



Friends of *Carson Road Woods*

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Happy New Year to all for the continued work and preservation of Carson Road Woods.

1) Woods, Trails and Maintenance

The flora of Carson Road Woods matured noticeably again in 2019 due to the mild winter. Formerly idle open fields and the peach orchard are becoming more wooded with Red Oak, Sweet Gum and Bradford Pear. Perimeter trails benefitted from our battery-powered hedge trimmer that makes short work of Multiflora rose that was used at several work parties this year. Berries, tree fruit and nuts had a great year because of the abundance of Spring rains and shown are stages of Shagbark Hickory (a Pecan relative) from husk to harvest.



Overall our trails are in excellent condition. In 2019, we cleared a number of fallen trees including a huge oak that fell across the bend in the LHT west of the stone bridge. The Township treated the LHT to control weeds and grasses which helped reverse several years of growth. All trails are presently open, mostly passable (albeit a bit soggy right now). The exceptions are the turf trail that connects the Northeast and Northwest areas farmed by Cherry Grove and the entry from the west parking area (shown). Once again their tractor left serious ruts behind when collecting their hay bales. They have since agreed to repair these trails this Spring once the ground dries out. The town may also add a new



field access point to allow them to avoid the trails. Final cut this year was November 2!

The BMS donated 'Gator' was immensely helpful in getting volunteers and equipment to the areas in need of attention, especially in the heat of Summer! Efforts are going twice as far with the help of this machine.

Thanks to Bob Hunsicker again for supporting me every time there was chainsaw work to be done. For others, please consider heading out with a set of shears and help us clip back, preserve and maintain the trails. Use the contact us link to express your interest, send an alert, or have your email added to work party invitations here: <http://www.carsonroadwoods.org/alert/>.



2) Pets and Trash

Lawrence Township has a leash-law that requires pet owners to keep a leash connected to each pet at all times. Last year I added signs that indicate this but still find pet owners releasing them and find doggie bags just left on the side of the trail. We also appreciate your helping us keep CRW pristine by picking up and removing any other trash that you might come across in or around the preserve. Lunchtime car operators seem to think that the parking areas are their personal ash trays. Feel free to point out that this was not the reason we preserved this space.

3) Election of 2020 Board Members

The Friends will hold elections for three Board positions in the next few weeks. Anyone interested in serving should contact our secretary, Benjamin Brickner, at info@carsonroadwoods.org, on or before **Monday, February 24**.

4) FUNDRAISING EFFORTS

A) Annual Dues

It's that time again - Please submit your membership dues by using our new online Donate/Renew page! Dues primarily go towards fuel for the tractor to keep the trails cut. All labor is done by unpaid volunteers. Along with suggested dues of \$25/year for individuals and \$35/year for families we have other levels to choose from. <http://www.carsonroadwoods.org/join/>. Checks made out to **Friends of Carson Road Woods** can be mailed to **48 Carson Road**, Princeton, New Jersey 08540.

B) Tractor and Gator Maintenance Fund

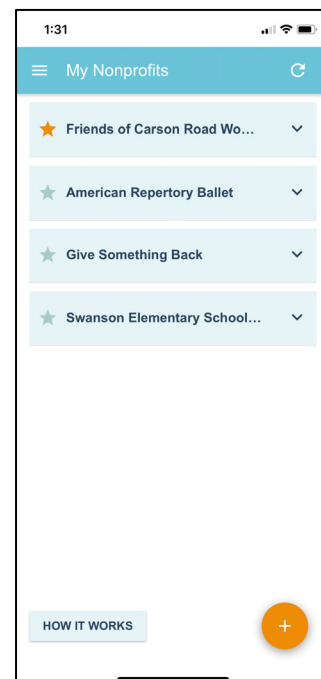
Like annual dues, building up our Tractor and Maintenance Fund remains ongoing. The 27 year-old Kubota tractor is charming, but temperamental. The 2019 rebuild of the fuel system provided a needed boost of power lacking for the last several years, but at some point it will need to be replaced. **If you are interested in being a tractor trail-cutting operator, please let us know!

C) Chip-In by Shopping Local (New)

Chip-In is a new program to claim donations from area merchants and have those directed to CRW! Please see our Chip-In web page for more info. <http://www.carsonroadwoods.org/chipin-1>.

D) Amazon Smile

In 2014 the Friends were approved to participate in [AmazonSmile](#), a program in which Amazon automatically donates 0.5% of eligible purchases to a charity of the customer's choice. Click [here](#) to designate the Friends as



your charity! It's an easy way to help preserve Carson Road Woods while buying your items!

5) Website and Social Media

There are more ways than ever to connect with Carson Road Woods.

- like us on Facebook:
<https://www.facebook.com/carsonroadwoods!>
and post your own photos and discoveries
- Volunteer or send us maintenance alerts on [our website!](#)
- We'd love to know what you think! Visit us at <http://www.carsonroadwoods.org>.



6) Wildlife

Carson Road Woods remains an active place for bird and animal watching! Regular deer sightings, quite a few healthy looking red tail fox, an abundance of Red-Tailed Hawk, and in the past an occasional coyote or black bear have been seen. In addition, turkey, quail, and several bald eagle sightings were confirmed.

7) CRWoods Safety

Please be especially vigilant about ticks. After walking in the woods, even on the mowed meadow trails, it is always prudent to check yourself (and pets!) for ticks, particularly during the warmer spring and summer months following these recent mild winters. Both Bob and I have both been treated for Lymes. Similarly, poison ivy grows along (and sometimes within) most trails - three pointed shiny leaves and hairy vines climbing trees! To learn more and see photos click [here](#).

Storms, Wind & Ash Trees. Storms developing in the distance provide about 20–30 minutes to get to safety. There's a new threat overhead however - the dozens if not hundreds of Ash trees dead or dying from the Emerald Ash Borer damage. These can be old growth, very substantial trees whose branches have already starting coming down. Windy days, gusty days and summer storms are all reasons to stay vigilant when nearby.

To all the Friends of Carson Road Woods: We look forward to seeing and hearing from you in 2020.

John Marshall
president

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Friends of Carson Road Woods, Inc.
<http://www.carsonroadwoods.org/>

The Friends of Carson Road Woods, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) public charity