Friends of Salt Springs Park
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Special Edition

Cloudy, cool, wet weather? That didn't stop a couple hundred people from coming to Salt Springs this April to hike, camp, fish, volunteer, hunt for Easter eggs, and perform and attend a water-blessing ceremony. This special edition of the e-letter will share some of the highlights. We thank Diana Bean for contributing page one

Trail Day Cleanup, April 23

Volunteers who helped clean up the trails at Salt Springs Park on Saturday brought an enthusiasm that more than made up for the damp, dreary weather.

About 45 people took part in the annual cleanup. Torrential rains in the morning kept some people away but the rain stopped and the wind died down in time for crews to hit the almost 13 miles of trails, moving debris and picking up garbage.

With no pollen, no rain and no hot sun, it was a perfect day to be out, said Lisa and Stan Staros, who brought their three teenagers and a friend from Thompson, Pa. "The kids were really excited to come," Lisa said.

After cleaning their section of the Cliff Trail, the family took a break while daughter Jessica fished for trout in the fast-moving stream.

Tami and Kevin Noonan of Endwell, N.Y., had another section of Cliff Trail, where they bagged some garbage, including part of a plastic chair.

Tami has been coming to the park since about 1985. She and her husband, Kevin, had their second date in the park and were married there in October 2009.

Despite all that history, cleanup day gave her a new perspective. "I got to see a part of the park I'd never seen before," she said.

Longtime park volunteer Ellen Fortunato of Conklin, N.Y., also walked a section of trail that was new to her. With clippers in hand, she nipped scrub starting to encroach on part of the Friends Trail.

Throughout the year, Fortunato works the sides of the brook up to the waterfalls. "I try to get the knotweed out so you can actually see the river," she said.

Among the last families to come off their assigned trail was the Abel family – Sherry, Eric, Erica and Eric Jr. – who came all the way from Honesdale. They've camped at the park, and Eric said the family came for cleanup day because they are committed to spending more time together outdoors this year. Cleaning the popular Hemlock and Woodland trails was clearly muddy work. But Eric had another word for it: "Spiritual."

Stan Staros gives daughter, Jessica, some pointers as she fishes for trout. Stan and his wife, Lisa, of Thompson, Pa., brought their three teenagers and a friend to help clean up the park. They worked part of the Cliff Trail near the Frog Pond. "It's as clean as clean can be," Stan said.

Tami and Kevin Noonan of Endwell joined the volunteers to help clean trails at Salt Springs Park on April 23. They were married in the park in October 2009.

The Abel family came from Honesdale, Pa., to help clean up the park. From left are Sherry, Erica, Eric and Eric, Jr. Sherry says they took an occasional break from getting muddy to just enjoy the peace and quiet.

April 23, Trail Day Cleanup

Trail assignments were given out along with maps and garbage bags and T-shirts.

William Wellman and Jack Davis.

Everyone was well-fed afterward.

Also on April 23rd

From April 17 to April 23, water was carried 90 miles on foot from the Neversink Reservoir in New York state to Salt Springs Park by five women and a healer. This event, **Walk About Water**, was a grassroots initiative to raise awareness of the sacredness of our water and lands. The water was carried in a hand-crafted vessel call an amphora. It and other water samples were blessed in a ceremony near the salt spring. These pictures show the ceremony.

And an Easter Egg Hunt! Ready, Set, Go!

Saturday, April 16

This was a busy day, too. The 2011 trout seasoned began at 8 am, and this year the Friends offered the hungry fishing men, women, and kids hot food and drinks for sale.

In the afternoon, 12 volunteers did some heavy work on the trails in preparation for the major cleanup on the 23rd. They cleared away downed trees with chainsaws and noted other trouble spots for future repairs.

Our volunteer work group in front of the Wheaton House. Top picture: Dave Clemens, Peter Bouman, Steve Spero, Jim Kessler, Colton Traver, Brian Baker, and Mike Hornak. Bottom: Jack Davis, Joe Blaisure, JJ Blaisure, Chris Wilkerson, and Evan Everitt.

Brian Sawicki of Binghamton caught his limit of brown trout.

Red buds of April.