

Volume 26 Issue 1 December 2021

# Volunteer of the Year Awarded to DAR

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF MCCONNELL SPRINGS



Park Naturalist Steven Rogers presented the the Volunteer of the Year Award for 2020 to the Lexington Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolutions on behalf of The Friends of McConnell Springs.

"The ladies were very excited to receive the award and I could tell that it really meant a lot to them," Rogers said.

The Friends of McConnell Springs would like to thank them for all that they do for the Park!

## See How Your Donations Helped This Year

Have you ever wondered where your money goes after you make a donation to The Friends of McConnell Springs? Some of the items that have been funded through donations include:

- Rocks used for the Dry Stone Conservancy 25-hour Marathon Wall Build in the park meadow
- A part-time AmeriCorps Service Member
- Pumpkins for the Jack-O'-Lantern Trail
- Grants for buses to bring school groups to the park for one of the many classes and activities offered by Park staff
- Materials used in Junior Naturalist bags
- Programs such as Founder's Day, History to Chew on, and the Author Series - which we hope to be able to offer again in 2022
- Displays in the Education Center

All donations are greatly appreciated and

give the park funds to do many things which may not get funded otherwise. We are looking into possibly upgrading some of the trails in the park within the next few years, and making improvements in some of the other areas of the park, as well. We are a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and all donations are tax deductible.

Thank YOU for Giving!





### BOARD OF DIRECTORS Executive Committee

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Parks Representative and Park Naturalist Steven Rogers

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### Dear Friends...

Charlie Boland, Chair

I hope this finds each of you well as we enter into the holiday season. The

past year and a half have provided many twists and turns as we have seen the impact of a pandemic on literally every aspect of life. Whether home, school, work, church, travel, shopping – you name it – many changes have impacted our personal lives and perspectives, as well as the collective larger communities of which we are all a part. Some impacts we will all be happy to see "in the rear view mirror"; some changes may be here to stay. It is a period of time we will all look back upon as different and life-altering by our various means of measure, understanding, and experience. And, like all trying experiences in life, there can be good things that can come out of it if we take the time to reflect and appreciate lessons learned or new benefits / perspectives gained. We've been forced to take a different view of things, and it is my sincere hope that each of us are approaching 2022 with a renewed sense of appreciation of our families, friends, and the world around us.

Speaking of the world around us, McConnell Springs Park proved to be a highly utilized community resource as people sought to find ways to be outside in safe settings to get a breath of fresh air and get some exercise! There were not many restrictions on "the great outdoors" and our board is pleased that so many came to enjoy the park, despite the fact that almost all of the special events we typically host throughout the year were canceled. Many thanks to Steven Rogers, McConnell Springs Park Naturalist and his great team who did a superb job of overseeing the park and are now seeing it spring back to life with great events like the Jack-O'-Lantern Trail where 5,145 people attended, as part of the biggest monthly visitation the park has ever recorded – 11,472 people for the month of October! We were also thrilled to host the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration of the Dry Stone Conservancy in late June, where volunteers built a 52-foot section of dry-laid stone fence during a 25-hour marathon build (below).

I also want to thank Jake Karnes who chaired our board through a difficult 2020 with excellence, and our officers and board members who served with commitment and creativity as we brought forward new ideas and park attractions such as our new beehive operation and a new take on our annual wine barrel tasting event. Thanks to each of you, and also welcome to three great new additions to the board, Don Powell, Josh Fain, and David Baird.



David Baird



Josh Fain



Don Powell

Please come see us at the park soon, and we would be so grateful for your support as you consider your end of year giving. Thanks for being there for us, and please have a safe and wonderful holiday season!



## Thank YOU for Giving...

Many thanks are extended to the organizations and individuals who contributed to The Friends of McConnell Springs October, 2020 through October 28, 2021 time period. We are especially grateful to those Friends who continue to support us on a regular basis. All of your contributions directly benefit McConnell Springs Park. Though we made every effort to include all donations prior to October 28, 2021, we apologize if there are any errors or omissions in this list, and would appreciate hearing about them. Please contact Karen Higdon at friends@mcconnellsprings.org.

#### Trailblazers (\$1000+)

Steve Southwel, Vulcan Materials

#### Founder (\$500+)

Kentucky American Water Company The Hon. John McLeod, Society of Colonial Wars in the Mr. & Mrs. James Fritz Commonwealth of Kentucky Drs. Ray Polisetty Mr. Carl Wardle

#### Preservationist (\$250+)

Mr. and Mrs. James Arnold Mr. Steve Coleman, C + R Asphalt LLC

Mr. and Mrs. Louis Hillenmeyer Dr. & Mrs. John Kiefer\* Mr. & Mrs. Jacob Karnes\*

Nate's Coffee

Mr. & Mrs. Michael Seiler Mr. Franklin Thompson\* Mr. & Mrs. Dale Wilson

#### Builder (\$100+)

Dr. & Mrs. Jerry Anderson Ms. Patricia Anderson Ms. Vicki Archer Mr. & Mrs. Peter Andrew\* Mr. Fred Baumann

Mr. & Mrs. Jack Blanton Mr. & Mrs. Edward Bullard Dr. & Mrs. Mark Cheney

Ms. Anne Combs Mrs. Robin Combs

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Mr. Wallace McConnell

Mr. & Mrs. Martin McMahon

Robert Milward Ms. Susan Mullins

Ms Susan Neff

Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth

Neiheisel

Mr. Nicholas Patton

Mr. & Mrs. John Phillips Ms. Kitty Ann Portwood

Mr. and Mrs. James Reb-

mann\*

Mr. & Mrs. Timothy Sheehy

Ms. Hanna Smith Ms. Barbara Sterrett

Mr. & Mrs. A. W. Turner

Mr. George Voorhees III

Ms. Joan Whitman\*

Mr. & Mrs. Emery Wilson Ms. Elizabeth Wright

Ms. Isabel Yates\*

### Homesteader (\$50+)

Ms. Patricia Araya

Mr. & Mrs. Charlie Boland\*

Ms. Jody Bosomworth

Ms. Mary Cartmell Mr. Jim Chesser

Mr. and Mrs. Al Cinson

Dr. & Mrs. Nelson Copeland

Mr. Eddie Cox

Mr. James Currens

Mr. & Mrs. John Darnell Dr. Rolf Embertson

Mr. & Mrs. Joe Federspiel

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Mr. & Mrs. Alfred Gajda

Ms. Kathy Gross

Ms. Phyllis Hasbrouck

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Mr. Paul Holbrook Mrs. Carolyn Holmes

Mr. & Mrs. Clement Imhoff

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Dr. & Mrs. John Kiefer\*

Ms. Terri Koontz

Mr. Thomas Martin

Mr. & Mrs. Burl McCov

Mr. & Mrs. James McGary

Mr. & Mrs. Martin McMahon

Ms. Meg Menke

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Mr. & Mrs. Fayette Stepp

Mr. Jerry Stout,

Stout Printing Mrs. Alice Taylor

Mr. Dan Terrell

Mr. Benjamin Tilghman

Dr. Ouida Tisdall Mr. Larry Trivette

Dr. & Mrs. Ronald Tucker

Ms. Vicki Vance

Mr. Wayne Waddell

Dr. & Mrs. Byron Westerfield

Mr. & Mrs. Albin Whitworth

Mr. & Mrs. Jack Wilson

#### The perfect gift idea!

Help support educational programming at McConnell Springs with the purchase of an 8-inch by 8-inch brick paver. The permanently inscribed paver will be placed in the central plaza of the McConnell Springs Visitors' Center and because \$85 of each \$100 paver is a tax-deductible donation (IRC 501(c)3 not-for-profit) to The Friends of McConnell Springs it will greatly help support projects at the

Clip this form and return it with \$100 payment to: Friends of McConnell Springs, P.O. Box 12196, Lexington, KY 40581-2196. Yes, I want to support McConnell Springs by purchasing a paver. I have enclosed \$100.

•	Name:
•	Address:
•	City, State:
•	Phone:
•	E-mail:

Complete boxes with message to be inscribed on paver. Please print carefully, with one letter per box. Each box presents one character.

## Buzzz...is the Word at McConnell Springs

by Jon Hagee, FOMS Board Member and Beekeeper

To the left is our very capable Friends Board Member and co-beekeeper Don Powell, as we inspect the hive of Queen Victoria II, just off the pond boardwalk. This hive did very well last winter and swarmed in the spring. That means, the Queen (Victoria) and the older bees (foragers) left to look for a new home, leaving her daughter in charge. Fortunately, my friend Larry and I were able to catch the swarm, and it is now in an off-site back-up location, in case the hive runs into trouble. The backup hive is called "Queen Victoria, In Exile"! We added a second hive, just off the pond / woodland trail, early this summer.

To the right is a frame of wax comb. The brown cells you see are capped brood (unborn baby bees). The cells that look empty, and have a lot of bees on them, are actually full of eggs & larvae, they are feeding them. The Queen will lay thousands of eggs throughout the year.

The whitish looking cells are wax capped honey. The bees store it that way, and then later they will uncap it and mix it with pollen to make "bee bread" for the brood.

We are currently preparing the beehives for winter. We insulate the top, reduce the entrance to protect from the cold, mice, and other pests and make sure the bees have enough honey for the winter.



Learn more about our bees at: <a href="https://mcconnellsprings.org/beehive/">https://mcconnellsprings.org/beehive/</a> As well as a monthly log, at the bottom of the page, we have sensor data that shows what's going on inside the hive!

We welcome financial support for the beehives and The Friends of McConnell Springs. If you would like to help, or have any questions, you can contact us on our Facebook page: <a href="https://www.facebook.com/McConnellSpringsPark/">https://www.facebook.com/McConnellSpringsPark/</a>

## **Fall Barrel Tasting**

Our Plein Air Barrel Tasting event was held September 25 with plenty of sunshine and outdoor spaces for safe visiting! We plan to return to our regular last Saturday in March date for 2022 when more wineries will be able to take part. Stay tuned to our website and Facebook page for information.

Thank you to the wineries who participated: 1922 House Vineyards and Winery, Chenault Winery, Chrisman Mill Vineyards, Equus Run Vineyards, Grimes Mill Winery, Hamon Haven Winery, Jean Farris Winery and Bistro, Wildside Winery and Vineyard

### Thank YOU for Giving (continued)...

### Friend (\$49 and Under)

Dr. & Mrs. Joe Arterberry

Ms. Jane Brannon

Ms. Angela Carpenter

Ms. Colette Cardwell

Mr. Mike Cooper

Mr. and Mrs. Michael DeBoor

Ms. Jana Faith

Mr. Walter Johnson

Mrs. Becky Kemper

Ms. Terri Koontz

Mrs. Kathryn McKinley

Mr. Fred Mills

Ms. Pamela Mitchell

Ms. Deana Price

Mr. Adam Recktenwald

Ms. Jean Sabharwal

### Ms. Pat Waggener

Ms. Darreldean Winkler

#### Grants

Kentucky American Water

Company

Fayette County Conservancy Grant

#### J. Circ

#### Other donations

Mike Matthews - 2 mounted deerheads, value of \$500

\*Friends of McConnell Springs Board Member



### Notes from the Naturalist...

by Steven Rogers

Many local birders know that McConnell Springs is a great location to visit to catch a glimpse at migratory birds in the spring and fall each year. The park is

home to other avian residents that you may not see during the day but you can hear at night....owls! Eastern Screech Owls (*Megascops asio*) to be exact.

During a Night Hike in the summer of 2021, park staff and visitors were treated to a special surprise, the opportunity to watch a group of young Screech Owls being taught to hunt by their parents! The owls have been heard calling near dusk since that time so the staff is hopeful that this family of owls has set up residence at the park. If so, then the parents will be nesting again in the same location very soon. Even though they are small birds, barely larger than a robin, they are ferocious predators that have been known to hunt animals larger than themselves. Their small stature and impressive camouflage give them a distinct advantage over the animals they hunt, but also makes it very difficult to spot them as they roost in a tree. If you are coming

out for an evening walk be sure to look up at the top of the meadow near the bat habitat poles for signs of the owls and keep your ears open for their calls. To learn more about Screen Owls and others be sure to stop by the Ky American Water Education Center and see our owl display that includes a taxidermy Screech Owl.

#### New Normal at the Springs...

Just like all other places that host the public, McConnell Springs has had to adjust with rule changes and restrictions during the Covid-19 Pandemic. Restrictions began to ease in the summer of 2021, but as cases began to increase some restrictions were put back in place, such as masks inside of the Education Center. Any restrictions that are implemented at McConnell Springs will be in line with guidance issued by Mayor Linda Gorton for LFUCG facilities. If you have questions or concerns about this matter prior to your visit, please feel free to call the park at 859.225.4073 or visit <a href="https://www.lexingtonky.gov">https://www.lexingtonky.gov</a> for the most up to date information.

### Jack-O'-Lantern Trail

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Jack-O'-Lantern Trail at McConnell Springs was held the last week of October 2021. The event was an amazing success by all accounts. Over 700 pumpkins were carved and donated by the public for the event and over 5,000 people visited the park over the four nights to see the jack-o'-lanterns as they lit up the trails. The carvings ranged from ghosts and witches to beloved cartoon characters and inspirational quotes, the creativity of our community was on full display. The park staff gets asked many times "what will you do with all of these pumpkins" and there isn't just one answer to that question. After all of the lights are removed, no small task, some pumpkins are

placed in the woods where they can be eaten by animals and decompose naturally. Some pumpkins are discarded if they have paint or other items that wouldn't decompose, but that usually makes up a very small percentage of the pumpkins. This year though nearly 50 pumpkins were donated to a local farm where the pumpkins were fed to pigs!





The Jack-O'-Lantern Trail appears to be here to stay as it is quickly becoming an event that is loved by our visitors. Be sure to keep an eye out for the Pumpkin Pledge in 2022 so that you can show off your own carving skills and see your jack-o'-lantern on our trails.



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

Twitter: https://twitter.com/McConnellSprgs

Facebook: Be our FRIEND: -

https://www.facebook.com/McConnell-

Springs-293733489824/

Website: www.McConnellSprings.org

## 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 ☐  ☐other:		5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5
Check this box to many of McConnell Spring Complete the form above donation to:	s Endowed Fu	nd #0527 at the BGCF.
The Friends of McConnell P.O. Box 12196 Lexington, KY 40581-2196	Springs	
Trailblazer (\$1,000) Founder (\$500+) Preservationist (\$250+)	Home	er (\$100+) esteader (\$50+) d (\$49 - under)

No matter what membership level you give, your

generosity is greatly appreciated! Thank you for your sup-

### 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, dedi-

cated 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: Charlie Boland**, Jon Hagee, Karen Higdon, Dick Mathy, Don Powell, Steven Rogers, and Laurie Thomas

McConnell Springs is a natural and historic site at 416 Rebmann Lane in Lexington, Ky. The park has two miles of trails that lets you explore 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 <a href="https://www.McConnellSprings.org">www.McConnellSprings.org</a>.

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