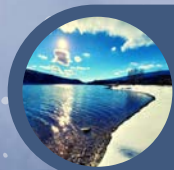




THE DAM NEWSLETTER

A PUBLICATION OF THE FRIENDS OF RAYSTOWN LAKE

WINTER 2021+ ISSUE 1+ VOL 25



Winter 2021

Winter is finally wrapping up at Raystown Lake!

Although many people enjoyed Raystown over the holidays, visitation dropped off after heavy snow events in January and February. However, those willing to brave the cold and travel to the lake this season were rewarded with some truly stunning winter scenery and abundant recreation opportunities such as ice fishing, snow shoeing, cross country skiing and more.

Looking forward, we are cautiously optimistic for a return of the RayCEP program, Fish Structure Building Days and Lake Cleanup Day. Additionally, we are excited to be partnering with USACE on yet another Handshake Project to add a brand new recreation activity in Seven Points (see Raystown Lake Disc Golf Course)! We'd also like to welcome new park ranger Scott Graham and ranger administrative secretary Megan Brantner to the USACE staff!

Summer will be here before you know it! Hang in there!

Didn't Receive Your Fall 2020 Newsletter?

Approximately 60 of our fall newsletters didn't go out due to an address positioning problem. The newsletter is available on our website, but if you would still like a hardcopy sent via US Postal Service, please contact us through our Facebook page or website, www.FriendsOfRaystownLake.com or call and leave a message for FRL Secretary Valerie Robbins-Rice at 814-643-4894.

**FRIENDS OF
RAYSTOWN LAKE
P.O. BOX 87
HESSTON, PA 16647**

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President + Ron Rabena
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2020 Annual Report

In January the US Army Corps of Engineers completed their annual report which provides an interesting snapshot of the 2020 year in review at Raystown Lake.

Recreation

In June, Raystown was granted a waiver to allow camping and beach use, and the remainder of the summer and fall saw extremely high visitation as trend changes related to COVID-19 pushed visitors outdoors and to the lake. Despite a 2 month delayed opening, Raystown's Seven Points campground was the number 1 revenue generating facility out of approximately 770 USACE campgrounds across the country. The campground saw a 35% increase in occupancy (50 percent occupancy in 2019 to 85 percent in 2020) and a total revenue increase of over \$175,000 from 2019 (despite fees remaining the same).

Resource

The natural resource staff partnered with the PA Game Commission to complete Rx fire and forest management, aquatic herbicide was applied to 82.5 acres of hydrilla, and there were 3 active timber sales underway in 2020. Due to COVID-19 there was no fish structure building program, but the staff worked with the PA Fish and Boat Commission to fell 25 shoreline trees for fish habitat. Additionally, stone deflectors were constructed as part of the shoreline stabilization project in Susquehannock.

Maintenance

Significant maintenance projects completed this past year include new roofs on the Visitor Center, Aitch shelter, and Corbin's Island shelter, new restroom facilities at Nancy's Campground, Corbin's Island and Shy Beaver, an expanded parking lot at Corbin's Island and campsite improvements in Susquehannock. In addition, significant engineering work continues on the Raystown Dam tainter gates. SUNOCO completed all pipeline construction work on the project and donated a pontoon boat to the FRL for various projects.



Captain's Quarters



BY RON RABENA, PRESIDENT

Finally a warm up at the end of February after a rough month of weather! The Friends of Raystown Lake is gearing up for spring. Plans are underway for the Raystown Bike Fest in May, and as the snow melts we will begin working on some repairs to the Allegrippis Trails. RayCEP is beginning to look at candidates for the upcoming season and working to secure grant funding for the upcoming season. FRL and Sunoco are working through red tape and forms to complete the donation of the pontoon boat. FRL along with several other organizations have been awarded a \$25,000 grant from the Army Corps of Engineers to build a disc golf course in the Seven Points Area. Fish structure construction will occur in April and the annual lake cleanup is scheduled for early May. Putt's Camp is receiving reservations for the upcoming year. So, things are underway and FRL continues to meet via Zoom for the immediate future. At some point when conditions allow the group to get together for a meeting, postponed elections will be held. Reminder that 2021 memberships are due and all the money goes to our projects! Thanks for your continued support!

- Ron



Raystown Lake Disc Golf Course

Birdie, Fairway, Backhand, Driver, Tomahawk. If you know anything about the sports of golf or ultimate frisbee, these terms probably sound familiar to you. Combine the two and you get disc golf, the newest outdoor recreation activity coming soon to Raystown Lake!

The US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Raystown Lake Project was recently selected as a recipient of \$25,000 as part of the Handshake Partnership Program that will be used to build a new 18-hole disc golf course in the Seven Points Recreation Area at Raystown Lake.

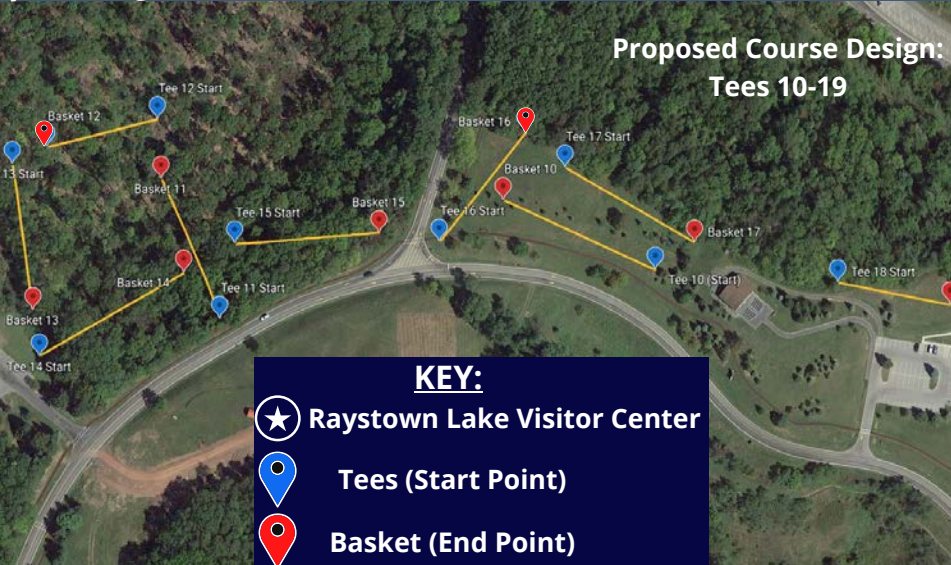
The Friends of Raystown Lake will partner with the US Army Corps of Engineers, the Standing Stone Disc Golf Club (SSDGC), Let's Go Throw, and the Huntingdon County Visitors Bureau (HCVB) to help design, construct, and promote the course. Rick Romo, owner of Let's Go Throw, is looking forward to the new opportunities the course will provide all Raystown visitors, stating that "the goal in designing and building this course will be that all visitors to our beautiful Raystown Lake region will have access to disc golf, which provides another means to live a healthier life."



Disc golf basket

The course will use the varied terrain and topographical features in the Seven Points area to make the course engaging for individuals or families learning how to play, novices seeking to build their skills, and experts looking for a challenge. Additionally, the course will attract a new user group, disc golfers, to Raystown Lake while also providing a new recreational activity to existing user groups, including campers, boaters, hikers, bikers, and more.

The anticipated start of the project is the early summer of 2021. Interested in volunteering? Contact park ranger Jenna Conner at (814) 658-6811.



UPCOMING EVENTS

- **FRL Meetings:** The Friends of Raystown Lake will hold monthly board meetings on Thursdays, March 11, April 8 and May 13. Meetings will begin at 7:00 pm. Currently held virtually, but subject to change.
- **Fish Building Structure Days- Apr 18 and 19:** Fish Structure Building Days will be held on Sunday, April 18th and Monday April 19th beginning at 8:00am. Location TBD. Volunteers are needed! Please contact (814) 658-6812.
- **Lake Cleanup- May 1:** The Annual FRL Cleanup Day will be held on Saturday, May 1st at the Tatman Run Boat Launch. Volunteer support is needed, including boat operators with boats. Please call (814) 658-6811. Free breakfast & lunch!



- **Ranger Orientation Scenarios- May 15:** Volunteer to help train our new seasonal Park Rangers in role playing scenarios on Sat, May 15. Contact Jenna Conner at (814) 658-6811 if you are interested.
- **Disc Golf Clinics- June 19, July 24, Aug 21:** Join us outside the Visitor Center for FREE disc golf clinics provided by Lets Go Throw. A great chance to learn the game or network with other disc golfers in the area before the new course is installed in Seven Points!

Membership Application

Please complete this application and send it along with a check payable to:

Friends of Raystown Lake
PO Box 87
Hesston, Pa 16647

- New Member Renewal
- Special Friend \$500 (lifetime)
- Individual Friend \$10/year
- Family Friend \$15/year
- Club / Organization Friend \$25/year
- Business Friend \$50/year
- Corporate Friend \$100/year

Extra Embroidered Patches: _____
@ \$3.00 each

Extra Decals: _____ @ \$1.00 each

Pins: _____ @ 5.00 each

Donation: _____

Please send my quarterly newsletter by email

Total Amount Enclosed: \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Thank You !



Membership Reminder

Please consider your 2021 membership ! Our memberships are set up on a calendar basis—January through December. As you may know, the bulk of our operating budget comes from membership fees. Please help to keep FRL strong and renew your membership today.

Pennsylvania Interscholastic Cycling League



At our FRL meeting this February, we were joined by guest speaker Melissa Davies from the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Cycling League (PICL) who shared information about the organization and potential events they have planned on the Allegrippis Trails in 2021.

PICL is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization that was founded in 2015 with the goal of "providing fun, safe, and competitive mountain biking opportunities for middle (grades 6-8) & high school students across Pennsylvania". The group is a subsidiary of the National Interscholastic Cycling Association (NICA) which works to empower youth across the country "to be part of a thriving and engaged cycling community".

This year, PICL plans to hold a "Allegrippis Coaches Retreat" on May 13-16 to provide training to team coaches and their 2nd annual "Awesome Allegrippis Adventure Weekend" from October 22-24 for approximately 400-600 youth and 200 coaches from across the state, which will feature scavenger hunts, group rides and stewardship events.



The group also participates in a NICA program known as the Teen Trail Corps which focuses on encouraging youth to serve and volunteer their time towards bike related advocacy activities, such as trail work. As a part of this program, PICL coaches and youth participants plan to volunteer during their spring and fall events and work with FRL trail coordinators to perform trail maintenance tasks.

PICL is also looking to start a team in the Raystown Lake region, so if you or someone you know is interested in coaching and mentoring youth in our region, please reach out to Melissa at melissa@pamtb.org or visit <https://www.nationalmtb.org/team-starter-kit/>.

ALLEGRIPPIS ACTION

By Brent Rader (FRL Board Member & Allegrippis Volunteer)



Things are quiet at the Allegrippis trails. Snow cover has kept all but the heartiest souls away. That's about to change though. Several events are in the works, making for an exciting year. The first event coming up is Raystown Bike Fest. Originally planned for last May, COVID necessitated delaying the premier edition of this event to May 21-23, 2021. To comply with COVID restrictions, the event will look a little different than Dirt Fests of old. Bike Fest will be a fun campout weekend centered around biking with your "pod".



Trail maintenance crew working on Osprey trail this season

In other news, the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Cycling League plans to return to the Allegrippis Trails later this year. This youth cycling association hosted a camp and ride weekend at Raystown in 2020 and plans to do so again this year. In exchange for using the trails, they plan to do some maintenance work for us.

FRL board member and trail volunteer Ken Smith has been busy doing a trail inventory over the course of the fall and winter. He has identified a comprehensive list of trouble areas that will assist us as we make maintenance decisions over the next few years. We're very appreciative of the work that he has put into this vital step!

Finally, as always, if you'd like to get involved with Allegrippis, please check our Facebook and Instagram accounts for happenings. We're always looking for new volunteers to help out on the trails! Hopefully, with more people getting vaccinated we'll be able to safely gather more often for trail maintenance this year. We know everyone is excited to get back out there, but please try to avoid riding wet trails, as it causes us serious maintenance headaches! Happy riding!

Friends of Raystown Lake
P.O. Box 87
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