

Focus on Bryan Park

Spring 2011



The Newsletter of The Friends of Bryan Park - Dedicated to the Preservation and Improvement of Bryan Park

Bryan Park Ponds to be Dredged !

by John Zeugner

The US Army Corps of Engineers announced in February that they would likely approve the City's application to dredge the two ponds in Bryan Park! This is great news!

Officially known as Upper Young's Pond and Lower Young's Pond, they have essentially filled up with sediment carried in stormwater from the Park's three main watersheds -- Upham Brook (which extends west to Staples Mill Pond, the Three Chopt and Ridge Road area, and parts of northwest Henrico); Jordans' Branch (which includes the Acca RR Yard, Westwood, and Willow Lawn area); and Princeton Creek, (which runs east through Bellevue and drains major portions of the Interstate Interchange).

The sediment in the ponds comes from decades of construction activities and streambank erosion in the watersheds, and may contain pollutants such as creosote, petroleum products, and nitrogen and phosphorus from fertilizers and animal waste.

Under normal conditions, ponds and feeder streams, wetlands and floodplains play important roles in reducing flooding, filtering sediment, and absorbing nutrients. When a pond fills with sediment its capacity to mitigate flooding and sedimentation is diminished. Furthermore, a shallow pond supports less aquatic life, because it gets colder in winter and hotter in the summer. Excessive nutrients cause algae blooms, which further reduces the dissolved oxygen in the water, causing dead zones. A sick or dying pond results in a stunted food web, and often sends the damage downstream.

In 1995, the City dredged the Upper Pond with help from Henrico County (which arranged for the dredge spoils to be disposed, providing a cost saving and an excellent example of inter-governmental cooperation). The Lower Pond has not been dredged in at least twice as many years.

The federal government's efforts to help improve water quality in the Chesapeake Bay include watershed restoration, nutrient reductions, and better stormwater management. This pond-dredging project is classified a Stormwater Management Project, paid for, in part, with funds from the City's Stormwater Utility, enacted in 2009. It will remove 100,780 cu. yds of sediment (imagine a football field with sediment piled more than 60 feet high) and annually remove about 1,900 pounds of phosphorous and 5,500 pounds of nitrogen, helping the City meet its pollution reduction requirements.

Additionally, the Corps will modify the Lower Pond dam and construct three sediment forebays, one at each tributary, to collect trash and sediment before it enters the main ponds.

The Corps' permitting process is rigorous, so construction may not begin for a year or more. We will keep you posted on the progress of this important project.



Unleashed Dogs in the Park

Unleashed dogs in the park is a touchy issue. There are people (especially parents with children) who won't come to Bryan Park because they are wary of the strange dogs that all too frequently run up to them. They write to the Friends of Bryan Park with their fears and complaints.

Others see their dogs as harmless, much-loved family members and won't leash them. Breaking the law and not caring about others using the park seems an entitlement.

For those of you who let your dogs off leash in Bryan Park (and you know who you are!) PLEASE begin to be considerate of others. Obey the leash law--it is there for a reason.

See a dog off leash? Please don't hesitate to call the Richmond Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities (646-5733) and Richmond Animal Control (646-5573). It is sad that this suggestion even needs to be made.

Friends of Bryan Park Board of Directors

An Azalea Primer

by Marilyn Erickson

During the month of March, Bryan Park's Azalea Garden lovers used their volunteer efforts to clean up winter's debris in anticipation of the Garden being open to automobile traffic from April 1 to May 15. To acknowledge this happy event, I thought I would share some general principles for being successful in growing azaleas.



- Azaleas prefer dappled sun all day or sun in the morning and shade in the afternoon. Hot sun will scorch the leaves, and dense shade will prevent blooming.
- Newly planted azaleas require lots of water during the first year or two.
- Azaleas thrive in an acid (around pH 5.5), well-drained soil.
- Because their roots tend to be close to the surface, azaleas need to have 3 inches of mulch (shredded pine bark is best) year-round under their branches.
- Azaleas don't need much fertilizer if they are growing in an acid soil with organic material. Since few of us have the ideal conditions, many gardeners recommend an application of Holly-tone (1 cup per plant) or equivalent in the Spring (April/May) after blooming and a lesser amount in October (1/2 cup per plant).
- When necessary, prune azaleas **ONLY** immediately after blooming. They begin to set buds for the next year soon after they finish blooming.

Purple Martin Houses in Bryan Park

Last year, FoBP and Adolph White, Purple Martin expert and Bryan Park's Purple Martin house care taker, placed two Martin houses near the dam on Lower Young's Pond.

The female Purple Martins' arrival date was delayed this year because of the off and on cold days that we experienced. As of March 25, only one male scout had arrived on schedule in Bryan Park. The scouts always arrive before the female Martins. The anticipated time of arrival for all male Purple Martins, which look for a place for their female friends to set up housekeeping, is in the middle of March. However, the females were delayed because the temperature was dropping too low for the development of the flying insects that they feed on. The one male Purple Martin who arrived in Bryan Park in mid-March stayed in the Martin house most of the time to conserve his energy and to prevent starvation. Adolph left some strips of fried egg for the lone Martin with the hope that it would not be eaten by other birds.



As of April 5, 8 to 9 Purple Martins were making their home in the Bryan Park Purple Martin houses. Adolph carefully monitors the houses daily. FoBP is fortunate to have this compassionate and dedicated gentleman watching after the park's Martins. As of May 15, 14 Purples Martins had settled into their new homes.

Purple Martins are fascinating birds. This is an ideal spot to observe and learn about these special creatures! Want to learn more? An excellent resource is The Purple Martin Conservation Association. You'll find them at www.purplemartin.org. Later this year FoBP will put a permanent informational display under the houses.

BOOK REVIEW: NO IMPACT MAN by Colin Beavan

by Sue Ridd

What does it really take to live eco-effectively? For one year, Colin Beavan swore off plastic and toxins, turned off his electricity, went organic, became a bicycle nut, and tried to save the planet from environmental catastrophe while dragging his young daughter and his Prada-wearing wife along for the ride. Together they attempted make zero impact on the environment while living right in the heart of Manhattan. This is about the sensational, funny, and

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conscious raising story of how they did it. With No Impact Man, Beavan found that no-impact living is worthwhile.... and richer, fuller, and more satisfying in the bargain.

Beavan does it in stages. One chapter "Trying to Do Enough Good to Outweigh the Harm," he gives back to the environment through picking up trash, planting trees, raising awareness, and talking to politicians. He writes "Environmentalism is not about the environment. It is about people. It is about a vision for a better life- for people."

I would like to add "and wildlife." Do your part, get outside, clean up the litter, plant trees, write letters to politicians or better, visit them and raise awareness. Introduce a child to the wonders of the outdoors. Watch and listen to the birds. Explore a trail. Participate in the Friends of Bryan Park projects. Help care for the Azalea Garden. Join an organized work party. Let us know how you can assist us to fulfill our mission to preserve and maintain Bryan Park.

Do something! It will make you feel good!

Upcoming Events:

First Sunday of each month - Audubon Bird Walks

1/2 hour after sunrise

Meet at Shelter 1

Call 270-5365 for more details.

June 18 (rain date July 9) - The Richmond Vegetarian Festival comes to the Azalea Garden!

Thursday, July 14 - FoBP's Annual Ice Cream Social

6:30pm at Shelter 1

Family event! Come meet your friends and neighbors. Learn about the goings-on in Bryan Park and share your suggestions and comments. And, as always, enjoy the free ice cream!

Keep an eye on our website calendar for additional event information. You'll find it at friendsofbryanpark.org

Work Party Reports

All of FoBP's work parties are made possible by the support of the Richmond Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities. It is the Parks' staff that takes care of what we collect, whether it be dead wood from the Azalea Garden to garbage retrieved from Jordans' Branch. Staff members frequently provide us with needed equipment, manpower and other invaluable assistance. We cannot thank them enough!



On March 15 seventy-nine bags of trash were collected by VCU and Elk Hill School students who combed the waterways with city provided pick ups. This FoBP/ Chesapeake Bay Foundation/Parks event kept a huge amount of litter, which constantly floats into the Bryan Park ponds from within its watershed, from reaching the Chesapeake Bay!

On March 26 members of the VCU Women's Soccer Team and other Friends came together to rake leaves and spread mulch around azalea beds. Thanks to their hard work the Azalea Garden's beauty was enhanced in time for this year's blooming season.

Have Photos?

If you have any photos of Bryan Park that you would like to see posted on our web site or on our Facebook page, please send them along to info@friendsofbryanpark.org.

www.friendsofbryanpark.org
Become a Member of FOBP

Name: _____

Help support FoBP by becoming a Member:

Address: _____

\$5 Student \$10 Individual \$15 Family

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

\$25 Friend \$50-\$299 Benefactor

Phone: _____

\$300-\$999 Park Guardian

email address: _____

(email addresses will ONLY be used to alert you to upcoming events/Bryan Park issues which may interest you. We'll also alert you when the latest issue of this newsletter is published and downloadable on our site.)

\$1,000 and above Founder's Circle

Please list your areas of interest in Bryan Park: _____

Method of Payment: Check Money Order

Checks are payable to Friends of Bryan Park.
Please send to FOBP,
P.O. Box 15481,
Richmond, VA 23227-5481

Would you like to Volunteer for events? _____

FoBP is an IRS-certified 501(c)3 non-profit. All donations are fully tax-deductable!

Friends of Bryan Park Board Members:

John & Bucci Zeugner
Ed Knight
Cary Wright
Rick & Sarah Sinsabaugh
Marilyn Erickson

Sally Chamberlin
Donna Lacy
Sue Ridd
Mary Beth Mains

Other Important Contacts:

Third District Councilman Chris Hilbert, City Hall: 646-5400
Police 4th Precinct Switchboard: 646-4105
Director of Parks, Rec. and Comm. Facilities: Norman Merrifield (starting 5-25-11)
Community Facilities Manager Larry Miller: 646-0037
Parks Operations Manager Mary Lois Mitchum: 646-1099

Let Us Hear From You!

Your suggestions and comments about the Park are important to FoBP. Send comments to info@friendsofbryanpark.org. Use this email too if you'd like to be added to our server list. Also visit our website at:

www.friendsofbryanpark.org

Friends of Bryan Park

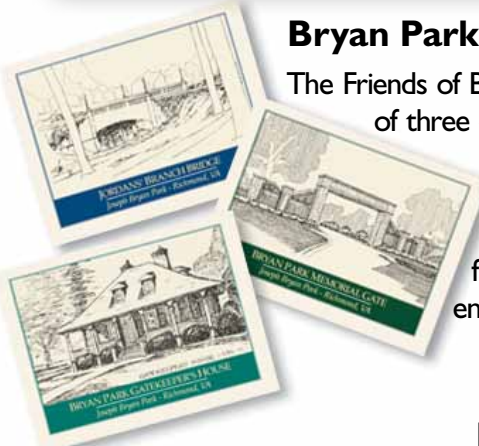
P.o. Box 15481
Richmond, VA 23227-5481
www.friendsofbryanpark.org



You already know how great Bryan Park is. Now you can show us off to your friends, too!

Bryan Park Notecards

The Friends of Bryan Park introduce 3 note cards highlighting illustrations by John Zeugner of three of the most recognizable landmarks in the Park. The Bryan Park Entrance Gate, the Jordan's Branch Bridge, and the Gatekeepers House are features that every park lover will recognize. Available in packages of 8 note cards, they are a perfect way to keep in touch with friends while showing off your favorite park. The cost is \$10.00 for a package of 8 cards and matching envelopes. Shipping is an additional \$4.95, for up to 4 packs of note cards.



Bryan Park Tee Shirt

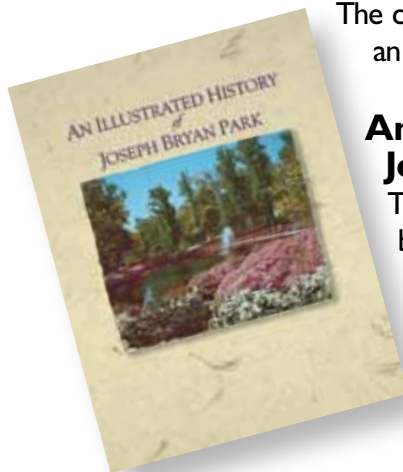
The Friends of Bryan Park offer a heavyweight 100% cotton tee shirt celebrating the 100 year anniversary of Bryan Park. Featuring an illustration by Richmond artist Ed Knight on the back, and the Friends of Bryan Park logo on the front, the shirts are available in medium, large and extra large.

The cost is \$10.00 for each shirt. Shipping is an additional \$4.95.



An Illustrated History of Joseph Bryan Park

This book takes readers on a journey into the hidden history behind one of Richmond's premier landmark parks. Through the generosity of the family of Joseph Bryan in 1910, this property is now one of Richmond's finest recreational areas, noted for its picturesque landscapes, legendary azalea garden, walking and jogging trails, soccer fields, picnic shelters and playgrounds, as well as remarkable wildlife habitat. Our book is available by mail. The cost for each book is \$5. Shipping is an additional \$4.95 for up to two books.



You can mail your order to Friends of Bryan Park, P.O. Box 15481, Richmond, VA 23227-5481.

Use the order form on back. For more information on the Friends of Bryan Park please visit us at: www.friendsofbryanpark.org/



ORDER FORM



Date: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

QTY	ITEM	SHIPPING RATE	SHIPPING TOTAL
	Centennial T-shirt Large @ \$10.00 each	\$4.95 per shirt	
	Centennial T-shirt X-Large @ \$10.00 each		
	Note Cards - set of 8 @ \$10.00 each	\$4.95 for up to 4 sets	
	Illustrated History of Bryan Park @ \$5.00 each	\$4.95 for up to 2 books	
			TOTAL:

You can mail your order, with a check made out to Friends of Bryan Park, to:
Friends of Bryan Park, P.O. Box 15481, Richmond, VA 23227-5481.
Purchases will be sent via USPS Priority Mail
Please allow up to 3 weeks for delivery.

Have questions? Please write to info@friendsofbryanpark.org or call 262-8861

FoBP is a 501 (c) 3 non-profit organization. Proceeds from these sales are used to improve Bryan Park.