



GREEN HERITAGE



The Newsletter of Monmouth County's Open Space, Parks & Recreation Agency Vol. 41 No. 4 Winter 2007-08

WINTER SNAPSHOTS...



Thompson Park



Manasquan River at Howell Park Golf Course

The birds are gone, The ground is white, The winds are wild,
They chill and bite; The ground is thick with slush and sleet,
And I can barely feel my feet.



Holmdel Park

Out & About: Meet The Park System's Urban Recreation Division

For over 20 years, the Park System has been providing recreation programs to qualifying local communities through the Recreation Assistance Program (RAP) and Mobile Recreation units. Four years ago, the Park System opened the Coastal Activity Center (CAC) in Asbury Park and recently began working with Monmouth University to offer a series of summer camps. All of these programs are managed and staffed by the Park System's Urban Recreation Division (known simply as "Urban Rec" within the parks). See box on page 2 for an overview.

Urban Rec's expanding array of community programming has received plenty of positive attention lately, earning them coverage in the local papers, inclusion on advertisements for community events featuring their programs (because they have such a good reputation), and words of praise from the people they have worked for.

MOBILE REC: HAVE RECREATION, WILL TRAVEL

With their colorful van, Urban Rec's Mobile Rec staff travel to numerous communities within the county, bringing the recreation experience to groups of all ages. And, according to Neptune Township Recreation Director Dawn Thompson, the Mobile Rec program



Full-time staffers at the Park System's Urban Recreation Division (l to r): Recreation Supervisor Courtney Bison and Program Coordinators Ann Marie Osnato and Kevin Dunn.

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Green Heritage Staff

Editor/Writer: Lisa Bonelli
Photographers:
Maribeth Gardner
Andi Monick
Graphics: Mary Ann Goodwin
Questions/Comments/
Subscriptions/Cancellations:
732-842-4000x4336;
lbonelli@
monmouthcountyparks.com

A SHORTCUT TO URBAN REC

- **RAP (Recreation Assistance Program):** Park System programs at a discounted price for approved urban communities
- **Mobile Recreation:** Traveling unit brings free sports, games, and craft activities to qualifying agencies
- **Extreme Team Summer Camp:** Scholarships, transportation, and camps for 60 middle schoolers
- **Coastal Activity Center:** Discounted after-school recreation programs 3 days a week in Asbury Park
- **Park Intern Program:** Summer training program to learn the “ins and outs” of working as a ranger. Five students graduated in 2007.
- **Summer Camps (with Monmouth University):** Originally just for 5-10 year olds, these free camps now include children ages 11-15 as well.

provides her own staff with some very important benefits. “The Mobile Rec staff always makes sure to involve our staff in their activities, so our staff can eventually repeat what they have learned.” Mobile Rec counselors are also “very energetic about including everyone in their activities” she says. They will make every effort to find a way for each person to participate, even if that means bringing them in as a cheerleader. According to Dawn, this sets a great example for her staff.

MOTIVATED STAFF: THE SECRET TO URBAN REC’S SUCCESS

Courtney Bison, Park System Recreation Supervisor, is enthusiastic about the merits of the Urban Rec staff, and says “they are animated and sensitive, and they love the kids.” The staff, in turn, are enthusiastic about their role serving children in the communities where they work.

“...sometimes the best thing for a child is just to let them laugh and have fun. That would be my favorite part of the job, making someone laugh...”

- Courtney Rucinski, Urban Rec Staffer

The influence that staff have on the lives of others is a great motivation for the attitude they present—which is “positive, friendly and encouraging,” says Courtney. “In part, this attitude is in their personalities, which is why they choose to do this kind of work in the first place. But it is also developed through nurturing the children, especially the ones who feel left out.”

“...adapting yourself to the needs of a group is the best way to lead a fun and safe program...you have to take into account the various personalities of the children.”

-Kerry Little, Urban Rec Staffer



Hitting the trails with a group of kids are Urban Rec staffers (blue shirts, l to r) Steve Raymond, Nikki Lombardi, Lillian Wharton, Shawn Tripp, Keith Michael, and Laura Isanuk.

In particular, counselors are trained to create balance in the recreational setting. “They know how to help slow down the aggressive children, and help strengthen the weaker ones” says Courtney. “Leading these programs involves developing a sense of selflessness as well, and this is what people notice. I think this is why people like to work with us, because it is obvious we care about what we do,” she says.

“Some people say to me, ‘Have fun playing with those kids’ and my answer to them is ‘I DO!’
Hearing

Continues next page





their excited voices because Mobile Rec is here makes this job worth it.

-Nikky Lombardi, Urban Rec Staffer

The staff at Urban Rec also receive very specific training, which helps even the newest staff members quickly grasp the correct attitude and fit right in. Courtney notes that while “these are simple points, they can have a big impact.” For instance, she asks that her staff not stand next to each other during programs because they might want to talk to each other instead of the participants. She also asks her staff to make sure they introduce themselves first to the people for whom they are working. In total, their motivation and training blends into something very special... “an involved and dedicated staff who would do anything to see the children smile” says Courtney.



Urban Rec summer trips include (Above left, right) a weaving loom demo at Historic Walnford and seining the Shark River.

Left: At the CAC end of the year party, Ann Marie gives one of the students a boost onto the climbing wall.

CAC for years, a reminder of the program’s success and endurance.

Many children participate in the CAC year after year—a reminder of the program’s success and endurance.

The students are divided into two groups, that switch between making and decorating crafts upstairs and physical activity downstairs in the gym. According to Courtney, the goal of craft time is for the children to enjoy a relaxed recreational experience and practice some of the lessons they have learned here. And, when asked what their favorite gym activity is, the children all mention the “Chicken Game.” (There’s no sense trying to explain the rules here... suffice it to say that it involves a lot of running and a rubber chicken.)

At 5pm, some children leave for the day while others stick around for a special program. Last year, it was Capoeira, a Brazilian martial art created in the 1500s where music and culture are part of the training (pictured left). This year, the children will enjoy gymnastics, yoga, cooking, and African-American dance. Participants pay a nominal fee per session. The CAC and all Urban Rec programs are managed and funded by the Park System with some financial assistance from the non-profit Friends of The Parks.

A DAY IN THE LIFE: CRAFTS AND CAPOEIRA AT THE CAC

Another program provided by Urban Rec is the Coastal Activity Center (CAC), which offers recreational activities from 3-6pm after school on Mondays, Thursdays, and Fridays to a group of Asbury Park K-5th graders. Students can register for and travel to other park programs from this site as well. Many children, have been enrolled at the



BRRRRR... VISITORS ON ICE

There's one sure-fire way to stay warm this winter, keep moving! That's exactly what these visitors did last year at Shark River Park, Neptune during the frigid month of February. It may get cold outside, but if you know how to bundle up—and you have a pair of skates—you are not without something to do.



SKATING LOCATIONS

Please make sure to call (732) 842-4000 for ice conditions first.

- Shark River Park, Neptune (pictured)
- Turkey Swamp Park, Freehold
- Manasquan Reservoir, Howell
- Holmdel Park, Holmdel



Skaters at Shark River Park



Winter Wally Says... Get your cross country ski gear here!

Everything you need is available at Thompson Park, Lincroft. You can rent cross country ski and snowshoe equipment through the Outdoor Recreation Division, then head out to the trails and fields. Stop by after the snowfall (but call 732-842-4000, ext. 4238, 4236, 4296 or 4240 first to reserve your equipment; supplies are limited).



Plant Propagation With Hardwood Cuttings

Karen Livingstone, Deep Cut Gardens

Looking for a late fall or winter project to satisfy your love of gardening during the colder months? Try making new plants with hardwood cuttings from either evergreens or deciduous plants. Late fall and early winter is a good time to propagate the following species, and many other garden favorites. At this time, plants are generally dormant and the wood is firm. The cuttings are taken from mature stems or "hardwood." At Deep Cut Gardens, the false hanki cypress (*chamaecyparis*) was the plant used for this demonstration. Keep in mind, it took four months for our plant to root at room temperature without a heat mat. Of course, the degree of success also depends on the plant.



Eastern Red Cedar

Hardwoods to Propagate

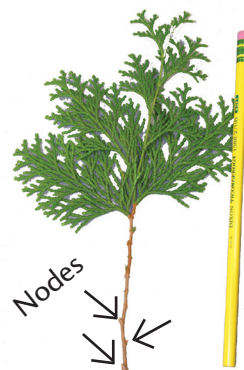
- Abelia (*mostly evergreen*)
- Arborvitae (*evergreen*)
- Boxwood (*evergreen*)
- Cedar (*evergreen*)
- Fig (*deciduous*)
- Forsythia (*deciduous*)
- Grape (*deciduous*)
- Heath (*evergreen*)
- Hemlocks (*evergreen*)
- Japanese Holly (*evergreen*)
- Privet (*deciduous*)
- Spirea (*deciduous*)
- Yew (*evergreen*)

A Step-By-Step Guide



Supplies needed for propagation

1 Obtain the following supplies: sharp pruners, paper towels, soil-less mix (we used a 50/50 mix of perlite and peat moss), pencil, rooting hormone, spray bottle, labels, heat mat, plastic nursery flat with cover or plastic pot with a large clear plastic bag.



2 Cut a 6-inch piece of stem with clean pruners just below a node. The node is the bump along the stem from which new leafy growth will come. For deciduous plants, remove the terminal tip or the top of the stem. This is usually the weak spindly growth at the top of the branch. Then remove any stray leaves or side branches. For evergreens, remove bottom needles or leaves of plant cuttings.

Plant propagation continues next page



3 Fill a clean, disinfected plastic nursery flat or 4-6" container with a soil-less 50/50 mix of dampened peat moss and perlite. Make a small planting hole with a pencil (so the rooting hormone isn't knocked off, see step 5).



4 Dip the bottom end of the cut stem into rooting hormone, and shake off any extra. To avoid contaminating the hormone, do not dip the cutting directly in container. Instead, fill the cap with just enough for application. Gently tap off excess hormone.



5 Insert the lower 3-4" of the cutting into the soil-less mix; firmly push the mix around the base so it stands up straight. This is a process known as "sticking." Lightly mist the cutting with water, and cover the container with the plastic top or slip it into a clear plastic bag to retain humidity. This forms a small greenhouse. Label each plant.



6 Set the container on a waterproof tray and place on a horticultural heat mat. If you choose not to use a heat mat, the cuttings may take longer to root, but the results should still be good with consistently warm room temperatures of 65-70°. Keep evergreen cuttings in a brightly lit area indoors, but avoid direct sun. Deciduous cuttings need no light until growth is seen (2 to 3 months). Check weekly for moisture, keeping soil damp but not soggy.



7 After 2 to 3 months, check the cuttings for roots. If there is a good rooting system started, repot into 4-inch pots with potting soil and lightly fertilize. If roots haven't started, wait one more month. If rooting hasn't started after 4 months then consider the cuttings a loss.

MOVING YOUR PROPAGATED PLANT OUTDOORS

After the danger of frost has passed (the last frost usually occurs around mid-May in this area), bring your plants outdoors in the shade. Gradually move them from shade into the sun. Make sure they are well watered.

Transplant plants into one-gallon containers after they have acclimated. Feed them with half-strength houseplant food and water through summer. By early summer, some plants will be well rooted and can be planted in the garden. Others may require more time. In the fall, check once again to see if the roots are well established. If so, plant them. If they still need time, then leave potted and hold them for another season in a protected outdoor area.

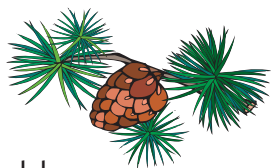


Manasquan Reservoir, Howell

There is nothing in the world more beautiful than the forest clothed to its very hollows in snow. It is the still ecstasy of nature, wherein every spray, every blade of grass, every spire of reed, every intricacy of twig, is clad with radiance.

William Sharp

IT'S TIME TO: December ✓



- Apply a winter mulch of shredded oak leaves around azaleas, rhododendrons, andromeda and other acid-loving plants.
- Ventilate cold frames when the weather is mild.
- Container-grown roses can still be planted as long as the ground is not frozen or waterlogged. Bare-rooted roses of *Rosa rugosa*, *Rosa rubiginosa* and *Rosa gaultheria* can be planted, too. Wait until spring for pruning.
- Start potting amaryllis bulbs successively every few weeks for continuous bloom through the winter.
- Keep houseplants dust-free by gently spraying with tepid water.
- Begin feeding birds for winter, especially when the ground is snow-covered. Regular feeding encourages birds to visit your garden and they are more likely to use the garden to breed in the spring.



January ✓

- Use Christmas tree limbs as a protective cover for your perennials.
- Keep at least a small area of your pond free of ice. This prevents a build-up of gases under the ice that could kill fish.
- If you didn't keep a garden journal, this is a good year to start one. Keeping a record will prove to be an invaluable asset in planning for the future.
- Increase humidity around houseplants by setting plants on pebble trays or grouping them together.

February ✓

- Take care of any tools that weren't put away properly in the fall. Cleaning and oiling will add years to the life of your equipment.
- Force flower branches for a taste of spring.
- Provide extra special care for your houseplants because the dry, warm air of most homes can stress them.
- Gently remove snow from evergreens to keep branches from breaking.

ASK THE EXPERTS: Park staff pick their favorite landscape trees

While the best time for planting again isn't until late spring, it's never a bad idea to think ahead. We asked a few Park System planners to share their favorite landscape trees (native species, of course) for planting in this area. Here are their choices...

From County Park Manager Ken Thoman...My top pick for favorite tree is the Flowering Dogwood (*Cornus florida*).



I have three in my little yard. It is a compact tree with a wonderful spreading habit and, of course, it is the harbinger of spring. Some other favorites include the evergreen

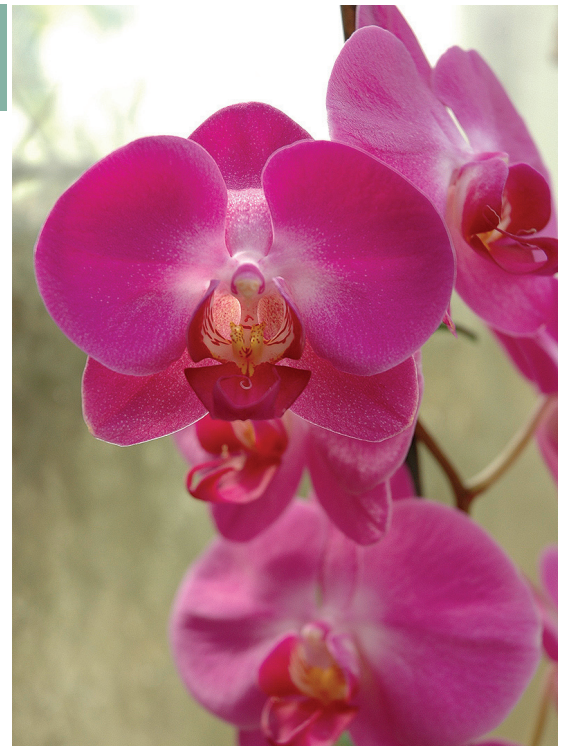
American Holly (*Ilex opaca*) for its year-round texture in the landscape, and the Red Maple (*Acer rubrum*), a compact tree that provides good shade and spectacular color in the fall.

From Rich Pillar, Chief Landscape Architect...For shade trees, the White Oak (*Quercus alba*) is a good choice. It is a strong and long-lived tree with nice reddish fall color, majestic form, and acorns for wildlife. For evergreens, I agree with Ken (above) that the American Holly (*Ilex opaca*) is a great choice, as well as Virginia Pine (*Pinus virginiana*), a picturesque, dark-colored tree with short needles that thrives in adverse soil conditions.



Need a Flower Fix?

The cold weather months are an excellent time to come see the orchids in the greenhouse at Deep Cut Gardens. Delicate and exotic orchids come in a variety of brilliant colors.



Park System Construction News & Notes

- Two new 6-person camping cabins at Turkey Swamp Park, Freehold. One is ADA accessible.



- A beautiful new orientation exhibit, Longstreet Farm Visitor Center in Holmdel Park.
- New 30' x 50' reservable picnic shelter, Hilltop Section of Holmdel Park (shown under construction last summer)



- Reconstruction of the historic Thompson Park Visitor Center (destroyed in a February 2006 fire), Lincroft has been awarded to M & M Construction of Union, NJ.



- Reconstruction of the historic Seabrook-Wilson House at Bayshore Waterfront Park in Port Monmouth is now underway.



- The North Section of the Henry Hudson Trail received a “facelift,” a few sections were repaved and cleared of branches this past fall.



Enjoy striking views of the water and treescape at the Manasquan Reservoir Visitor Center. Three sides of this building have windows that frame the surrounding reservoir. (left)

The Enchantment of “Parkitecture”

Janet Ryan, Park Naturalist, Holmdel Park Activity Center

Growing up in crowded Essex County, our family always looked forward to the occasional Sunday drive up to Eagle Rock Reservation with its spectacular views of New York City. Near the scenic overlook was a lovely open shelter with a series of arches. Built in 1911, it was called the *casino* (Italian for country or summer house). This is where my father would always buy each of us a little packet of peanuts. That place never failed to enchant—the *casino* held as much delight as the terrific views and lovely woods of the Watchung Mountain itself.

The architecture of buildings we traveled to in our youth can evoke strong memories— not unlike those associated with certain songs, a favorite toy, or particular foods we ate.

The architecture of buildings we traveled to in our youth can evoke strong memories...

Those family trips were very special occasions, and I can still remember the smallest details from some visits. I’ve been affected the same way by other buildings since, and was delighted to discover that there is actually a branch of architecture devoted to structures designed to enhance natural settings—called Parkitecture. It’s a more recently coined term that refers to park architecture which is “rustic.” This style developed just after the turn of the last century and was popular until WWII.

PARKITECTURE, CIRCA 1900-WWII

Rustic architecture developed as people became more conservation-minded and developed a romanticism about nature. This coincided with the Arts and Crafts movement which valued hand-crafted

work. During this period, creative architects designed buildings for the National Park Service that seemed to “grow” right out of their settings. They used natural materials in a hand-crafted style, scaled the buildings to their site, and designed them to fit in with their cultural and historic settings. Anyone who has ever been to the finest of these buildings, can attest to the special aura they cast.

- Old Faithful Inn at Yellowstone was built on an enormous scale using colossal logs to match its majestic setting.
- Bright Angel Lodge at the Grand Canyon has a fireplace built with rocks in the same geological strata as the canyon walls.
- Hotels at Glacier National Park, promoted as the “American Alps,” were inspired by Swiss chalets.
- Mesa Verde National Park in Colorado (site of the pueblo cliff dwellings) has Pueblo-style buildings.

WWII AND POST-WAR ATMOSPHERE AFFECTS ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

With the coming of WWII, there were fewer laborers available to peel logs and haul boulders, and there were newer materials and building techniques available. People also began to favor the cleaner lines of the International Style. Examples of this newer style include

- The stainless steel Gateway Arch in St. Louis designed by Eero Saarinen at the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial in St. Louis.
- The urban, nautical-themed Aquatic Park in Golden Gate Recreational Area in San Francisco.

Continues on page 11



The clubhouse at Charleston Springs Golf Course (above) matches the rural landscape of surrounding Millstone; and was inspired by the areas horse farms.

Cooperation Works To Preserve Open Space

No one agency can do it alone. New Jersey is by far the most densely populated state in the nation. And because there are so many people here, development pressures are tremendous. According to the Department of Environmental Protection, New Jersey is developing at a rate of almost 50 acres per day. Given this, the drive to protect open space occurs in an environment of extreme competition. The good news is...many agencies and organizations are now involved in the race to preserve land. Together, they play a vital role in the successful growth of our parklands and protected landscapes.

From government agencies and non-profits to local towns and individuals, many entities are now involved in the race to preserve land in Monmouth County.

Who are these agencies, organizations and individuals? The three entities that own and manage the most open space in Monmouth County are the Federal, State, and County governments. Together they have permanently preserved over 30,000 acres of land—roughly 10% of the county’s 472 square mile land area.

Monmouth County’s Farmland Preservation Program, administered by the Monmouth County Agricultural Development Board, has preserved over 10,500 acres. Since 1987, the Board has acquired agricultural easements on 131 Monmouth County farms. (NOTE: An easement conveys some



Farmland Preservation Sign

set of property rights from the owner to another party. In the case of an agricultural easement, the farm owner is “giving up” the right to develop.) While still in private ownership, these lands help maintain the viability of agriculture in the region and protect our treasured rural landscapes. The bulk of preserved farmland is located in the western part of the county, and a



person need only drive through Upper Freehold, for example, to understand how completely different the landscape is.



On the non-profit side, the Monmouth Conservation Foundation, which recently celebrated its 30th anniversary, is a formidable fundraiser and advocate. They have provided critical financial and technical assistance to the county and its municipalities over the

years. Towns throughout Monmouth County, from rural Upper Freehold to coastal Manasquan, have received a helping hand from the Foundation to acquire open space that was important to the community.

Another mature non-profit that has recently become more active in Monmouth County is the D&R Greenway Land Trust. Dedicated to permanently preserving watershed lands and large-scale landscapes, the Trust served as lead negotiator for the county to acquire land for Perrineville Lake Park in Millstone and Roosevelt. Their geographic area of interest includes the Millstone River watershed in Monmouth County, where this park is located. The Trust also owns and manages some land, promotes conservation education and awareness, and provides technical assistance to others involved in land preservation.

Monmouth County’s 53 municipalities are also major players in local land preservation efforts. As a group, they have preserved over 13,000 acres of open space and recreation lands. Seventeen towns have dedicated local open space taxes to fund their acquisition programs. *Continues next page*

Cooperation, continued

Colts Neck and Tinton Falls have gained significant open space areas as a condition of development approvals. In the heavily developed coastal region, Manasquan and Spring Lake Heights have purchased developed property to expand adjacent municipal open space areas. The tiny town of Roosevelt (estimated 2006 population of 933 and an area of 1.93 square miles) benefited from the efforts of a local non-profit—The Fund for Roosevelt—to preserve two farms totaling over 200 acres. More than 30 percent of the households in Roosevelt donated to the project!

A local non-profit helped the tiny town of Roosevelt (pop. 933) preserve two farms totaling over 200 acres. More than 30% of township households donated to the project!

Last, but not least by far, are individual residents. Monmouth County taxpayers have demonstrated their ongoing support for open space preservation by voting favorably three times (1987, 1994, and 2000) in referenda that helped establish and increase the Open Space Trust Fund tax, which is the money the county uses to purchase land for parks and recreation. County residents have also contacted their elected officials, attended local government and planning board meetings, volunteered and fundraised for open space causes, and visited the parks.

With the continued collaboration between non-profit and government agencies—and continued support from the residents of Monmouth County—we can all look forward to a future where there is still preserved open space for people to relax and recreate.

Parkitecture, continued from page 9

Herbert Maier, an important early architect for the National Park Service, said that “even the finest building... is somewhat of an intruder.” Intruder or not, in my book a skillfully designed park structure may lend even further enchantment to an already lovely natural setting.

We don't have any famous “parkitectural” structures here in the Monmouth County parks, in part because we can't really compete with the vast scale of the National Park Service landscape. However, we do have a few of our own park-style buildings to explore from this perspective, pictured here and on page 9.



In the interest of keeping costs low, some new park buildings are made from kits as modular units. The Visitor Center at Longstreet Farm, for instance, was made from a kit with an added porch. The philosophy is not to try to make the new building look old, but instead match certain elements to the historic buildings that surround it. Note how the proportion of the roof pitch (not too shallow, not too steep) matches the buildings in the background.

Partially earth-covered and sloping gradually with the site's natural contours, the Manasquan Reservoir Environmental Center achieves a unique harmony with the land. The design incorporates rustic stone throughout and log siding on the exterior. Also, no fossil fuels are used. Instead, the building is heated and cooled with a Geo-thermal system.



Some parks now have custom signs with symbols that capture their essence. Importantly, signs signal entrance to a special place and can create a sense of leaving the outside world behind.



PRSRT. STD.
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PARK SYSTEM

The birds of winter



Flicker



Dark-Eyed Junco



Merganser (Duck)



Carolina Chickadee



Tufted Titmouse



Peregrine Falcon



Robin



Blue Jay

Visit These Feathered Friends in a County Park!