

Green Link

MONMOUTH COUNTY PARK SYSTEM
NEW JERSEY

An Employee & Volunteer Newsletter



Thompson Park

September/October 2014

Impact: Our Beautiful Parks

Staffers from across the Park System were able to capture these stunning sunrise and sunset photos in and around the parks. So, working outdoors does have its upside. Take a moment to enjoy the natural beauty around us and the talents of your co-workers:

Eye-Catching Early Scenes



Sunrise over the Atlantic at Seven Presidents Oceanfront Park, **Senior Park Manager Matt Coleman**



Sunrise over the Manasquan Reservoir, Turkey Swamp **Senior Park Ranger Darrin Morrissey**



Early Morning at Mount Mitchell's 9-11 Ceremony, **Park System Photographer Maribeth Gardner**



Sunrise at Bayshore Waterfront Park, **Chief Construction Inspector Steve Matthews**

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DIRECTOR'S CORNER



“What We Do”

I want to thank everyone who worked so hard to prepare for our Commission on Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) 20-year accreditation visit

this past June. Our three visitors represented professionals from Park and Recreation Agencies in Louisiana, North Carolina and Texas. They were certainly impressed with our organization and what you do to serve our citizens each and every day. Your hospitality did not go unnoticed.

The effort on everyone’s part was extraordinary, from pulling together information, to updating files and manuals, while at the same time doing the daily routine and preparing for company to visit our parks.

We expect the Commission on Accreditation to be meeting in Charlotte, NC in October this year. If all goes well, we can expect to hear that we have again been reaccredited for another five years.

You all deserve a lot of credit for being excellent hosts. Accreditation is a process that provides us with standards that we should be meeting in carrying out what we do, the public’s business. The process helps answer the question of, “How are we doing?”

“High expectations are the key to everything.”
- Sam Walton, American businessman



CAPRA team visit at the Manasquan Reservoir Visitor Center (l to r) Park System Secretary-Director Jim Truncer, Kevin Beavers from Temple TX, Susan Yerkes from Nashville NC, Bert Neal from Pride LA, Freeholder Liaison to the Park System Lillian Burry, and Recreation Commissioner Vice Chairman Fred Rummel.

Striking Sunsets



Sunset over the Manasquan River at Fisherman's Cove, **Park Planner Paul Gleitz**



This sunset frames a fishing boat and the Oceanic bridge on the Navesink River at Hartshorne Woods Park, **Construction Inspector John Eisemann**



A calm sunset over the Navesink River—this time from Blackfish Cove at Hartshorne Woods Park, **Senior Park Manager Ken Olsen**



It is no surprise that an avid kayaker and seafarer has captured some beautiful sunsets, this one over the Atlantic Highlands Marina, **Senior Park Naturalist Joe Reynolds**



The dedication plaque in its original location.



The heavy boulder awaits carving and placement of the plaque at Thompson Park.

Plaque Project Extraordinaire. Last spring, Holmdel Park's original dedication plaque from 1964 (that's fifty years ago)—formerly affixed to the side of the fireplace inside the Shelter Building—was moved to a nicer and more visible location on a grassy berm just outside. But first...**Rangers from Hartshorne Woods Park** had to dig up and haul this very heavy boulder base from Rocky Point to Thompson Park. Then, **Carpenter Frank Mead** and **Signmaker Dave Dellett** carved the rock and affixed the old plaque. **The Special Projects Team** took over from there, hauling the boulder from Thompson to Holmdel, where it was carefully guided into place.



Our heaviest equipment was needed to haul the dedication plaque to its new home on the lawn. **Special Projects Team of Rangers Eric Doren, Ivan Sanchez and Steve Clayton** bring the heavy object in, overseen by **Assistant Superintendent George Richdale**.



Rangers dig the ground to set the boulder just right.



By June, grass is already filling in around the newly placed dedication plaque.



Before and After. In 2009, the gigantic beech tree dwarfs the house. Today in 2014, it is the other way around.

End of an Era. After an estimated 120 years (1896-2014), the once grand and glorious European copper beech at the entrance to the Visitor Center was removed and replanted. The typical lifespan is 150-200 years and no one was sadder to witness this tree's recent slow demise than the staff and regular visitors at **Thompson Park**. Thankfully, the removal in June went quickly and a brand new beech of the same variety was in place within days.



3. Takedown. On Wednesday, June 11, 2014, the experienced staff from Becker's Tree Service took down the struggling tree, which had valiantly leafed out its few remaining sections this year.



1. The Beech Takes a Few Hits. After sections were singed by the Visitor Center fire of 2006, the beech stood tall for another five years before losing a huge section of trunk to a spring storm in May 2011. The crack and thud of the branch hitting the ground was so loud, many VC staffers were drawn outside take a closer look.



2. A Deadly Blow From Sandy. Then in October 2012, Superstorm Sandy took another large section of the trunk, and the already-weakened beech just couldn't recover.



4. A New Tree in Its Place. The next week, our own staff took over to remove the gigantic stumps, replant a new tree, and tend the site and soil to ensure this new beech has a long life.



STAFF SCENES

History Lives Inside Battery Lewis. Members of the American Ground Forces Association (in authentic historic uniform) joined staff from Hartshorne Woods Park, and Park System and County Administrators for one of the Park System's first official tours of the interior of Battery Lewis on May 17.

(pictured center group, left to right) Senior Park Ranger Allison Petruzzo, Park Ranger Ralph Appicelli, Principal Park Ranger Tom Dillon with Senior Manager Ken Olsen (in back) and Park Historian Gail Hunton are flanked by uniformed members of the AGFA.



(l to r) Senior Park Manager Ken Olsen, Park Historian Gail Hunton, Freeholder Liaison to the Parks Lillian Burry and Information Officer Karen Livingstone tour the corridor where the shells and powder (stored separately) travelled on overhead tracks (called a carriage) between the two gun casements, one under each white canopy.



The former gun casement site appears here as a large hole. Formerly, it housed a barridge or movable steel platform on which the 63 foot gun was mounted. The Park System awaits installation of a new concrete pedestal and gun.

Our Final Outdoor Expo? Park Naturalists Sam Skinner and Peggy Ross walk the planks (that is, the trail boardwalk leading to the event site) on their way to the last Expo.



Turkey Swamp **Park Ranger Francisco Masini, Park Manager Chris Plantamura and Park Ranger Russ Finkelstein** clean up their event Ranger Station.



70,000 Steps Funds Park System Event. Friends of the Parks Director **Maria Wojciechowski** presents a check for \$2,700 to **Therapeutic Recreation Supervisor Lauren Gerber**,

who will use it to supply the division's annual semi-formal for individuals with disabilities this October. Sponsored by the Atlantic Club, this fitness program challenged participants to log over 70,000 steps on a pedometer in exchange for a chance at a free membership. It was the Atlantic Club employees who picked us as one of two non-profits to benefit from the proceeds. Thank you!



Tatum Trail Crew. It was a fine day in May to be out grooming the trails: **Seasonal Rangers Graham Haliskoe (left) and Max Lawless (right) with Park Ranger Bryan Whalen (center).**



Almost Scene: A Park System truck peeks out from behind a gorgeous rhododendron at **Deep Cut Gardens** this past spring.

Wild Wildlife

A Whale of a 'Tail'. This character was donated to the Park System 10 years ago and has been seen at *Creatures of the Night*, the *Fair* and a few other events through the years. All that activity caused some damage to the tail, so the whale was sent to our trusty "Wear and Tear Repair Shoppe," managed by the Park System's go-to guy for unusual projects, **Signmaker Dave Dellett.** With help from **Carpenter Frank Mead**, the whale's tail was reshaped with new foam, painted, and sent along to its next appearance.



...And, Turtles Found. This branch at **Holmdel Park's** pond is obviously a very happening spot for painted turtles. How many can you count? (The Green Link sees 11: 5 on the bottom, 2 top left, 3 bottom right [one is kind of hiding behind the branch] and one swimming in the center.)



A Rabbit Grows Up. You may remember this young rescued rabbit with **Landscape Architect Laura Lienick**, who found it hiding at the Marina, from a previous Green Link article. Fast forward a few years... the adult rabbit is thriving in its new home.



A Horse is a Horse. Well...sort of. This is **Peggy the Practice Horse**, who provides an opportunity for individuals with disabilities to get acquainted before moving onto an actual equine. Here she is getting a try out from **Asst. Superintendent of Recreation Karen Jarmusz.**



Do You Recognize This Egg? **Jan Galanti of Outdoor Adventures** found this large egg in the middle of the parking lot by the Activity Barn at Thompson, and knew she had to move it—but where? According to Park Naturalists, the egg belonged to a Canada Goose and would be safer if returned to the grass nearby.

Caught in the Act. While hungry robins probably spend much of their day digging up and eating worms, we aren't often lucky enough to catch them in the act. That is...until last May, when this robin enjoyed an afternoon snack behind the **Visitor Center** right as a staffer walked by with a camera. The VC is getting to be a great nature watching spot.



Turtles Lost... **Hartshorne Woods Park Ranger Allison Petruzzo** found this box turtle wandering along the middle of the road near **Battery Lewis** in May, and moved it to a more appropriate location.



Eagles in Our Midst. This is what it looks like when an eagle flies into your neighborhood and lands in a nearby tree. Since this kind of thing doesn't happen every day, **Park System Museum Curator Cheryl Stober Goff** quickly took this photo.

Corner



Volunteer Al Fico digs a winding trench into the woods to route water off the trail.

Project Updates

Trails Team

specialists re-routed some unwanted water off the swampy trails at Shark River Park in early spring (April). Without foliage to obscure the view, these photos illustrate the exact path the water will take—something that won't be as visible later in the season (June), when volunteers returned to continue their work at this site.



Another Trails volunteer does the same, pictured on the trail.



Volunteers Jeanette Lingelbach, Kat Hopkinson, Maury Mangan and Christine Scott dig another trailside water trench.

Beach Nesting Bird Monitors and **Seven Presidents Rangers** report that one pair of piping plover and one pair of oystercatchers are nesting at the park this year, as of June 11, 2014. Together, these teams take great care to provide suitable habitat, protect the birds, and educate visitors about the need to give the birds a little “breathing room.”



Beach Nesting Bird Monitor Volunteer Linda Rovder captured these delightful photos that document the birds that the volunteers are working to protect: a piping plover pair and an oystercatcher.

New Programs & Events



Archery Birthday Parties.

Families looking for a new twist on the sport-themed birthday party will find plenty of interest in archery, especially

when they learn it's held in **Thompson Park's Activity Barn**. A hit activity with both boys and girls!



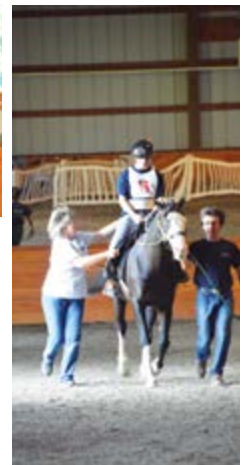
On Your Mark....

About 130 participants, mostly families with young children, came out to race in the Park System's first annual Superhero Fun Run at **Dorbrook Recreation Area** in early June, and in costume, of course!



Riders Perform in Sunnyside Show.

The **Sunnyside Equestrian Center** held its first annual Horse Show this year, an event where riders displayed their skills for a special audience of parents and friends.



Welcome New Employees!



Henry Torres -
Greenskeeper, Shark River
Golf Course Maintenance

Gary J. Homefield, Jr. -
Golf Ranger, Howell Park
Golf Center



Matthew Jetzt - Golf Ranger,
Hominy Hill Golf Center

Fox Mulder - Equipment
Operator, Construction &
Repair, Thompson Park



George List, Jr. -
Greenskeeper, Howell Park
Golf Course Maintenance

Jacqueline West - Assistant
Manager, Sunnyside
Equestrian Center



Michael Fenlon - Recreation
Leader, Urban Recreation
at Fort Monmouth

Larry Milonas -
Greenskeeper, Hominy Hill
Golf Course Maintenance



Farewell, Retiree!

Park System Assistant Director Bruce Gollnick



It would be impossible to list all of Bruce's individual accomplishments here, or anyplace else, since he was truly involved in everything. In addition to managing all the essential, behind-the-scenes operations that keep the Park System humming along—the budget (of course), construction projects, labor contracts, etc.—Bruce was front and center when disaster struck, leading our response to emergencies such as the Visitor Center fire, Hurricane Irene and Superstorm Sandy (and notably, handling all the complicated insurance claims that ensued). But ultimately, it is his vast knowledge of all aspects of the Park System and his care for our property and facilities and people that is truly legendary. Moving things along in a positive direction, year after year, steady as a rock yet without a lot of fuss or fanfare, Bruce has helped shape this Park System into the respected agency it is today. We are so grateful for his 43 years of dedicated service and the solid legacy he is leaving behind. We wish him all the joy in the world on his most well-deserved retirement, and hope he will come back to visit us often.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

September

1 Patrick Vivalo 2 Michele Demaree 3 Diane Allen
3 Ronald Bomma 3 Kelly Cole 4 Lauren Gerber 5 Justin Birk
5 Wayne Connelly 5 Shawn Cusack 5 Angela Kochon
6 Howard Dombroski 7 David Whalen 10 Jim Mowczan
11 Susan Stafford-Smith 11 Mark Szemiot 11 Susan Williams
13 Emerald Platzer 16 Tom Petraglia 17 Mark Borchert
19 Edward Docker 19 Katie Stone 22 Elizabeth Hennessy
23 Robert Morris 25 Joe DePierro 26 Ken Herceg
26 Jim Janeczko 27 Chuck Raftery 28 Dave Mishkin
28 George Richdale 30 Eric Cadenelli

October

1 Bob MacDonald 2 Michael Alfano 4 Jeffrey Ward
4 Gary Waters 7 Paul Bagdanov 7 Patrick Killeen
7 Skip Supczynski 8 Barbara Berry 9 Bill Murray
13 Ron Luepke 14 Tom Mullens 15 Shea Gilliland
16 James Curry 17 Dawn Clayton 18 Barry Barone
20 David Hollabaugh 20 Bill Shaffer 21 Dave Dellest
21 Laura Garavuso 22 Matt Coleman 22 Claire Morris
27 Rocco Mayo 27 Jenn Troisi 28 Michele Clampfer
28 Maribeth Gardner 29 Kivin Brown

November

1 Ivan Gottstein 2 Frank Bradford 3 Rich Pillar 3 Paul Zimmer
11 Bill Diehl 11 Mark Miller 11 Jim Truncer 16 Paul Basquill
16 Sean Pierson 17 Ryan Rochelle 18 Jed Jesiolowski
18 Matthew Jetzt 19 Daniel Buecher 19 Mark Foulks
20 Michael C. Sullivan 23 Mike Dollear 24 Ann Marie Osnato
25 Philip Patterson 26 Tom Ketcham

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Monmouth County Park System
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Fire In The Sky

This issue, the Green Link has put the photographic talents of staff on display with a feature on the sun. More inside...



Park Naturalist Bob Henschel, sunset at Shark River Estuary



Park Naturalist (retired) Doug Krampert, the pennisular cliff of Hartshorne Woods