



Friends of the  
Rockefeller State Park  
**PRESERVE**

# The Preserve Observer

Friends of the Rockefeller State Park Preserve Magazine  
Vol. XXXIX Spring 2018



Photo: Iny Golden

Peony

## 10th Annual Peony Celebration Set for Thursday, May 10, 2018

By Herbert Hadad

On Thursday, May 10, from 6 to 9 p.m., one of the highlight events of the preserve spring season will be hosted by the Friends of the Rockefeller State Park Preserve. It is the Tenth Annual Peony Celebration – a fund-raising event that will celebrate the blooming of the famous Japanese tree peonies at the entrance to the preserve.

This year, the art exhibit that accompanies the event, is entitled “From Nature” and features the artist Val Kilmer, who is also an

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## Renewal for David's Loop

David's Loop has not been rehabilitated in 20 years and it shows! Besides runners and walkers who use this lovely carriage road, equestrians use it for access from local stables. In memory of David Rockefeller, who did so much for this park, we are encouraging the public to give a donation in his memory.

Bruleen, LLC is going to do the work. The cost will be \$40,000. The location of the project is David's Loop from the equestrian access to Swan Lake and is approximately 1,200 feet. The scope of the project is to redefine the drain swales, shape the sides of the roadway, install material, grade and compact material and sow grass seed along the roadsides.



Photo: Herbert Hadad

In her generosity and memory of her Uncle David, Lucy Rockefeller Waletzky has donated half of the project's cost. We are hoping to raise

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Photo: Thomas A. Capossela

Storm clean-up

## Friends Underwrite \$120,000 of Crucial Park Road Work

By Jessika Creedon,  
Friends Administrative Director

The hallmark of Rockefeller State Park Preserve, the carriage roads, fit seamlessly into the landscape, networking the rolling hills, woodlands and farmland of Pocantico Hills. It is easy to forget their construction began in 1910, and that they are in fact, manmade. Every yard is constructed to drain and hold its form. It is a testament to the careful planning, detailed construction practices and the decades of maintenance by Greenrock Corporation that the

*continued on page 3*

**Peony**, continued from page 1



Val Kilmer

actor, author, director and producer. He rocketed to international stardom playing Iceman in *Top Gun* and the Caped Crusader in *Batman Forever*. He will also be attending the Peony Celebration!

This celebration is a much anticipated one by members of the surrounding communities. It commemorates receiving the gift of 500 peonies from the town of Yatsuka Cho in Shimane Prefecture, Japan, in memory of the victims of September 11th. It was meant to express a gesture of healing and solidarity towards the United States. The peony is the signature flower from this area and is considered Japan's "most noble of flowers." The placing of Japanese flowers on American soil symbolizes the blending of two cultures and two peoples.

Friends vice president Evelyn Hadad, at the time the director of external affairs for the Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry in New York, arranged for this generous gift, and George Gumina, who was the founding board president of the Friends, spearheaded a \$100,000 fund-raising effort to create a landscaping project around the gateway entrance to the preserve. The remainder of the design called for American wildflowers and native trees.

Lisa and John Manuele, Chairs of the Peony Celebration Committee, said, "Once again there will be a cocktail and

light cuisine reception." And Terry Marchica, in charge of Special Events for the Briarcliff Manor Garden Club who solicits and organizes the floral displays, has assured us there will be beautiful arrangements donated by local garden clubs, including her own Briarcliff Manor.

The reception will take place in the Visitor Center Courtyard under what is hoped will be clear blue skies and warm weather.

Preparation of the peonies began months before the event. One of the enthusiastic volunteer gardeners is Keith Austin, the former mayor of the Village of Briarcliff Manor and chairman of its planning board. "Right now, there are two master gardeners in the program," he said. "I'm only a master enthusiast." Austin's colleagues in this noble effort include Chris Davies, Joann Stern and Ann Perkowski. (Please also see story of remembrance for *Mattie Varvaro* on page 4.)



Photo: Jessica Creighton

## Geronimo and Me

By Benjamin H. Cheever

You might wonder what a suburban burgher has in common with *The Wolf of the Warpath*, and you'd have a case. "The one who yawns," died in February of 1909—almost 40 years before "the one who wets his pants at school" was born in May of 1948.

Even if they had been alive at the same time, the burgher and the brave wouldn't have been friends, since the burgher was fearful, while the Apache was fearsome.

Shortly after the one who wets his pants moved from Manhattan to the wilds of Scarborough, New York, he heard the drums of the volunteer fire department parading on Route 9 and leapt into his mother's arms shrieking, "Indians! Indians!"

But the great warrior and the burgher shared two essentials.

### 1. We both knew tragedy.

Geronimo found the corpses of his mother, his young wife, and three small children. Sound bad? Well I have had my troubles also. I spent two years in the second grade.

The Apache is relatively brief about his bump in the road. He remembers only that he stood alone for a long time looking into the waters of a river.

The details of my own heartbreak come vividly to mind. The one who wets his pants had the tail unsnapped from his coonskin hat on the way home from school, and when the solomonic bus driver forced the louts who had done the deed to return the precious totem, one of the louts piped up to say that hat or no hat, the wet one was nothing like Davy Crockett, because Davy Crockett wasn't stupid, while the wet one was so stupid that he wasn't even going to gradu-

continued on page 4



**Road Work** *continued from page 1*

roads are still here, over 100 years later, for our community to enjoy. Designed to be 16' wide, with a shoulder on each side that is from the roadside to the wood line, the wide roads have allowed everyone – walkers, runners and equestrians to coexist safely. These roads are what make Rockefeller State Park Preserve unique and sets it apart from other parks.

In 1983, when the land of what is now Rockefeller State Park Preserve was bequeathed to the state, their care and maintenance was shared between the State of New York and Greenrock. The Friends formed in 1987 to not only advocate for the Preserve publically, but to fill a notable gap in funding. The State's contract with Greenrock did not cover all the necessary work that had to be done, so the Friends stepped in and began paying for roadside mowing, leaf blowing and related work as needed - and had been doing so up until 2016 when the contract with Greenrock was not renewed by the State. The loss of Greenrock, and lack of replacement by a new company, has caused a noticeable shift in maintenance. Roadsides and fields that were routinely mowed in years past are neglected, drains filled with debris and deep ruts have formed, exposing large rocks.

The 45-mile network of carriage roads need to be maintained, the leaves blown, the drains clear and storm damage repaired. While timely upkeep is expensive, it costs a great deal less than the work that is required when it is not done. Fallen trees are a natural part of a woodland ecosystem, but trees left too close to the roadside hinder mowing, block drains and pose a safety risk for carriages and walkers. As a part of the Friends, I have seen firsthand how a routine maintenance schedule is the first step in protecting the carriage roads. In early March, the Friends paid for \$40,000 of contracted work, to tackle overdue roadside cleanup and removal of trees and logs in preparation for spring.

Immediately after that work was completed, we experienced an unprecedented 4 Nor'easters in 3 weeks, which left devastating damage in the Preserve. More than 50 trees fell, crisscrossing the carriage roads. As an avid runner, I gamely

hopped over, or around and continued on my way in the days and weeks following the storms. However, I knew the trees would be impassable for horses, strollers and anyone with limited mobility. The manpower and equipment necessary to clear the trees far exceeded the Preserve's in-house ability. In light of this, the Friends stepped in with a second contribution of \$40,000 to provide 13 days of storm cleanup and tree/log removal. This work has just been completed. Returning the Preserve to a safe and passable state for the community is our priority.

The Friends are community members, with wide and varied interests, but we are united in our mission to preserve the carriage roads. To further this mission, we have pledged a third contribution of \$40,000 towards the refurbishment of David's Loop. An access point for equestrians and a link to the carriage roads east of 448, it is in dire need of repair. Our focus remains on ensuring the historic roads are safe, open to the public and properly maintained, for future generations to enjoy, as was the intention of the John D. Rockefeller Jr.



Photo: Jessica Crendon

*Pocantico River carriage road devastated by recent storm.***David's Loop**, *continued from page 1*

the remainder. For those of you who use the Preserve and run on the carriage roads and watch the birds, a small donation would be a wonderful way to give something back.

Please donate via our web site: [www.friendsrock.org](http://www.friendsrock.org) and thank you!

**Reaching the Friends**

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**The Preserve Observer**

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Editors: Evelyn Hadad, Herbert Hadad  
Letters and submissions are invited.  
Please contact us c/o the Friends.

## Remembering a Tireless and Superb Gardener

By Steve Varvaro and Steve Austin



Mattie Varvaro

We are sad to report that long-time friend and volunteer of the Rockefeller Preserve passed away on December 12, 2017.

Some of you may be familiar with the name Mattie Varvaro, said her husband Steve. Some may recognize the truck with the sign The Wildlife Gardner. But all of you have seen the work that Mattie has done at the Rockefeller State Preserve.

After a successful career as a pharmaceutical executive Mattie retired to take up gardening full time. In her Master Gardener training she was considered a firebrand for advocating the concept of nurturing nature, embracing wildlife, protecting and promoting habitat for birds, bees, butterflies and especially hummingbirds.

In addition to her very small gardening business, catering to customers who wanted beautiful gardens, Mattie spent a fair amount of time volunteering her services in public spaces.

She frequently lectured on the topics of welcoming wildlife to your backyard, creating humming bird and pollinator friendly gardens, and creating gardens that would look beautiful throughout the four seasons.

Her own property was certified by the National Wildlife Federation as a Natural Habitat, providing food, shelter, water and a place for birds to rear their young. There are over 15 feeders on her property, ten bird boxes and two heated bird baths. Bird seed was a line item in the family budget.

In Rockefeller Preserve Mattie was an avid volunteer and tireless worker. Two years ago before contracting lung cancer Mattie started seedlings in her home of milkweed and asters, which were planted along the Swan Lake carriage road.

Most importantly, in a story that very people know, when the Japanese donated the tree peonies to the park in the fall of 2002 the original shipment of the peonies were baked as they sat in containers during the west coast dock strike. When the trees arrived they were all dead and worthless.

A second shipment was sent, which arrived in late fall, but by then the Japanese gardeners that had come to plant the stock were long gone. Along with a park worker, Allison Lynch, Mattie worked on hands and knees in frozen ground to plant hundreds of the delicate treasures we enjoy so much today.

Keith Austin, a master enthusiast if not a master gardener, added that Mattie had a leadership role for our most recent

project – funded by the Friends – to add more winter color to the Visitor Center, and with her husband Steve propagated and planted numerous native plants along Swan Lake carriage road. Her contributions to the community included creating bird, butterfly and hummingbird friendly gardens at the Teatown Preserve, the Pryun Audubon Sanctuary and the pocket garden at the Scarborough RR station that attracts hundreds of Monarch butterflies during their annual migration. She also lectured on wildlife gardening and through her firm, The Wildlife Gardener, created private gardens with those themes.

But what I will remember most about Mattie is not her *curriculum vitae* but her engaging smile, optimism, warm and friendly personality, and eagerness to share her expertise with anyone demonstrating even the slightest interest. And she made the best paella this side of Barcelona.

We shall remember and miss her.

### Geronimo, continued from page 2

ate from the second grade.

Whereupon the one who had wet his pants in the cafeteria stoutly defended himself. "I am not stupid!" he said.

"You are stupid," said the lout.

"Am not," said the wet one.

"Are too!" said the lout.

Clambering down from the bus, when it came to his stop, the tiny frontiersman leapt into his mother's lap and regaled her with his debating triumph.

Whereupon that lovely woman told young Davy that, in this one case, the lout "might have a point. Your father and I had a meeting with your teacher, and we all felt that, with the trouble you are having learning to read, it might not be such a bad idea for you to have another go at the second grade."

### 2. The Apache and I both loved the land.

When family life seemed intolerable, the one who wets his pants in the day and his bed at night used to run into the woods.

Fearing--or hoping--that his repentant parents were in pursuit, he would plunge through thickets that gouged his arms and jabbed at his eyes until at last he burst into

*continued on page 10*

## From the Friends President



By George Gumina

As I write, we are celebrating spring but still recovering in the Preserve from a horrific winter. The storms and snow kept coming! As you see from the article on page 1, the Friends came to the rescue of the Preserve and paid \$80,000 for clean-up from the storms and more than 50 downed trees.

We are adding another \$40,000 to rehabilitate David’s Loop. We are asking for donations from the public in memory of David Rockefeller. We think it only fitting that people can show their respect and appreciation for this great benefactor by helping to breathe new life into the David’s Loop carriage road. We also want to commend the State for its ongoing rehabilitation of the Preserve, which is primarily funded as part of Governor Cuomo’s NY Parks 2020 initiative to revitalize the state park system.

The process continues for the designation of the carriage roads as part of the historic register! We have extraordinary beauty here and have an obligation to protect it while inviting the public to enjoy it as well. The Friends organization is coordinating with the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation to gain for the century-old carriage road system full designation on the State and National Register of Historic Places. The designation nomination will be considered for approval at the September meeting of the State.

As we look forward to this year, we are thinking about our event schedule. The 10th Annual Peony Reception is May 10th, where we also receive help from the local garden groups with their beautiful flower arrangements. And the art exhibit by the actor Val Kilmer of the *Batman Forever* movie fame is still ongoing.

The Rockwood Ramble has opened registration for Saturday, June 2. Set on the trails all around Rockwood Hall, this 10K combines the incredible views of the Hudson River with the gentle streamside carriage roads of Rockwood Hall, and a few challenging hills as well!

We are also looking forward to our two October events. The Amble & Gamble will take place on Sunday, September 30 also at Rockwood Hall. It’s a lovely trail ride for the equestrian set as well as being an opportunity to lunch at the foundation of the mansion that stood in Rockwood, see the boats go by on the river and the horses come in from their ride.

The Rocky’s 5K also takes place in mid-October, and starts out from Rockwood Hall and features more of our famous hills.

Please join us!



Photo: Jessika Creedon

Damage on Pocantico River carriage road

### Board of Directors Friends of the Rockefeller State Park Preserve

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# Citizen Scientists Investigate Status of the Preserve

Volunteers contribute to, and sometimes lead, science and biological monitoring projects which inform our land management and help us track changes in the Preserve. They also link the Preserve to statewide, national & global studies.

We are joining a nationwide program to assess Monarch butterfly populations and their success in the Preserve. Volunteers will monitor caterpillar density, map patches of milkweed, and count adults as they migrate through in the fall.



photo by Julia Jardine

specialized plans to manage this pest and protect the key native evergreen tree in our forest.



Bob Finkelstein – photo by Julia Jardine

How successful are our nesting bluebirds? Bob Buchanan and Sandy Morrissey (below) inspect bluebird boxes during the nesting season. In 2017, pairs using



We need birders in May to look for bobolinks, a grassland bird, which usually show up in the large fields along Bedford Road. If it looks like they intend to nest, we will modify grazing.

photo by Todd Cameron



Bob Buchanan and Sandy Morrissey – photo by Susan Antenen

Bob Finkelstein (*upper right*) uses hand lenses to monitor the life stages of the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid, a non-native scale insect that is killing hemlock trees in the region. He also documents the health of individual hemlocks. His findings, reported to Cornell University, will help us develop

12 boxes produced 59 eggs, 28 of which fledged. Of the 8 successful nests, the average fledges per nest was 3.5. Last year, our bluebirds fledged more chicks than other sites, which were affected by a fatal parasite.

Paula Sharp and Ross Eatman, who have photo-documented over 100 species of native bees in the Preserve and Stone Barns, have located uncommon pollinator species. We will adjust mowing to protect



# Preserve's Monarch Butterflies, Birds, Bees, and Forest.



Preserve manager Susan Antenen (middle) with Paula Sharp and Ross Eatman  
photo by Heidi Fuhrman

their ground nesting sites and foodplants. Paula and Ross's gorgeous photographs and site-specific information may be viewed at their website: [www.sharpeatmanguides.com](http://www.sharpeatmanguides.com).



photo by Sharp/Eatman

We thank the birders in the Preserve who enter their sightings into *eBird*, an ever-growing global on-line dataset. Local birders have amassed 13,000 *eBird*



Saw Mill River Audubon Monthly Birding Group: photo by Heidi Fuhrman

records for 202 species in the Preserve! By joining their records, we've confirmed 33 species of warblers and 13 species of sparrows plus documented winter waterfowl, spring and fall migrants, year-round residents, & nesting species.

The forest depends on the presence of tree saplings to replace large trees that are lost. To monitor tree regeneration in the understory, the Preserve measures



2017 Stewardship Team:

photo by Thomas Rawinski

the "ten tallest" using a method developed by the US Forest Service. So far our plots indicate average sapling height is only 12", which indicates high rates of deer browse and poor tree regeneration. This year, citizen scientists will help us measure more plots and expand our forest monitoring.

If you are interested in participating in citizen science projects, please contact the Preserve's Natural Resource Specialist Rebecca Policello at

[Rebecca.Policello@parks.ny.gov](mailto:Rebecca.Policello@parks.ny.gov)



photo by Julia Jardine

**For more information visit:**

[www.instagram.com/rockefellerstatepark](https://www.instagram.com/rockefellerstatepark)

[www.facebook.com/RockefellerSPP](https://www.facebook.com/RockefellerSPP)

[parks.ny.gov/parks/59](http://parks.ny.gov/parks/59)

Centerfold content & design layout by

Susan Antenen & Laurence Gill



## ❖ Gallery Schedule at a Glance ❖

### “From Nature”

Sunday, May 6 - Sunday, June 10, 2018

Opening Reception: Thursday Evening, May 10, 2018 6-9 PM



Val Kilmer graduated from Juilliard, where, at 17, he was the youngest actor ever accepted to the Drama Division. He burst onto the Hollywood scene as rock star Nick Rivers in the comedy *Top Secret*, then starred in the cult classic *Real Genius*. He achieved international stardom playing Iceman in *Top Gun*, Jim Morrison in *The Doors*, Doc Holiday in *Tombstone* and the Caped Crusader in *Batman Forever*.



He made his Broadway debut in *Slab Boys* with Sean Penn and Kevin Bacon. He has appeared in numerous theater productions including Joseph Papp’s *Henry IV: Part One, As You Like It* with Patti LuPone, and *Tis Pity She’s A Whore*. Val received a Grammy nomination and recently wrote, produced, directed and starred in *Citizen Twain* a one-man play about Mark Twain.

As a fine artist, Val Kilmer has shown at the James Kelly Gallery in Santa Fe, New Mexico, and Studio 360 in Tokyo. His *Wonderland* of collage and painted photographs were exhibited in Rome and Los Angeles. Val had his New York City debut Solo Exhibition *Valholla* at the Woodward Gallery from May 20-July 22, 2017, which received critical acclaim.

*Exhibit co-curated by John Woodward and Audrey Leeds. Mr. Kilmer appears courtesy of the Woodward Gallery, NYC.*

### “The Spirit of Spring”

Sunday, March 11 - Sunday, April 29, 2018

An exhibition introducing seasonal changes interpreted by talented artists Gianni Biaggi, Peggie Blizard, Corinne Lapin-Cohen, Joseph Genova, Janet Lippmann & Dianne Sposito.

Responding to emerging growth of budding blooms in joyful colors, greenery sprouting amidst the trees and conceptual gardens evolved by horticulturists; this new life force will renew your senses and energy.

\*The image on our front cover is a photograph by Dianne Sposito entitled *Carnaval Tulip & Friends* and is one of the works shown in this exhibit.



Gianni Biaggi



Janet Lippman:  
*Wisteria, Sunnyside*



Peggie Blizard:  
*Petunias and the Tappan Zee*



## From the Preserve Manager

By Susan Antenen

April 2, 2018 – As soon as the snow stopped, the wood frogs and spring peepers resumed their raucous calls and breeding frenzy in the Preserve’s wetlands. Spring is accelerating. The cormorant is back on the lake and early migrants-- phoebes, palm warblers and red-winged blackbirds – have arrived. Red-tailed hawks and great horned owls are already sitting on nests. Chipmunks are emerging and any day we’ll see the first butterfly, the Mourning Cloak, which overwinters as an adult. Red maples, elms, alders, hazelnuts, skunk cabbage and pussy willows are in flower. Pretty soon Peaceful Path and Brothers’ Path on the east side of Swan Lake will be best places to see spring wildflowers. But hurry. They bloom before trees leaf out.

Meanwhile, the State-funded carriage road rehabilitation in the western part of the Preserve is progressing quickly. The contractor, Nicky Diggs Excavation and Masonry of Katonah, has restored drainage and is now regrading and resurfacing sections of Big Tree carriage road, Witch Spring carriage road, Gory Brook carriage road, Pocantico River carriage road, and Eagle Hill access trail. The three magnificent stone arch bridges across the Pocantico River will be repointed. The \$622,000 project is primarily funded by Governor Cuomo’s NY Parks 2020 Initiative to revitalize the state park system and expand access to outdoor recreation.

The first carriage road section to be completed will be the Pocantico River carriage road, ahead of the emergence of fern fiddleheads and pale pink flowers of the spring beauty with their sole pollinator, the *Andrena* wild bee. One of the challenges in the Preserve is balancing the ongoing maintenance of the carriage road drainage and shoulders with those of native wildflowers growing along their edges.

I’m sure that those of you who live near the Preserve vividly remember the high winds of the two of four nor’easters in

March. Not only did they knock out electricity for several days, they felled more than 50 trees across the carriage roads and many more alongside and away from the trails. Many were quite large and alive, such as the large red oak that fell just below the Pocantico River cascade. All the carriage roads were cleared promptly thanks to the Friends of Rockefeller State Park Preserve who sponsored a contract with Bruleen LLC and Greenrock Corporation. The clean-up was (and still is) an enormous job that we could not have managed alone, so thank you Friends!

Ongoing loss of the large native trees is serious. Most of the Preserve is forest, so conserving the health of the forest is central to maintaining the character of the property. Our hardwood forest appears green and lush, but once you look closely you can see signs of distress. Lots of dead and fallen trees, very few native tree saplings, too few native wildflowers, and thick infestations of invasive non-native vines and shrubs. Our stewardship program is dealing with major issues that threaten the beauty, health, and possibly the very existence of our hardwood forest: (a) non-native insect pests and pathogens (diseases), (b) Invasive plant species, and (c) large numbers of white-tailed deer, which are native, but in high numbers they selectively browse native tree seedlings and sapling, compromising the forest of the future.

Unfortunately, doing nothing will not lead to a beautiful, diverse forest. Recently the Preserve hosted a symposium on the *Future of the Forest: Managing Change in Rockefeller Preserve and Westchester County* that delved into what we need to do to sustain our forest into the future. It was sold out, which indicates there is considerable interest in the Preserve’s forest and landscape. To learn more, please stop by the office or attend our short walks and talks.

### Rockefeller State Park Preserve Staff

Susan Antenen, Preserve Manager  
 Laurence Gill, Director of Operations  
 Vacant, Maintenance Supervisor  
 Sean Sullivan, Buildings & Grounds Keeper  
 Hunter Salmon, Seasonal Maintenance Assistant  
 Rebecca Policello, Natural Resource Specialist  
 Julia Ann Jardine, Conservation Communicator  
 Vacant, Office Assistant  
 Anthony Corda, Parking Lot/Visitor Service Assistant



Work primarily funded by Governor Cuomo’s NY Parks 2020 Initiative.

**Geronimo**, *continued from page 4*

a clearing where--after his sobbing subsided—he could hear the songs of birds and the chatter of squirrels. Then he could hear his own heart and then—mysteriously and quite unexpectedly—he felt better, much better.

For the Apache also the landscape was a church, a place where they worshipped both in groups and when alone. They believed that the spirits of their ancestors lived in the trees and in the rocks.

When the U.S. Army set out to destroy Geronimo, they determined that the best way to do this was to take him away from his land. The Indians who kept breaking out of their reservations and then raiding the not-so-innocent people who had settled on what had been Apache land didn't all need to be killed, if they were simply uprooted, plucked out of the terrain from which they took their sustenance.

Because Geronimo was so clever, the army had to hire other Apache to track down that one Apache. It took decades, but they finally caught Geronimo, made him a prisoner of war. The Apache scouts who had helped the army were doubtless surprised to learn that they, too, were now prisoners of war. When all is said and done, the generals must have reasoned, an Apache is an Apache.

Tracked down by his own people, Geronimo ultimately surrendered, and the Indians were all put on a train. When the train pulled out, the Apache dogs ran alongside it, and they ran and ran until their wind was spent, until their hearts were broken. In prison in Florida, the Apache died like flies, but their leader survived.

Like many who are successful against terrible odds, Geronimo was a pragmatist. He lived to join the Dutch Reformed Church. He allowed himself to be exhibited at the 1904 Saint Louis World's Fair. He would buy hats and sew new buttons on his clothes, so that when he ran into tourists, he could sell them the hat that had once belonged to a great killer, or a button that had been torn from a wicked Indian's clothing. He rode a horse in the inaugural parade of President Theodore Roosevelt, but he never stopped asking to be returned to his land.

Geronimo's out-of-doors was in the mountains of what is now New Mexico. For the burgher the out-of-doors was the beautifully landscaped estate of John D. Rockefeller,

and yet he loved it, took his sustenance from the trees and leaves and earth.

I know that today it is anathema to project my feelings onto people who for reasons of income, gender, or race might be quite different than I am myself. But from the time I was a small child, I have wished that I could have been an Apache. The Wolf of the War Path was by no means the only book I read.

I don't know where the Apache think they got their land from. The land I love was an out-and-out gift of the Rockefellers. I've heard it said that we don't need to support this park, with its gorgeous views and beautifully laid-out carriage roads, but this is bunk.

The Rockefeller fortune did not trickle down, it gushed. When John D Jr. disposed of his father's wealth, he gave 102 million dollars to his heirs. Charity got more than a billion. We were given the park, and we had best protect it and support it. And this is a real live issue today. Do we really need so much open land? Should we maintain the spectacular network of carriage roads, or concentrate on supporting indigenous plants?

That's an easy one. We should do both.

You might not think you have a lot in common with the great warrior, but I bet that you too have had some tragedy in your life. You've had the need for solace. You've used the park.

Geronimo had to give up his park.

Before he died at almost eighty years of age, Geronimo said that if he had it to do over again, he would never have surrendered. "I would have fought until I was the last man."

In the not-too-distant future there may be a time when we all need to decide if we want the park to grow, or if we don't mind terribly if it shrinks. When that time arrives, I hope we all remember Geronimo. I hope that we can learn from his mistake.



*Geronimo*





# Friends Gala December 9, 2017 at Rockefeller Playhouse





## The Preserve Observer

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**HERE TO ENJOY...OURS TO PRESERVE**

## ROCKWOOD RAMBLE 10K



**Saturday, June 2, 2018 - 9am**

10K Race on the Beautiful Groomed Carriage Roads of  
**ROCKEFELLER STATE PARK PRESERVE**  
1 Rockwood Road • Sleepy Hollow, NY 10591

All Proceeds For Carriage Road Maintenance

Registration fee - \$35 through June 1st • Registration fee day of race - \$40

**Team Competition • Awards • T-Shirts • Refreshments**

Register Online: [www.register.chronotrack.com/r/35772](http://www.register.chronotrack.com/r/35772)

Additional Race Info: [www.friendsrock.org/events/rockwood-ramble-10k-3](http://www.friendsrock.org/events/rockwood-ramble-10k-3)



**Thank you to Our Sponsor LL Bean Outdoor Discovery Schools for donation of gifts for the race!**