



Salt
Springs

Messenger

The Newsletter of the Friends of Salt Springs Park

Winter 2007

Exciting Events in April

Alternate Energy and Green Building House Tour. Saturday, April 21, 9 am - 4 pm

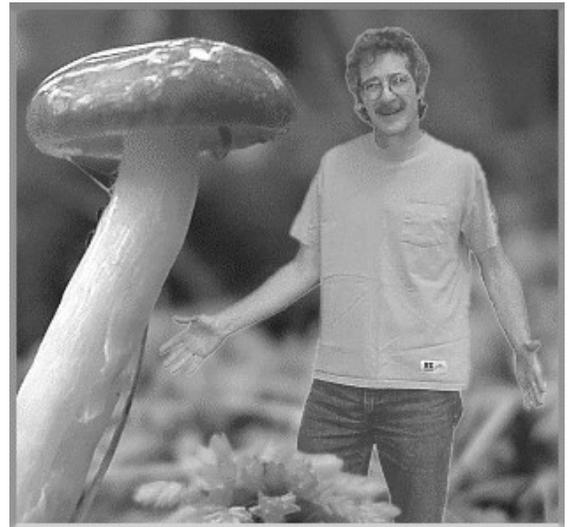
What better way to celebrate Earth Day than on a guided tour to energy-efficient and green construction residences in the county? Numerous people have embraced alternative building methods and alternate energy sources to reduce fossil fuel consumption. Five local home owners have graciously offered to share the homes they've built based on these principles. Your guide, John Puzo, an FSSP Board member and residential design consultant with Campbell Residential Design in Nicholson, will provide interesting commentary about each of these structures. Homeowners will also talk about their residences and be available to answer your questions. The fee of \$25 per person includes lunch. Space is limited—*Pre-registration is required.*

David Fischer's Wild Musical Mushroom Show.

Thursday, April 26, 7-9 pm Sit back and enjoy this multimedia exposé on mushrooms—nature's fifth kingdom. Featuring outstanding original music and stunning fungal photography, David Fischer will captivate you with his prose, humor, and expertise. A special treat of complementary wild mushroom hors d'oeuvres will be served, and David's books, DVD, T-shirts, and other mushroom-themed items will be available for purchase.

Residing in Binghamton, NY, David Fischer is a well known expert on the ecology and identification of wild mushrooms, as well as an accomplished photographer, composer, and author. He is co-author of two major books on mushrooms: *Edible Wild Mushrooms of North America: A Field-to-Kitchen Guide* and *Mushrooms of Northeastern North America*. He has served

for 9 years as president of the Central New York Mycological Society and is also past president of the Northeast Mycological Federation, Inc. He is a mushroom identification consultant for the New York State Poison Control Center and for several mycological organizations. David has also served on the faculty of the annual Northeast Mycological Foray (the Samuel Ristich Foray) and the annual North American Mycological Association Foray and is the scientific advisor for the Susquehanna Valley Mycological Society.



(c) AmericanMushrooms.com.

This program will be held at the Montrose Theatre. The fee is \$6 per person. To learn more about the show and David and a lot more about mushrooms, visit his website at ***AmericanMushrooms.com.***

Friends of Salt Springs Park

P.O. Box 541
Montrose, PA 18801
570-967-PARK (7275)
www.friendsofsaltspringspark.org

2007 Board of Directors

John Miskell, President
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Marilyn Day
Walt Kostyk
Susan Newhart
John Puzo
Hedi Randall
Michaela Steele

The mission of the Friends of Salt Springs Park is to provide opportunities for enjoying healthy outdoor recreation and to serve as an outdoor classroom for environmental education, while conserving the natural, scenic, aesthetic and historical values of the park.

The Friends of Salt Springs Park is a private 501(c)3, non-profit organization. Support for the Friends' work at the park comes from memberships, public and private agency grants, business donations, in-kind donations of materials and services, special events, and program fees for educational services. Contributions are tax deductible.

Board Changes

Thank You for Serving

Each January is bittersweet. In the midst of our excitement at beginning a new year, we must also say good-bye to valued board members. This year, term limits force us to bid farewell to **Bob Coy** and **Dave Clemens**. Both have assured us that they will remain close and involved.

Welcome

With pleasure, we announce the appointment of three new board members, **Walt Kostyk**, **Susan Newhart**, and **Michaela Steele**.

Walt Kostyk retired from the Naval Surface Warfare Center after 21 years as a senior engineering manager with experience in wireless networking, automated machinery condition assessment, and distributed machinery control systems. Walt joins the Friends of Salt Springs board hoping to continue its rich tradition of environmentally conscious stewardship, and at the same time help make the park's natural resources more accessible to the surrounding community. (Walt is also great with a chainsaw and a triathlon!)

Susan Newhart and her family have been visiting Salt Springs since 1977, when they came to the area to grow Christmas trees on their farm in Franklin Township. Many good memories of picnics, hikes, and programs at Salt Springs are now being renewed with three grandchildren. She loves the beauty of the farm, the Park and the County and hopes to help keep Salt Springs State Park beautiful and active for present and future generations

Michaela Steele is married and has one beautiful daughter, 4-year-old Grace. She graduated from Mansfield University with a bachelor of science degree in elementary education. Michaela will soon be pursuing her masters degree in science education. Currently, she is a long term sub for first grade at Lathrop Street Elementary School in Montrose.

And They're Jumping in Feet First!

The Friends are known for their extremely active board of directors. Walt, Susan, and Michaela will be no exception. Last year, Walt organized our first triathlon. To make this year's even more successful, Walt plans to become a certified triathlon coordinator. Michaela is conducting two new series of children's programs this summer. See the website for details. Susan has also embraced a challenge. Because of the greatly increasing number of visitors each year, we need some friendly greeters to spend a couple hours at the park on weekend afternoons answering visitors' questions and making literature available. When Susan calls you, please say yes!

Salt Springs Digital Photography Club

Local photographer **George Schreck** is so knowledgeable and entertaining that participants in his annual digital photography workshops wanted more. George has graciously agreed to provide more. The Salt Springs Digital Photography Club formed last fall. The club meets the second Sunday of each month, 2-4 pm, at the Wheaton House. Sessions are devoted to learning and sharing, with special topic assignments and photo basics covered each month. The club is open to both amateur and experienced photographers. It is appropriate for all types of photography, but the primary focus is on digital photography. Contact williguy@epix.net to be added to the club email list and to receive meeting notices and updates.

Triathlon '07

Given last summer's hurricane and the lost Franklin Forks bridge, it was a feat just to hold the Salt Springs Triathlon '06. Despite all obstacles, it was also a success! We are pleased to announce that a Salt Springs Triathlon '07 will also be held. This time, the event will take place the morning of the annual Celebration instead of the following day. Further details will be posted as they become available.

Just a Reminder

Our thanks to all the members who support The Friends of Salt Springs Park. We depend on the income from our members to manage the park and provide environmental education programs to the local schools. This income also helps pay for the cost of printing and distributing the newsletter and program guides.

Unfortunately, these costs have continued to climb while our membership dues have remained steady. Therefore, the board has voted that, beginning June 1, 2007, we will increase the membership dues. Starting at that time the cost of an individual membership will be \$20 and a family membership will be \$40.

Orphan Trails

Thank you **Brian and Nathan Carter, Jim May, Jay Harter, Don Hamernick and sons, and Eli Wilson** for adopting a trail. There are still some trails available: Hemlock, Woodland, Hardwood, Upland, Silver Creek, Summit, and Wetlands. Even though there is snow on the ground, the trails are being used and need monitoring. After the snow melts, there will be lots of spring cleaning to get them in shape for the season. Please help us by adopting a trail.

Another project that we started is to put trails on the Friends' newly acquired land. We have cleared the timbering road and begun scouting for trails. Ambitious and knowledgeable volunteers to help with this project would be most welcome.

New Handicapped Bathroom Under Construction in the Barn

by Dave Clemens

Over several years Bill Chance and the Pennsylvania Conservation Corps have been working on the large old barn behind the Wheaton House. Initially the barn, in danger of falling down, had to be pulled back together with cables and its support structure of large beams rebuilt and renovated. The basement area was insulated, a heating system installed and the walls finished in rough-cut hemlock.

Last year the bad weather during our annual celebration event showed the great value of this space. It allowed us to carry on a number of interesting, fun activities in comfort during the rain and cold weather.

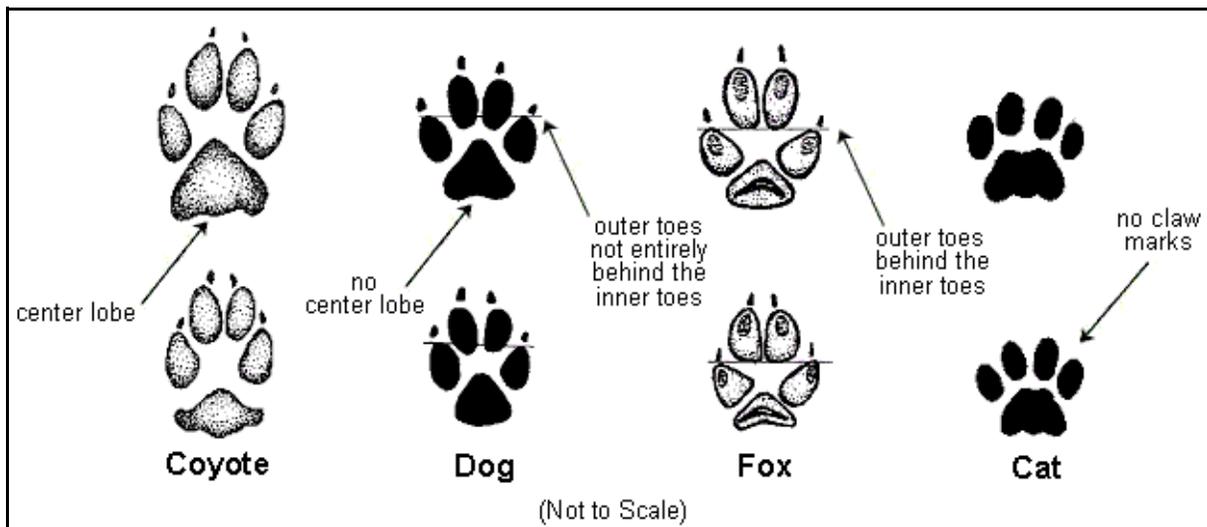
Now the utility of this space is being enhanced by the building of a handicapped bathroom, using a grant from the state through the County Department of Housing and Urban Development. This bathroom will not be active until it is tied into a renovated septic systems when DCNR completes a general upgrading of the public restroom facilities in the park, but we look forward to having it available in the spring.



**Friends of Salt
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Montrose, PA 18801

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Some common tracks found in the park. Read more about animal evidence in "Seasons at the Park," inside and on our website.



From Wild Bunch Wildlife Rehabilitation, www.wildbunchrehab.org.

Oral History Project

The Susquehanna County Oral History Project completed its second round of student training sessions this fall. A committee of the Friends of Salt Springs Park, SCOHP is dedicated to collecting, transcribing, archiving, and making public oral histories of Susquehanna County residents. SCHOP's focus is on training young people in the art and techniques of oral history. By then interviewing older people, students gain a new appreciation for times past, and Susquehanna County gains some of her history back.

This year, SCOHP provided training for all the students in the National Honor Society at Blue Ridge. The National Honor Society consists of 11th and 12th graders who each year take on a group project. Past projects include tutoring and community cleanups. As Honor Society President Anthony Dorunda explained in Blue Ridge's *Raider Reader*, "We decided on this project as a change of pace. . . . By completing this project, people that lived in our community 50 or more years ago get the opportunity to tell their stories and we get to learn about what life was like around here back then."

Students have split into groups and chosen a county senior citizen with whom they will conduct an hour-long interview. The interviews will be transcribed, and a copy will be archived at Salt Springs as part of SCOHP's small but growing collection of local oral histories. Subjects include daily life, politics, farming, food, and women's roles. All archived interviews are available for reading or use in other projects. Call the park (967-7275) to schedule an appointment.

Seeking Project Coordinator

The Susquehanna County Oral History Project is seeking a project coordinator. This is a paid position. Duties include coordinating interviewers and interviewees, overseeing recordings and transcriptions, scheduling training sessions, and grant writing. For more information, call Debra Adleman at Salt Springs (976-7275).

Seasons at the Park Excerpts from "Gore in the Gorge"

By Nancy Wottrich
Special Projects & Education Coordinator

There is a common misconception that winter is a dead time, but quite the contrary. The woods are filled with activity, and all you need to participate is a light covering of snow and maybe a track identification chart.

When you visit the park this winter, look down and notice the tracks. You may discover a squirrel visiting its hidden food cache or a weasel alternately tunneling through the snow and then popping out to run along the surface. You may even happen upon a scene of carnage where life and death . . . eat or be eaten . . . survival of the fittest and the fastest has played out.

Look for the single sets of tracks made by foxes and coyotes (both place the rear foot squarely in the front track, a habit referred to as "direct register") as well as the wildlife highways that the hoofs of many deer create. Raccoons and opossums leave tracks that look like miniature handprints. Rabbit and squirrel tracks appear backward, with their long hind feet ahead of the front feet. Mice, weasels, skunks, porcupines, and even bobcat betray their presence to the observer.

Watch for other signs, such as nibbled branches and bark, bare spots where animals have scratched through the snow looking for food, holes in trees, burrows in the ground and under rocks, and scat, also known as "droppings." Raccoons have a peculiar habit of leaving their calling card in an obvious location, such as on top of a fallen log or large stone. Deer, rabbits, and porcupines produce round pellets, with the consistency of compressed sawdust. The winter scat of bobcat, fox, and coyote is full of hair and often bone fragments.

To learn more about tracking, attend "Mammals of Susquehanna County" Saturday, February 10, 1 pm, at the park.

[Read this essay in its entirety on the Education page of the website.]

News & Notes

Flood Relief

We received some much needed help from the Montrose Garden Club. Their generous donation of \$200 helped us prevent mold from growing in the Wheaton House basement after the flood.

Artists' Open House Weekend

Each year the proceeds from the Artists' Open House Weekend are donated to a few local organizations. The Friends of Salt Springs are honored to be one of them. We thank the Artists' for their \$365 donation last fall. Again, it was put to immediate use to mitigate flood damage.

Volunteer Birders Still Needed

The fourth year of a five-year study to document breeding birds across the state has begun. Volunteers of all abilities needed to survey areas in Susquehanna County and bordering counties. More information and all materials are available at pabirdatlas.org.

Dinner Meeting

This year, our annual meeting will be a dinner meeting, held in November. Details will be posted on the website when available.

"Seasons at the Park"

We have added a new feature to the Education page of the Friends' website: "Season's at the Park: Essays on Nature's Best to See, Hear, and Experience at Salt Springs." The essays will be written by Nancy Wottrich, the Friends' Special Projects & Education Coordinator. Nancy's first essay is "Gore in the Gorge." An excerpt appears in this issue.

Save These Dates!

These are highlights. Check the program brochure and website for more programs and details!

Mammals of Susquehanna County. Saturday, February 10, 1-3 pm.

Nature Poetry Workshop for Children. Saturday, March 10, 10 am - Noon.

Reflections: Inspired Poetry at the Park. Friday, March 23, 7-8:30 pm.

Alternate Energy and Green Building House Tour. Saturday, April 21, 9 am - 4 pm.

Wild Musical Mushroom Show. Thursday, April 26, 7-9 pm. At the Montrose Theatre.

Packing With Llamas. Saturday, May 1, 1-4 pm.

Kids, Naturally! Mondays in May, 4-5:30 pm.

Birding Susquehanna County. Saturdays in May, 8-11 am.

Mother's Day Wildflower Walk. Sunday, May 13, 2-4 pm.

Earth Tots. Saturdays in June, 10-11:30 am.

Poetry Hike & Workshop. Saturday, June 9, 3-5 pm.

Wild Edibles & Medicinals. Saturday, June 23, 1-3 pm.

Weaving for Children. Each day, Monday, June 25 — Friday, June 29, 10 am - Noon.

Blue Moon Night Hike. Saturday, June 30, 9-10:30 pm.

	Friends of Salt Springs Park, Inc. P.O. Box 541 • Montrose, PA 18801
Membership Categories	Name _____
Individual \$15	Address _____
Family \$30	_____
Organization \$50	_____
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