

Our apologies if you are receiving multiple newsletters or multiple emails. We are working on consolidating our contact lists.



Friends of Oil Creek State Park~Fall 2022

Park Manager's Report

When I first came to Oil Creek in April of 2012, I was told about an event held at Oil Creek called the OC 100. At first, I thought they were joking. I had never heard of Ultra Marathons before and thought there was no way that anyone would or could do something like that. Turns out I was very wrong. Tom Jennings is the race director of this event for those of you that don't know him. He is the one that oversees putting this large-scale event on every year. The amount of time and effort that it takes to put something like this together is incredible. It's like having a second job for six months out of the year Tom once told me.

For years Tom would remind me that the previous manager of Oil Creek had run the 50k, and he would extend the invitation/challenge to me annually. While I thought these people were nuts to do something like this, I also found it to be very inspirational and motivating. Little did I know that all the years working this event had ignited a spark inside of me that eventually lead to me signing up for the 50k. And, on October 15th, after 12 years of Tom and others trying to get me to run, I completed my first Ultra Marathon. It was a life changing experience that I will never forget. One that you cannot truly appreciate until you do it. The varied emotions that one feels over the course of 31 miles surpassed my expectations.

This is Tom's last year as Race Director, and I want to thank you Tom, your wife Rita, and the hundreds of amazing volunteers that make this yearly event so special. While it is in the works for this race to continue, it won't be quite the same without Tom.
see you on the trail Tom!

David Hallman Pak Manager



*Tom Jennings and Dave Hallman
at the finish line of OC100*

Chicks-in-the-Sticks

Chicks-in-the-Sticks was held June 18th this year. It was a beautiful windy day. 102 women were registered and 96 participated in classes. This year there were 20 classes with 6 new ones added such as etching on gourds, making dried wild flower arrangements, trimming trees and shrubs, and "calling in" animals.



I'd attended Chicks-in-the-Sticks several times before and enjoyed every class. The level of organization seemed amazing and now I know why.

This year I helped with the actual planning, which starts in March. I was also able to help with set-up, which starts a couple days before the event. John and Evelyn Kolojedchick have the process down to a science and make it easy for the other team members to know what they need to do and when.

Part of the Chicks-in-the-Sticks process is talking to potential sponsors. We reach out to businesses and folks for monetary donations and/or items for the raffle. Every year the generosity of the sponsors provides critical funding for the programs and wonderful items for the raffle!!

Another important contribution to the success of Chicks-in-the-Sticks are all the people who volunteer. In addition to the Friends of Oil Creek Board members, local volunteers, the staff at Oil Creek Park, and helpers from Pathways School worked to set up, register attendees, and clean up after the event.

The volunteers worked well together. The level of dedication (as well as determination as we set up the new, LARGE tents) the days before and the actual day was terrific.

Thank you to all the volunteers, sponsors and Park staff for making this an extraordinary day for women to get out and try out something new.

Jen McAlevy



Biathlon 2022

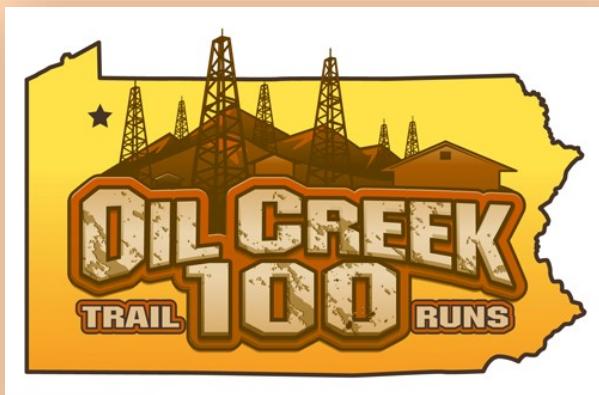
The 17th Annual Oil Creek Summer Biathlon was held on August 13. We had 90 entrants and an absolutely gorgeous day. We had 34 volunteers who put in over 250 hours to pull this event off. We love our volunteers and couldn't do it without all their help. With donations from sponsors (Morrison Funeral Home, Birch's Graphix, Ron's Cable Shop Trapping Supplies, Sun Valley Pottery, Somers Dentistry, and the PA Biathlon Club) and income from entry fees minus expenses we raised \$1,051.10. A BIG



(and teasing) is given to biathletes in the penalty lap ring and cheers go up when shooters hit a target or shoot clean! It is impressive to hear all the participants, spectators, and volunteers singing the National Anthem with gusto. This is a very unique event and is the largest summer biathlon in the country and the only one in a Pennsylvania State Park. If you missed it this year consider participating, volunteering, or spectating next year on Saturday, August 12, 2023. For more photos or to see results go to the Friends website or check out www.pabiathlon.com

thank you to all! This amount was split between the Friends of Oil Creek and the PA Biathlon Club. Since the inception of the Biathlon, we have raised \$20,964.84 for the Friends of Oil Creek. More importantly, the Biathlon has brought people from several states to the park for fun and fitness and to learn about gun safety. Three loyal participants have done all 17 events and many have been here for over 10 years. There is a lot of camaraderie and sportsmanship displayed during the event. Much support





October 15th was the 14th year for the OC100 Trail Runs. It was a beautiful cool fall day. There were 84 entrants in the 100mile race, 95 entrants in the 100k, and 199 in the 50k.

Tom Jennings who had the inspiration for the race, and for the past 14 years made the race happen, is stepping down as the director. Tom has done an amazing job making this race a sought out venture for elite runners as well as athletes who want to challenge themselves. Heather Nelson will take his place. She has been a critical part of the OC100 Trail Runs since the beginning of the earliest planning stages. Good luck Heather, and **thank you Tom for your amazing vision.**

Heather Nelson and Tom Jennings

Aid Station 3-Miller Farm



Over-The-Hill Gang

This past Summer provided many beautiful days while working on the trails. However, there were also storms that brought heavy rains and strong winds. The OTHG kept busy removing downed trees throughout the summer. Some trees damaged portions of trails as they were uprooted, requiring extra time and effort to repair the damage. We are grateful for reports from runners and hikers where trees are down so we can address problems as quickly as possible.

The gang has added shingles to boardwalks and bridges where needed in order to enhance safety. This summer we lengthened some boardwalks and bridges where the potential for washouts during periods of rain were a concern. One major project required raising and lengthening the bridge on the trail

above the acid works. Boardwalks were improved in several other areas. The long set of switchbacks starting near the lower end of Wolfkiel was improved. This required many man-hours of work but the end result made the effort very much worthwhile. The lookout near the top of the switchbacks was also improved.

The gang did extensive widening and deepening of ditches in order to help prevent flooding and washouts. This will be an ongoing need due to the steepness of trails and soil makeup in many areas.

Despite problems caused by excess water, we are very much aware that our water supply, especially evidenced by the many beautiful spring runs, is a priceless asset for our area.

Weekly maintenance also included trimming branches back from trails, running weed trimmers, removing fallen branches, and keeping drainpipes clear. We have found that regular maintenance with weedeaters is especially helpful for keeping multiflora rose under control.

The OTHG maintains trails to and from the two shelter sites in the Park. We also help process firewood for the shelters each winter. It is especially gratifying to meet people staying in the shelters and hear their comments about how much they enjoy the shelters and the trails. Included with this report are pictures that exemplify the enjoyment experienced by families, including very young children. The people that we encounter and hear their expressions of pleasure and gratitude, make our work all worthwhile.

Denny Pattison

For

The Over the Hill Gang



OTHG ON THE TRAILS



Beautiful view after improving bench location



Clearing the trail after a nasty storm



Chainsaw furniture for a well deserved rest



Wood for the Adirondacks is provided by the OTHG. The wonderful family is “living the good life” as noted by the young boy. The children are totally mesmerized by the fire as they sit inside an Adirondack.



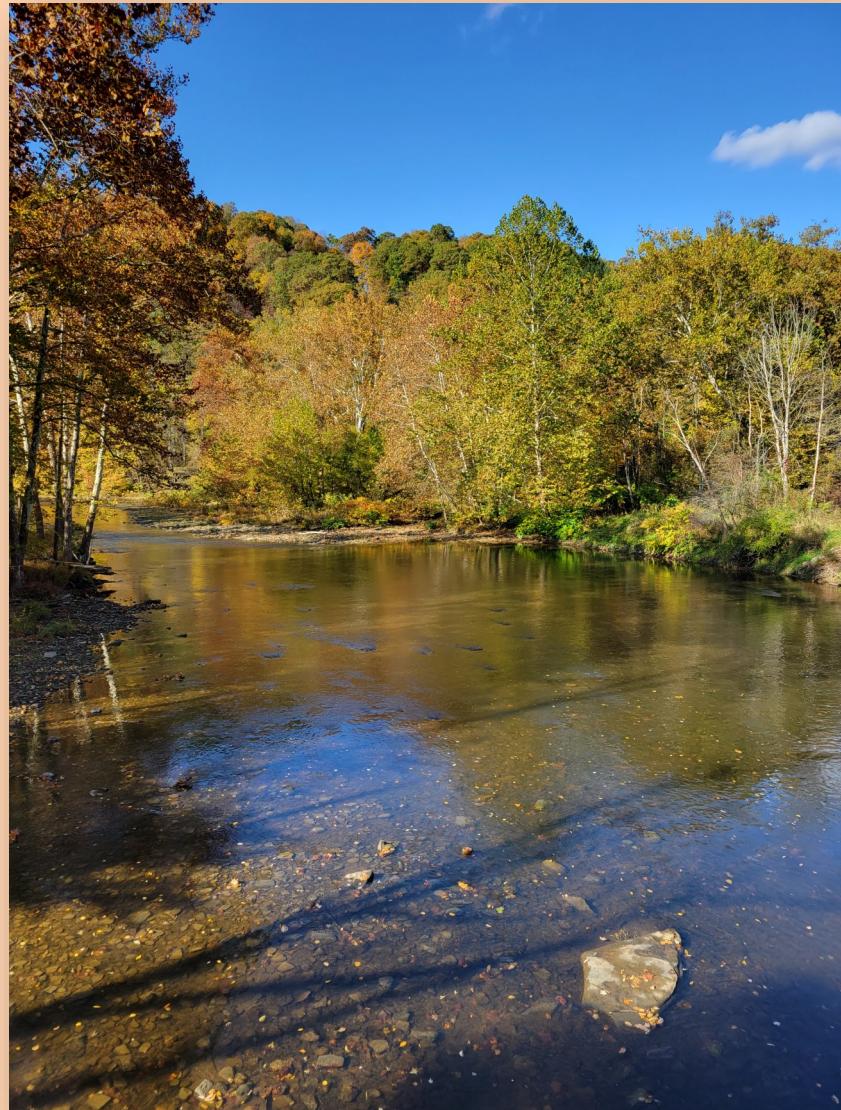
President's Report

As the leaves turn color and then change to brown and fall to the ground it reminds us that the year is coming to a close. That will mean it is time to renew or join the Friends of Oil Creek State Park. By joining you will have the satisfaction that you are supporting the park through the Friends group. The Friends in turn support the Over the Hill Gang and other trail maintenance projects. They also sponsor events such as the Biathlon and Chicks In The Sticks. They have supported garden projects and have recently purchased logs and a log splitter for the park and the list goes on. You also receive this great newsletter and are the first to know about volunteer opportunities. You are also welcome to come to any of our Board meetings on the first Thursday of each month except July and January, and learn more about us. We meet at 6:00 PM at Second Presbyterian Church in Oil City. Membership is only \$15 for an individual or \$25 for a family. It is easy to join online from our website (friendsocsp.org) or through snail mail. Your donation is tax deductible through the Pennsylvania Parks and Forest Foundation. Please consider joining soon. The membership year runs from January to December. A membership in honor of someone or as a gift for someone who has everything are other options as well. We greatly appreciate all our loyal members and welcome new ones.

There is joy in giving back to a place that is such a treasure for many.

Peg Sims

President



Membership

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

Your membership helps maintain existing projects in Oil Creek State Park. Your contributions also help maintain new initiatives in the Park. Your membership also helps to maintain the Gerard hiking trail, the bike trail, and the ski trails. In addition, these resources fund the “Over the Hill Gang”.

If you haven’t renewed your membership or would like to become a member, follow the link to become a friend of Oil Creek State Park:

www.friendsocsp.org. The membership prices: single \$10, family \$25, and corporate/business/group \$100. You can also become a Friends member or renew your membership by contacting the FOCSP in one of the ways listed below:

- Write the Friends of Oil Creek
PO Box# 1273 Oil City, Pa 16301
- E-Mail—oilcreekfriends@gmail.com
- Website—www.friendsocsp.org
- Call Park Office—814 676-5915



The Friends of Oil Creek State Park is a Chapter of the Pennsylvania Parks and Forest Foundation



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.