course)

### Things to remember:

- Bring skis or rent from T-ville Leisure Service
- Head lap
- Snack
- (Possibly a lantern for ski hut)

# Winterfest



As the fragrant smell of wood smoke from the warming hut beckoned skiers from around the area, a record 114 cross country ski enthusiasts and beginners happily enjoyed perfect ski conditions for the Friends of Oil Creek State Park's first-ever Winterfest on Saturday, 17 January 2015. The skiers and the volunteers were greeted with a crisp start to the day that made for a fun and comfortable day of exploring the well-groomed ski trails. Participants in the lessons arrived from as far away as Maryland, Butler PA, and Ohio.

Forty-seven people of all ages showed up to either learn how to ski or to refresh their skills as Titusville Leisure Services through Kyle Minium and John Smith provided a full-day ski rental package that included skis, boots, poles, and a trail pass for each participant. Local ski enthusiast and ski instructor Tambra Sabatini provided three how-to-ski sessions for the beginners, along with her lesson volunteers, Mark Ma-

zurkewiz, Mark Vincent Cangemi, and Ariana Sabatini. The lessons consisted of basic skills, techniques, and practice before progressing into an actual trail tour and an overview of the trail system as maintained by Sun Valley Nordic, Ltd. (consisting of John and Peg Sims) and the volunteers of the Friends of Oil Creek State Park.

Volunteers from the Friends group prepared and provided a full round of tasty treats, warm chili and warm drinks in the warming hut. Homemade Ice Cream was also available from Susie Q's Homemade Ice Cream because it is never too cold for ice cream! Friends old and new enjoyed the gorgeous weather and perfect trail conditions. Many plans were made by all for more wonderful days on the trail.

By Tambra Sabatini



# CROSS COUNTRY SKIING

Preparation for Cross Country Skiing at Oil Creek begins in the off seasons of spring, summer, and fall when our dedicated trail volunteers do extensive trail work. Trail work includes trimming brush, cutting out dead trees, painting blazes, digging drainage ditches, and putting in culverts and French wraps. The hard work really pays off when winter comes.



Next comes our excellent ski clinic in November. Our certified National Ski Instructor, Russ Myer from Albany, NY, put participants through dynamic dry land drills to improve ski technique. There was also a roller ski demo, and participants learned to properly prepare and wax their skis. We are ready for the season.



Then comes the long wait for snow to cover the trails. We finally got enough snow for Sun Valley Nordic, LLC to groom on Friday, January 9 and we've been skiing ever since.

We held our First Winterfest on Saturday, January 17 at the ski area in conjunction with Titusville Leisure Services. Participants registered for rental equipment and lessons in advance. Our instructors were local skier Tambra Warner Sabatini and several volunteers. Please note article on the opposite page.

Oil Creek is a gem for classical cross country skiing. If you want to try skiing and need equipment contact Titusville Leisure Services at 814-827-3741. Go to our website for more information, ski conditions, and trail map. It's a fantastic way to enjoy winter in the park!

By Peg Sims



Daily ski information can be found on our Friends' web page  
[www.friendsocsp.org](http://www.friendsocsp.org)

For Weekend Ski Equipment rentals call Titusville Leisure Services at [814-827-3741](tel:814-827-3741). \$15 for entire weekend.



Peg Sims is our new board president. Peg has been an Oil Creek supporter for years. She has served on the board for a very long time in every capacity including president. Peg has been instrumental in most of our endeavors including the biathlon and the CC ski area.

# President's Report

## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

As the new president of the Friends of Oil Creek I want to encourage you to consider becoming a Friends member. We are in the midst of our annual membership drive so if you are a member, please renew. If you are a person who enjoys Oil Creek please think about becoming a member.

The Friends have done much to promote and support the park over the years. For your membership of \$10 as an individual and \$25 as a family, your donation will help us to continue in our mission to support the park in any way we can. The Friends are highly involved in trail upkeep and maintenance and support the Over The Hill Gang and the Ski Trail Volunteers. We have purchased equipment and building materials for many projects, We sponsor the Annual Biathlon, the OC 100 Trail Runs, the Chicks In The Sticks, Cross Country Ski Clinic, Night Skis, and the Winterfest. We also support educational and environmental programs in the park,

Another way to support the Friends is by becoming a volunteer. We are always grateful to have new trail workers or folks willing to help out at our events. You can donate and find out about events and volunteer opportunities from our website [www.friendsofoc.org](http://www.friendsofoc.org) or contact me at [oilcreekfriends@gmail.com](mailto:oilcreekfriends@gmail.com). The Friends of Oil Creek are a great group of people. Please become a 2015 member today!

Happy Trails,

Peg Sims President

# Membership

The Friends of Oil Creek would like to thank everyone who renewed their membership and to thank the many new members.

Your membership helps maintain existing projects in the Park. Your contributions also support new initiatives throughout the Park. 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 Friends of Oil Creek, follow the link on our web page ... [www.friendsocsp.org](http://www.friendsocsp.org) . The membership prices are : single \$10, family \$25, and corporate/business/group \$100.

You can become a member or renew your membership by contacting the FOCSP in one of the ways listed below. Our web site has a direct link.

- **Oil Creek Office**  
305 State Park Road  
Oil City, PA 16301  
Park Office Phone: 814-676-5915
- **E-Mail: [oilcreekfriends@gmail.com](mailto:oilcreekfriends@gmail.com)**
- **Website: [www.friendsocsp.org](http://www.friendsocsp.org)**

Bridges throughout the park are done through combined efforts of the Park Staff, The Friends Group, and The Over-The-Hill Gang

