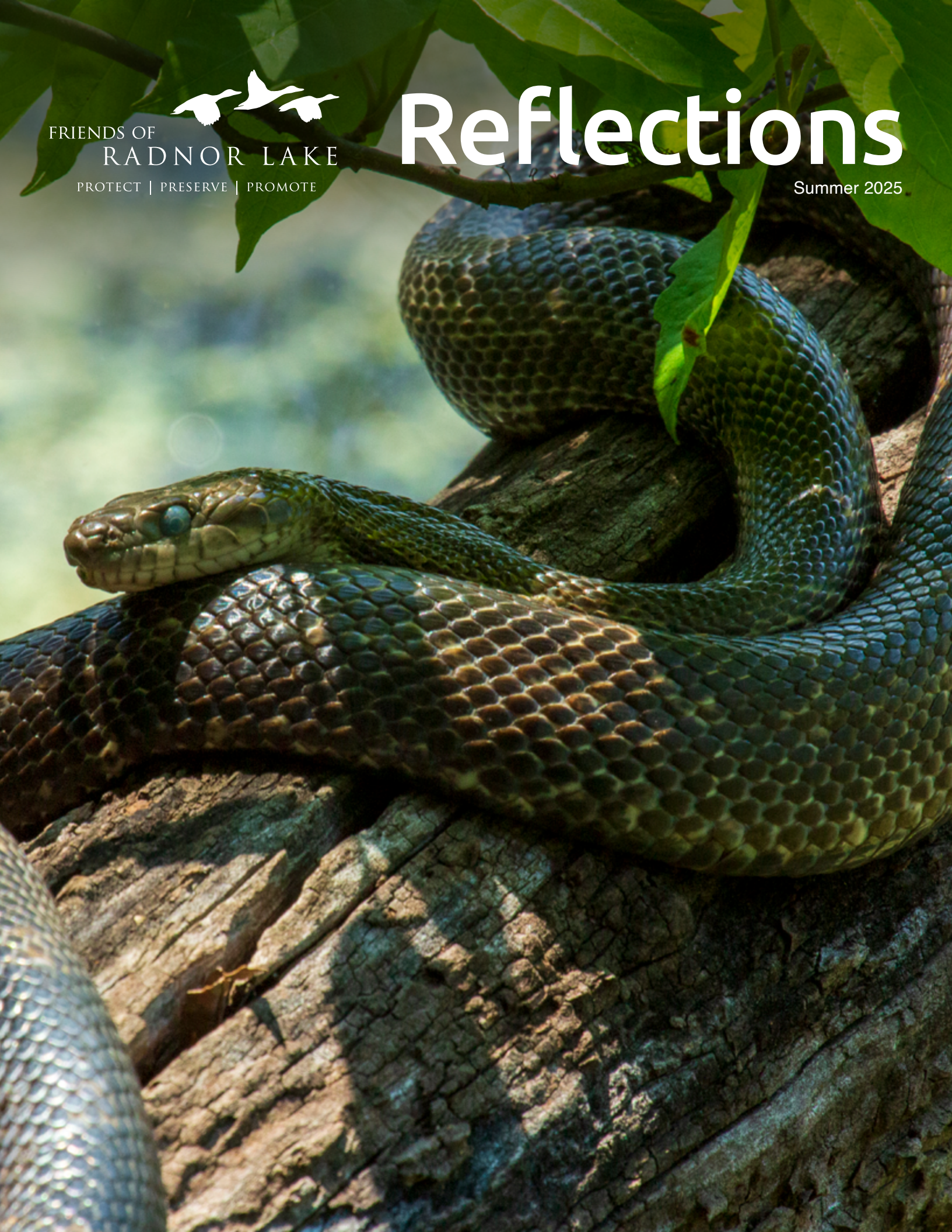




FRIENDS OF
RADNOR LAKE
PROTECT | PRESERVE | PROMOTE

Reflections

Summer 2025



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Cover photo by
Robin Conover

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From the Board President

There is so much to celebrate at Radnor this season!

Weather is warming and many of us are flocking to our 1,389 acre (and growing) “back yard.”

With the aviary celebrating its first 10 years in existence, we are partnering with Radnor on some upgrades and enhancements at the Barbara J. Mapp Aviary Education Center (Pages 5-7). We are very fortunate to have funding partners who have offered donation matches to help fund these improvements.

As part of our collective protection/conservation goals, Friends of Radnor Lake provided funding for Park Manager Steve Ward to attend the International Association of Aviary Trainers and Educators (IAATE) annual conference where he presented on our lessons learned and was given a nice award (Page 4) from his peers at the conference.

This “back yard” we call Radnor requires a lot of attention. Park management has been handled by four skilled and trained rangers for the past 20 months during a long period of being understaffed. These hard-working individuals:

- Make sure we stay safe. They monitor everything from traffic to poaching to fallen trees.
- Conduct interpretive programs for 17,000 visitors annually. Educate us on the trails, on the lake and at the aviary.
- Assist visitors with directions, broken down vehicles, wheelchair access.
- Perform boundary work.
- Partner with Penn State and others on research projects.
- Monitor and protect the eagle nest.
- Manage trail enforcement.
- Prevent vehicle break-ins.
- Provide safety and support for all Radnor events.
- Lead 1,500+ volunteers annually.

- Maintain 7+ miles of hiking trails.
- Graciously welcome 2 million visitors annually.

- Feed and care for birds of prey, snakes and turtles at the aviary.

- And on and on and on.

So when you see a park staff member, please thank them.

- Paul Schauer, 10 years at Radnor. Paul is a master craftsman, whose talent we see on trails and woodwork throughout Radnor
- Matthew Bowling, 8 years at Radnor. Matthew is a master birder, a wealth of knowledge.
- Brandon Jarratt, over 5 years at Radnor. Brandon is a proud US Army veteran.
- Alexia Shore started at Radnor the latter half of 2024 and has recently returned from Police Academy training.
- Our newest ranger, Jay Starks hails from Kentucky and started at Radnor in late March.
- Lyndy Maness, 24 years at Radnor. Lyndy is the “behind the scenes glue” who handles park operations and administration, our best kept secret.
- Steve Ward, who leads his team by example, 23 years at Radnor. In addition to ranger responsibilities, Steve’s vision is what makes Radnor Lake State Natural Area the wonderful park it is today, and is guiding it to what it will be in the future.

Please thank our park staff! ■



Rob Cochran



PRESENTED BY



Radnor in the Round Moves to Fall!

Save the Date: Sunday, October 19

For the first time in its six-year history, Radnor in the Round—Radnor Lake’s beloved annual songwriter event—is moving to the fall!

Join us for an unforgettable Sunday evening of live music, nature, and community on October 19 at the beautiful Vanderbilt Dyer Observatory, surrounded by Radnor Lake property.

Enjoy performances by Phil Vassar & Friends on a crisp fall evening at this family-friendly, outdoor celebration benefiting Radnor Lake State Natural Area.

Hosted by Phil Vassar & Friends

Sunday, October 19
Vanderbilt Dyer Observatory
1000 Oman Drive

Tickets go on sale Thursday, August 21 at
RadnorLake.org/radnor-in-the-round-2025
\$325 per Carload



Radnor in the Round 2024
Photos by Weatherly Hulsey

Interested in Sponsoring Radnor’s Largest Fundraiser?

Sponsoring **Radnor in the Round** directly supports the **Friends of Radnor Lake’s mission** to protect, preserve, and promote the natural beauty of Radnor Lake through **land acquisition, environmental education, and park support.**

Sponsorship Levels:

Golden Eagle – \$10,000

Blue Heron – \$7,500

Great Horned Owl – \$5,000

Red-Tailed Hawk – \$2,500

Host – \$1,000

To learn more about sponsorship opportunities, contact
tcorkum@radnorlake.org.

Welcome New Board Members



Carolyn Thompson, MD is an OB/Gyn, transitioning into coaching and facilitation to support healthcare professionals navigating burnout. An avid hiker, Carolyn treasures Radnor Lake’s trails as one of her favorite places to explore.



Caroline Chamberlain is the Director of Product Marketing and Payment Integrity at Zelis. With expertise in sales, event management, and team building, she brings a wealth of experience to our board.



Steve Ward
Park Manager

Lyndy Maness
Administrative Assistant

Paul Schauer
Park Ranger

Matthew Bowling
Park Ranger

Brandon Jarratt
Park Ranger

Alexia Shore
Park Ranger

Jay Starks
Park Ranger

Mackenzie Maness
Seasonal Interpreter/Recreator

Taylor Smith
Ranger Aide

Shawn Byington
Ranger Aide

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

Hours
6:00 a.m. until 20 minutes
after sunset

Visitor Center Hours:
Thurs – Mon:
9:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.
(Closed: Tues and Wed,
and daily 1-2 p.m.)

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

Park Events Schedule:
tnstateparks.com/parks/
events/radnor-lake

Radnor Lake Wins IAATE's High Flyer Award

At February's annual conference of the International Association for Avian Trainers and Educators (IAATE), Park Manager Steve Ward's presentation Visitors with Specific Needs: Developing Interpretive Programming Standards with Raptor Ambassadors for Everyone by Leveraging Public-Private Partnerships won Radnor Lake the High Flyer Award for best presentation, selected by conference attendees.

The IAATE is a global organization dedicated to promoting the highest standards of care for birds in human care and fostering conservation action through education. That means that like us, they're committed to excellence in avian programming and accessibility. Steve's presentation highlighted the public-private partnership at the Barbara J. Mapp Aviary Education Center, where non-releasable raptors serve as ambassadors to educate and inspire visitors from all walks of life.

This recognition is a testament to the dedication of Radnor Lake's park staff, who have organized and conducted 10 years of impactful interpretive programming. Together, we are proving that thoughtful programming and public-private partnerships can create meaningful connections between people and nature, while ensuring the wellbeing of the birds in our care.



Pictured: Radnor Lake Park Manager Steve Ward and IAATE Vice President Helen Dishaw. Photo courtesy of IAATE.

We congratulate and thank all those who made this possible, including the park staff who organize and conduct interpretive programming, and all our partners and donors who participate in and support aviary sustainability at Radnor Lake. The lessons learned from 10 years of avian programming were much appreciated by this international group of educators focused on wellbeing for birds in human care and programs that inspire conservation action.

Thanks to the Friends of Radnor Lake Boards past and present and the Barbara J. Mapp Foundation for committing to building and growing the aviary program at Radnor Lake for more than 10 years! ■

Match Grants Build Better Homes for Our Resident Raptors

As we look back on 10 years of the Barbara J. Mapp Aviary Education Center, we also look forward to various facility improvements. Just like any regular home, maintenance and adaptations are continuously needed to improve the way we "live" in this facility. And, of course, this maintenance costs money.

Over the past several months, we've been developing some exciting plans—and sharing them with some of our funding partners to begin the process of revitalizing the education center. So far, three foundations have provided match grants to help us with our fundraising efforts.

AWC Family Foundation provided a \$50,000 match grant for the Hall House demolition and restoration project, providing the opportunity to remove the Hall House, a former ranger residence, and open up the entrance corridor for a more accessible pathway to the Education Center. Several donors stepped up and helped us match the AWC's contribution in December 2024, and we couldn't be more grateful for their generous contributions!

Two other foundations have come forward with match grant opportunities to help us raise funding for additional projects at the aviary. The Barbara J. Mapp Foundation has offered a \$50,000 match grant, while the Don and Roy Splawn Foundation is providing a \$25,000 match grant. These foundations will match aviary-designated donations through July 31, 2025.

Right now, we're working on maintenance of the 550-foot boardwalk that runs between the enclosures. Kitchen upgrades will commence soon. We'll then begin construction on our new aviary exercise enclosure and shaded viewing area, as soon as we raise the necessary funding.

That's where you come in. Every matched dollar is a nail hammered, a beam raised—a direct investment in making this sanctuary safer and more sustainable. Together, we're not just patching cracks; we're rebuilding the foundation for the next decade.

Visit radnorlake.org/aviary-gift to support this, and let's make this house a home. ■



Scan to learn more!



Photo by Elle Danielle



Photo by Steve Ward



Photo by Steve Ward

Congratulations, Ann Duncan!



Ann Duncan

Ann Duncan has retired after years of dedicated service and incredible contributions to Radnor Lake. As the welcoming face of the Walter Criley Visitor Center, Ann has been a critical part of our park staff, offering kindness, care, and unwavering dedication to everyone who walks through our doors. Her warm smile and thoughtful presence have left a lasting impact on our staff, visitors, and the entire Radnor Lake community.

Whether she was greeting visitors, answering questions, or simply sharing her enthusiasm for Radnor Lake, Ann made every interaction meaningful. Her commitment to creating a welcoming and inclusive environment has made Radnor Lake a special place for all who visit.

As she embarks on this exciting new chapter, we want to express our deepest gratitude for everything she has done for Radnor Lake. Thank you, Ann, for your years of service and for making our park a better place. Your legacy will continue to inspire us for years to come. ■



Photo by Steve Ward



Photo by Ron Boniol

Soaring to New Heights: 10th Anniversary Projects at the Barbara J. Mapp Aviary Education Center

In 2015, a visionary idea became a reality with the opening of the Barbara J. Mapp Aviary Education Center at Radnor Lake State Natural Area. Conceived in 2010 and brought to life through the generosity of the Barbara J. Mapp Foundation and countless supporters, the aviary was designed to provide a permanent home for injured birds-of-prey that could not be safely released back into the wild.

Over the past decade, the aviary has become a hub for conservation and learning. Through a public-private partnership with the State of Tennessee, Friends of Radnor Lake (FORL) has funded high-quality care for the resident birds of prey, including specialized training for park staff and veterinary services. Today, the aviary is home to seven non-releasable raptors, including a Great Horned Owl, a Red-Tailed Hawk, a Vulture, a Golden Eagle, and three Bald Eagles. Each bird's habitat is tailored to its unique needs, ensuring their well-being while offering visitors an unmatched educational experience.

After 10 years of outstanding programming, Friends of Radnor Lake (FORL) and park staff have identified several key projects that will ensure the aviary continues to provide exceptional care for its raptor ambassadors—and an unforgettable experience for visitors.

Kitchen Upgrades

The aviary's kitchen is an important part of the area's operations, as it is where food is prepared for the birds and veterinary care is administered. A redesign featuring stainless steel counters will streamline these essential functions, meeting and exceeding compliance with U.S. Fish & Wildlife, USDA, and Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency regulations while making it more manageable for park staff to do their crucial work.

Flighted Exercise Enclosure

While many of the aviary's raptors have limited flight due to their injuries, the physical and emotional benefits of practicing flight are undeniable. Plans are underway to construct a dedicated flighted exercise enclosure with heavy double netting to protect the birds from injury. This space will allow the raptors to stretch their wings and engage in natural behaviors, enhancing their overall well-being and providing enhanced viewing opportunities for visitors.

Universal Access to the Boardwalk

Accessibility has always been a priority at the aviary, and we're committed to making the facility even more inclusive. Modifications to the path leading to the boardwalk will ensure that visitors of all abilities can independently access and enjoy every feature of the aviary.

New Entryway and Gradual Walkway

The current path to the aviary is steep and challenging. A new, gently sloping walkway will make the journey easier and more enjoyable, while a feature statue and secure gate will mark the entrance.

As we look to the future, we're grateful for the support of our partners, donors, and volunteers who make these projects possible. Together, we can ensure that the aviary continues to inspire, educate, and protect for decades to come.

As we celebrate this milestone, we look to the future with excitement and determination. The aviary's success is a testament to the power of community support, and we are committed to investing in facility upgrades and new initiatives to ensure it continues to inspire and educate for generations to come.

Here's to 10 years of success—and to soaring even higher in the years ahead. **Make your gift to the Barbara J. Mapp Aviary Education Center at Radnor Lake by July 31** to improve accessibility for visitors, enhance bird quality of life, and enrich the visitor experience. Every donation will be matched dollar for dollar.

Don't wait—Lend a Wing today! ■



Kitchen renovation



Flighted exercise enclosure



Universal access to boardwalk

Putting Our Best Foot Forward: Fall Hikes at Radnor Lake

Sunrise on Harris Ridge

Seventeen early risers kicked off 2025 in the best way possible—with a 6 a.m. sunrise hike to Harris Ridge on New Year’s Day. This strenuous 4.5-mile trek offered hikers an up-close look at the future route of the Harris Ridge Trail Project, a multi-year initiative made possible by the acquisition of 89 acres of critical land. The hike celebrated the preservation of Radnor’s southeastern border and the promise of new trails and enhanced wildlife viewing opportunities. As a special thank-you, Friends of Radnor Lake (FORL) provided hikers with calendars featuring stunning photography by Robin Conover.

This past fall, Radnor Lake State Natural Area was alive with activity as park staff led a series of special hikes that brought together nature enthusiasts, community leaders, and dedicated volunteers. These hikes not only showcased the beauty of Radnor Lake, but highlighted ongoing conservation efforts like our native grassland restoration, land acquisitions, and planning for new trails. Here’s a look back at some of the memorable moments from these hikes—and the inspiring work that’s being done to protect this natural treasure.



Photo by Steve Ward

International Mountain Day

On December 11th, Radnor Lake hosted its 5th Annual International Mountain Day, a unique hike and volunteer event that drew five dedicated visitors. The event highlighted the Harris Ridge Trail Project, recent land acquisition successes, and the park’s native grassland restoration efforts. Participants learned about the historical significance of the area and the importance of protecting Radnor’s watershed and viewshed. Special thanks to the Church of the Advent for providing parking and support for this event!



Photo by Steve Ward

Big Tree Hike

On New Year’s Eve, Ranger Alexia Shore led a special hike to close out 2024, highlighting three award-winning trees recognized by the Nashville Tree Foundation’s Big Tree Awards. Fourteen visitors joined the challenging trek, exploring the South Lake and South Cove Trails while learning about the history of Radnor Lake’s trees and how to nominate future Big Tree contenders. This hike not only celebrated the beauty and significance of these towering giants but also underscored the importance of preserving Radnor’s natural heritage for generations to come.



Photo by Steve Ward



HCA Healthcare Volunteer Day at the Harris Ridge Trail Project. Photo by Steve Ward

Native Grasslands: A Haven for Wildlife

One of the recurring themes of these hikes was Radnor Lake’s Native Grassland Initiative, a project aimed at restoring habitats for indigenous birds, butterflies, and other wildlife. Monarch butterflies, in particular, depend on milkweed and other native plants to thrive. During hikes like those we hosted on November 4th and 15th through the Hall Farm, volunteers were given a chance to learn about the important role these grasslands play in the ecosystem. On our November 20th volunteer day with HCA Healthcare, over 35 volunteers worked tirelessly to remove invasive species and clean up trash along Franklin Road, ensuring the success of these grasslands.



Native Grasslands Hike through the Hall Farm. Photo by Steve Ward

Land Acquisitions: Protecting Radnor’s Future

The hikes also celebrated the incredible land acquisitions that have shaped Radnor Lake’s history. From the Harris Ridge project to the Yarbrough tract, these efforts have safeguarded Radnor’s watershed, viewshed, and sensitive habitats from development. Each step on these trails is a reminder of the power of collaboration between Friends of Radnor Lake, the State of Tennessee, and private donors.

Join Us on the Trails

Inspired by these stories? You can find similar hikes and volunteer opportunities on the **Tennessee State Parks** website. Whether you’re an early riser eager to catch a sunrise or a conservation enthusiast ready to roll up your sleeves, there’s a place for you at Radnor Lake. Together, we can continue to protect, preserve, and promote this natural treasure for generations to come.

We extend our gratitude to **Nissan North America** for their generous support of environmental education at Radnor Lake. Their funding helps make our volunteer programs and special event days possible, ensuring that visitors of all ages can connect with nature and learn about the importance of conservation. ■



2024 Donations and Contributions

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all who contribute to Friends of Radnor Lake in any capacity. Your generosity and unwavering support are deeply appreciated and play a vital role in advancing our mission to protect, preserve, and promote the natural integrity of Radnor Lake State Natural Area.

Please note: While we strive to recognize every contributor, we apologize for any accidental omissions.

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Thank You YLC Interns: Catherine Royka and Nicole Hughes

We are incredibly grateful for the dedication and expertise of our Young Leaders Council (YLC) interns, Cat Royka and Nicole Hughes.

Cat Royka, Senior Manager of Corporate Social Responsibility & Philanthropy at Dollar General, has been an active member of the Marketing and Events Committees, bringing fresh ideas and enthusiasm to our efforts this year.

Nicole Hughes, Principle and COO at Woodmont Investment Counsel, brings her expertise in financial planning and tax strategy to OFRL, helping to create informational events to educate donors about planned giving, donor-advised funds and other tax-efficient charitable strategies.

Young Leaders Council trains young professionals to serve effectively on nonprofit boards. ■



Cat Royka



Nicole Hughes



Radnor Lake volunteers

Thank you for your time, hard work and good cheer!

Friends of Radnor Lake Board

Thank you for your invaluable gifts of time and professional services.

TN Specialty License Plate Owners

Specialty license plates generate a lot of important revenue for Radnor Lake! Those who have purchased a plate provide valuable funding for park support.

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Photo by Robin Conover

Leave a Lasting Legacy: Planned Giving

At Friends of Radnor Lake (FORL), sustainability is at the heart of everything we do. As the oldest State Natural Area in Tennessee, Radnor Lake is a treasure we are committed to protecting for generations to come.

For over 50 years, Friends of Radnor Lake has partnered with the State of Tennessee to support land management initiatives that protect Radnor Lake’s watershed, viewshed, and sensitive habitats. Whether through individual donations, Radnor Lake license plate purchases, or events like Radnor in the Round, your support fuels our mission to protect, preserve, and promote this natural gem.

One of the ways you can leave a lasting contribution to Radnor Lake’s future is through planned giving. By including FORL in your estate plans, you can leave a legacy that ensures Radnor Lake remains a sanctuary for wildlife and a refuge for the Nashville community. Whether it’s a bequest in your will, a charitable trust, or a beneficiary designation from a retirement plan or life insurance policy, every gift—no matter the size—helps sustain Radnor Lake for future generations.

Thank you for considering a planned gift to Friends of Radnor Lake. Your generosity ensures that Radnor Lake State Natural Area, a rare natural resource in Nashville, receives the support and protection that it deserves—and continues to inspire and thrive for years to come. ■

For more information on ways to donate, visit radnorlake.org/get-involved/donate

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.

None of this would be possible without the support of our donors. Please consider making a donation to Friends of Radnor Lake today.

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Tennessee Specialty License Plates

Show your support of Radnor Lake and upgrade your vehicle - **BUY A RADNOR LAKE LICENSE PLATE!**

Our unique John Netherton-inspired specialty license plates have become an increasingly important source of funding for Radnor Lake State Natural Area! The additional \$35 per year for this stunning license plate brings us over \$62,000 a year - every penny of which goes directly to park support, such as land acquisition, invasive plant removal, care of the non-releasable raptors at the Barbara J. Mapp Aviary Education Center, and other stewardship of natural resources.

So with this one minor expense, you can contribute to Radnor Lake, advertise your support, and beautify your car!

Why not?

RadnorLake.org/get-involved/ways-to-donate



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