

# Reflections

Summer 2016



## Radnor Lake Named “Park of the Year”

Radnor Lake State Natural Area earns the highest award.

## The Historic Valve House

Partnership ensures preservation of Radnor’s history.

## The Harris Ridge Trail Project Needs You!

Friends of Radnor Lake is raising \$1 million of \$2.4 million needed to add 34 critical acres to Radnor Lake Natural Area.



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## From the Board President

**What an exciting time to be a Friend of Radnor Lake, 2015's**

**Park of the Year!** We are honored to accept and share this award

from Tennessee State Parks, thanks to the community support

and partnerships that help us thrive. In 2015 alone, we were

able to place 33 acres of valuable land under State protection

and expand our treasured Natural Area. We started 2016 with

volunteers, local companies and our dedicated Park staff working

together to preserve our own slice of Tennessee history. Soon we'll

complete the 89-acre land acquisition for the Harris Ridge Trail

Project, adding the final 34 acres critical to improving access and adding new trails

for generations to come. We have big things on the horizon in the coming months and

years, and it's all because we know we can count on your support. Thank you!

*Nan Adams*



**Nan Adams**

*President*

*Friends of Radnor Lake*

## Radnor Lake named Tennessee's 2015 Park of the Year



Friends of Radnor Lake Board members with "Park of the Year" award.

*Photograph by Steve Ward*

### What does it take to win the Park of the Year award from Tennessee State Parks?

Here are just a few of the reasons Radnor Lake State Natural Area earned the highest award given out of 56 state parks:

- **Growth:** 33 new acres were added to the natural area and placed under state protection forever. 34 new acres went under contract.
- **Programs:** Park staff conducted 636 programs for 16,337 park visitors.
- **Staff:** Each ranger became a certified canoe instructor, participated in two birds of prey training sessions and took training on sensitivity for visitors with special needs.
- **New Features:** Construction completed on our beautiful new Lake Trail observation deck.
- **Education:** The Barbara J. Mapp Aviary Education Center opened, creating educational opportunities for visitors to learn about the raptors housed there.
- **Updates:** The Walter Criley Visitor Center received new renovations and updated educational displays.

"It's an honor to accept this award on behalf of the Radnor park staff, Friends of Radnor Lake and the thousands who support and volunteer at Radnor Lake each year" said park manager Steve Ward.



# Junior Ranger Internship Program at Radnor

We're thrilled to celebrate 14 years of this popular program, funded through donations to Friends of Radnor Lake and in partnership with Tennessee State Parks. Our committed young interns range in age from 12 to 18 years old. Each group arrives for the intensive six-day session ready to work and learn from our park rangers. We count on these interns to provide vital trail maintenance along with valuable river cleanup. More importantly, they learn the importance of protecting our natural resources through unique environmental education programming opportunities.



Internship sessions include a river cleanup day, where tires and countless bags of trash are collected from the river. Thanks to FORL Board Member Greer Tidwell, in the past four years over 150 tires have been recycled through the Bridgestone Americas Tires4ward Program.



Interns spend four days working on trail projects at Radnor Lake State Natural Area with the park ranger staff, improving the trail system for our 1+ million annual visitor.

Our interns participate in hands-on environmental education programs while working at Barbara J. Mapp Aviary Education Center, learning to care for birds of prey, reptiles and more.

*All photographs by Steve Ward*



# The Historic Valve House

Public-Private Partnership ensures preservation and interpretation of Radnor's history for future generations



The Porch Company of Nashville rebuilds the historic Valve house at Radnor Lake for their 2016 employee community project.

*Photograph by Steve Ward*

## When was the last time you hiked the Historic Valve House Trail?

If you haven't done so in the last few months, make sure you take the quarter-mile walk when you visit Radnor Lake. You might remember the structure that stood on the side of this trail before: a small dilapidated building dating to the early days of the L&N at Radnor. It eventually collapsed during Nashville's historic flood of 2010. Today, you'll find a new, 100% volunteer-built Valve House designed to protect a piece of Radnor Lake's fascinating history. This unassuming little building is a perfect example of private and public partnership, historic preservation in action, and committed volunteers dedicated to achieving a goal more than five years in the making.

The preservation initiative actually began in 2010, with Dr. Heffington of MTSU's Global Studies and Cultural Geography Department leading the charge to restore and refresh buildings and sites of historical significance on our acreage. Thanks to the recent and enthusiastic involvement of our community partners and consistent support from the Tennessee State Parks, we completed the Valve House restoration this spring.

## Local Companies Get Involved

Completing the Valve House required collaboration between volunteers, donors, management and ranger staff working toward the same goal. The Porch Company, a local porch design and construction business, took the rebuild on as a community service project. They worked with Radnor Lake volunteer Gary Keckley's original design plans, keeping a focus on re-creating the original structure's shape, proportions and style. Gary has been deeply involved with the long-term project of the Historic Valve House Trail, having built the nearby bridge with his son and several MTSU students in 2011.

Nashville Wire generously donated custom metal grates on the doors and back section of the building that allow our visitors to view the valve, and Turf Managers supplied the lumber and materials to make the project possible. Tennessee State Parks pledged ranger time and talent to manage the project from start to finish.



With materials secured and volunteer labor on board, dedicated volunteers, ranger staff and MTSU students hauled and hand-carried lumber, stone and building materials a quarter mile to the site; The Porch Company's crew built the new structure in just one day.

This project is a perfect example of the committed network that makes Radnor Lake thrive, aligning state support, volunteer labor and corporate generosity to preserve, protect and promote our wonderful oasis in an ever-busier "It" city.

## Preserving Tennessee History

The Historic Valve House Trail is the first historic preservation project for Radnor Lake, and it plays an important role in connecting our visitors with the park's history. Our man-made lake was originally built as a reservoir for the L&N Railroad, providing water for steam engines and for livestock being moved by rail. This railroad line carried essential supplies during the Civil War and fed the economic growth of the city throughout the 1900s.

The original valve house protected a large metal valve buried in the ground that would be turned on by hand to release water from the lake to the railroad yard more than three miles away. Engineering and constructing a gravity-fed water line this size in the early 1900s was no small feat; at the height of its use around 1,000,000 gallons of water were drained from the lake daily. The underground valve tucked away in the little house in the woods is arguably the most significant artifact on the property, and might also be the only one of its kind in the U.S.

## What's next?

As our ranger staff and volunteers spend the summer finishing the new trail to the Valve House, installing rock, preserving the valve and installing interpretive signage, we'll rely heavily on volunteer labor and skills to finish the amazing work that our community partners have set in motion. The next step in our plan is a complete restoration of the Caretaker's House.

This summer, come connect with Tennessee history at the Valve House. Hike our new trail and take a look inside to see a piece of Tennessee history preserved thanks to the efforts of our state and hundreds of community volunteers.



Dr. Doug Heffington and MTSU students with ranger Sam King.

*Photograph by Steve Ward*

## We kept our volunteers and visitors busy on National Trails Day!



*Photograph by Steve Ward*

- **Ranger Dustin Crowell led a hike** for park visitors to the Barbara J. Mapp Aviary Center for a tour and birds of prey program
- **Park volunteers helped with our Historic Valve House Project**, making wonderful progress toward our long-term preservation goals
- **More than 25 volunteers** worked with Ranger Paul Schauer to haul rock by wheelbarrow down the trail and install it around the recently reconstructed Historic Valve House
- Volunteers relaxed on a **sunset canoe float** led by Ranger Will Peters.

**Thank you to all of the volunteers who came out to celebrate National Trails Day with us at Radnor Lake!**





# 2016 Environmental Awards

## Partnership Award

*Given to an individual or group that has shown exceptional support for Radnor Lake.*

Presented to **Dan Smith**, owner of "The Purple Cow" at the Granny White Market, for 15 years of partnership and friendship. Dan offered exceptional support through generous fundraising events and feeding our volunteers. Dan was presented with a Robin Conover print by board member Paul Buchanan.



Dan Smith

## Blue Heron Award

*This very special distinction is given to recognize the highest level of support and leadership toward preserving the natural area.*

Presented to **Dr. Doug Heffington** of Middle Tennessee State University. Over the past 15 years, Dr. Heffington and hundreds of his students have contributed invaluable historic research and educational interpretation of Radnor Lake, including the recent Valve House and Trail.



Dr. Doug Heffington accepts the Great Blue Heron Award, Painting by FORL Board member and artist, Kim Barrick.

**Steve Ward**  
Park Manager

**Dustin Crowell**  
Park Ranger

**Will Peter**  
Park Ranger

**Paul Schauer**  
Park Ranger

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**Radnor Lake State  
Natural Area**  
1160 Otter Creek Road  
Nashville, TN 37220  
(615) 373-3467

**Park Hours:**  
6 a.m. until dark

**Visitor Center Hours:**  
Thurs – Mon: 9:30 a.m. - 6 p.m.  
(Closed: Tues and Wed,  
and daily 1 - 2 p.m.)

**Walter Criley Visitor Center:**  
(615) 373-3467

**Event Schedule  
and Updates:**  
[www.radnorlake.org](http://www.radnorlake.org)

**Volunteer Days**  
Fourth Saturday of the month  
(Meet at the Visitor Center)  
8 a.m. - noon



Harris Family: Marvin & Gail Nealy, Annette & Danny Cox, Peggy & Ray Harris were presented Conover photos of Radnor Lake by Nan Adams, Greer Tidwell and Steve Ward

## Environmental Award

*Given to an individual or group who have demonstrated exceptional leadership and made notable, voluntary contributions in conserving Radnor Lake's precious resources.*

**The Harris Family** was recognized for their notable land contribution and preservation. Working with Friends of Radnor Lake for fifteen years, their generosity and desire to protect this valuable land has resulted in 89 acres added to the natural area that will be protected forever.





# The Harris Ridge Trail Project Needs You!

Friends of Radnor Lake Board Members joined park ranger staff on a spring hike to new Harris property.

As our city grows, so does the visitation rate at Radnor Lake. With an anticipated one million new Nashville residents by 2020, our need for new trails, parking and wildlife protection is critical.

Friends of Radnor Lake is raising \$1 million of \$2.4 million needed to add 34 valuable acres to Radnor Lake Natural Area. This acquisition is the final step in the Harris Ridge Trail Project, a six-year, \$4 million initiative to acquire 89 acres, and guarantee the preservation of valuable land forever.

**Please consider giving as you are able. We greatly appreciate your generosity as we all work to protect this special land that provides so much for so many.**

Please indicate Land Acquisition on your donation envelope or online donation.

Pledge forms are available on our website.

*With a gift of \$2,500 or more, your generosity will be recognized on a display at the Radnor Lake Visitor Center.  
With a gift of \$25,000 or more, your generosity will be recognized on a kiosk panel at the new trail head.*

## What will the Harris Ridge Trail Project mean for our community?

Your support for this important project creates the opportunity for Radnor Lake to better serve the community by protecting the land from future development and making the park more accessible and inviting to our visitors for generations to come.

- **Improved visitor access** with the addition of a new entrance and a 100-space parking lot off of Franklin Road
- **New trails and enhanced wildlife viewing** for Radnor Lake visitors
- **Expanded land preservation** protecting the land and expanding wildlife habitat.
- **Support for healthy lifestyles** and more outdoor experiences for all Radnor visitors.

## Best Wishes, Sam!



Since joining us as an intern with Lipscomb University in 2010, Ranger Sam King will be leaving our staff for a new opportunity with Tennessee Division of Natural Areas. Sam has done an outstanding job for us in the past 6 years in his roles as intern, seasonal ranger and park ranger. Thank you Sam for all of your hard work and we wish you the best in your new opportunity with Tennessee Division of Natural Areas!

*Photograph by Steve Ward*

**Thank you to everyone who has contributed to Friends of Radnor Lake!**  
**Your generosity and support are greatly appreciated and will help us to further the mission to protect, preserve and promote Radnor Lake.**

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and Marci Hicks.

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*This list reflects  
donations, gifts, grants  
and memorials made in  
2015. Please let us know  
of any omissions  
or listing errors.*

## Barbara J. Mapp Aviary Education Center Updates

- **The Flighted Eagle Aviary** will be completed by mid-July. Following final inspection by Tennessee Wildlife Resource Agency (TWRA), we begin the process of locating and transferring two non-releasable American Eagles to their forever new homes.
- **Sustainability:** Committed to sustaining the excellence and quality of the facility, Barbara J. Mapp Foundation awarded a matching grant of \$5,000 per year over the next five years. The match was promoted and met through the 2016 Big Payback.
- **Enjoy a hike!** The BJM Aviary Education Center has become a new favorite hiking destination at Radnor Lake. Visitors are enjoying hiking the Hall Drive, and walking the beautiful boardwalk while observing the birds of prey in their aviaries. Also very popular are the turtle and snake reptile displays and presentations by seasonal park ranger Laurie Campbell in the Education Center.
- **Summer hours:** Wednesdays 7 a.m. – 1 p.m. Saturdays 1 p.m. – Sunset. Special programs are listed at radnorlake.org.



Charley Hankla, Ranger Paul Schaur, Lester Turner, Billy Leavel and Walter Cook of Tennessee Wildlife Resource Agency.



On May 2nd, department members of the TN Division of Environment & Conservation Development visited Radnor Lake and enjoyed a tour of the Barbara J. Mapp Aviary Education Center with ranger Dustin Crowell.





FRIENDS OF  
**RADNOR LAKE**

PROTECT | PRESERVE | PROMOTE

1160 Otter Creek Rd.  
Nashville, TN 37220  
(615) 251-1471  
FORL@radnorlake.org  
www.radnorlake.org

**Our Mission: To protect, preserve and promote the natural integrity of Radnor Lake through land acquisition, environmental education and park support.**

Friends of Radnor Lake was founded in 1971 when the lake and surrounding hills were threatened by residential development. As the Tennessee State Parks system's oldest and most successful nonprofit support group, FORL has purchased critical properties and supported protection efforts in many other ways.



/friendsofradnorlake



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## New fiberglass canoes make their debut on upcoming canoe floats!

A favorite activity at Radnor Lake from Memorial Day to Labor Day is now even better. Thanks to a generous donation from Trish and Shelly Krizelman, the interpretive floats offer not only the "best view" into the natural area, but now the "best seat". **New fiberglass canoes** are equipped with padded seating and back support options and a **new canoe rack** offers more efficient storage and long-term sustainability.

Check [radnorlake.org](http://radnorlake.org) for event time and reservations.

