

To The Point Winter 2005

Newsletter of the Friends of Myrtle Point Park, Inc.



Bob Boxwell eyes the multiflora rose infesting the parking lot edges.

The Battle is Joined

Sunday October 23, 2005 was a nicer day than the last couple of days. This was good considering I had planned a three-hour workday at the park. Earlier in the month, Mary Piotrowski and I started the assault on the multiflora rose infesting the parking lot edges. Our two-hour effort cleared out a 20 by 20 patch and revealed several small trees and shrubs.

I had not heard from anyone about joining me Sunday, so I was pleasantly surprised to have two vehicles waiting when I arrived. Robert Willey and Mollie Quinn were my work crew for the day. We grabbed our chosen tools of destruction and began our assault.

And considering that the rose is well armed itself with lots of thorns, it was a battle. Mollie and I concentrated on expanding the original area, while Robert worked on opening up the new section. Pulling down the overhead branches was the bulk of work on our original section. We found the multiflora rose entwining itself with the Japanese honeysuckle forming a dense sun tight covering. Not as pervasive, but still doing well was the grape vine bearing lots of fruit.

Robert was able to find the base of several immense multiflora rose plants. These monsters had stalks as thick as small trees and easily the size of a large shrub. Five or six of the behemoths were stacked near the recycling bin.

We removed all rose hips we could find on the plants. These were placed in a black bag to be disposed of separately. The remaining debris can be composted without worry of spreading the park's problem to other locations. Rose hips are a great source of vitamin C and many birds enjoy them. Unfortunately, they have thousands of seeds.

We used only hand tools for our efforts to date. We will have to revisit this area and continue to remove and monitor our progress. Root removal may be the next step, but we would like to investigate other methods. This is the second step in a long process. **So keep tuned to our web page and the newsletter.**

FOMPP Board of Directors - 2005

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www.myrtlepoint.org

The President's Point

As part of our on going effort to plan for the future of Myrtle Point Park an interesting idea was brought before the board. While we do a fair amount of activities at the park, we really haven't held a social event in years. We also plan on beginning an educational outreach program through evening programs on topics of interest not only to visitors to the park, but any concerned citizen. A few ideas we will pursue are storm water management, critical areas, and a primer on soils. We are open to other ideas as well. If you are interested or have suggestions please contact me. An informed citizen is an empowered citizen. And we hope to bring you information straight from the local and state experts in the field.

On another topic, we are moving along in acquiring a logo for the Friends. Last month we opened discussions with Hollywood Elementary to hold a logo contest through their art department. We reviewed the students' work at our board meeting and picked three prizewinners and four honorable mentions. The work was inventive, original, and showed the effort put in by both students and staff. We will be announcing the winners and have much more on this topic in our next newsletter.

And on a personal note, I hope everyone had a wonderful Thanksgiving. Come on out and join me in working off some of the leftovers on Saturday December 3 for another invasive removal event (see calendar for details). And as we approach the holidays consider whether a membership to the Friends might be just the right gift for a neighbor, friend, or family member. Thanks for being with us this year and stay tuned as we continue our work in preserving Myrtle Point Park.

Bob Boxwell

Watch this spot for the new Friends of Myrtle Point Park, Inc. logo. Coming in the To the Point - Spring Edition.



Robert Hicks explains Geocaching in the Park.

Myrtle Point Park is a wonderful resource for many outdoor activities. Recently, the park has become host to a whole new group of outdoor enthusiasts, called geocachers. What is a geocacher you might ask? Geocaching is a worldwide high tech game of hide and seek. The only three things you need are a computer, a Global Positioning System (GPS) receiver and a spirit to go out there and hunt! The game is played by hiding a “geocache” like the ones found here in Myrtle Point, then going online and inputting its coordinates on a web site (www.geocaching.com). This web site is host to literally thousands of geocaches around the world. Other geocachers can log on to the site and find the page for the geocache, input the coordinates into their GPS receiver and go out and hunt. Geocaches can take many shapes, but they are usually clear plastic airtight containers. The container should have “Geocache” clearly marked on it and contain a logbook inside. The geocache can also contain trade items. These can be many types of dollar items and are sometimes part of a theme like pets, or toy cars, etc. The person finding the geocache can sign the logbook and chose to trade an item. Geocachers are strong advocates of “leave no trace” and often remove trash from the parks they visit. Geocache owners periodically check on their geocaches and make sure that they continue to provide enjoyment for those who visit. Geocaching is a fun family activity and a great way of enjoying the trails! Geocaches are often associated with area/park history or beautiful views such as those found here. Myrtle Point has proven to be an excellent location for that reason and because of the good trails and several different hikes to choose from. It is currently the home to five geocaches. So next time your out at the park and pass by someone pondering hiding places in the woods, know that it’s just a geocacher searching or looking for that perfect spot! If you’d like more information on geocaching, please contact the Maryland Geocaching Society (www.mdgps.org).

Bob Hicks
Public Relations Officer
www.mdgps.org
(301) 904-2518

Patuxent Riverkeeper Is Looking For Volunteers
www.paxriverkeeper 301-249-8200

A Call for Volunteers 2005/2006 Activities

As we enter the winter planning phase and prepare our working plans for the coming year, there are several needs and projects that have emerged. Some are standing projects, others are ones that are envisioned and for which funding is being sought. There is something here for all interests and skill levels. See something that interests you? Get in touch and we'll add you to the notification list.

Hearing from you will help us determine whether there is adequate volunteer support to complete these projects....

- _ **Annual Cleanups:** Riverwide: Spring trash removal from designated sites.

- _ **Special Cleanups:** Bowie, Laurel and Odenton: Clean and beautify selected sites by removing trash.

- _ **Tree plantings:** Central and Southern Patuxent. reforestation of sensitive and sediment prone areas.

- _ **Water Quality Monitoring:** Riverwide. Develop a network of local water testers who can pool their data for more global snapshot of the total watershed.

- _ **Fish Blockage Removal:** Little Patuxent areas near Columbia. Moderate exertion.

- _ **Tire Dump Removal:** Southern, MD in St. Mary's. Deep ravines, many tires. Physically challenging work.

- _ **Patuxent Guide Training:** Central to Southern Patuxent. Planned first aid, kayaking and other training for volunteer guides in preparation for the Summer 2006 Patuxent Sojourn. by the Maryland League of Conservation Voters. Tickets and details about sponsorship levels please contact:
Liz Nelson at 410-280-9855 or enelson@mdlcv.org

Can the Riverkeeper speak to your community association, watershed or civic group?

We would love to customize a slideshow and/or a talk for your group. Please call to discuss and schedule a time.

Annual Patuxent River Clean Up

When: April 8, 2006

Please contact Patuxent Riverkeeper for more information and site locations.



Calendar of Events



Saturday, December 3, 2005; Continue the battle –

Invasive Plant Removal, 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM. Myrtle Point Park, meet in the main parking lot. Wear clothing with long sleeves, bring gloves and clippers. The work area will become a demonstration area to be used to educate others about the invasive plant problem. The goal is to remove the invasives and then replant with native plants. The demonstration area will also be used to determine the most effective way to remove the invasives.



A Second Public Forum on Alternative Energy and Conservation is being planned for January.

The discussion will continue on how we can all work toward reducing our energy consumption and our dependence on conventional sources of energy by utilizing alternative technology for energy production for vehicles, home heating and more. For additional information contact: Dudley Lindsley, 301-373-2551; E-mail: dilindsley@erols.com



Earth Day on the Square in Leonardtown: The date for Earth Day on the Square in Leonardtown has been set for Sunday, April 23, 2006 from 12:30 until 4:30. For information contact: Dudley Lindsley, 301-373-2551; E-mail: dilindsley@erols.com

Friends of Myrtle Point Monthly Meetings: The regular monthly meetings of the Friends of Myrtle Point, Inc. are held on the third Monday of the month, 7:00 p.m., at the Leonardtown Branch of the St. Mary's County Memorial Library. The meetings are open to the public.

Membership Notes:

Help us preserve, maintain and enhance what is special about Myrtle Point Park. Join the Friends of Myrtle Point Park, Inc. for 2006

Give a Friends of Myrtle Point Park, Inc. membership for any occasion. [See form on last page.] An appropriate acknowledgement will be sent to the person. Send the contribution and information to: Friends of Myrtle Point Park, Inc. P.O. Box 1433, California, Maryland 20619 – Suzanne Henderson, Membership Chairperson



Friends of Myrtle Point – The Honorable and Mrs. Bernie Fowler

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION:

Return to:
Friends of Myrtle Point Park, Inc.
P.O. Box 1433
California, Maryland 20619-1433

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Membership:

_____ Individual(s) - \$10.00 (check to Friends of Myrtle Point Park, Inc.)

Interests:

_____ Historical/Archeological _____ Invasive Plant Removal

_____ Trail Maintenance _____ Education

_____ Public Relations _____ Species Identification

_____ Other: _____

Friends of Myrtle Point Park, Inc.
P.O. Box 1433
California, MD 20619