

Friends

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF MCCONNELL SPRINGS



Volume 24 Issue 1
Spring 2019

12th ANNUAL
*Wine
Barrel
Tasting
for the
Springs*

30
March

*Bluegrass
Wineries*

Date Set For Friends' Fundraising Event

The Friends' major fundraising event, "The 12th Annual Wine Barrel Tasting for the Springs" will take place on Saturday, March 30, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. A few changes have been made this year. The event is staying a little closer to home which means that we must say goodbye to four of our Bluegrass Parkway wineries. Some have been with us since our inception. We will always be grateful to Horseshoe Bend, *continued on page 3*

Welcome to Our New Officers...



Elizabeth McGee Lewis was an intern with the Friends during the development of McConnell Springs. She currently works for the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government in the Division of Budgeting and is a Sustaining Member of the Junior League of Lexington. She and her husband Chris live in Lexington. She has accepted the secretary position.

Jake Karnes has been a board member for three years. He is retired from the University of Kentucky Division of Student Affairs. Jake is a Kentucky native and has lived in Lexington for over fifty years. His interests include Ky. History and horticulture. He has accepted the chair elect position.



Karen Higdon is the new treasurer for The Friends of McConnell Springs. She is a native Lexingtonian and a retired math teacher and librarian for Fayette County Public Schools. Her hobbies include nature photography, basket weaving, and wood carving. She especially enjoys photographing McConnell Springs Park and teaching basket weaving classes in Versailles.

Joan Whitman is a native of Fleming County. She graduated from Morehead State University with an area in Business Education. She taught school for several years and then decided to obtain her real estate license. She has been a Realtor for over 45 years, President twice of the Lexington Bluegrass Association of Realtors, voted Realtor of the year and was active in her state and local *continued on page 2*



Inside: McConnell Springs Annual Review

Friends of



BOARD OF DIRECTORS Executive Committee

Isabel Yates,
Chair Emeritus
Joan Whitman, Chair
Jacob Karnes, Chair Elect
Karen Higdon, Treasurer
Elizabeth McGee Lewis,
Secretary
Jim Rebmann,
Vice Chair Emeritus
Charlie Boland,
Immediate Past Chair

Standing Committees

Steven Rogers, Education
Richard A. Mathy,
Fundraising
B. J. Webb, Nominating
Reneé Williams,
Promotions &
Newsletter Editor
Jamie Millard, Webpage

At-Large Board Members

Peter Andrew
Sherrell Brown
Jon Hagee
John Kiefer
Richard A. Mathy
Doug McLaren
Becci Ray
Laurie Thomas
Franklin D. Thompson

Parks Representative and Park Naturalist

Steven Rogers

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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Bill Allen
Tucker Ballinger
Mrs. Norwood Cowgill, Jr.
Lou DeLuca
Lillian B. Gentry
Bo Henry
Barbara Hulette
Kelly Keefe
Tim Kelly
Freda Klotter
James Klotter
Susan Lancho
Gloria Martin
Jennifer Mattingly
Roy W. Mundy II
Doc Muzzy
Carolyn Murray-Wooley
Jacqueline Noonan
Greg Padgett
Susan Ridenour
Charles W. Stewart



Dear Friends...

Joan Whitman, Chair

We welcome in a New Year and look forward to spring at McConnell Springs!

Our appreciation to Charlie Boland as our 2018 chairman for a very successful year!



Our annual luncheon was held in January at the University of Kentucky Boone Center. Our keynote speaker was Brandi Peacher from the Mayor's office who brought us up to date on Town Branch Commons. Thanks to Franklin Thompson for planning this event and to Karen Higdon, Laurie Thomas, B J Webb and Renee' Williams for their help.

Our new officers for 2019 are—Joan Whitman, Chair; Jacob " Jake" Karnes, Chair Elect; Elizabeth McGee Lewis, Secretary; Karen Higdon, Treasurer; and Charles Boland, Immediate Past Chair.

The Volunteer of the Year Award was presented at the annual luncheon to Annette Mathy!

Whitman continued...

associations. She has also been an active volunteer in the community serving eight years on the Planning Commission and presently serving on the Board of Adjustments, Chair of the LFUC Housing Authority Board, and Vice Chair of the Lexington Community Land Trust. Woodcarving is her main hobby and is a member of the Lexington Woodcarving Guild and the Whittlin' Piddlin' Woodcarvers. Joan has accepted the chair position.

Annette has chaired one of our major fundraising committees for several years—Wine Barrel Tasting to be held on March 30. Come join us for this fun event! Congratulations, Annette!

We are always appreciative of our financial supporters. At our February meeting Peter Andrew presented the Board with a \$1,000 check from his Kiwanis Club to be used for Rita's Ride. This program, named for a past chairman, provides transportation to the park for Fayette County School students for a Parks and Recreation educational program. Thanks to Peter and his Kiwanis Club! With the coming of spring our Kentucky authors series will take place on March 12 and April 9. These events will be held in the Nature Center at the Park. We also look forward to Founders' Day on May 18. Mark your calendars and join us!

Every time I come to the park, I marvel at the fortitude of former Vice Mayor Isabelle Yates and Jim Rebmann for their vision of making the historical springs into a community park. I am amazed at the efforts of many volunteers over the years who have given us this gem in our community—from removing trucks of trash to fundraising for the nature center!

We are grateful for community support to continue our educational programs — individuals and companies/corporations. Donations can easily be made by mailing a check to: Friends of McConnell Springs, P.O. Box 12196, Lexington, KY 40581-2196 or through PayPay directed to Friends of McConnell Springs.

Thank you to the Kiwanis Club for donating to Rita's Ride!



Peter Andrew presented a donation from the Bluegrass Kiwanis Club for the Rita's Ride Grant to FOMS Chair Joan Whitman and Treasurer Karen Higdon.

2018 Friends of McConnell Springs Annual Review

The "Friends of McConnell Springs" 25th Annual Luncheon was held at noon on January 16, 2019 at the UK Boone Center, with 35 people in attendance.

Highlights of the program included:

- Parks 2018 annual report from park naturalist Steven Rogers, highlighting a great year of visitors and programs taking place at McConnell Springs;
- A positive 2018 year-end financial report from treasurer Dick Mathy that ended "in the black";
- An acknowledgement by board chair Charlie Boland of the dedicated service and accomplishments of several guests and board members in attendance;
- Presentation by immediate past board chair John Keifer of the 2019 "Volunteer of the Year" award to Annette Mathy for her dedicated service to the board, including the annual wine barrel tasting fundraiser (see accompanying article in this newsletter);
- An update from Brandi Peacher, director of special projects for the office of the mayor on the Town Branch Commons project (see photo). This project has multiple phases to be completed over several years, and a large portion of funding has been committed. It will likely bring positive impact

to McConnell Springs Park and the remaining two McConnell house structures, as well as a community amphitheater, downtown open space, and water features along the downtown path of Town Branch from Midland Avenue to Forbes Road.

- Other special guests included newly elected LFUCG 2nd district councilmember Josh McCurn who gave a word of welcome to the group, and LFUCG deputy parks director Penny Ebel.

Thanks to the Annual Luncheon committee for their work in pulling together a great event that was enjoyed by all! Committee members include Franklin Thompson, Becci Ray, Renee' Williams, and Karen Higdon.



Wine Barrel Tasting Event to be Held March 30

Springhill (closed), McIntyre, and Chuckleberry wineries for their generosity over the years. Two other wineries, Blackbarn and Three Horses, have closed their doors to pursue other interests. They were all wonderful wineries to work with, not to mention their delicious wines!

Although we will miss all these "guys" we are really excited about this year's event! We will have 13 wineries on board and.... YES!! We have a new winery! 1922 House Vineyards and Winery is our newest addition and we are delighted to welcome them to our little family. The owner, Brian Young, is excited about being a part of this great event. He will be joined by Chrisman Mill Vineyards, Equus Run Vineyards, First Vineyard Winery, Grimes Mill Winery, Hamon Haven Winery, Harkness Edwards Vineyards, Jean Farris Winery & Bistro, Lovers Leap Vineyards & Winery, Prodigy Vineyards & Winery, Rising Sons Winery, Talon Winery & Vineyards, and Wildside Winery & Vineyard. Come by yourself or with a group and enjoy a day in the country while helping to support the Friends' mission of assisting in the development of our beautiful and historic Springs. You choose where you want to start and which wineries you wish to visit. Whether you

spend an hour or the full day, it is a great ride over the rolling hills of horse country. McConnell Springs volunteers will be there to greet you! It is a rain or shine event.

For more information go to www.mcconnellsprings.org or call 859.272.0682. You can also find us on the McConnell Springs Facebook event page at: <https://www.facebook.com/events/1970757609628001/>.

-- **Annette Mathy, Event Coordinator**



Participants at Jean Farris Winery at last year's Wine Barrel Tasting.

Annette Mathy Named Friends Volunteer of the Year

The selection of the Volunteer of the Year for McConnell Springs Park is a highlight of the Annual Meeting, and this year we honored past board member and ongoing volunteer supporter, Annette Mathy, with the award for her incredible contributions to our efforts.

In 2007 the Friends began a new fundraiser that celebrates the many wineries in the area, and offers participants the opportunity to visit several of them in a wine-tasting event. Participants pay a fee to attend this event which is a contribution to the Friends group that support its mission of preserving and protecting the park. Just consider these numbers: Since 2007, this event has raised over \$50,000 for the park and involved approximately 600 volunteers. Coordination of the scheduling, transportation, volunteers and other aspects of the event is a huge undertaking that Annette has treated as a labor of love. Her efforts have made a tremendous difference for the park and we truly cannot thank her enough. Between Annette and Dick, it is safe to say



that Mathy family's cumulative impact on the park will be felt for years to come.

We are grateful to Annette for her years of tireless service as a volunteer, and offer our most sincere congratulations on being named our 2019 Volunteer of the Year!

-- **Charlie Boland**

History to Chew On Series Dates Set for 2019

The 2019 History To Chew On Series are on the following Tuesday nights at the Springs. See you there!

- June 11 - "Shaker Songs and Stories"
Speaker: Holly Wood
- July 9 - "The Suffragettes in Kentucky"
Speaker: Sallie Lanham
- Aug. 13 - "Robert O'Hara Benjamin' His Lexington and his times (1890-1900)"
Speaker: Joe Anthony
- Sept. 10 - "Solomon Lee Van Meter Jr. inventor of the Backpack Parachute"
Speaker: Jill Roseberry
- Oct. 8 - "The History of Hemp in Kentucky"
Speaker: Kirsten Bohnert

2019 Author Speaker Series Line Up Set for this Spring!

March 12 - Robert Thompson - author, storyteller,

Bob Thompson, will give us a talk on "Preserving our History and Culture, one Story at a Time."

This presentation will feature stories written and told by the author on his long-running NPR radio show, Kentucky Homefront and in his book, Hitchhiker, Stories from the Kentucky Homefront.

These personal narratives will be used to explain the author's process of mining memories, diaries, and family artifacts to explore, preserve and share our common threads.



April 9 - Eddie Price - author, speaker, actor

Eddie Price will bring his program called "Kentucky After the War of 1812" which is the historical period covered in his historical novel "One Drop--A Slave!" "One Drop--A Slave!" is the long-awaited sequel to his excellent first novel "Widder's Landing".

He has also written a children's series: "Little Miss Grubby Toes Steps on a Bee" and "Little Miss Grubby Toes Plays with Fire".

And also "An Unlikely Trio--The Winners of the 1913 Kentucky Derby." As well as several other programs, Eddie portrays the 1913 Kentucky Derby winner Roscoe Tarleton Goose for the Kentucky Chautauqua.



Each program is at 6 p.m. at McConnell Springs park (indoors). Refreshments are provided. Meet the authors, hear their talks, have Q&A time, book sales and signing.



The Friends of McConnell Springs
P.O. Box 12196
Lexington, KY 40581-2196

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Friends Information

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/McConnellSprgs>

Facebook: Be our FRIEND: - <https://www.facebook.com/McConnell-Springs-293733489824/>

Friends – Memberships

The Friends of McConnell Springs is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization. Your tax-deductible donation supports the preservation of McConnell Springs and educational programs at the site. Can we count on your support in being a Friend? If so, please mail this form to the address below.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Donation amount:

\$1000 \$500 \$250 \$100 \$50 \$25

other: _____

Check this box to make my donation to The Friends of McConnell Springs Endowed Fund #0527 at the BGCF.

Complete the form above and mail it with your membership donation to:

The Friends of McConnell Springs
P.O. Box 12196
Lexington, KY 40581-2196

Trailblazer (\$1,000)
Founder (\$500+)
Preservationist (\$250+)

Builder (\$100+)
Homesteader (\$50+)
Friend (\$49 - under)

No matter what membership level you give, your generosity is greatly appreciated! Thank you for your support!

Our mission

The Friends of McConnell Springs, an independent not-for-profit 501 (c)(3) organization, works in a partnership with the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government Division of Parks and Recreation, dedicated to the restoration and preservation of McConnell Springs as:



- a national historic site, recognized as the pioneer encampment in the naming of Lexington, Kentucky;
- an environmental and educational resource; and
- a passive recreational park.

FRIENDS is published by the Friends of McConnell Springs

Editor: Reneé Williams

Contributors: Peter Andrew, Charlie Boland, Sherrell Brown, Jon Hagee, Annette and Dick Mathy, Jim Rebmann, Steven Rogers, Renee' Williams, Joan Whitman

McConnell Springs is a natural and historic site at 416 Rebmann Lane in Lexington, Ky. The park has two miles of trails that wander around the sinking springs, vegetation, stone fences and vestiges of historic buildings. McConnell Springs boasts more than 130 species of plants and numerous species of urban wildlife that reside at or visit the park. The unique geologic, natural and historic features are protected, providing environmental, cultural and historical education opportunities for the residents of Fayette County and elsewhere.

To learn more about McConnell Springs, call 859.225.4073 or visit www.mcconnellsprings.org.