

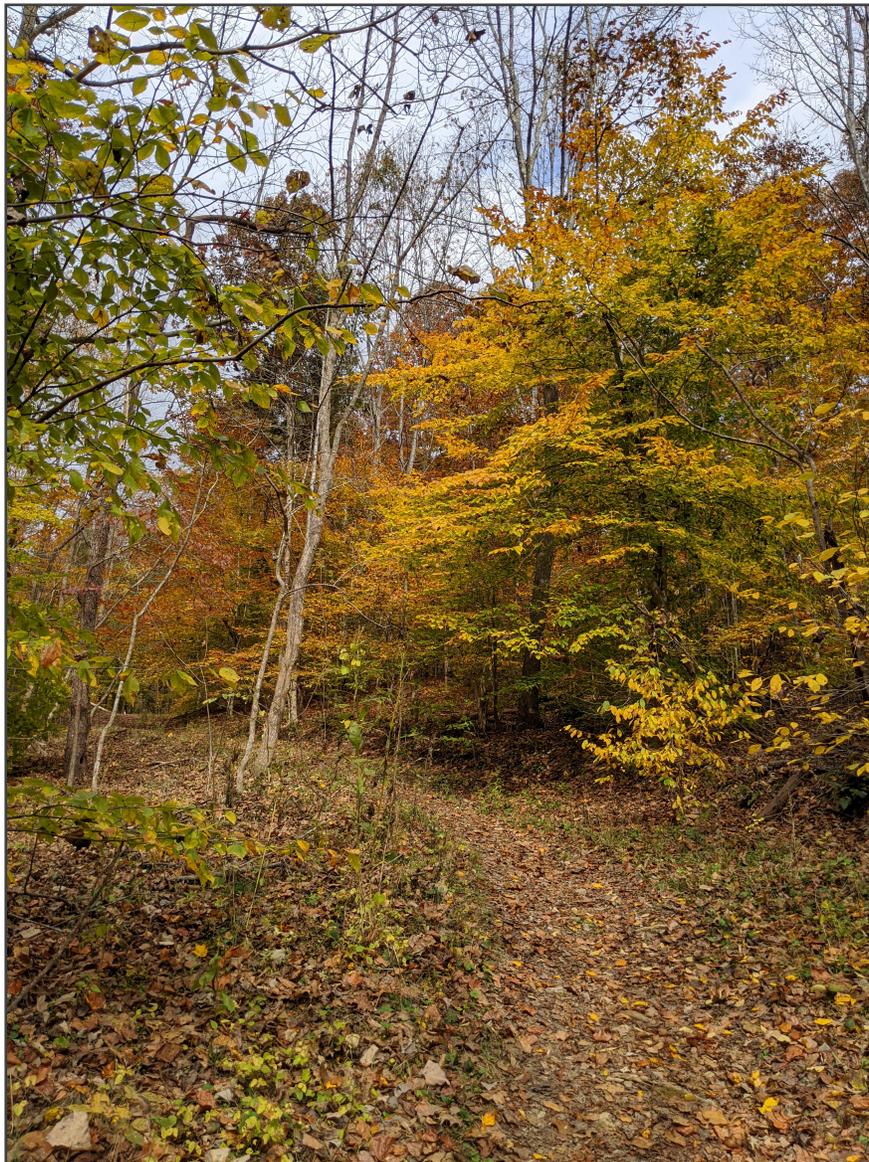
# Friends of Brushy Hills

## 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

The Friends of Brushy Hills is a volunteer group working to preserve the natural integrity of Brushy Hills for the benefit of the public. We are affiliated with the Rockbridge Area Conservation Council (RACC) and are serving as the Stewards of the Brushy Hills Preserve, owned by the City of Lexington.

We are governed by a Steering Committee with the following members: Lexington residents Dave Agnor, Peggy Agnor, Joseph Guse, Bill King (Treasurer), and David Rosher (Invasive Plants Project Chair); and County residents Peter Jetton, Larry McNeil, Katie McNeil,, Alexia Smith (Coordinator), and Chris Wise.

The Friends welcome volunteers and donations, to help with education, trail maintenance, the Invasive Plants Project, and other work.



*A trail in Brushy Hills. Photo by Kit Huffman*

## 2021 in Review

A major event in the Preserve in 2021 was the restoration of the historic Entsminger springhouse, along the Salamander Trail — originally built to shelter one of the springs that supplied the City of Lexington with water in the 19th century. John and Jesse Friedrichs, experts in historic masonry restoration, donated materials and their to repoint the stone walls and replace some of the structure's wooden elements.



*Photos by Kit Huffman*

As always, keeping the trails open, safe, and in good condition was a high priority for us. Trail crew members remove fallen trees and branches from the trails and cut back living greenery to clear the way. They refurbished water bars periodically, as needed.

And we put a lot of time into the control of invasive plant species. David Rosher, who heads the Invasive Plants Project and does the lion's share of that work, reports that most of the Preserve has now been visited at least once over the years, so that the thick growths of invasive plants are mostly gone. In 2021, therefore, the vast majority of time went towards monitoring trails and woods, and removing any new seedlings and root sprouts.

Volunteers assisted on guided "weed pulls" on five occasions in April and May. And we supervised two special weed pulls, with students and their teachers from the Buffalo Creek Boys School in May and with Washington and Lee students on Nabors Service Day in November.

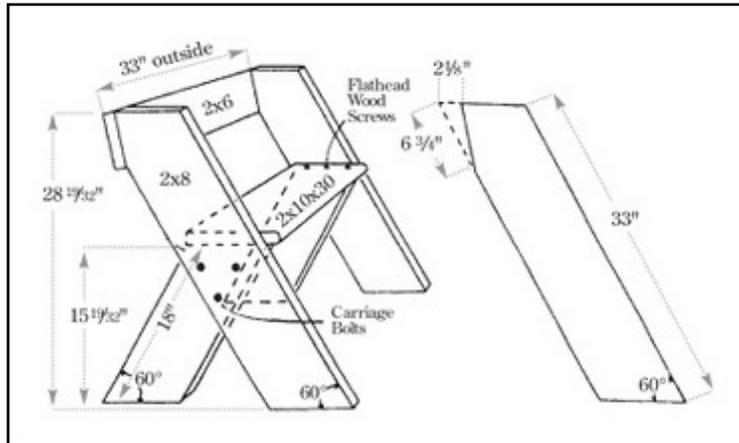


*Buffalo Creek Boys School weed pull. Photo by David Rosher*

2021 was a year of signs — that is, signs that we designed, got produced locally, and installed. "In case of emergency" signs now stand at the three trailheads, showing the 911 address of each location. The gas pipeline right-of-way previously had no Preserve boundary indication, providing an entry path for ATVs and pick-ups; now, strategically placed signs welcome hikers and bicyclists and state that motorized vehicles are prohibited — and on the reverse, advise trail users where private property begins. Finally, signs provided and installed by VDOT now indicate to drivers approaching the main trailhead, on Union Run, that pedestrians may be crossing the road ahead.

Notable events that took place in the Preserve include the self-guided Spring Plant and Flower Walk organized by the local chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society with assistance from the Friends, and the Nasty 9 Trail Run in September.

Projects begun in 2021 include a new trail map that shows contour lines more clearly (among other improvements) undertaken with the help of W&L geologist David Harbor; and the construction of four simple "Aldo-Leopold-style" benches, bolted together and easily taken apart and moved, to place along trails for rest and enjoyment of the surroundings.



*Aldo Leopold bench*

## 2021 by the numbers

**Volunteer work** by Steering Committee members and others amounted to over 1,700 hours.

### Our 2021 income and expenses

#### Donations

From individuals	\$1,350.00	
Native plant sales	295.00	
The Nasty 9 Trail Run	2,000.00	
Total donations		\$3,645.00

#### Expenses

Printing, design, and shipping	\$ 856.38	
Trail and invasive plant management	1,188.68	
Total expenses		\$2,045.06

## 2022 in prospect

In the coming year, we welcome the continuing generosity of our donors and volunteers, and we wish everyone the many and varied joys that time in the woods can bring. The Brushy Hills Preserve is beautiful in all seasons!



Friends of Brushy Hills

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