



Katie Keating Girl Scout Gold Award Project November 2012

Philip and I are enormously pleased with and proud of the efforts of Katie Keating, her fellow Girl Scouts in Falls Church Troop #1140, as well as several boys from her high school, her parents and her younger brother, a contractor friend of her family, and the various businesses who contributed building supplies, all of which resulted in the elegant rebirth of a Cross County Trail side kiosk near the junction of Woodlark and Mockingbird Drives. This project to complete Katie's Girl Scout Gold Award represents the best sort of community effort, working with the Fairfax County Park Authority and Friends of Accotink Creek, to establish a new high standard of stewardship of our parklands.

We are both looking forward to more such successful contributions from local scouts of all genders.

Ted Welch

Kiosk Rehabilitation and Invasive Plants Species Education.

My name is Katie Keating and I am a Senior Girl Scout with Troop 1140 in Falls Church, Virginia. I was looking for a project for my Gold Award when I was lucky enough to meet Mr. Ted Welch and Mr. Philip Latasa with the Friends of Accotink Creek. After meeting with Mr. Welch we decided a good project was to rehabilitate the vandalized kiosk located in Wakefield Park. There are several reasons why I chose to pursue this project. The first is that I have always been a nature lover and I relished the chance to provide education about the dangers invasive plants cause our local environment. I did not realize until I started research for this project that invasive plant species are the second most serious threat to natural areas and the native plants and wildlife that live there. The problem caused by these plants does not stay contained to the local areas but can affect marine life hundreds of miles away in the Chesapeake Bay. I was also drawn to this project because I believed the rebuilding of this kiosk would upgrade the park and cause people to take even more pride in this beautiful haven. I also thought that due to the volume of traffic, in the form of hikers and cyclists that pass along the trail this location gives me an excellent opportunity to educate people about invasive plant species.

After receiving donations from generous sponsors such as Merrifield Home Depot, FBB Capital Partners and Reston Glass we had the materials needed for the project. The manpower was supplied by friends, family, my troop, community members and the Friends of Accotink Organization. In two Saturdays we were able to demolish the current structure, rebuild a sustainable one and add educational materials.

I wanted to thank the Friends of Accotink Organization for giving me the opportunity to work on this project. Mr. Welch has worked very closely with me and was a critical part of completing this project. Mr. Latasa and his in-depth knowledge on invasive plant species opened my eyes to their dangers to our flora and fauna. I have learned so much about the local environment, Accotink watershed and planning and executing a project. Completing my Gold Award has given me the confidence to take on bigger projects to benefit the community in the future.

Katie Keating









Friends of Accotink Creek
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