



Skylarks

Spring is here and lots will be happening in the Wick Country Park in the coming months. Read all the latest news from the 'Friends' and we look forward to seeing you at our future events. Please keep all those fingers and paws crossed for fine weather!

Message from the Chair

A busy time ahead for the 'Friends' - our main event of the year 'PAWS IN THE PARK' is on Sunday 9th June and all fingers are crossed for fine weather again this year! The second Skylarks 3K race is in July, followed quickly by Nature Quest as this year it is in July and then the ever popular Kite Festival in September.

All the details are on our website and hopefully we will see you at our events.

In this edition of Skylarks we have reports on all our recent events, thanks to all for coming along.



Eileen Cattell
Chairperson

What's happening at Wick Weeders?



Why are the intrepid Wick Weeding Team holding all these wonderful new tools? All will be revealed later on in this newsletter!

NEXT EVENT IN THE WICK COUNTRY PARK - 'PAWS IN THE PARK' ON SUNDAY 9th JUNE!



A fun dog show with many categories including best bitch, cutest puppy and scruffiest dog - registration from 11.00am. Please register your dog early as classes get booked fast.

The Billericay Dog Training School will also be here to give one of their excellent displays

Plus children's quiz, stalls, tombola, exhibits & children's craft activities

Sunday 9th June 2013, 11.00am to 4.00pm
The Wick Country Park, Tresco Way Wickford
SS12 9GP

Admission Free

Refreshments available

For full details see our website

www.friendsofthewickcountrypark.co.uk



Looking forward to seeing you there!

OUR ANNUAL QUIZ NIGHT AT BARNHALL COMMUNITY CENTRE MARCH 2013



So popular is this annual event that it was sold out with 14 teams having up to 8 members in each. As with previous occasions, the teams comprised of some of the sharpest minds (so some people were alleging) from Wickford, Billericay and other surrounding areas. It was also very pleasing to see some of the teams deploying a touch of youth should there be questions on modern music or a question might pop up on something they are studying at school, college or university.

The quiz consisted of ten rounds, with some rounds being open to the proverbial pitfall when second guessing what the questions would be on and therefore causing the usual dilemma when choosing which round to play the joker on. The marathon round on national flags also caused a debate! For those that missed out, below is the list of the various rounds

1. Please Sir I Want So More (Food)
2. Phobias
3. Book Worm
4. Inspire a Generation (Olympics)
5. General Knowledge
6. One Hit Wonders (Music Quiz)
7. Inventions
8. The week that was
9. Shaken Not Stirred (James Bond)
10. The Natural World

Added pressure was heaped on the individual tables by Nikki, having a balloon which was flying on the table of the current leaders after each round, no hiding anywhere and the individuals of the table feeling numerous eyes focused on them and burning into the back of the head. The "what have they got" & "we can beat them" was heard to be muttered on more than one occasion, no pressure then!!



Michelle got the quiz underway with some quite testing questions early on, some causing heads to be scratched, some causing blank looks and only the occasional smile or a "yes" being heard, more out of relief when someone could answer a question! At the halfway stage, four teams had started to pull away, 4, 11, 14 & 8 with only six points between them and no jokers being played.

After a short break to refresh the glasses and get the heads right for more mental torture, along with trying to work out the last few country flags. The bunting with flags on around the hall caused added confusion and debate amongst the teams, "no it is that one", "no it isn't, it's that one" saw no real respite for a few.

The second half now saw the anti being upped with some tables appearing to become a touch more competitive, now wanting the poison chalice, aka Nikki's balloon, and working out the best place to deploy the joker. Round six seeming to be the favourite with six teams using it, either hoping songs came up from the right era or confident on the breadth of knowledge on music.



After this round two teams took a substantial lead 11 & 14 and it was these two that took it all the way to the wire. At the end of the evening and adding in the marathon round both teams had tied on 108 points each. However, table 11 lodged a query regarding the marathon round and having had one flag marked wrong it was established that there were in fact two countries with the same flag and were given the additional winning point. Table 14 were to be complimented on the very gracious and charitable way they accepted defeat but vowed to come back stronger next year.

A highly enjoyable and exciting but tiring evening, testing the grey matter, at the end of a long week saw another successful quiz evening.

Our thanks go to Michelle for arranging and compèring the quiz, The Barnhall Community Centre, Chairman Aiden Doyle along with bar staff John & Tracy for their tireless work during the evening and especially all those that turned up to make this both a light hearted and serious quiz through the evening (depending which table you were on).

We look forward to seeing you again in 2014!

Written by Paul Clarke

THE BIRDSONG WALK - 21st APRIL 2013

We could not have asked for a better day to have the Birdsong walk, beautiful blue sky and brilliant sunshine. As we arrived at the Pavilion we could hear the birdcalls of Robin, Wren, Blue Tit and Great Tit, all of which we saw bar the Wren, which proved to be an elusive little chap or chapess! There was a Blue Tit busily collecting nesting material and flitting back and forth from the pavilion roof. A male Blackcap was spotted along the drive between the pavilion and car park, strangely the female Blackcap has a brown cap, very confusing!



A number of Goldfinches and Chaffinches were seen as we made our way along the path and the wheezing call of the Greenfinch was heard. A splendid looking Reed Bunting was perched on the top of a bush and we had a good view of a Meadow Pipit which landed on a fence. There was a solitary Swallow flying overhead and it was good to see Whitethroats had also arrived. Magpies, Woodpigeons, Carrion Crows, a Blackbird and Starlings were all seen as we continued our walk around the park. As we approached the far end of the Park we heard the loud yaffle of a Green Woodpecker. At the lake there were a number of Black-headed Gulls flying over and we saw Canada Geese, Coots, Moorhens and Mallards, the latter looking resplendent in the sunshine.

Although we had heard Chiffchaff earlier, it wasn't until we arrived at one of the ponds that we saw one, and it gave us a good display as it searched for food. We arrived back at the Pavilion for refreshments and to reflect on the mornings birding.

24 species of birds were seen plus the occasional Tortoiseshell Butterfly now starting to be seen as the temperature is now on the increase as both blossom and flowers are now coming into bloom.

Written by Marie Singleton

SKYLARKS 3K RACE ON 24th APRIL 2013

The first Skylarks 3K Race of the season took place on Wednesday 18 April. The weather was kind to us and a great turnout, lots of happy runners of all ages took part with enthusiastic support from the sidelines. Excellent times as always ranging from an extremely speedy time of under 10 minutes through to a more sedate 28 minutes. Well done to all those who took part. Here are the results:

First Man - Crispian Bloomfield in 9:42

First Lady - Rachel Flannigan in 12:27

First Girl - Chloe Nation in 15:29

First Boy - Christopher Nation in 16:40



Check out more pictures of the race and the prize giving on the Friends website.

The next race will be held on Wednesday 24th July at 7pm. The Friends of the Wick Country Park look forward to seeing you - even if you don't fancy taking part come along to cheer and have a cuppa in the Pavilion.

TOOLS GALORE - DID YOU SEE US AT MEADOW CROFT GARDEN CENTRE & NURSERIES?

The last of our generous funded money has now been spent! Meadow Croft gave us a good deal on lots of tools and Simon there negotiated with his suppliers and the wonderful outcome is that Wolf and Wilkinson Sword gave us 7.5% off and then Meadow Croft said they will match that so we get 15% off the secateurs, loppers, shears, which is brilliant. But better still Bulldog tools have agreed to give us all the Bulldog Tools FREE! That is over £400 worth of tools free.



What can we say but a very big thanks to Meadow Croft, Wolf and Wilkinson Sword and Bulldog Tools!! Please check out the Meadow Croft website on www.meadow-croft.co.uk

Events for 2013

The Friends' Committee has arranged the following events with the Wick Country Park Ranger. Some events are organised by the Friends of the Wick Country Park (FOWCP) and others by Basildon Council (BC). For all events meet at the Wick Country Park Pavilion.

Wick Weeders (FOWCP) Usually the 2nd and 4th Monday of each month, starting at 1.30pm (see website & posters)

Paws in the Park (FOWCP) Sunday 9th June, 11am to 4pm

All dogs and responsible owners are invited to this very popular annual event. A fun dog show, display of dog obedience and agility, stalls, refreshments, games and children's quiz.

Nature Quest (FOWCP) Sunday 21st July, 11am to 4pm

Be a nature detective and discover some of the wild wonders of the Wick. A fun day for all the family. Explore the park and investigate the underwater world of the dipping pond. Parental supervision required.

Skylarks 3K Race (FOWCP) Wednesday 24th July, Starting at 7pm

The Friends of the Wick Country Park in conjunction with Pitsea Running Club present the second Skylarks 3K Race of the season. Come along and give it a try, cheer on a friend, come along for the cup of tea!

Crickets & Dragonflies (BC) Sunday 11th August, Starting at 2pm

Come and search for these fascinating creatures. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Dogs welcome on a lead.

Kite Festival (FOWCP) Sunday 15th September, 11am to 4pm

Join in the kite making competition and pick up some top flying tips. Children to be accompanied by an adult.

Yule Ramble & AGM (FOWCP) Sunday 8th December, Starting at 2pm

Finish the year with a sociable walk round the park with the Ranger and *Friends*. Enjoy some mulled wine and mince pies, stay for the AGM, meet the committee and have your say about the park.

For any more info on the above please contact Nikki Gibson on 01268 734293, email mikenikki@supanet.com or Christine Lee on 01268 571302, email cleeb@btinternet.com

Latest information on events throughout the year can be found on our website: www.friendsofthewickcountrypark.co.uk

Membership

If you are not a member but would like to join the *Friends of the Wick Country Park* please contact Nikki on 01268 734293 or email mikenikki@supanet.com

The Friends of the Wick Country Park Committee:

Eileen Cattell - Chairperson, Nikki Gibson - Vice Chair/Membership Secretary, Dorothy Cundy - Treasurer, Christine Lee - Secretary

Committee Members: Trudie Crow, Maxine Crow, Hilary Sim, Marie Singleton, Peter Bates, Paul Clarke, Alaric Cundy

Basildon District Council Countryside Services:

Mark Williams - Countryside Ranger, Telephone: 01268 562921

Steve Prewer - Manager of Countryside Operations and Development, Telephone 01268 465380

Neighbourhood Policing Team: Telephone 0300 333 4444 or 07875 003503