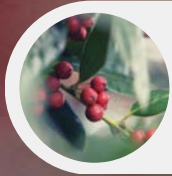




# THE DAM NEWSLETTER

A PUBLICATION OF THE FRIENDS OF RAYSTOWN LAKE

WINTER 2023 + ISSUE 1 + VOL 27



## Winter 2023

We've had an excellent and busy start to the new year at Raystown Lake!

The Raystown Lake drawdown is wrapping up as water levels slowly rise back to summer conservation pool 786.5 feet. Many projects that were initiated during last year's drawdown were completed this year. Just about every public facility at Raystown, including boat launches, beaches, campgrounds, marinas, etc., had some type of repair or improvement done during this period (see Annual Report)! Now that all scheduled projects have been accomplished, there are no additional lake drawdowns planned for the foreseeable future, so plan your shoreline viewing trips now before these areas go underwater again!

This has also been a season of change! If you hadn't already heard, FRL elected a new President and Vice President in January, which is certainly significant considering the outgoing officers held those positions for a combined 30+ years (see FRL Elections).

The 50th anniversary of the current Raystown Lake Dam is in 2024! Various local businesses, historians, stakeholders and residents from across the community are helping to plan ways to celebrate throughout the whole year! Planning meetings are held before the FRL meeting at 6 PM on the second Thursday of every month at Hoss's in Huntingdon! Come to share your ideas and hear about what's being scheduled!

Hope to see you there!

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

### Board of Directors

President + Matt Price  
Vice President + Michael Tome  
Secretary + Valerie Robbins-Rice  
Treasurer + Wayne Hearn

Cooperative Agency  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers,  
Raystown Lake Project  
6145 Seven Points Road  
Hesston, PA 16647  
(814) 658-3405



### Operations Manager

Jude Harrington

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# FRL Elections

The Friends of Raystown Lake is very excited to welcome a new President and Vice President to our board, who were elected at January's monthly meeting!

Matt Price was elected as the new FRL President, following the long tenure of Ron Rabena, who held the position for 25+ years. Additionally, Mike Tome was elected as the new Vice President, replacing Leslie Leckvarcik, who served in the role for 10+ years. Valerie Robbins-Rice and Wayne Hearn were reelected to the positions of Secretary and Treasurer.

We'd like to thank Ron and Leslie for their many years of service and commitment to serving the visitors and community members of the Raystown Lake Region. In 2021, Ron Rabena was awarded the Enduring Service Volunteer Award through the Corps Foundation for his impressive career as FRL President.

As a reminder, all officer positions are unpaid and our FRL officers and board members have donated countless volunteer hours to making Raystown a great place to stay and play! We look forward to seeing what Matt and Mike will accomplish in their new roles!

See Ron's final Captains Quarters below (try not to cry) and a word from our new President Matt Price on the following page of this newsletter!



Left to Right: Leslie (outgoing Vice President), Matt (new President), Ron (outgoing Vice President) and Mike (new Vice President)



## Captain's Quarters



BY RON RABENA, PRESIDENT (OUTGOING)

Despite the groundhog's prediction it looks like an early spring at Raystown Lake. Lots of changes and ongoing projects are ahead for Friends of Raystown Lake. After many years of leading the organization and at the ripe old age of 80, I am pleased to announce the Matt Price is the new President and Mike Tome is the new Vice President of FRL. A lot of good things happened at Raystown Lake during my tenure and Matt was in the middle of all of it. Matt was instrumental in the Allegrippis Bike Trails project and is a committee member of the annual Allegrippis Trail Days coming up in May. In his regular job as director of the Huntingdon County Visitors Bureau, Matt is spearheading the 50th anniversary of Raystown Lake celebration starting this year. I will be assisting Matt in administering the \$100,000 grant for the ongoing work that the PA Fish and Boat Commission is doing in the Trough Creek area for shoreline remediation and fishery habitat. I'll slowly start turning over other duties to Matt or committee's as he desires, but I will still be active in the organization. Thanks to all for many great years!

- Ron

# President Price's Inaugural Address

Friends is a plural noun.

I am proud to assume the presidency of the Friends of Raystown Lake – an organization that works to conserve the natural resources of Raystown Lake. From its roots creating an annual lake clean-up effort - to partnering with the American Chestnut Foundation to restore the forest that was once dominated by the statuesque trees - to working with Natural Biodiversity to establish a rain garden populated with native plants at the Raystown Lake Visitor Center - to coordinating the efforts of Juniata College and USACE to provide conservation education every summer for the past 16 years through RayCEP, the Friends of Raystown Lake has championed the resources of our public lands and waters.

I am proud to assume the presidency of the Friends of Raystown Lake – an organization that takes the lead in growing the use of public land and water for safe recreation. The Friends of Raystown Lake installed and continues to manage lighted navigation markers on Raystown Lake enhancing the safety of boating after dark. The Friends of Raystown Lake developed and manages the Allegrippis Trails, and in doing so, introduced a new set of recreation enthusiasts to the Raystown Lake Project. The Friends of Raystown Lake has worked with The Friends of Trough Creek and Warriors Path State Parks to rehabilitate the Terrace Mountain Trail making it safer and more usable for hikers. The Friends of Raystown Lake manages Putt's Camp for organized group camping, and most recently the Friends partnered with local disc golf clubs to create and plan for the sustainability of two new disc golf courses in the Seven Points Recreation Area.

I am proud to assume the presidency of the Friends of Raystown Lake – an organization whose board of directors is as dedicated a group of volunteers as I've seen anywhere. I accepted this nomination because I know of the expertise and commitment demonstrated by the board of directors. Mike Tome, our new Vice President is well-versed and connected with the conservation efforts of the Friends of Raystown Lake. Wayne Hearn, our treasurer, is perhaps the most qualified individual serving in that role for any organization as a Certified Public Accountant with decades of experience. Valerie Robbins-Rice has maintained the records of the organization for many years as secretary. Our past officers Ron Rabena and Leslie Leckvarcik continue to serve the organization's mission as directors at large after years at the helm.

I am proud to assume the presidency of the Friends of Raystown Lake – an organization that owes a great debt of gratitude to its long-time leader Ron Rabena. Ron has lead this organization from a loosely affiliated clean-up committee to a full-fledged partner with the Army Corps of Engineers in managing, maintaining and utilizing the public lands and waters we know as the Raystown Lake Project. The Friends of Raystown Lake, collectively, and Ron Rabena, individually, have been recognized nationally for partnership excellence with the Corps. Every project listed in the paragraphs above can be directly attributed to Ron Rabena's leadership.

I am proud to assume the presidency of the Friends of Raystown Lake, and I hope you will help in filling Ron's shoes, because I can't do it alone!



Sincerely,

*Matt Price*

# UPCOMING EVENTS

**FRL Meetings- Thursdays:** The Friends of Raystown Lake will hold monthly board meetings at 7 PM on Thursday, March 9, April 13 and May 11. We have returned to Hoss's Steak and Sea House in Huntingdon!

**Disc Golf Course Grand Opening- April 14:**

A ribbon cutting ceremony for the 9-hole "Pine" course and 18-hole "Ravine" course in Seven Points is scheduled for Friday, April 14, 2023. Additionally, the inaugural Raystown Open disc golf tournament is scheduled for the following day, Saturday, April 15. You can sign up at [dgsce.com](http://dgsce.com).

**Fish Building Structure Day- Mon, Apr 17:**

This annual event will be held on Monday, April 17 beginning at 8:00am. Location Snyder's Run. Volunteers are needed! Breakfast and lunch are provided! Please contact (814) 658-6813.



**Lake Cleanup Day- May 6:** The Annual FRL Cleanup Day will be held on Saturday, May 6th at the Tatman Run Boat Launch. Volunteer support is needed, including boat operators with boats. Please call (814) 658-6811. Free breakfast & lunch!

For most up-to-date information about all Raystown Lake events check the Corp's Facebook page at Raystown Lake, US Army Corps of Engineers or @raystownlakeproject

## 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**

- Individual Friend \$10/year
- Family Friend \$15/year
- Club / Organization Friend \$25/year
- Business Friend \$50/year
- Corporate Friend \$100/year
- Special Friend \$500 (lifetime)
- Other Donation Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

Extra Embroidered Patches: \_\_\_\_ @ \$3.00 each

Extra Decals: \_\_\_\_ @ \$1.00 each

Pins: \_\_\_\_ @ 5.00 each

Total Amount Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Please send my quarterly newsletter by email

THANK YOU!!!

SCAN ME!



## Membership Reminder

Please consider your 2023 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 thriving by renewing your membership today!

# Water Safety Employee Award

Rachael Gwinn, water safety intern at Raystown Lake, recently won the 2023 US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) National Water Safety Employee Award!

Rachael served as a Student Conservation Association (SCA) Water Safety Intern at Raystown Lake over the past 3 recreation seasons (May-September) from 2020-2022. During this time, Rachael spent countless hours talking to visitors at beaches, boat launches, campgrounds and on the water, contacting over 5,000 Raystown Lake visitors. Rachael also oversaw several successful water safety initiatives, such as the “I Got Caught Wearing My Life Jacket” campaign, and events like Glow Swim and Chalk the Walk. Despite being an intern, Rachael acted as a leader amongst her coworkers, helping to guide, mentor and train seasonal park rangers.

Rachael has been an invaluable asset to the Raystown family and a truly exceptional volunteer for USACE!!! Her exceptional accomplishments and commitment to the USACE water safety mission makes her highly deserving of this tremendous recognition, as these efforts help to save lives everyday!



## Opening Schedule

### USACE Facilities

Ridenour Overlook:	March 4
Baker's Hollow Water Pump:	April 1
Seven Points Camp Loops	
• Ridge, Meadow, Point, Senoia 1:	April 7
• Valley, Bay, Senoia 2:	May 18
Seven Points Beach:	May 19
Tatman Run Beach:	May 26
Susquehannock Campground:	May 26
Amphitheater (Summer Program Start Date):	May 26

### Gate Opening (Turkey Season)

High Germany (Gate 28):	April 28 - June 1
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### Restrooms

Oak, Seven Points Boat Launch 1:	March 17
Raystown Lake Dam:	March 28
Seven Points Entrance Station:	April 7
Pine, Mushroom, Miller, Laurel,	
Seven Points Boat Launch 2:	May 12
Boat Launches:	Open Year Round

### Concessionaires

Branch Camp:	April 1
Lake Raystown Resort	
• Campground, marina, restaurant:	April 14
Seven Points Marina:	April 28
Lighthouse Concessions:	May 26

# Annual Report

The US Army Corps of Engineers recently completed their annual report, which provides an extensive summary of the successful projects, partnerships and programs occurring at Raystown Lake in 2022.

## Recreation

The increased visitation trends we've seen the past 2 years continued into 2022 as just shy of 1.6 million people visited Raystown Lake. Seven Points campground fell to the second highest revenue generating USACE campground in the country, but still had its best financial year to date, grossing \$1,034,412. The beginner friendly "Pine 9" disc golf course was completed in 2022 and the more challenging "Ravine 18" course will open this April following a ribbon cutting ceremony! A new picnic shelter was constructed on Oak Peninsula and dedicated in June to former park ranger Don Donaldson, who served Raystown Lake for 39 consecutive summers.

## Resource

One resource highlight of the year was the installation of 3 new vernal pools at Raystown Lake, which create a water source for breeding frogs and amphibian species. USACE worked with Juniata College and the Pennsylvania Game Commission to protect over 43 turtle nests on the nesting mounds at Riverside. Herbicide was applied to 28 acres of terrestrial invasives and 126 acres of aquatic invasives, primarily hydrilla. There were 2 active timber sales completed in 2022 that generated over \$430k, the most profitable sales ever at Raystown.

## Maintenance

2022 was a big year for major facility repairs and improvements at Raystown! The drawdowns over the past 2 years presented opportunities for some unique projects, including the construction of a fishing pier and boat mooring area at Twin Hollows, regrading of the public swim beaches, repairs to 3 boat ramps, replacement of the Weaver Falls courtesy dock, sediment removal and shoreline stabilization at Nancy's Camp and Tatman Run, debris removal, and more! Additionally, the first phase of the 3 stage Raystown Lake Dam repair project was completed with finalization of the \$12 million Raystown Dam Tainter Gate Rehabilitation contract. The second phase began with the inspection and placement of bulk heads on the underwater cold water control tunnel gates.

Friends of Raystown Lake  
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