

Kelly's Pond Pride: 2016

There is a spot where the WoodPecker and Kelly's pond trails converge at the crest of the camping area. You can overlook the entire trail head. Last Saturday I paused to reflect on the mornings tasks. I pondered for a moment. What was the most significant accomplishment today? Was it the gate repair? Possibly the fact that one individual trimmed every tree in the picnic area. A full 9 ft from the ground, every tree was pruned. The limbs neatly piled near one camping area. Certainly a future campers will to burn without much thought of the labor it took. Maybe it was the team that formed under the leadership of the Equestrian group. The group scraped and painted all 8 picnic tables? What about the father with son in tow. They cut 5 years worth of lemon bush trees with only loppers and didn't complain a bit. How about the Hiker that identified an invasive species at the ponds edge then without asking, the motorized element volunteers dug out the roots and hauled out of the forest? Two zero turn mowers worked in concert over 3.5 acres. Two weed eaters expired combating vines and Poison Ivy. Generators provided power for the tools necessary to repair the broken picnic tables. The repair required intensive planning, technical expertise and a loads of ingenuity. It took a brave sole to goal toward such an obvious challenge.

The picnic tables getting refurbished. That's go to be the pinnacle of what was accomplished. Better still we must give credit to the leadership component. Maybe it was the planning overall that wins the "accomplishment" award. Days perhaps weeks prior, someone committed to goal and prepare to DO all this giving. They emailed then posted the call to duty. Others jumped in and extended a spreadsheet. Someone offered tools and supplies and asked folks to for help.

Hiker, Equestrian, Motorized, Campers, Hunters united to accomplish all of this (and more) in only hrs. Twelve volunteers worked in unison to address what had not been serviced for nearly half a decade.

We identified future projects to repair the bathroom vandalism. We theorize even more help will arrive at future events. Hopefully the youth will start to materialize once we get better at planning in advance. It's impressive to see the effort. The possibilities are endless. The reward of being a part of something about to blossom is reassuring.

For all that have been contributing over years past and those that have invested time as of late, I thank you. Your time means more than you can imagine.

Respectfully,

Motorized Element

From me to you: George Allen, Charlie, Allen Pape, Dave Wade, Larry Faulk, Marisa W,

For decades' other families have toiled over the trails. Recently a gentlemen explained it was he who lead the effort to place "every paver you see on the trail". Can you imagine. There are literally hundreds of pavers in certain areas along the trail. Folks were installing them by hand decades ago. We pass over them with little thought of the sacrifice. Tons of pavers were ordered, stockpiled then loaded, hauled and CAREFULLY placed. What an endeavor. What an accomplishment. I hope the reader is the kind of person that takes appreciates such things.

We did not know at each other a short time ago. Now we toil on what needs done in the forest constantly. Ranger Station meetings, Trail Head painting, On the trails, Online, Sawyer, First Aid or erosion trainings. I've grown to appreciate all stakeholder perspective. Sometimes it appears we are few but then we are reminded of all that has been done before. It's just our turn.

I am not convinced we care more than those before us. Some would argue we have a lot to do to match that of the past. Hopefully the future will put our current effort to shame. I think we just like sharing more than the majority at the moment. Regardless I am blow away at what the Kelly's pond area is now starting to look like.

You're not selfish. You want others to experience the fulfillment. The forest has a replenishing effect on your spirit. We know preservation is key and we are learning what sustainability really means. We are wise enough to know the trails provide that which money can't. You enjoy the feeling you get on the trail to such a degree you want (to ensure) others have that opportunity. You share freely. You protect through learning and guiding. Our individual efforts are slight but the combined is not. I want you to know you inspire me. Your time over the last few years is the key to keep things going. You labor. Above all you care and. For now, it's our turn.

12.14.17

At the conclusion of another volunteer day a gent stated he had fun. I asked, "what did you expect verses the result I asked". He said the following. *"I heard it was a big hassle to volunteer. It wasn't. Two signatures, a healthy safety briefing followed by printed instructions and images of what needed done plus a map. I applied numbers to bridges, cut back some brush and got to be with others and occasionally by myself. I had purpose and I will return with my son. It's so important to FEEL the reward in accomplishment. The chow at the pot luck was great and do I dare say I had fun."* Just wondering about something, may I ask you another question?. You have come to the forest prior right? "Yup, we group up and ride with a few others a few times a year". Ok, here's my final. Which format do you enjoy more? Show up and ride or todays volunteer effort? Todays' event for sure ! We had purpose, we got out on the trail. I saw what others did and I got to contribute. It feels good accomplishing. I don't have a lot of time to give elsewhere but If I am going to give of myself for others this is the type and the way I want to give back. I want to give so my son and his buddies may someday be able to feel what I am feeling right now!



































