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Minsi Lake Update: Picnic Tables, Bluebird Nestboxes, Purple Martin Towers, Osprey Nests

By Jim Wilson / Friends of Minsi Lake (FOML) Sec.

UMBT - Northampton County Parks & Rec staff have replaced the 11 nearly 50-year-old picnic tables with the 11 brand new ones FOML recently purchased.

Four of the new tables are wheelchair accessible—one from one end of the table & three from one side of each of the tables. The table frames are made of galvanized steel & the benches & tops are made from recycled plastic in cedar color. FOML paid \$12,761 for the new tables.

LV Audubon Society volunteers & I recently installed an additional 19 bluebird nestboxes at Minsi Lake & Bear Swamp. We now have 28 bluebird nestboxes there, all of which are being actively monitored once a week by local volunteers.

We now have five purple martin towers at the Lake supporting a total of 90 martin nesting condos—18 condos per tower. Parks & Rec purchased two towers this year & FOML purchased three over the past several years. LVAS vols & Parks & Rec staff installed them all.

We should have a record year for martin production at Minsi in 2024. There's lakeside space for a few more towers on the east & west shores of the Lake. We'll see what this year's occupancy looks like this summer in the current 90 units & then decide on additional towers for next year. Pretty sure we now have the largest purple martin colony in the Lehigh Valley at Minsi Lake.

Our osprey pair are back on their nesting platform tower at Totts Gap Conservation Area for the sixth consecutive year. And two of our six barred owl nestboxes in the Minsi Lake Greenway are occupied again this year—one each at Bear Swamp & Totts Gap. Each box contains three barred owlets, which will be ready for banding by Hawk Mountain Sanctuary biologists in the next week or so. When these six owlets successfully fledge, our barred owl nestbox efforts will have resulted in adding 12 brand new barred owls to the Minsi Lake Greenway in just three nesting seasons.

We have trailcams next to each of these two barred owl nestboxes and will be posting them on Blue Valley Times Facebook page.



Habitat for Humanity Names New Executive Director



Scott J. Fabian

By Barbara J. Hill, President Habitat for Humanity Board of Directors

East Stroudsburg, PA . - The Board Of Directors of Monroe County Habitat for Humanity is pleased to announce that Scott J. Fabian has been named Executive Director.

"Scott is not new to our organization," said Habitat's president Barbara J. Hill. "He has been with us since 2019, serving as Volunteer Coordinator, Affiliate Coordinator, and most recently as Acting Executive Director. His successful experience with our agency, as well as his previous professional accomplishments elevated him to the top of our list during the search process."

"With more than 32 years of organizational and community leadership, Scott brings a proven track record of success to his new position," Hill said. "His extensive background in relevant experience positions, his deep understanding of working with volunteers and faith-based organizations, and his solid community network align perfectly with Habitat's vision and mission. We are confident that with Scott's leadership, Monroe County Habitat for Humanity's growth and success will continue."

Fabian is enthusiastic about his new role. "I am honored to have been chosen to lead Habitat's team and I look forward to creating new opportunities to increase our potential to improve housing affordability and assure that everyone in Monroe County has a safe and decent place to live. I am most excited right now to bring our dream of a ReStore to fruition - the proceeds of which will allow us to help more homeowners," he said. Fabian holds a B.A. from Westchester University and a M.S. from Marywood University.

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