

**Friends of Radnor Lake receive grant
from The Community Foundation**
by Steve Ward

Many of you know the story of how Radnor Lake was saved by a collaborative effort of citizens, scientists and government officials in the late 1960's and early 70's from impending development. Just 2 years ago, we celebrated our 30th anniversary in which the original 757 acres surrounding the lake was designated the state's first natural area. Since that time, Friends of Radnor Lake have partnered with several groups including the The Nature Conservancy, The Conservation Fund, State of Tennessee, The Cities of Oak Hill, Forrest Hills and Metropolitan Nashville to preserve the remaining land critical to the health of the Radnor Lake ecosystem.

Four years ago, a new partnership was formed with Middle Tennessee State University. That partnership began with an idea from Dr. Doug Heffington of the MTSU Geography Department and has culminated into an undergraduate class (Geography of Tennessee) being taught at Radnor Lake to help preserve the history of Radnor Lake. Specifically, steps have been taken to document and preserve the history of the human-land relationship that is intertwined to the geographic location and the people who live, work and are drawn to the natural area. Historic and scientific information that had never been documented is being salvaged before many of the people associated with the preservation of the natural area are gone.

This program has been extremely successful and could not have been made possible without Friends of Radnor Lake, Dr. Heffington and the Radnor Lake Staff. In addition, several park visitors, neighbors and other citizens have volunteered their time and energy to provide recorded oral histories and provide documents that otherwise would not have been preserved.

On September 15th, Friends of Radnor Lake was awarded a matching grant by The Oral History Fund and The Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee in the amount of \$1,631 to fund our oral geography & history program as it begins to take a life of its own.

In June of 2005, Emmie Thomas (Executive Administrator for Friends of Radnor Lake) and Dr. Heffington (M.T.S.U. Geography Dept.) wrote the grant with the hopes of providing additional funding for this program for the upcoming year. The designated funds by the Community Foundation will be used to purchase a transcription machine, audio recording equipment, archival supplies and historic map duplications.

It is my hope, with the help of the Community Foundation, Middle Tennessee State University and Friends of Radnor Lake we will use that information to be

better stewards of the natural resource & cultural resources we are trusted to protect.....Radnor Lake. If you would like more information about the history program or can provide information/documents that may have historical importance, please feel free to contact me @ steve.ward@state.tn.us or (615) 373-3467.