



Evan Hadad, oldest grandchild

Hadad's Way Inaugurated

By Edward Hadad

This past spring a Preserve trail was officially named Hadad's Way in memory and honor of Herbert Hadad, a founding board member of the Friends of the Rockefeller State Park Preserve and volunteer for over 25 years. Hadad, who passed away in late 2021 at the age of 85, was an award-winning writer with a celebrated career as a reporter, essayist, public relations representative, speech writer, and press officer. He was a resident of Pocantico Hills for 40 years and the co-creator of this publication, *The Preserve Observer*, which he produced for the past 25 years with his wife and fellow Board member Evelyn.

The idea for naming the trail was brought forth by Peter Iskenderian,

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The Travelers Among Us

By Clare Pierson

I recently read an article in one of my wonderful herbal publications, called "Every herb is a native somewhere," by the late Barbara Williams. The author discusses at great length the effect that the moving tectonic plates had on plant populations throughout the ages, as well as the role that humans have played in the years of recorded history. The influences of our travel and trade, as well as inadvertent introduction of plants, is very significant.

It got me thinking about our definitions of native versus other. Often, we think of plants that we are accustomed to, or have a use for as established, and they no longer bear the label of invasive. Agricultural plants that we brought, and that behave in ways we expect and prefer are seen as useful and non-threatening.

Then there are a number of plants that we have introduced locally for their great tenacity at holding the soil, for instance, like Kudzu, *Pueraria montana*, or Japanese knotweed, *Reynoutria japonica*. These

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Photo: Mark Liffander

*Back Row (l to r): George Gumina, William Hochul Jr., Erik Kulleseid
Front Row (l to r): Lucy Rockefeller Waletzky, Gov. Kathy Hochul, Kim Elliman, Jennifer Cunningham*

Rockwood Hall Garden Party

The rain had been pouring all morning, the skies then opened, the sun appeared and the Friends Garden Party began on Saturday, June 24, 2023 at Rockwood Hall. In attendance were New York State Governor Kathy Hochul, Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, Parks Commissioner Erik Kulleseid, Honorary Co-Chairs Kim Elliman, great-great-grandson of William Rockefeller and Lucy Rockefeller Waletzky, MD, great granddaughter of John

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**Gala Photos
on page 3**

Image: Detail from Lily Splendor by Bonnie Sakoff.

Hadad's Way, *continued from page 1*

Preserve Manager, and Laurence Gill, Director of Operations of the park. "Many of you are aware that we recently lost our good friend Herbert Hadad, a friend to the Preserve for so many years we cannot count them," said Iskenderian. "In Herb's honor we are naming a trail and putting a memorial pollinator garden at the park entrance across from the Union Church and the firehouse."

The trailhead, as Iskenderian mentions, is located on Bedford Road (Route 448) nestled in the middle of Pocantico Hills, directly across the street from the Union Church. Hadad's Way leads visitors into the Preserve along a section of the old Putnam Railroad line, next to a bubbling stream, that then culminates at the intersection of the Greenrock Road trail and the Pocantico Gate trail.

In conjunction with the naming of the trail was the establishment of two pollinator gardens, a fern garden, and numerous improvements to the fencing, which runs along several sections of the trail. Expenses were covered from private donations from many in the community, including Aris Economides, Barbara Goodman, and the Hadad Family. Volunteers and family members prepped the site for the new gardens and then gathered on April 20 to help plant a beautiful array of Coneflowers, Milkweed, Aster, Sundrops, Mountain Mint, Wild Geraniums, Butterfly Weed, Agastache, various ferns, and more. This effort included integral participation and financial support from the Pocantico Hills Homeowners Association and Garden Club, with much help from both Phyllis Lerner and Gwen Jones. The efforts of both the Ford and Graham families, whose properties border the new gardens, were also crucial in keeping the new plants watered during the heat of the summer. And the Nowell

Family, whose home borders the trail as well, promises to guard over it with love and care.

Herbert first moved to Tarrytown in the mid-1970s and became enthralled when he discovered Pocantico Hills. At that time, the official state park had not yet been established, although much of the private Rockefeller lands were open to the public. He moved his young family, which

now included a daughter named Sara Jameela, to Pocantico for he wanted to live as close to the trails as possible. At a dedication ceremony held in June, Charles Hadad, son of Herbert, spoke of the family's history, his father's love of the Preserve, and his many years of service in supporting it. Charles told the participants, "For decades the Preserve has been a refuge for every member of the family, and a place of peace and contemplation. In the final weeks of my father's life, it also became a place of solace."

Evelyn Hadad encapsulated the dedication and new gardens with her remarks, "They say it takes a village to raise a child and I would say that it also takes a village to name a special trail and to create a beautiful memorial garden. Because that's what happened here. A village of exceptional people came together to make this happen. My family and I would like to thank these people from the bottom of our hearts. I know Herb is looking down on this group and smiling from ear to ear, and most likely has a martini in his hand."

Edward Hadad is the eldest son of Herbert Hadad and is a certified financial planner with Financial Asset Management Corporation that is based in New York.



The Herbert Hadad Family

Photo: Elizabeth Gentry

Pocantico Hills Marathon and Half Marathon

Friends will once again host a Marathon/Half Marathon on **Saturday, November 11** starting at 8 am. The scenery will be beautiful, the hills will be tough and a good time will be had by all, hopefully. Come join in the fun! Details for signing up are at our website www.friendsrock.org.



Start of 2022 Pocantico Hills Marathon/Half Marathon

Photo: Heidi Fuhrman

Garden Party, *continued from page 1*

D. Rockefeller, Sr., Friends President George Gumina, members of the William and John D. Rockefeller's two branches of the family, and many supporters of the Rockefeller State Park Preserve.

Friends President Gumina welcomed everyone and informed the gathering that New York State has a vision for an appropriate entryway for Rockwood Hall. Right now there is just an informal path leading up to the remains of the mansion that William Rockefeller had owned. The plan would also include additional parking and other amenities and an informational kiosk detailing how William Rockefeller bought the land, made a magnificent paradise and how NYS came to own it currently. The funds from the Garden Party will contribute to realizing this project and the presence of everyone who attended will start to make that a reality.

Governor Hochul thanked Lucy Rockefeller Waletzky for her 14 years as head of the New York State Council of Parks and for her tireless energy in getting things done. She mentioned that Lucy would even bring her own resources to a plan to serve as a catalyst in encouraging others that projects were possible. Gov. Hochul thanked George Gumina for his work with the Friends and in taking such good care

of the Rockefeller Preserve. She thanked Kim Elliman in his role as CEO of Open Space Society and his constantly reminding people how important open spaces are to our health and mental well-being. She thanked Commissioner Kulleseid for being such a good steward of all the parks under his control, no matter their size. And finally, she thanked her husband for being the first gentleman for the state and for all the times they had camped and hiked and roamed with their children in state parks.

Parks Commissioner Kulleseid mentioned that the Governor is a promoter of state parks and had championed the passage of a 4.2 billion-dollar Environmental Bond Act by voters last year. She has also designated 200 million dollars in the current budget for Parks capital improvements to invest in enhancing and improving state parks. She also increased the pay for lifeguards at the public swimming pools. He said there was no Governor more familiar, or more appreciative, of our State Parks.

All the people who attended delighted in such a beautiful setting as Rockwood Hall and a delicious and exciting luncheon. Friends President Gumina encouraged everyone to keep hiking or walking on the Preserve and he hoped to see them out there, even in the winter!



Photos: Mark Ljflander

Hulda's Night Is Huge Success!

When Preserve Manager Peter Iskenderian first started working at the park, he said, "Let's do something for Halloween!" He teamed up with Ranger Su (aka Susan Lewenz, Park Communications Coordinator), to create Hulda's Night.

Ranger Su said, "In studying the local history, we discovered this legend, as old as that of the headless horseman, but which was little known. Hulda was a real historical figure and her hut in the play may very well be standing on the exact spot where her actual home had been. I think of the theme as representing all the misunderstood throughout the ages, something very important to me." The pictures shown here will give you a flavor for the evening - enjoy!



Photos: Margaret Fox

Friends Donation to Pocantico Hills Fire Department

By Brian Geary

Staff from Rockefeller State Park Preserve (RSPP) joined members of local fire, EMS and police departments at the Pocantico Hills fire station for a wildfire training session. The training was led by Joseph Pries, a forest ranger with the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC). Ranger Pries has extensive experience fighting wildfires and he is currently assigned to DEC's division of Forest Protection.

With the tragedy of Maui still in the headlines and memories of smoke from Canadian wildfires still lingering, the training covered strategies and tactics for containing and suppressing wildfires. Participants also discussed conditions and challenges unique to RSPP. Ranger Pries referenced the 2022 wildfire in Minnewaska State Park that started as a result of a suspected lightning strike and spread to approximately 142 acres within the park. Coordination between the emergency response agencies and their varying resources and capabilities played a critical role in containing the Minnewaska wildfire.

After the training wrapped up, PHFD provided a catered dinner buffet. It was an excellent opportunity for participants to form relationships, discuss their own firefighting experiences, and learn about the different resources of the departments in attendance.

Good plans require good people. Both could be found at the Pocantico Hills Fire station that night!



Staff from Rockefeller State Park Preserve and members of local fire, EMS and police departments receiving wildfire training at Pocantico Hills Fire station.

Photo: Brian Geary



From the Friends President

By George Gumina

Dear Friends,

It has been an exciting year so far and only seems to be getting better!

The Garden Party Gala was a big success in June where Governor Kathy Hochul spoke and pledged her continued support for the Preserve as a necessary part of our daily life. (*Please see article on page 1.*) Many members of the William Rockefeller branch of the family attended and saw Rockwood Hall for the first time! And the proceeds are going toward the creation of a formal entrance for Rockwood Hall and additional parking.

We had our annual Rocky's 5K on October 14 and are following up with the Half Marathon/Full Marathon on Saturday, November 11. Although there are hills in all the races, it gets your heart pumping while you enjoy beautiful scenery. We also have our popular Hunter Pace on Sunday, November 5. As you can see, there are plenty of events for you to participate in while experiencing the benefit of being in our beloved Preserve.

We are also mourning the passing of a stalwart supporter of the Friends, and especially of our races, Joe Golden. Joe could always be seen behind the lens of his camera catching all the excitement and the trials and triumphs of the individual runners. He was truly a gem! He was generous and kind and also mentored many young people in his passion, which was photography. We will miss him and dedicated the Rocky's 5K to him this year. A story about Joe and his interesting background by Estella Medina, a Friends board member, will be coming in our next issue

A special attraction put on in October by the Preserve and supported by the Friends was Hulda's Night. The retelling of a local Sleepy Hollow Legend in the depths of the woods after a stroll, with stops along the way, and talks by interesting characters. What could be more fun! Or inform you better of the fascinating history right at your doorstep.

Our art gallery in the Visitor Center curated by Audrey Leeds always has marvelous exhibits for you to take in, after your walk through the Preserve. Such a nice way to end a nature visit with some art culture.

Wishing you a Happy Thanksgiving and encourage you to keep taking walks. It's the best thing for your mind and for your soul!



From the Cover: Lily Splendor by Bonnie Sakoff.

Board of Directors

Friends of the Rockefeller State Park Preserve

George Gumina, *President*

M. Evelyn Hadad, *Vice President*

John Nonna, *Secretary*

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Stella Medina

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Kimberly K. Rockefeller

Donald W. Stever

Ron Vogl

Administrative Director: Jessika Creedon

Volunteering at the Preserve

By Ranger Su



At the Preserve we are blessed to have such a great community of supporters, including our many volunteers, as well as those who are members and contributors to the Friendsrock.org support organization. We have a growing online community via social media community (we just hit 6600 followers on Facebook!).

When there isn't a hiring freeze as there is now, our entire team is 13 parttime and fulltime employees. To give you an idea of what this means, we have 2 people to maintain the flora and fauna of the entire 1700 acres of the Preserve (i.e. our Stewards). So, we are very reliant and EXTREMELY thankful for our volunteers and this issue is dedicated to all of them! Below, short summary of some of our volunteer programs and how to learn more. If you want to get involved, please reach out, but be persistent as sometimes we can get swamped! Sign up to join our volunteer list at: rockefellerstateparkpreserve.org/volunteer

STEWARDSHIP TEAM	Stewards help with habitat restoration and trail maintenance! There is always something different to work on; whether it be removing invasive plant species to help natives grow, maintaining existing native habitat, assisting in plantings, or clearing debris from trails. CONTACT: stewards@rockefellerstateparkpreserve.org
GARDENING TEAM	Every week volunteers come and care for the Preserve's magnificent gardens, including our world-famous Japanese Tree Peony Garden. We are seeking volunteers to join the team. The group meets every Monday, however, once trained, gardeners often come when time best suits them. CONTACT: gardens@rockefellerstateparkpreserve.org
GUARDIANS OF THE PRESERVE	The Guardians Program is a dedicated group who commit to weekly trail patrols and help with light maintenance and overall protection of the Preserve. Guardians contribute to the enjoyment of visitors by encouraging and engaging them to understand the purpose of the Preserve and its varied offerings. CONTACT: volunteers@rockefellerstateparkpreserve.org
MONARCH AMBASSADORS	Volunteers train to become certified Monarch Ambassador for the Preserve, learning how to protect these beloved pollinators by creating and maintaining habitat, as well as raising and releasing. To date, we estimate we have released over 1000 butterflies into the Preserve. CONTACT: monarchs@rockefellerstateparkpreserve.org
HULDA'S NIGHT	Hulda's Night is an immersive outdoor theater experience in IV Acts performed in the Preserve at night. Staged the last 2 weeks of October only, Hulda is a community favorite. Our volunteers have a great time, get free tickets and are a critical part of this unique park experience. CONTACT: hulda@rockefellerstateparkpreserve.org
CORPORATE DAYS PROGRAMS	The Preserve collaborates with local industry and organizations to host volunteer workdays for corporate, church, school, and other groups (10 to 20 people). Workdays are a healthy opportunity to engage in team building and fulfill social responsibility goals. CONTACT: volunteers@rockefellerstateparkpreserve.org
CUSTOM PROGRAMS	We work with many local companies and organizations who have a need for custom volunteer programs, including Community Service obligations. CONTACT: volunteers@rockefellerstateparkpreserve.org



Not able to volunteer? You can still help by donating to the Friends! Contact friends@friendsrock.org



Stewardship Team

"SIGNS OF SPRING CAMPAIGN"
(watch for it!)

We have over 150 new signs to install and will need LOTS of help!




Hulda's Night



Monarch Ambassadors




GUARDIANS



BE AN RSPFP TRAIL TRASH TERMINATOR



COEXIST
ROCKEFELLER STATE PARK PRESERVE

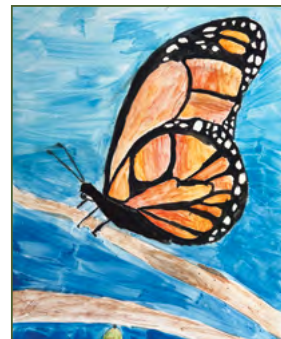
❖ Gallery Schedule at a Glance ❖



Bouquet of Flowers

HAILEY'S SECOND ANNUAL CHARITY ART AUCTION LASTS UNTIL SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 19!

Hailey Schott is a 12-year old artist living in Westchester County and is one of Rockefeller State Park Preserve's most dedicated volunteers! She considers the Preserve her "second home". A member of the Guardian volunteers for RSP, she co-leads the monthly Full Moon Hikes and educates visitors as a Monarch Ambassador.



Monarch Watercolor

Hailey decided to sell her original art pieces to raise money for the Preserve last year and is doing so again this year. Hailey enjoys working with a wide variety of mediums – acrylics on canvas, watercolors, paintings on porcelain, sculptures and more. Although her gallery exhibit just ended, the auction of her works will not end until November 19, 2023.

Please take a look at the items for sale on the Auction Site. To view Hailey's art items and bid on the auction, go to the Friends web site: www.friendsrock.org. Come join the fun!



Fawn



AMANDA GORMAN



MICHELE SAVOGLIOU



MALALA YOUSAFZAI



NORAH O'DONNELL



JANE ALEXANDER



FRIDA KAHLO



ALISON STEWART



TINA TURNER



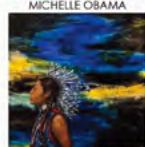
KIMBERLY ROCKEFELLER



RUTH BADER GINSBERG



MICHELLE OBAMA



SONIC NATIVE AMERICAN



DOROTHY GILLESPIE



KATHY YULAJ



SONIC GEISHA



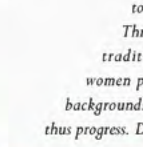
SONIC SUFFRAGETTE



JELENA PAVLOVIC



MARGARET CHO



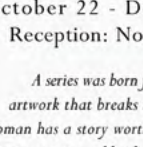
NAYA GRILLO



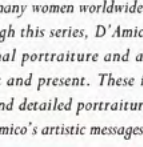
LEANNE MORGAN



MEGAN RAPNOE



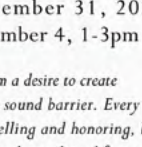
ELIZABETH TAYLOR



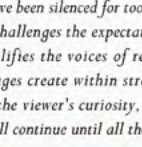
TINA TURNER



LEANNE MORGAN



MEGAN RAPNOE



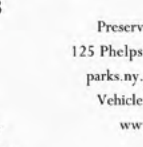
ELIZABETH TAYLOR



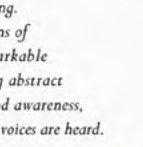
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LEANNE MORGAN



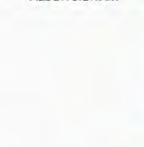
MEGAN RAPNOE



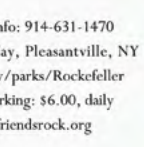
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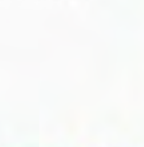
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LEANNE MORGAN



MEGAN RAPNOE



ELIZABETH TAYLOR



TINA TURNER



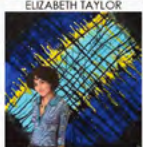
LEANNE MORGAN



MEGAN RAPNOE



ELIZABETH TAYLOR



TINA TURNER

The Art Gallery at the Rockefeller State Park Preserve presents

"THE SONIC HEROINES" featuring works by artist, Lisa D'Amico

October 22 - December 31, 2023
Reception: November 4, 1-3pm

Curated by Audrey Leeds
Gallery Hours: 9:00am - 4:30pm, daily
Gallery Info: proceeds1@gmail.com
Graphics by Laurence Gill
NYS Parks

Preserve Info: 914-631-1470
125 Phelps Way, Pleasantville, NY
parks.ny.gov/parks/Rockefeller
Vehicle Parking: \$6.00, daily
www.friendsrock.org

A series was born from a desire to create artwork that breaks the sound barrier. Every woman has a story worth telling and honoring, but too many women worldwide have been silenced for too long. Through this series, D'Amico challenges the expectations of traditional portraiture and amplifies the voices of remarkable women past and present. These images create within strong abstract backgrounds and detailed portraiture, the viewer's curiosity, and awareness, thus progress. D'Amico's artistic messages will continue until all their voices are heard.

URBANSAPES, PLACES & SPACES: PRESERVING NATURE

October 21, 2023 - January 15, 2024 at the New York Hall of Science

Michael Garber • Walter LeCroy • Bobbi Lane • Lee Varis

From the Preserve Manager

By Peter Iskendarian

It was quite a busy summer at the Rockefeller State Park Preserve. The Preserve was filled with people enjoying the best the Preserve has to offer, because on the other days the wind and the heavy rains kept us all inside and created quite a mess on the carriage roads. Between downed trees, clogged drains, and deep ruts, the team was out making sure the carriage roads remained open. Between the supervisors and me, we have worked hard over the past two years to get the right equipment and build a team that can manage these large tasks in house. We need to be able to go out at a moment's notice and tackle these problems. As the number of visitors has increased over the past 3 years, it's more important than ever for the staff to keep the carriage roads open and accessible to our guests.

The Preserve is unique in that almost the entire 55-mile carriage road system is accessible to individuals of all abilities, drawing people from all over the tri state for relaxation and exercise. The historic carriage road system that meanders through the Preserve was designed by John D. Sr. and Jr. to take advantage of the natural surroundings and the beauty this country setting has to offer. The Rockefeller Family were at the forefront in understanding the importance that nature played in a person's health and wellbeing and thus the carriage road system has been open to the public since its inception in the early 20th century and has remained open for guests to enjoy since.

Ensuring accessibility for all people is crucial for promoting inclusivity in outdoor activities, which is a primary goal of ours. The features and general design of the carriage roads support our mission of inclusivity in the following ways:

Pathway Design – The carriage roads should always have a smooth surface and a wide pathway that not only accommodates carriages but also a wide range of wheelchairs and mobility devices. The carriage roads should be clear of obstacles like roots and rocks.

Surface Quality – The carriage road surface should be firm, stable and slip resistant to facilitate easy movement for individuals using wheelchairs or mobility aids.

Signage and Information – Clear, accessible signage with bright colors and large imprint options can help individuals

with visual impairments navigate the roads. Information about accessibility is readily available online or at the Preserve office.

Rest Areas – Rest areas with benches and rocks have been strategically placed throughout the Preserve along the carriage roads, providing opportunities for people with disabilities to take a break.

Accessible Facilities – Restrooms/visitors center, the office, parking lots and the small picnic area in the parking lot are designed to be near the major trailheads and accommodate individuals with disabilities.

Sensory Considerations – The carriage roads were designed to incorporate sensory needs, like providing quiet areas for those with sensitivities and incorporating sensory-rich elements for those who benefit from them. Some examples are Swan Lake and the babbling brook on Brook Trail.

Trail Loops – The creation of trail loops throughout the Preserve is beneficial to people with disabilities. Trail loops allow individuals to enjoy shorter segments of the trail if the full length is challenging.

Regular Maintenance – Although our crew is small, they are out there daily, maintaining the carriage roads, ensuring they are in good condition and accessible to all.

By incorporating these considerations, the carriage roads will continue to offer a place for recreation, while becoming more inclusive, allowing individuals with disabilities to fully enjoy the beauty of the Preserve and outdoor activities. In keeping with our mission, the Preserve is holding its first Abilities Day celebration on November 19. It will be an exciting day of live music, activities, and a self-guided hike around Swan Lake.



Photo: Michael Garber



Photo: Herbert Hadad

Travelers, *continued from page 1*

are two very hardy plants we now see as dangerous and destructive, and that we need to fight. Once a plant has been labeled as dangerous, our attitude about how to manage it can become more extreme. Fear is, in many instances, one of the driving forces behind managing such a plant.

The most recent object of fear is the Spotted Lantern fly. Videos of New Yorkers stomping on these bugs are everywhere, and they do seem to be destructive with the goop they spread. I've killed a few myself, and cut down several *Ailanthus* trees, their natural hosts.

It turns out the spotted lantern fly have an infection in their lungs.

I am no scientist, so I do not know where the infection has come from, nor how long it will take until these bugs become just another part of our landscape. My farmer friends, who have a much more informed view of the natural world than I, seem to feel that we are at the peak of a cycle, and that we will not see the same numbers of spotted lantern fly for a while, if at all.

Given what I see as a certain amount of ambiguity, where others see black-and-white, I was thrilled to be invited to teach in a series at the park about the uses of these plants that we are struggling with.

The first class was taught by Greg Rosen, who is a forager with deep experience and knowledge. He studied and lived in Japan for five years, so many of the plants that we met, he knew in their native habitat. The fascinating thing was that some of them are deeply revered plants there. Mugwort, *artemisia vulgaris*, was one that stood out for me. As an herbalist, I understand many of the uses of Mugwort as a medicinal. But the Japanese think of Mugwort as a good plant for almost everything. They use it as food, they use it as medicine, it is used as part of the ancient system of acupuncture.



Detail of mature Mugwort leaf

Marie Viljoen led the second class, and it was equally amazing. We talked about many of the same plants but from a completely different perspective. We visited Japanese Knotweed, so feared, and also apparently so delicious. She makes a wonderful pickle from the stems when they are tender, as well as eating the seeds. She uses the stems instead of leeks in vichyssoise.... she is a really talented chef!

I taught the third class in the series in June, and I was able to talk about many medicinals that happen to also be unwanted plants. I'll briefly mention two, Mugwort and Japanese Knotweed.

Mugwort, as its name implies, was an integral part of beer making in Europe. It is also an essential part of vermouth. Apparently you cannot call it vermouth if it does not contain Mugwort. As a medicinal Mugwort is very healing to the liver. One sees it along the side of the road everywhere, and as many medicinals tend to do, it seems to have come to us where we need it the most. Our bodies are assaulted with poisons in the air, in the water, and in the soil. And our minds and our hearts struggle with the stress of modern life. All these things affect our livers.

Mugwort is wonderful for helping us capture our dreams and remember them. It's a central herb for women in all phases of their lives. Marie Viljoen uses it as a substitute for rosemary and sage. I make smudge sticks with it for cleansing the energy in a space.

Japanese knotweed also seems to have come where we need it. This is a deeply powerful medicinal plant. It is an anti-spirochetal, so very helpful for fighting Lyme disease. In addition to being an anti-spirochete, it also has the ability to cross the blood brain barrier, which allows the medicine to get into the brain where Lyme often goes to hide and cause havoc. Japanese knotweed is a very powerful anti-microbial, and is under study to be added to natural packaging for our food to fight listeria, *E. coli*, and streptococcus. The honey made by bees that collect nectar from the flowers of the Japanese knotweed is as powerful an anti-microbial as Manuka honey. It also contains Resveratrol, a prized anti-inflammatory.



Japanese Knotweed

Observing plant populations over many years here in the park, I see subtle shifts, entire groups of plants moving from one place to another, and diseases showing up. The natural world is not static. It has its own rhythms, often in longer time frames than we are interested in, but in the long run very effective. Sometimes we might consider allowing the natural world to influence how we address a plant population.

2024 Friends Exciting Gala



Photo: Mark Lijander

NYS Senate President
Andrea Stewart-Cousins



The honoree for the Friends 2024 Gala will be NYS Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins. She will receive the John D. Rockefeller Park Preservation Award for her tremendous work in supporting parks throughout New York State. The festivities will take place at the famed Rockefeller Playhouse next June 2024. Please follow our website for details closer to the event.

Rockefeller State Park Preserve Staff

Operations

Peter Iskenderian, Preserve Manager
Laurence Gill, P&R Supervisor / Director of Operations
Linda Parker, Office Manager
Tom Starr, Parking Lot & Patron Services

Conservation & Stewardship

Joshua DiPaola, Natural Resource Specialist
Devyani Mishra, Stewardship Crew Leader
Kim Fendrich, Environmental Educator
Susan Lewenz, "Ranger Su", Conservation Communicator
Collin Sugrue, Steward

Maintenance

Maso Robinson, Head of Buildings/Grounds
Jack Gandolfo, Buildings/Grounds Keeper
Stacy Robinson, Buildings/Grounds Keeper
Edwin Gonzalez, Buildings/Grounds Keeper

Art Gallery

Audrey Leeds, Gallery Curator

Rocky's Ramble Still Rocks

The 5K Rocky's Ramble went off without a hitch at 9 am on Saturday, October 14. Rain had been predicted but it held off until the runners had finished. Everyone had a great time, including our oldest participant, Dr. Lucy Rockefeller Waletzky (pictured at right), who finished first in her category, 80 years old and above. She is an inspiration to all of us!



Photo: Jessika Creaton

The race was dedicated to a longtime volunteer photographer Joe Golden, who passed away suddenly several months ago. At every race, you could see Joe snapping pictures of the participants. This year Taylor Burnett, a young girl that Joe had mentored, took the pictures to honor him. We also thank the many, many volunteers who supported this event. It would not happen were it not for these stalwart volunteers, registering participants, guiding runners along the path, handing out water, and cheering everyone to finish!



Photo: Taylor Burnett

Irene Kalbian, 1st
place female winner

The sponsors, whom we also appreciate very much, were:

- Wegmans
- Westchester Road Runner
- Pedego
- Amrita
- Briarcliff Fire Department
- NYS Parks Recreation and Historic Preservation

You can consult our website for all the race results. It was a grand day!



Reaching the Friends

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Rockefeller State Park Preserve
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The Preserve Observer

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Editor: Evelyn Hadad
Letters and submissions are invited.
Please contact us c/o the Friends.



The Preserve Observer

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HERE TO ENJOY...OURS TO PRESERVE

Hunter Pace Celebrates the Rockefeller Park Equestrian Legacy

By Patricia Jones

On November 5th, the Friends of Rockefeller State Park Preserve is, for the second consecutive year, returning to the Hunter Pace format for our annual equestrian event. The event is anchored by a tent in Rockwood Hall and efficient horse van parking in the field north of Rockwood.

Building on the successful 2022 event that attracted more than 70 teams, the 2023 Pace will include a new 8-12 mile course with more jumps and new fields through beautiful Rockefeller State Park Preserve. Good prizes and raffles await. Awards will be announced at 2pm.

The Friends will again partner with the Hudson Valley Horses organization, led by horsewoman Christine Nastasi, who co-chairs the Pace. Information can be found at www.friendsrock.org/pace. For the first time, riders who contributed an additional \$40 received a free pass valid from November 2023 through April 2024 and will be mailed a new pass in May for 2024-2025. There are nearly 50 miles of additional trails to be explored!

Riders and non-riders will enjoy upgraded dining provided by CIA trained gourmet chef, Jason Makely. Non-riders may dine for \$20 from a menu to include soup, entrees, pasta, salad and dessert. Hot drinks and water are included. Wine will be available for purchase.

Come prepared to enjoy graceful horses, spectacular Hudson River views, good food and good company in a beautiful park.



Photo: Heidi Fuhrman

Scene from last year's exciting Pace