

Voice of the Canyon

An Occasional Newsletter

Winter 2023

It's a New Year for Friends

Liz Bade explains it all on this page and next where you will meet the Friends Operating Committee.
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Are We Up for the 10th Dam Run?

Travis Brown and Christi Smith put out a call for help in deciding if Dam Run 2023 is feasible. Fill out their questionnaire or email them.
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The Bridge is Coming

Liz Bade gives a hopeful report that the bridge will get underway this year.
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Early Friends Member Dies

Richard Brandt, an early member and officer of Friends passed away Jan. 1, 2023.
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Planning Starts on Next Big Project

Chris Glaeser and Susan Williams put out a plea for help.
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FRIENDS BOARD MAKES CHANGES FOR A NEW YEAR

By Liz Bade Friends Board Member and Volunteer Naturalist

Friends of Castlewood Canyon have worked as a team since the beginning when a group of park supporters organized to raise funds to expand the park's boundaries keeping development at bay. Starting in 2023, the Friends' Board of Directors and Officers are working under the name Friends Operating Committee to reflect the teamwork spirit. We even have teams organized under the main umbrella to share the activities and provide backup needed when members go on vacation or can't make a meeting. As you can see by the list, below, it takes a lot of people to keep our organization running efficiently. The Operating Committee members are:

- Liz Bade – Board member, past co-Treasurer and website editor
- Travis Brown – Board member, past VP
- Bev Finamore – Board member and Co-Treasurer
- Chris Glaeser – Board member
- Jeannette Littlejohn – Board member, Co-Treasurer, membership chair, and Secretarial team
- Bridget Milnes – Board member and Secretarial team

Other key members include:

- Sondra Hale – Merchandise Team
- Cheri Holverstott – Merchandise Team Chair
- Sharon Randall – *Voice of the Canyon* editor
- Linda Staehler - Secretarial team
- Carole Stapleton – Merchandise Team
- Samantha Tanner – Financial reporting, Friends Facebook lead and website editor
- Linda Vincent – website editor



Photo by Linda Staehler

Elected at the annual meeting in October, Board Members are l to r, Bev Finamore, Chris Glaeser, Travis Brown, Bridget Milnes and Liz Bade. Jeannette Littlejohn at right, was unable to be at the January meeting.



Friends Operating Committee – Teamwork in Action

And – these Friends volunteers are also incredibly active as Volunteer Naturalists at events throughout the year. We would like to send a big THANK YOU to past President Dale Campbell for his many, many years of service on the Friends board and to Steve L'Esperance, 2022's Vice President and co-chair of the Dam Run. We are most appreciative of all you have contributed to Friends' on-going success and are glad we'll continue to see you at park events.

More on next page including how to contact the board members.

Liz Bade *continued from page 1*

Throughout 2023 Board members will rotate chairing our meetings (next one will be led by Bev Finamore on Feb 11 from 10-11). At each meeting, we'll set the date for the next meeting. Samantha adds the meeting minutes to the membership section of CastlewoodFriends.org. All are welcome to attend the meetings; only Board Members can vote on items except for our fall Annual Meeting at which all members can vote on issues including nominated Board Members. Though certain business procedures are routine aspects of all Friends meetings, we also hold fun discussions on topics such as how we can best support park management and volunteers. This year, important projects include events surrounding the construction of Wildcat Canyon Bridge (see page 4), and what project will be the best use of the Metzler estate \$150,000 gift to Friends of Castlewood Canyon (see page 6). We are always happy to hear your ideas so please join us February 11.

Your Friends Board of Directors

Friends board members serve for one-year terms. Elections are held at the annual meeting in October. You can call or email the operating committee members anytime.

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Friends board members, interested members and those wanting to join the organization, meet in the Visitor Center on Saturdays as announced throughout the year.

A social time starts at 9:30 a.m. followed by the meeting at 10 a.m. The next meeting is February 11 and Bev Finamore will chair.



Friends Projects that Can Use Help

An Education Center: Chris Glaeser and Susan Williams are heading an exploratory committee. They need people to help with ideas and gathering facts for building an education center at the park. Can you work with them? Their information is above. Call or email.

A 10th Annual Dam Run: Should we or should we not? Christi Smith and Travis Brown welcome ideas on postponing, refreshing, or giving up on the trail run. Put in your 2-cents using the Google Survey. See how on page 3

Wildcat Canyon Bridge: It's time to execute the donation plaques, plan the Grand Opening, and plan and help with a celebration party when the bridge opens. Construction may start in August if everything goes as planned. See page 4.

The 90th Anniversary of the Night the Dam Burst: Help plan the special celebration on Dam Day, Aug. 5, 2023. Costumed historical figures, a Dam Good Lunch, Hikes to the Dam, a Special Guest Who experienced the flood. Can you work with Chris to update and rewrite the booklet *The Night the Dam Gave Way, A Diary of Personal Accounts*? Call or email Chris.



Shawn and Steve L'Esperance, forefront, along with Dale Campbell, were Race Directors for the 9th annual Dam Run last September. At the Annual Meeting in October the three recommended that the race be discontinued, citing the many hours involved for not a huge payback and advised that Friends explore other events.

Christi Smith and Travis Brown to Form Exploratory Committee

By Travis Brown
Friends Board Member and
Volunteer Naturalist

SHOULD WE PLAN A 10TH ANNUAL DAM RUN at Castlewood Canyon State Park?

Thank you all for your fantastic support over the past 9 years! We are looking for your opinion yay or nay on its future. Please speak up now, Christi Smith and Travis Brown, former race directors, are heading a Dam Run planning and exploratory committee to make some kind of decision by April on continuing the run.

Friends is heads up on this event because of the insurance and seed money needed to host the race. A big need is for coordination via the race directors. Christi and Travis are interested in helping make it happen and are interested in a refresh of the race, including adding a half-marathon or even a whole marathon if that's feasible. And can the run be made more fun for families? Or should it be put on hold for a year?

Please lend your opinion to the linked [google survey](#) or let them know at focwcsp@gmail.com or Travis at travisab6@hotmail.com or Christi at christi_smith@msn.com

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSf24nM_RRhmVfYEUplbSP-CjgdRLmyGMcOR_pRZGtoRF1WSGw/viewform?usp=pp_url

Thank you all for your great support through the years and let us know your position on continuing this event.



One thing we know about the race for sure is that the runners who participate love it. They voice their enthusiasm when they gather after the race for awards and prizes and pancakes. But a criticism is that, except for a few runners who practice often in the park, we don't see them participating in other ways. Some Friends members want to put the effort required in holding the race into other events that may result in new members and new donations.

Wildcat Canyon Bridge – This is the Year!

By Liz Bade
Friends Board Member and
Volunteer Naturalist

First the project was delayed because of the COVID hiatus and then by the resulting supply chain issues. Then, because a soil test proved the location of the planned abutments was not stable enough, CPW's project lead engineer, Dmitry Tepo, needed to modify the original design drawings. He has now prepared final construction drawings and supporting documents. As another gotcha, the Water and Land Conservation grant that is a major funding source, is under the auspices of the Federal government. They required the project to use only American produced materials. This wasn't a problem for the main interlocking modules that will form the bridge but literally a problem in finding American made nuts and bolts. However, Dmitry worked with the grant administrator to reach a solution. All is well.

Per Dmitry, there are a couple of permitting steps left to wrap up in the next few weeks, mainly a sign off from Douglas County and the Corps of Engineers. If everything goes smoothly with permitting, we can advertise the project for bid in the beginning of February. From there, he's estimating about 6 months for bidding, contract award, submittal reviews, bridge manufacture, and shipping. That puts the start of construction some time in August. However, there are still a lot of supply chain and labor availability issues that could delay us. So, a conservative estimate for the start date is Fall 2023.

Though the start date is a ways away, Friends has begun planning for the Bridge Donor appreciation plaques, and the dedication Grand Opening and party. We're going to have one plaque housed in the Visitor Center and an all-weather plaque located at one of the bridge abutments. Letters have been sent to the contributors who donated enough to have a 'plank'. Trail Explorers can dedicate one plank; Wildcats, two planks; Pride of the Canyon, four planks. The plaque planks will vary in size. So far donors have chosen to inscribed their names and/or family names or quotes (all about benefits of nature so far). Once we get all the inscription info, we'll finalize the plaque designs. If you're interested in helping with this, please contact Friends at focwcsp@gmail.com.

We are also putting together a party committee to celebrate this great accomplishment. If you are party hearty, please join us in planning this fun event. Just send an email to focwcsp@gmail.com. Besides ribbon cutting, official first crossing, food etc. – what would be a great way to celebrate?

Volunteer Naturalist Training on Again for 2023

By Liz Bade
Friends Board Member and
Volunteer Naturalist

Keep your eye on your email inbox, Volunteers. Ranger Rachel Chaffee will soon be sending out information about this year's Naturalist Training. It will be aimed at new volunteers and towards the 2020 class whose training got waylaid because of Covid-19. Current plans have Prospect Day scheduled for Saturday, Feb 4 in the morning. The first required class, Orientation, will begin that very afternoon for the prospects who want to become Castlewood Canyon Volunteer Naturalists. Rachel's email will include the class schedule and information for the 2020 class. This year, classes will be spread out from Feb through August rather than eight consecutive Saturdays so that, for example, Plants can take place when the wildflowers are blooming – no more recognizing trees in the winter! Newbies will give their final presentations in the form of a display they will staff somewhere along the trails on Dam Day instead of an indoor presentation. Each newbie will have a veteran volunteer at their side as a mentor who may know the answers to visitor questions that the newbie doesn't yet have the experience to answer.



Editor's Note: Richard Brandt, one of our first volunteers and Friends members died Jan. 1, 2023. He was 89. Dick was an important player in the early years of Friends and the Volunteer Naturalist program at Castlewood Canyon State Park. Over seven years he served in every officer position on the Friends Board from Vice President to President to Secretary and Treasurer. An engineer and fine woodworker, his handiwork is still evident

in the Visitor Center. If you have a hiking stick, that started with Dick who fashioned them and applied the brands. As President of Friends following Dave Shipley, he resurrected the *Voice of the Canyon*, believing that members had to be kept up-to-date on Friends' activities and progress.

Memories of Richard Brandt Friends Founding Officer and Volunteer Naturalist Extraordinaire

Dave Shipley
Founding Member and
Former President of
Friends and a Volunteer Naturalist

Dick was my VP for much of the time after starting Friends of CCSP in 1997. He was a sounding board for me when I had ideas about growing the organization or dealing with the Colorado State government bureaucracies (since for most of his professional career he was associated with State and local government engineering organizations). I could always count on him to give me sound, unvarnished advice. Some thought he was too direct in his demeanor, but not me! He was just what I needed to help guide the organization in the early, formative years before the merger of State Parks with Wildlife Management. I trusted him to keep things going when I was out of pocket for one reason or another and when it came time after many years for me to propose a successor for President, I didn't have to look far—it was Dick. He graciously accepted and was elected unanimously by the Board. In the years that followed, he would ask me for advice or opinions from time to time and we maintained an ongoing relationship until his and his wife's health started to become problematic and he needed to step down. By then the Friends of CCSP was an established entity and the rest is history. Aside from his Friends position, he was a major Volunteer contributor to Castlewood Canyon State Park and its development. He was and will continue to be, be sorely missed.

News from the Top



Brent Lounsbury
Park Manager

Hello Castlewood Canyon Friends,

Here we are forging forward into 2023! It's so strange to me we're there already; it feels like we're living in the future.

We've already seen a few Keep Colorado Wild (KCW) passes come through our entrance. This is the \$29 Annual Pass pre-loaded onto Colorado motor vehicle registrations starting this year. It's too soon to tell how successful this program is going to be, but suffice to say it's going to be a game changer. I remain optimistic—with even 50% participation, Parks will be bringing in over twice the pass revenue we brought in through our peak year during the pandemic.

You may have noticed a large construction project occurring north of the Homestead. This is the staging area for the Cherry Creek trail construction, connecting the park and where the trail presently ends at Highway 86. Douglas County asked for permission to use this area and we granted it. They're required to rehab it when they're done; with the weeds we have over there I suspect it will be more pristine afterwards than it was before. I'm expecting them to be done before spring gets underway.

Our new vault restrooms at Juniper Rock, the West Side Trailhead, and at the Homestead lot have a contractor! Hopefully we'll see them installed this summer. They're going to be a huge improvement, especially at the increasingly busy Homestead lot. I've rented a porta potty there for the last few years, and it's been very popular.

On staffing, I'm expecting our full-time Ranger vacancy to be filled come January 2024. I've also, as you may know, put a new full-time Interpreter position on our 5 year plan. The benefits to such a person here can't be overstated, and I think it's long overdue that we have one. New positions are, of course, subject to a lengthy approval process—including the State Legislature signing off. I'm hoping we'll see it here in 2024, though more likely '25 or '26, but it fundamentally depends on what happens with the KCW pass. If we're rolling in money, then great, if not, then it may be some time yet.

Thank you, as always, for all that you do for our park and State. Take care and I hope to see you soon!

-Brent

Castlewood Canyon Remembered by the Metzler Estate

**By Liz Bade
Friends Board Member and
Volunteer Naturalist**

Many of you may remember from Naturalist history classes that Bob Metzler was Margaret and Patrick Lucas' grandson. Ron Claussen spent many hours with Bob learning about his memories of the Lucas homestead and shedding light on the life Bob's mother, Mary Lucas, had during the early 1900s. Here's some information about Bob excerpted from his 2020 obituary:

Robert Franklin Metzler, born Sept. 5, 1923, passed away at his home in Idaho Springs, Colorado, July 6, 2020, at the age of 96. ... Bob was a cattle rancher, educator, artist, adventurer, developer, and philanthropist.

He began his career in education in 1944 as a teacher in a one-room school. He served as a principal and, in 1952, was elected County Superintendent of Douglas County Schools. Bob contemplated national opportunities, but in 1964 eager to advance his avant-garde ideas concerning individualized learning, he accepted the position as Superintendent of Schools for Clear Creek County, where he campaigned to innovate and improve education. His success attracted the attention of the Ford Foundation and, with a team from Columbia University, presented his ideas at the 1964 World's Fair. ... Bob and his sister Rosemary developed a passion for reading and teaching from their mother, Mary, who was one of the few women of her time to attain a high school education.

His estate owned the water rights under the Lucas Homestead. The estate's wish was to sell the water rights and endow Friends of Castlewood Canyon with the proceeds. CPW, of course, did not want the rights, valued at \$300,000, to go to someone who would then encroach on the park to take advantage of the water. So CPW negotiated with the estate and ended up purchasing the rights for \$150,000. The estate, in turn, bequeathed the funds to Friends. The Metzlers clearly wanted the funds to be used in a way that would benefit children's environmental education. Until Friends and CPW determine the best use of these funds, we have deposited them in an interest bearing account that is currently accruing about \$1,000 annually. Susan Williams and Chris Glaeser have volunteered to lead a committee to explore the idea of using it as seed money for an Education Center. They would welcome your ideas so please send word to focwcsp@gmail.com if you'd like to join them.

Friends of Castlewood Canyon –

A NEW EDUCATION CENTER LET'S GET STARTED!

**By Board Member Chris Glaeser
and Friends Member Susan Williams**

Friends of Castlewood Canyon has supported many great additions and improvements in the park over the last 25 years. Now, a long-awaited project of building an education center has moved to the top of the wish list. A group of interested Friends members will be gathering preliminary information on the feasibility of embarking on this project. It is recognized that this will be a long-term project from design conception, to funding, to confirming partnerships with similar interests and finally construction.

Fortunately, we have experience gained from the recent success of building a bridge across the stream in the park and have received a very generous gift of \$150,000 from the Metzler estate that will be the seed money to use while seeking matching funding.

If you are interested in being a part of this endeavor, please contact Chris Glaeser or Susan Williams. The fun is just starting, become a charter member of the planning team!

As Amazon Smile Goes Away a Better Idea with King Soopers

By Jeannette Littlejohn
Friends Board Member and
CASP Volunteer Naturalist

For those of you who use Amazon Smile it is going to be discontinued. If you had Friends of Castlewood Canyon listed as the charity attached to your purchases, you might want to think about using the King Soopers Community Rewards Program instead.

Kroger affiliates, King Soopers and City Market have a Community Rewards Program that lets customers support their favorite 501(c)(3) non profit with almost every grocery purchase. It's easy to set up just follow the instructions.

ALL YOU HAVE TO DO: go to

- For King Soopers Stores - go to <http://www.kingsoopers.com>
- For City Market Stores - go to <http://www.citymarket.com>

Once logged into your King Soopers or City Market account, you can search non profit, then click "Enroll".

New users will need to create an account which requires some basic information, a valid email address and a loyalty card. If you do not have a loyalty card, they are available at the customer service desk at any Kings Soopers or City Market.

In 2022, Friends of Castlewood Canyon received \$329.19 from King Soopers vs \$83.83 from Amazon Smile.

Thanks to Grant, Inner Canyon Stairs Will Be Rebuilt

ExtremeTerrain an online aftermarket parts retailer based in Paoli, PA. granted Friends \$250 via their **Clean Trail Initiative** -- a program they run year-round to support responsible land use. They offer grants to both outdoor (non-motorized) and off-road organizations to help with the costs associated with maintaining the land. Since the program started in 2015, they've donated over \$50,000 to trail maintenance and improvement projects across the U.S.

When we learned about this opportunity we asked Jordan how this might help Castlewood Canyon. He quickly replied he could rebuild the weird sideways stair sets on Inner Canyon. The \$250 would just about cover all of the cost of materials. So we applied for the grant and we got it. We can look forward to new stairs this spring thanks to ExtremeTerrain.

