

NEWS FROM THE WOODS



Friends Of Edgewood Park

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FOEP MEMBERS BRAVE COLDEST POLAR PLUNGE



(Kids plunge into Long Island Sound Jan. 1)

Members of Friends of Edgewood Park didn't mind going blue for a minute to raise a little green for Edgewood and other city parks in the annual Polar Plunge for Parks at Lighthouse Point Park on New Year's Day. The weather was the worst on record for the 8th annual event – 40 mph winds and temperatures in the low 20s.

A bit of The Big Easy helped it go down easier. Many FOEP members wore Mardi Gras masks and beads to make their entrance into icy Long Island Sound. They warmed up afterwards in hot tubs and with hot food and drink.

The event raised over \$1,000 for FOEP. Thanks again to all the plungers and donors!

A DIARY OF A WINTER HIKE

FOEP member Sharon Lovett writes of her recent inspiration to organize an impromptu winter hike in the park:

“Yesterday morning was very cold here in New Haven and I had to walk the dumb dog. I decided to walk him on the trails in Edgewood Park, and cold as it was, he couldn't have been happier. The trails were just beautiful, there was beautiful early morning light casting shadows, steam coming up from the river running through the park, and tons of footprints in the snow, which confirmed that so many people are using these trails even in the dead of winter.



(FOEP members pose on their hike Jan. 17)

I was so elated from my walk that I invited some FOEP friends over for coffee and a hike the next day.

As I brewed the coffee the next morning, I wasn't sure if anyone would show up,

but by 8:45 a.m. I had 10 people drinking coffee in my house, eager to take the hike. It was snowing, so the morning light was not shining or casting shadows as it had the day before, but the gentle snowfall brought a different beauty to the park, and that was fine.

We all admired the many footprints in the snow and how much more of the park you could see in the winter, when just the bones of the park are showing. We walked along the Rhododendron Trail and observed how their leaves had turned dark green, and curled up, as if hiding from the cold. We discussed when exactly the rhododendrons would bloom, so we could be sure to come back and see them. We were all left inspired. It was a great morning, and sometimes spontaneity is just what we all need in our lives.

CHILI COOK-OFF FEB. 21

Warm up Feb. 21st at the third annual FOEP Chili Cook-Off! This year's event is at Coogan Pavilion from 4-7 p.m. (enter the driveway off Whalley Avenue and Fitch St.). FOEP members may enter their chili and attend for free. Non-members may join at the door to enter chili or just to enjoy the tasting and

judging. Children welcome! Prizes for cooks! Meat and vegetarian options offered. Volunteers also needed. Call Deirdre Fox at 387-1283 or e-mail FOEP to enter your chili or for more information.

See the calendar at www.westvillect.org for details of the Chili Cook-Off and other events:

- March 20: First Day of Spring Nature Walk, 3:30-4:30 p.m. (Other nature walks are on Tuesdays and Thursdays this winter and spring – call Ranger Harry Coyle at 946-8028 for info.)
- April 1, 15 & 22: Ranger Station Open House, 3:30 – 5 p.m.
- April 25: “Rock to Rock” bike tour from East Rock to West Rock
- April 26: Bocce and Biscotti, 10 a.m. to noon. Come dedicate the refurbished bocce court, learn the game and enjoy Italian delicacies
- May 2 & 3: Spring Clean-Ups, 9 - 11 a.m. May 2 at the Ranger Station, May 3 at the gazebo
- May 9: ArtWalk in Westville
- June 7: Wine and Cheese on the Deck, 4-6 p.m. Members only.
- June 21: Family Fun Day at the First Day of the Farmer's Market