

Friends



Volume 30 Issue 1
February 2024

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF MCCONNELL SPRINGS

It is time to call your Friends and start planning your beautiful Bluegrass country wine tasting tour! Normally held on the last Saturday in March, our annual Wine Barrel Tasting will take place on March 23rd this year so that it doesn't interfere with Easter weekend.



Purchase your \$20 ticket through Eventbrite by scanning the QR code or by visiting <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/barrel-tasting-for-the-springs-tickets-813284213977>.

Plan your route and start at any of the listed wineries! The map on our website (mcconnellsprings.org)

has an outline to show you which wineries are close to each other. Printed maps will also be at each winery.

This year we welcome a new winery, Ghost Fox Winery. They purchased the former Chrisman Mill Winery in Jessamine County.

How it Works...

When you arrive at your first winery, show your proof of ticket purchase to one of our volunteers by either showing your Eventbrite confirmation on your phone or a print out. You will receive a McConnell Springs glass and move on to the tasting.

A Time for Wine and Friends

The glass will be proof of purchase at the next winery. Each winery decides what type of tasting experience they want to have. Most will have a sampling and comparing of several different wines. Follow our Facebook page for more information on the wineries at <https://www.facebook.com/McConnellSpringsPark>

If you want to visit more than a few wineries, please plan on having a designated driver. Some groups in the past have hired party buses or limos! You must be 21 to purchase your Eventbrite ticket and you could be asked for ID by a winery employee.

*The event began as a wine barrel tasting. Not all the current wineries on the list have their own barrel facilities and though we have retained the name, there will be wineries on your route where you are sampling from their bottled wines.

A Special Thanks to our Wineries...

We would like to thank our wineries because without them this annual fundraiser wouldn't be possible.

1922 House Vineyards & Winery • Chenault Vineyards • Equus Run Vineyards • First Vineyard Winery • Ghost Fox Winery • Grimes Mill Winery • Hamon Haven Winery • Harkness Edwards Vineyards • Jean Farris Winery & Bistro • Lovers Leap Vineyards & Winery • Prodigy Vineyards and Winery • Rising Sons Winery • Talon Winery & Vineyards • Wildside Winery



Barrel Tasting
for the Springs 



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**Parks Representative
and Park Naturalist**

Steven Rogers



Dear Friends...

by *Charlie Boland, Chair*

On behalf of our board, let me begin with a hearty "Thank You!" to so many who contributed to The Friends of McConnell Springs in 2023. Whether through our fundraising efforts, general contributions, year-end efforts, or contributions to our endowment fund, you truly make it possible for us to pursue and fulfill our mission of preserving history, protecting the natural environment, and providing a multitude of educational opportunities for visitors to McConnell Springs Park. Your ongoing support is deeply appreciated.

The unique value and placement of this park is proven by the fact that by the time you read this, we will have already surpassed the 50,000 visitor mark for the fiscal year. Our visitors come from near and far, and we sincerely hope that number includes you, or will include you in the future. What a great place to take a hike in the woods and enjoy the springs as the Spring season draws near – right here in the city!

Elsewhere in the newsletter you will find information on several upcoming events. First is the annual Wine Barrel Tasting on Saturday, March 23. The vineyards are scheduled, the wine glasses are here, and registering on Eventbrite has never been easier. Please join us for this always-popular event and enjoy the day making the rounds with your family or friends. Thanks to the participating vineyards, and especially to the many volun-

teers who assist in hosting the event, and the event planning committee led by Becci Ray. Following that will be the annual Founders' Day celebration on Saturday, May 18, where you will enjoy many activities and exhibits related to the period of time Lexington was founded. The History to Chew On series will begin in June, and it always includes a popular line-up of authors/guests and topics. Please come join us for these wonderful events!

Finally, you might want to consider remembering a loved one with a paver stone or a memorial tree planting. These are tangible and long-term ways to support the park and pay tribute to someone you wish to honor from the past or the present. One person recently spoke about the memorial trees he purchased for his grandchildren, so their memorial trees will be growing right along with them. What a great idea, and one you may want to replicate.

Please visit us anytime you can, and again, thanks so much to all of you who have volunteered your time or dollars to sustain our efforts. We could not do it without you!

Sincerely and on behalf of The Friends board,

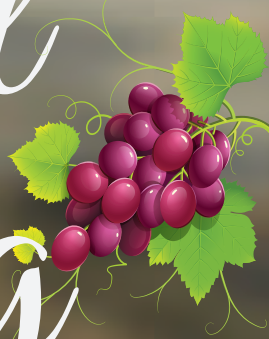
Volunteer Opportunities...

If you're interested in helping more at McConnell Springs, then please consider being a park volunteer. Volunteers pick up litter, remove invasive species, welcome visitors, and assist with education programming. If any of these roles sound like something that you may interest you then please contact Park Manager, Steven Rogers at srogers@lexingtonky.gov.

17th Annual

Barrel Tasting

for the Springs



March 23, 2024
11 am – 5 pm

A barrel tasting is a one-ounce sample of wine in its final stages before actual bottling and release. The tasting is not the finished product; however, may have some of the final characteristics.



Begin at one of
14 KY Wineries

Take this guide with you on March 23!



WINERIES

Thank you to each Winery!

These directions are from Lexington to the winery.

F. Lovers Leap Vineyards & Winery

1180 Lanes Mill Rd., Lawrenceburg, KY 40342
502.839.1299 | www.loversleapwine.com

Take Bluegrass Pkwy. to Lawrenceburg exit #59 (US 127). Follow US 127 Bypass north toward L-burg, After @6 miles, turn right on Frankfort Rd. (Bus 127 South). Proceed 1 mile and turn left on Route 326 (Ninevah Rd.). In about 3.2 miles, turn left on Lanes Mill Rd. and winery is one mile on right.



G. Rising Sons

975 Frankfort Rd., Lawrenceburg, KY 40342
502.600.0224
www.risingsonswinery.com

Enter Lawrenceburg on US 127 S from Frankfort; turn left at the first McDonald's (Intersection of US 127 business/HWY 151) onto Frankfort Rd. which is US 127 business. We are 1/2 mile on the right.



H. Wildside Winery & Vineyard

5500 Troy Pk., Versailles, KY 40383
859.879.3982
www.wildsidewinery.com

Take the Blue Grass Parkway to the Versailles exit then turn left (away from Versailles) for 3.5 miles.



L. 1922 House Vineyards & Winery

3155 Keene Rd., Nicholasville, KY 40356
859.321.3533 | www.1922housewinery.com

From Lexington, south on Harrodsburg Rd. in 7.8 miles from New Circle Rd. turn right onto KY169 (Keene Rd.). Winery is about 1/2 mile on the left. From the lane, follow signs to winery.



J. First Vineyard Winery

5800 Sugar Creek Pk. | Nicholasville, KY 40356
859.948.4208 | www.firstvineyard.net

(Man o' War to Rt. 1268 - 13 miles) US 275 through Nicholasville by the by-pass; turn LEFT (1268) at Sugar Creek Resort sign; after 4.3 miles continue straight on Sugar Creek Pk. for 2 miles; turn right onto gravel road to winery.



K. Ghost Fox Winery

2385 Chrisman Mill Rd., Nicholasville, KY 40346
502.553.8378 | <https://ghostfoxwinery.com/>

Take Nicholasville Rd. (US 27) to slight right at Lexington Rd./US-27 S. Turn left at US-27-BR, then left at KY-39. Turn left at Chrisman Mill Rd./KY-1541



E. Prodigy Vineyard and Winery

4626 Versailles Rd., Frankfort, KY 40601
502.352.9400 | www.prodigyvineyards.com

Prodigy Vineyards is located in Versailles, KY. From the west head East on US60 two miles past the I-64 exit. The vineyard will be on the left. When traveling from Lexington or Versailles, travel West on US60 and the vineyard will be on your right.



D. Equus Run Vineyards

1280 Moores Mill Rd., Midway, KY 40347
859.846.9463 | www.equusrunvineyards.com

Travel US 421/Leestown Road West toward Midway and Frankfort. Continue 7.8 miles past New Circle Road. Turn right onto US 62 and travel 1.3 miles. Turn left onto Moores Mill Rd. & travel 1.9 miles. The vineyard is on the left.



G. Hamon Haven Winery

7041 Rockwell Rd. | Winchester, KY 40391 | 859.745.4161
www.hamonhavenwinery.com/

facebookhamonhavenwinery
From Lexington take Rt 60 toward Winchester. Turn left on Clintonville Rd. (KY 1678). Cross over I64. Turn right onto Rockwell Rd. (KY 2888). Winery on the left.



B. Harkness Edwards Vineyards

5199 Combs Ferry Rd., Winchester, KY 40391
859.644.5140 | www.harknessedwardsvineyards.com

From Lexington: Get on Richmond Rd. until it turns into Athens Boonesboro Rd. Continue on Athens Boonesboro Rd. for about 9.5 miles until stop sign at a fork in the road. Take a sharp left (almost making a U-turn) onto Combs Ferry Rd. Drive 1.4 miles on Combs Ferry to 5199 Combs Ferry Rd. on your left.



A. Chenault Winery

2284 Barnes Mill Rd. | Richmond, KY. 40475
859.328.7773 | www.chenaultvineyards.com

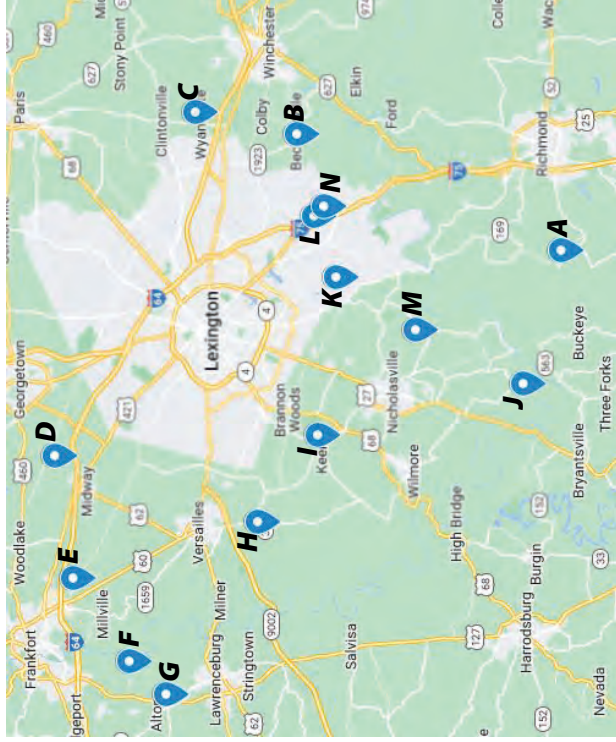
Get on I-75 S and travel south towards Richmond. Take exit 87 from I-75 S to KY-876 W/Barnes Mill Rd. in Richmond. Turn right onto KY-876 W/Barnes Mill Rd. & travel West for 6 miles. Winery on the right.



N. Grimes Mill Winery

6707 Grimes Mill Rd. | Lexington, KY 40515
859.368.7148 | www.grimesmillwinery.com

From Lexington, Richmond Road at Jacobson Park. Turn right on Old Richmond Rd. go 5.5 miles. Turn left on Grimes Mill Rd. to winery immediately on left.



L. Jean Farris Winery & Bistro

6825 Old Richmond Rd., Lexington, KY 40515 | 859.263.9463
www.jeanfarris.com

From Lexington, Richmond Road at Jacobson Park. Turn right on Old Richmond Rd. Go 5 miles. Winery is on the left.



M. Talon Winery & Vineyards

7086 Tates Creek Rd., Lexington, KY 40515
859.971.3214 | www.talonwine.com

From Lexington take Tates Creek Road 5 miles past the intersection at Man O War Blvd. The winery is on the left.



Purchase your pass through our EventBrite QR code on the left. Then on March 23 a McConnell Springs volunteer will be at each of the wineries to confirm your receipt. Once this has been done, you will receive a McConnell Springs commemorative glass and be directed to the winery tasting area.



Notes from the Naturalist...

by *Steven Rogers*

As we begin to look ahead to Spring there is a lot to be excited about in nature. Flowers will begin to bloom, trees will turn green again, and animals will be on the move. Spring migration will begin soon with songbirds moving back into Central Kentucky from their tropical winter retreats. One of the greatest migration stories that occur each spring comes from the Monarch Butterfly. Monarchs don't lay dormant during the winter like some other species of butterflies, they travel...far. These small creatures will live as far north as Canada in the summer and begin to move south to areas in Mexico to overwinter. Some individuals can travel as far as 3,000 miles during their migration. In Mexico and a few other select areas, the butterflies will congregate by the millions, clustering on trees and mating before they begin the journey back north. Along the way in the spring, the monarchs that spent time in Mexico will lay eggs on milkweed they find growing in Northern Mexico and the Southwest

states. It will be those babies that will be the first to arrive in Kentucky in early summer. They will mate and lay eggs as milkweed plants begin to bloom in May and the cycle will continue. Sadly, when researchers observed the overwintering monarchs in late 2023, they recorded the second smallest population on record. The butterflies were only covering an area of 2.2 acres a 59% decrease in size from the previous year. Many factors can contribute to the decline such as severe weather during migration, drought, or human interaction so depending on conditions there is hope that the numbers could improve next year. You can help the monarchs by incorporating milkweed into your landscaping this summer. Milkweed is the host plant for monarch caterpillars so adult females will seek it out to lay eggs. When you see a Monarch this summer be sure to give them encouragement as they prepare for a unique and fascinating journey.



Events to Mark Your Calendars

McConnell Springs is in full swing with our annual events being held once again at the park, so don't forget to add these dates to your calendars!

Lexington's Founders' Day - May 18, 2023

Join us as we celebrate our frontier heritage and walk back through time. Our annual 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 -

History to Chew On, will be held again this year on the following dates: June 1, July 9, August 13, September 10, and October 8.

Talks start at 6 p.m. and last about an hour, depending on questions.

We are still finalizing topics and speakers and will publish on Facebook and our website when they are ready.

Roots for Remembrance

Trees that were ordered during the past winter for Roots for Remembrance will be planted as soon as the threat of a hard freeze passes. If you are interested in getting a tree planted this spring at McConnell Springs in someone's honor, then be sure to submit your order soon. Trees are planted as the temperatures and growing season allows so there will be a pause in planting during the summer and we will resume in the fall. The Roots for Remembrance program is a great way to honor someone with trees planted in their name at McConnell Springs to support a healthy forest ecosystem.

2023 Park Visitation

Calendar year 2023 ended with record visitation at McConnell Springs with 80,432 people recorded. This was the first time that recorded park visitation has surpassed 80,000. Thanks to the support of The Friends of McConnell Springs, park volunteers, and an amazing park staff we were able to offer more programs and maintain quality trails. Thank you to all of those that visited, and we hope to see you again in 2024.



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/>

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

Editor: Reneé Williams

Contributors: Peter Andrew, Charlie Boland, Becci Ray, 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.