



# Green Link

An Employee & Volunteer Newsletter



Deep Cut Gardens

March/April 2014

## Celebrating Creativity

Nature can be unpredictable, and our Rangers and design staff are often called upon to think on their feet when unexpected issues arise at outdoor facilities. Programmers, too, constantly have to switch things up as they serve a public whose recreation tastes are always changing. Here are some recent examples.

### A Tricky Trail Re-Opening

The Popamora Point section of the **Henry Hudson Trail** starts in Highlands and runs 1.5 miles to the Atlantic Highlands Marina, very close to Sandy Hook Bay and at parts, at the base of a steep bluff. This portion of the trail was seriously damaged by Superstorm Sandy.



*This aerial view, pre-Sandy, shows how close the trail is to the water and the height of the adjacent bluff. It's hard to believe this was a functional railroad, up to the 1950s.*

When visitors began asking in earnest for the trail to reopen last fall, staff were in a tight spot because repairs had been stalled for months by construction/permitting delays (the trail could not be rebuilt as it was before). Since we couldn't rebuild the damaged bridges, staff constructed puncheon style boardwalks (see photo) to cross over the trail's many wet areas. And, they used salvaged wood from the damaged bridges. The trail re-opened in December with interim "primitive conditions," as ongoing repair work continued.

**Bayshore Waterfront Park** Rangers were joined by crews from other parks to clear debris, address trail surface issues and construct new boardwalks, often working in very cold and windy conditions.



*Bayshore Waterfront Park Ranger Ed Dobrosky works on a boardwalk to cross one of the trail's many springs.*



*Bayshore Waterfront Senior Park Ranger Bill Stevenson with Park Rangers Andrew Stegner and Keith Heckman.*

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# DIRECTOR'S CORNER



## “Being Proud”

Not too long ago, I watched a recorded presentation on C-SPAN by a Mr. Robert Allen, an Australian, who spoke to a group of Americans on the values and opportunities that our county affords our citizens. Mr. Allen noted that nowhere else in the world does an individual have the freedom and opportunities that we enjoy and take for granted.

Mr. Allen said that he believes Americans should be proud to be a world leader and not apologetic. Sometimes it takes someone from outside our country to remind us that we should be proud patriots. And, not only should we be proud of our country and the ideals of our founding fathers, we should also be proud of what we do each and every day for those we serve.

Our actions, how we do our jobs, what we say, and how we present ourselves speaks volumes about who we are.

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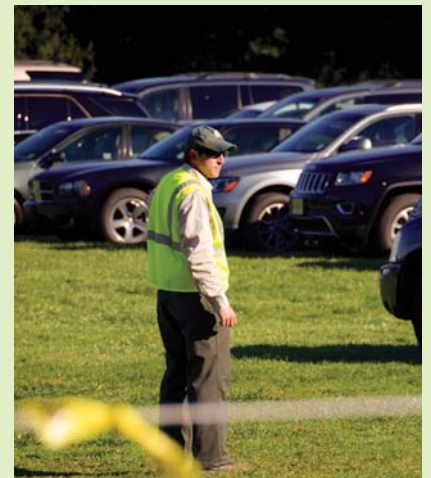
We should be proud of our uniform and how we dress. We should be proud to live in one of the greatest countries on earth and to be of service to our fellow citizens.

What Mr. Allen expressed in his presentation was how passionate and proud we should be about who we are and what we stand for. I can't help but believe that our success as individuals, as an organization and as a society will, to a large extent, depend on our commitment and the passion we exhibit.

We should all be proud of what we do and accomplish to improve the quality of life for our citizens. I know I am.

**“Study nature, love nature, stay close to nature, it will never fail you.”**

**–Frank Lloyd Wright**



*Most park visitors probably aren't aware of the 'engineering' that goes on behind the scenes to control traffic—even when they arrive by the thousands to attend some of our busier cross-country meets at Holmdel. But our Park Rangers certainly do. They may seem like part of the landscape, but they're hard at work protecting public safety and ensuring that all these visitors end up in the right place. (l to r) Thompson Park Ranger Al Lopez, Fort Monmouth Senior Park Ranger Andy Spears and Park Ranger for Operations Eric Doren step in to help direct traffic at a large meet last fall.*



Outgoing Park Superintendent Dave Compton (far left) and his replacement, incoming Park Superintendent Tom Fobes (center) and Bayshore Waterfront Park Principal Park Ranger Chris Davidson (2nd from left), Operations Site Crew Park Ranger Eric Doren, Turkey Swamp Park Ranger John Skimelas, Bayshore Waterfront Park Ranger Andrew Stegner and Seven Presidents Senior Park Ranger Paul Basquill.



Rangers collected bridge debris, laid down a path, and built 3 sections of these puncheon boardwalks—some of them quite long—to cross wet areas along the trail.

### Staff Acknowledged for 2013 Program Success (and Pose for a Great Photo!)

At this year’s Annual Programmer’s Meeting held at the Thompson Park Visitor Center in October, staff from all the different areas reviewed what worked well in 2013, looked at areas for improvement and, of course, shared ideas.



In our line of work, it’s rare to get so many staffers in one place at one time for a portrait. Here are most of the program staff from Visitor Services in 2013.

One new item on the meeting agenda was an awards ceremony to recognize the year’s ‘exceptional’ programs. Among the winners:

**Best New Program—Eta Aquarids Meteor Shower.** Park Naturalist K Dasenbrock helped families view and understand this annual astronomical event when Earth passes through the dust released by Halley’s Comet, late at night on May 4 at Bayshore Waterfront Park in Port Monmouth.

**Best Drop-in Program—**Supervisor Courtney Bison and the crew from Urban Recreation arranged a series of **Summer Playdates**, every Saturday at various park locations. Visitors could wander over to play on our jumbo blow-up basketball hoop.

**Most Creative New Camp—Camp Woof** was a four-day play and obedience class for pre-teens (entering grades 6-8) and their small dogs. Offered by Ann



Sage of Cultural Services the last week of July, the kids and their pets had an amazing time!

Camp Woof at Dorbrook

There were also some funny awards for programs that met unusual criteria, such as the I Can’t Believe that Program Ran (**Aquarium Fish Feeding**, Naturalists), Best Pushing the Limits of Our Mission Program (**Pistol Shooting**, Outdoor Adventures) and the Longest Write-Up in the Directory (**Swim Lessons** by Sports & Fitness—with more than 200 classes, the write-up runs for 6 pages!).

Programmer Allison Gibney received awards from both categories, one for **Princess Party Camp**



which was the Fastest Summer Camp to Sell Out and another for **Superheroes in Training** which was the Longest to Set-Up and Take-Down.

Superheroes in Training Camp

## Flashback To Fall

### A Lovely Letter

It is always encouraging when the Park System receives an especially nice thank you letter. It may be enthusiastic, express a sincere/heartfelt sentiment or include something special about our staff and facilities. This one is all three!

*Recently my family had the opportunity to go to two events and I wanted to send you an email on them. We have been living in Monmouth County for seven years (transplants from Bergen County) and have always been impressed with all the parks. The facilities are extremely well kept, well maintained, beautiful and clean. We recently went to Thompson Park Day and Creatures of the Night at Huber Woods and I can't begin to say how impressed we were, in fact I wish we went sooner. Thompson Park day was well run, affordable, and my daughter had an amazing time. I cannot say enough about Creatures of the Night, there were seven in our group and everyone had great things to say. The kids loved it and we as adults were impressed with the information and the quality of the program. I should and can go on and on, but please let the entire staff know how great they are, and how the entire Park System makes me love Monmouth County all the more.*

*Thanks again.*

*B.L.*

*(Email received on October 28, 2013)*



Thompson Park Day's Scarecrow Contest is just one of this event's many festive activities. What the designers of this "tech" themed entry may not have realized, is the interesting way it shows the intersection of technology and nature.



Monmouth County Freeholder Deputy Director Serena DiMaso (right) was on hand to judge the Strut Your Mutt event this year.



Naturalists Tanya DiNova, Alana Feitlowitz and Irma Philmus (retired) dressed as architects to emphasize the event theme this year, which was Animal Architects.



Seasonal Naturalist Tara Connelly performs her skit as a beaver, one of nature's "builders," at Creatures of the Night.

## Out Of The Ordinary

### Park Formations

Forget the mystery of how the pyramids at Giza were built...**Thompson Park** has its own pyramid mystery. Who built this Osage Orange Pyramid behind the main entrance sign on Route 520 in early November? We may never know! Check out that antenna on top, perhaps it was used to contact the mothership.

*—Photos by Park Manager Dan Bisti*



The pyramid reminded us of another formation —this one made of rock—discovered along the Pine Hills Trail at **Shark River Park** back in June of 2012. The robot or transformer-like shapes of these formations, called cairns, were certainly a compelling sight.



### Golf Oddities

If you have never visited **Shark River Golf Course** (or seen recent display case exhibits at Holmdel/Turkey Swamp) you may not have had the pleasure—until now, of course—to appreciate these funny golf collectibles. Both items arrived at Shark River Golf Center so far in the past that they are now beyond the working memory of any of our staff. But their (so far) mysterious appearance just adds to their charm. These items now reside at Historical Services.

## Staff Incognito

Our costumed staff 'regulars' (at themed parties and events in October) have some competition from an inspired gardener this year.



Seasonal Naturalist Karen Little dressed as a bee to help describe hive construction during a performance for Creatures of the Night.



Recreation Supervisor Rachel Cohen stepped out as Snow White for Thompson Park Day.



The annual Halloween Party at the Coastal Activity Center saw Recreation Leader Liz Hennessy dress up as a witch, but it looks as though Recreation Supervisor Courtney Bison just left the house in a hurry.



More witches! Do you think because they are "green," they may be attracted to nature? These two apparently are, and made comical Halloween appearances at Thompson Park Day. The Wicked Witch of Marlu Lake scarecrow with her gigantic green lips (right) and a cauldron cutout witch that inspired this funny photo (left).

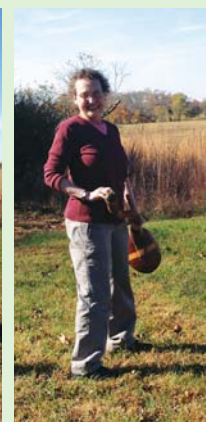
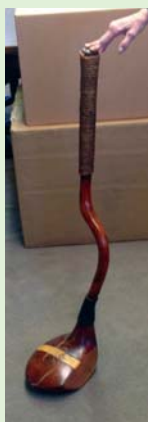


Front and back photos are needed to fully appreciate this prehistoric plant specialist Donna Baginsky, who worked the gardens of Deep Cut dressed as a stegosaurus.



**Golf-footed Table.** One unconfirmed rumor suggests this table was donated to us by a former golf staffer, who either made it herself for us or gave it to us as a gift from her own set of golf collectibles. Either way, it makes a funny plant stand.

**Crooked Driver.** Speculation that this driver was made from a tree branch didn't stop Historical Services Museum Curator Cheryl Stoeber-Goff from giving it her best swing. It only took her a few tries to get her form down. (NOTE: She makes it look easy—but that driver is really heavy!)





## A Rewarding Membership For Deep Cut

**Deep Cut Gardens** joined the Garden State Gardens Consortium (GSGC) in August 2013. The goal of this organization is to increase public awareness of and appreciation for the beauty and value of New Jersey's public gardens, and Deep Cut will get some great exposure through this membership.



*The GSGC has an annual theme, and for 2014 it is Garden History, of which Deep Cut has plenty.*

Deep Cut staff were also delighted to learn that the GSGC was recognized on its fifth anniversary this past October with a resolution presented by the NJ State Assembly. A proclamation was awarded to each member garden, of which there are now 22, and is now on display in the Horticultural Center.

*Speaking of garden history...do you know where Deep Cut got its name? The obvious guess would be that it's based on the ravine beyond the greenhouse walkway. But in fact, the name comes from the original "deep cut" through the hill to make Red Hill Road, pictured in this 1890 photo.*

Check us out on their website [www.gardenstategardens.org](http://www.gardenstategardens.org).

## Attention To Detail

These park projects from 2013 may have passed you by unnoticed because of their small scale. But each deserves recognition, either because they gave special consideration to our park visitors or feature a special design element, or both.

### Manasquan Mural

The desire to provide a fresh and family-friendly exhibit is what drove staff at the **Manasquan Reservoir Environmental Center** and our Graphics team to commission a mural that accurately reflects scenery at this site. Funded by the **Friends of the Parks** and painted by a local artist Ken Stetz of Shark River Hills—the colorful new work of art was framed and installed by our team at Construction and Repair.



*(l to r) Senior Naturalist Chris Lanza, Friends Director Maria Wojciechowski, Muralist Ken Stetz, Graphics Supervisor Maryann Goodwin (now retired) and Secretary-Director Jim Truncer, in front of the new work.*

### Heather Hill

When the Park System redesigned **Thompson Park's** paved trail following completion of the beautiful Marlu Bridge, the people living in the neighborhood across the street (Route 520) lost their convenient trail access



point. When the trail was complete, we built a formal crossing over the busy highway.

*This new crossing connects Thompson Park to the neighborhood across the street.*

### Claypit Kiosk

Salvaging just one stone wall from the demolished caretaker residence at **Claypit Creek** preserved a piece of history and provided this cool backdrop for a park map and notices.



*The Park System's only stone wall kiosk at the Claypit Creek section of Hartshorne Woods Park.*

## Corner

### Vonage Team Helps Out on the Henry Hudson Trail

Before the weather turned brutally cold, this team of volunteers from Vonage spent a day out on the **Henry Hudson Trail near Popamora Point** in November, helping with trail clean-up. They cleared debris and helped move some



of the heavy planks, salvaged from Sandy-damaged bridges, onto a section of trail. These planks were eventually fastened together into a new boardwalk.



### A Happy Day on the Greens

Volunteers Werner Aelich (left) and Harden Fowler (right) have a laugh at the Friends Golf Tourney last spring. These two volunteer devote hundreds of hours each year at the parks, and they seem to really enjoy it.



## Welcome New Hires!



**Richard Carpenter** is a County Park Ranger in Thompson Park (1/27/14)

## Farewell, Retirees!

### David M. Compton

County Park Superintendent

January 1, 2014 after more than 38 years of service



*Although he was in charge of operations for ALL our park properties—a huge job with countless responsibilities—Dave Compton always had a smile ready for our photographer. Here he is at the Sprint Triathlon at Seven Presidents in September 2007. His capable presence will be missed at all our regular events, as well as out in the parks and at Headquarters.*

### Jeffrey C. Wyant

Senior Greenskeeper, Shark River Golf Course

January 1, 2014 after more than 39 years of service

### Robert Melick

Senior Building Maintenance,

Hominy Hill Golf Course

January 1, 2014 after more than 11 years of service

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY

### MARCH

1 Edward Dobrosky Jr. 2 Ryan Bennett 2 Erika Bozza  
2 Andy Nunes-Vais 3 Ralph Apicelli 3 Chris Brawley  
4 Philip Andras 5 Bob Laauser 6 Christina Carlson  
7 Ann Reinhardt 8 Jeff Faistl 8 Bruce Gollnick 8 Theresa Secks  
10 Matt Bezahler 11 Dennis Bergstrand 12 Steve Matthews  
13 Karen Jarmusz 13 Brad Rogers 13 Scott Simpson  
15 Ivan Sanchez 21 Ben Friedman 21 Diane Hughes  
21 Ryan Kimble 21 Debbie Tamburello 24 Sandy Byard  
25 Barbara DeLorenzo 25 Maryann Elwood 27 Debra Senese  
28 Chet Scalzo 30 Robert Smith 31 Tim Mariner

### APRIL

1 Greg Hyland 2 Chris Lanza 4 Barbara Urbinato  
7 Wayne Ossner 8 Jacques DiPane 9 Lisa Bonelli 10 Al Weaver  
11 Susan Provost 12 Gloria Cohen 13 Tom Fobes  
13 Allison Gibney 14 Gregory Alexander 16 Bill Stevenson  
17 Dan Bisti 17 Jim Chase 18 Sam Skinner 19 Sean Ramsey  
20 Sue Madden 23 Scott Schaaf 24 Sean O'Herron  
26 Jean Kline 28 Jeff Willever 29 Patty Burke 30 Ryan Abbott

### MAY

1 Drew D'Apolito 2 Steve Clayton 2 Vincent Maresca  
2 John Pekarovich 3 Laura Lieneck 6 Tim LaVance  
7 Heng Chin 7 Brian Sullivan 7 Jason Zinger 8 Patti Conroy  
8 John Eisemann 9 Zachary J. Kuhlwein 9 Ken Thoman  
10 Ann Sage 11 Cathy Barfield 11 Marijane Bruncati  
11 Rob Kolczynski 12 Peter D'Angelo 12 Diane Stasik  
14 Laurie Marswillo 15 Chris Davidson 18 Lauren Coleman  
18 Helen Fiore 18 Karen Livingstone 20 Tom Noordzy  
21 Shawn Allen 21 Susan Harasty 22 Matthew Robinson  
25 Hank Schreiber 26 Michelle Scolletta-Gosha  
27 Dan DeSoucey 27 Jeff Szalc 30 Gary Stedman

# Green Link

An Employee & Volunteer Newsletter



Monmouth County Park System  
805 Newman Springs Road  
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March/April 2014

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PARK SYSTEM

## *Beautiful Setting, Beautiful Wedding*



There isn't much more to say...this lovely photo, taken last September at Thompson Park, speaks for itself. Maybe that's why the parks hosted 21 wedding ceremonies (and another 119 wedding photo sessions) last year.