

Friends

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF MCCONNELL SPRINGS



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December 2022

Fall Friendsgiving

The first ever Fall Friendsgiving on October 25 was a big success and thanks to all who attended! We enjoyed a great barbecue dinner served up by The Friends of McConnell Springs board members, heard great updates on the park, celebrated our 2021 Volunteer of the Year, Karen Higdon, and then all attendees enjoyed an early walk on the Jack-O-Lantern Trail, lit up by over 700 pumpkins in all their glory! Sincere appreciation to the park staff for setting up the event and to the board members for pulling things together. Most of all, thanks to all who attended and made this such a great evening! We will draw on this first-time event and find ways to make it even more memorable next year. Be on the lookout for Fall Friendsgiving 2023, slated again for late October.



*From the
Friends of McConnell Springs*

*Happy
Holidays*

Inside: Dear Friends, End-of-the-Year



Dear Friends...

Charlie Boland, Chair

I understand that the changing of seasons this time of year can provide some vivid contrasts, but going from leaf raking in shorts and t-shirts to winter coats and dodging snowflakes in the matter of 48 hours seems kind of sudden, at least to me! Be that as it may, it has been a gorgeous, warm fall season, and we all know what comes next – hope your woodpile is well-stocked and your fireplace ready to go!

Thanks to all of you who came to the park for the first annual Fall Friends-giving, the Jack O'Lantern Trail, or any other reason in the past few weeks. The staff led by Steven Rogers does such a great job with the park and keeping it ready for visitors, and I hope you will stop by the desk in the Education Center next time you are here to give them your personal thanks. While you are there, you might want to pick up some of our new t-shirts. They, along with other items you can find there, make a great gift!

The board completed our 2023 planning session and there are lots of good things on the horizon. There may also be some strong opportunities for advancing the park's mission in the coming year, and I will share more about those specifically as they take shape. More to come. I am very grateful for our board of directors

and the time and energy they put into the park. Those of us who love McConnell Springs are truly fortunate to have them. In 2023 we intend to spotlight a board member in each newsletter, because so many of them have interesting experiences and insights that provide a unique value to the park. I am so appreciative of their many contributions.

Speaking of contributions, I request that you consider The Friends of McConnell Springs in your end-of-year giving plans. Your dollars go to support outstanding activities and programs like bringing school classes to the park, special nature education events, annual events like Wine Barrel Tasting and Founders' Day, communications such as this newsletter, and more. You help keep the park in the spotlight for the community, as a valuable historical and cultural resource for the community. Thank you in advance for any gift you can provide between now and the end of the year!

From The Friends board to you, best wishes to all of you, your friends and families for the holiday season!

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Parks Representative and Park Naturalist

Steven Rogers

Season for Giving...



Help The Friends of McConnell Springs extend educational boundaries beyond the classroom. Whatever level you decide to give, your generosity is greatly appreciated!



Notes from the Naturalist...

by *Steven Rogers*

Throughout history and across many different cultures, certain animals have always seemed to have intrigued humans. Some animals stand above the others in our minds and we create myths and stories about them to explain their extraordinary features, one such animal is the owl. Owls live on every continent, except Antarctica, and they have always found a way to capture our imagination. It is very easy to get lost reading about how different cultures and religions viewed these animals and the myths that were created around them. Different tribes of Native Peoples across North America believe in a connection between owls and the spirits of the dead. Some tribes believed that the owl contained the soul of the deceased or that the birds had strong connections to the spirits of their ancestors. Ancient Greeks had a belief that if an owl flew over soldiers before a

battle it was a sign that victory was at hand. The people of England in the middle Ages would listen to a Barn Owls call to help them better predict changes in weather. Even in modern times we use owls in cartoons and stories to symbolize wisdom and knowledge, think of the Mr. Owl and the quest to find out how many licks it takes to get to the center of a tootsie-pop. The wisdom of an owl, its connection to the spiritual world, or their ability to predict weather can be debated but what know for sure is that these animals are fascinating. Some species are apex predators in their environment and they all play a vital role in a complex ecosystem. Discovering a good population of owls in a habitat indicates that the entire system is healthy and supporting an abundance of life. Come and enjoy the owls of McConnell Springs next time you visit the park.



Dry Stone Wall Built at McConnell Springs

Have you been out the the park and seen the new section of dry stone wall that was built over a weekend ? There is a small bench and an arch that was built into this section to show off different styles of work that stone masons can do. It is really a lovely feature that has been gifted to the park through The Friends of McConnell Springs and the work of the Dry Stone Conservancy. There isn't too much more they can do in this area for now, but we're hopeful we can come up with other stone features they could build at McConnell Springs.

Mark Those Calendars for 2023 Events!

Wine Barrel Tasting for the Springs March 25, 2023

Mark your calendars for our 2023 Wine Barrel Tasting fundraiser on March 25th! Follow us on Facebook for updates as the date draws closer or look for info on our website, <https://mcconnellsprings.org/>.

If you have not participated in the fundraiser before, make 2023 the year you do. Call your friends and tell them how much fun they could have, driving through the Bluegrass, visiting wineries, and sampling Kentucky wines this spring.



For those of you who attend regularly and collect our commemorative glasses, we will have a new design for you!

Stay tuned to find out which wineries will be participating. Tickets will be sold through Eventbrite.

Lexington's Founders' Day - May 20, 2023

Join us as we celebrate our frontier heritage and walk back through time at our annual Founders' Day event, held at the Springs on May 20.

Founders' Day is a full day of frontier reenactment, traditional music, wildlife and exhibits as we celebrate our themes of nature, history and education. This is a free, entertaining event for all ages.

History to Chew On Series June - October 2023

We are pleased to announce that the History To Chew On Series will be returning in 2023 after being suspended by Covid since 2019.

To all our loyal history lovers and future attendees welcome back! We will be setting up five interesting and exciting talks on the vast history in Kentucky and surrounding areas.

Save these dates for the talks:

- Tuesday, June 13
- Tuesday, July 11
- Tuesday, August 8
- Tuesday, September 12
- Tuesday, October 10

These talks start at 6 pm and last just over one hour, so bring a snack and enjoy the free history lessons. Topics for the 2023 schedule will be published in the spring newsletter and on our website. Once again we look forward to seeing you again in 2023. If you have a history topic you would like to hear more details on please contact us!

- Other dates to remember:
- Fall Friendsgiving - October 2023
- Jack O'Lantern Trail - October 2023
- Owl Prowl - December 2023

••••• 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 Springs.

• 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.



Thank YOU for Giving!

Many thanks are extended to the organizations and individuals who contributed to The Friends of McConnell Springs November 1, 2021 through November 11, 2022 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 November 11, 2022 we apologize if there are any errors or omissions in this list, and would appreciate hearing about them. Please contact David Baird at friends@mcconnellsprings.org.

Founder (\$500+)

American Water
Charitable Foundation
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Mr. & Mrs. James Boyd
The Hon. John McLeod
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The Friends of McConnell Springs
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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 \$250 \$100 \$50 \$25
other: _____

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

Please email my newsletter to: _____

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

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Contributors: Charlie Boland, 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 www.McConnellSprings.org.