



Thompson Park

May/June 2012

## Evening Programs Offer A Dramatic New Park Experience



The Visitor Center looks even more grand at night.

The first programs under the 2012 theme, "Let's Meet Under the Stars," began this past winter. So far, photos taken during these programs—held for the first time at night—have yielded unique and beautiful images that hopefully parallel the new experiences had by our visitors.



Hike leader Jan Galanti of Outdoor Adventures addresses the group as they head out for a night hike through Thompson Park in January.



In February, program attendees arrive at the Manasquan Reservoir Environmental Center (MREC) for an astronomy night hike led by RuthAnn Zobel.

It was completely dark on the MREC trail and Ruth Ann Zobel directed hikers to carry flashlights covered with red cellophane, so as not to disturb the wildlife.

(NOTE: The blur in this photo is caused by the unsteady hand of Green Link editor and sometimes photographer Lisa Bonelli, who had little experience taking night photos and couldn't figure out why the camera stopped working about 1/8 mile into the trail. She later learned even the fanciest camera can't take pictures in the dark no matter how hard you press the button!)



Doesn't the MREC lobby look different at night?!



At the other end of the park, Park Naturalist Linda Roseman helps lead a family-friendly camp-out, held inside the Visitor Center. The experience was made authentic with roasted marshmallows (for s'mores), games, and a night-time tent experience, complete with a live animal visitor.

# DIRECTOR'S CORNER



## “CHECK THIS”

By Secretary-Director  
James J. Truncer

What we do is important to a lot of people. When I say a lot, over 5.6 million visitors spent time and/or money with us in 2011 to enjoy the benefits of the outdoors or to participate in a program. We know our customers want and expect a quality experience that includes clean restrooms, well maintained facilities, and courteous service from helpful and knowledgeable staff, so it is important how well each of us does our job, each and everyday.

One of the things we all can do, both at work and in our personal affairs, is maintain a **“To Do List.”** This not only reminds us what needs to be done, but also when. Schedules and timelines are important to being prepared and well-organized. It may also help to have that pad of paper and pencil or pen always at the ready. Like the wrist watch, these tools can be helpful in going about our daily lives.

**“To-Do Lists” and “Check Lists” are tools that may help each of us do our job better.**

I also believe we can learn from the experiences of others. Doctors, for instance, have adopted techniques from the aviation industry to reduce errors in performing surgery. They verify and crosscheck the patients’ identity and what procedure is to be done, and physically mark the area on the patient where the surgery is to be performed.



Professional pilots have their own logical series of tasks to be completed before a flight. It starts with a **“To Do List”** that includes a visual sweep or inspection of the instrument panel, called **“Flows.”** This should be systematically completed before proceeding to the **“Check List,”** which helps confirm and verify that everything that needed to be done, has in fact been done.

When we stop to think about it, **To Do Lists, Flows** and **Check Lists** are really very simple, straight forward techniques that can help each of us do an even better job of serving our citizens.



*Whether scheduling dozens of anxious pie-eaters for a contest at the Fair, or managing hundreds of runners for our annual races, Recreation Supervisor Bob Ward is often seen with clipboard in hand.*

**“Perfection is not attainable, but if we chase perfection we can catch excellence.”**

*–Vince Lombardi*

## Golf Courses Offer First-Ever “Non Resident-Full Privilege Cards”

Aside from opening many of the golf courses early this year (in February), another golf first in 2012 was the sale of our first “Non-Resident Full Privilege” card. This new option, priced at \$340 for 1 year, allows out-of-county residents to play golf at the in-county rate. It’s a good buy for frequent golfers (adult, non-seniors) as it pays for itself after:

- 10-11 weekend rounds at Charleston Springs or Hominy Hill
- 22-25 weekday rounds at Charleston Springs, Howell Park and Shark River and only 11 weekday rounds at Hominy Hill

The first card was sold at Howell Park Golf course in early March by **Golf Ranger Kevin Wilhalme** to Paul Falcone of Ocean County. As of press time (late March) 36 cards have been sold.

*Paul Falcone (left) with Golf Ranger Kevin Wilhalme (right)*



## Our First Wedding At Walnford



*Sarah and the happy couple*



*The wedding ceremony took place alongside the Waln House, facing the mill and the creek.*



*The couple arrived via horse-drawn wagon.*

Last fall, park staff at Historic Walnford hosted their first wedding ceremony. The happy couple arrived in a horse-drawn wagon, married in front of about 50-60 guests in the most beautiful weather, and proceeded to a reception at another site afterwards. The couple sent along a very nice thank you note and this photo with **Site Supervisor Sarah Bent**, who said the event was “just perfect.”

## Identity of Objects on Back Cover:

The wooden frame is from an **ice boat**, or ice sail boat, or ice yacht. It doesn’t need to float, so it doesn’t need a large, solid bottom or hull. Instead, it’s more like windsurfing, but on the ice. Check out this drawing of what the old boat might have looked like, put together with its sail.

The other item is a **hog scraper**, used to scrape the hair off a hog carcass after it has been slaughtered and scalded prior to butchering. Did you even know that hogs have hair? We didn’t either, until Park System Museum Curator Cheryl Stoeber-Goff kindly explained how it works.



*Illustration by Jim Truncer*

# Wild Wildlife In The Parks

The list of marine mammals found on or near the coast of Monmouth County is lengthy and includes dolphins, porpoises, whales and even an occasional visit from a wayward manatee, but the overwhelming majority of marine mammal sightings are harbor seals. This adult



Harbor Seal

was seen in the early morning hours of late January on a dock at the **Monmouth Cove Marina**, on Pews Creek. It seemed relaxed, probably digesting a bellyful of fish!



Groundhog

It's springtime in the parks, and all our resident wildlife species are becoming more active—some in ways you may not have noticed before. For instance, consider the groundhog (emphasis on "ground"). We know they are faster than their anatomy might suggest, but have you ever wondered if they could climb a tree? Here's your

answer, from **Friends of the Parks Director Maria Wojciechowski**. NOTE: This photo was taken in her neighborhood and there was a dog involved.



Great Blue Heron

Speaking of being up a tree...the sight of this large bird sitting in a pine tree at the **Manasquan Reservoir** might strike some as odd, but in fact it is quite normal for Great Blue Herons, as they actually nest in trees. There is always something new to learn about wild animals and their behavior.



Brown Bat

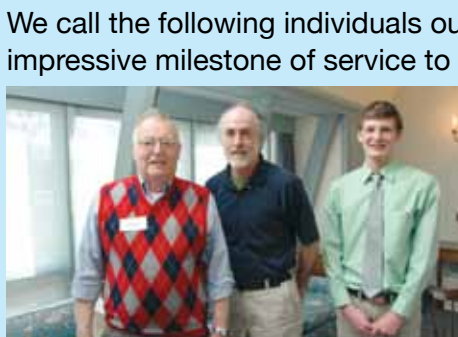
A rarer sighting, however, is this Little Brown Bat hanging over an Exit sign at the **A&D** building at Thompson Park in February, possibly interrupted from its hibernating slumber.

## Volunteer Corner

### WOW! Four Volunteers Reach Impressive Milestones



Pat Bernstein



Jim Henry, David Roche, Andrew D'Amato

We call the following individuals our super-volunteers, as they each reached an impressive milestone of service to the parks in 2011. (l to r) **Pat Bernstein** exceeded 1,000 lifetime hours with the Sunnyside Recreation Area. **Jim Henry** topped 6,000 lifetime hours and **David Roche** reached 1,000 lifetime hours—each with multiple jobs across different parks areas. **Andrew D'Amato** topped 1,000 lifetime hours working as a lifeguard at Seven Presidents Oceanfront Park. Thank you so much, and **CONGRATULATIONS!**



### Volunteer Group Cleans Up

In addition to the more than 1,000 individuals who volunteer, over 100 different community and school groups give their time in the parks each year. Pictured here are members of the **Navesink Swimming River Group** and **Monmouth County Clean Communities** who came out to clean up at Dorbrook Recreation Area, which sits adjacent to the Swimming River Reservoir, an important local drinking water source.

# STAFF PHOTOS

## Park System Welcomes New Board Member, Mark Zelina

Park System Secretary-Director James J. Truncer (far left) performs a swearing-in ceremony at a January 2011 **Board of Recreation Commissioners** meeting, for (center, l to r) Kevin Mandeville, Mark Zelina and Thomas Hennessy. Park System staff extend a very warm welcome to Mr. Zelina, who was recently



appointed by the Freeholders to serve as a Recreation Commissioner. Mr. Zelina formerly served on the Friends of the Parks Board.

## The Maintenance Crew at Hominy Hill

Often noted as one of the Park System's most challenging golf courses, here are the **Hominy Hill** crew members responsible for making sure we keep up our high playability standards.



*The Crew from Hominy Hill (l to r) Jeff Faistl, Greg Sharin, Tim Mariner, Brad Bradach, Alejandro Roman, and Larry Cunningham. Absent from photo—George Moran*

## Speaking of beautiful golf courses...Did You Know?

The 64th MGA/MET Life Public Links Championship was held at **Hominy Hill** last summer. Only golf courses of exceptional caliber are selected to host this



well-respected and well-established (since 1936) tourney. Congratulations to our crew for this honor.

## Incredible Weather Boosts Half-Marathon Attendance

No one can complain about the mild weather we enjoyed this past winter, so it's no surprise that our first race of the year attracted a stellar turn-out. Almost 700 runners showed up to hit the trails through **Thompson Park** and surrounding neighborhoods. Heavy turnout required the steady attention of staff to make sure the event ran smoothly (which it did).



*New Visitor Services Programmer (formerly a seasonal with the Sports & Fitness Division) Allison Gibney, works the T-Shirt table.*



*Superintendent of Recreation Andrew Spears and Assistant Superintendent of Parks George Richdale help direct traffic.*



*Thompson Park Ranger Ivan Sanchez works the radio to keep the route clear for runners.*



*With 20+ years in the parks, directing traffic is second nature to Thompson Ranger Ralph Johnson.*



## Bayshore Dunes Capped With Unusual Material

To repair repeated storm damage that eroded the beach at the **Bayshore**, the Park System undertook a dune restoration project in early 2012 to, well...shore up the shoreline. Part of this project involves affixing these unusual looking concrete mats to stabilize the dunes.



*Concrete mats stabilize the dunes at Bayshore.*

## “Shared Services” Clears Out Pond at Hominy Hill

One example of how effective a shared services effort can be is the Pond Dredging Project completed at Hominy Hill’s 11th & 14th hole this past winter. It started with a visit from **Ecologist Ken Thoman of A&D** and **Naturalist Joe Reynolds** who worked a 50’ net to seine the pond of fish so that **Greenskeeper Brad Bradach** and **Golf Superintendent Tim Mariner** could relocate them to their temporary new home in another pond.



*Brad (left) and Tim (right) relocate the 60 fish (yes, they had to be counted) to their temporary new home in the 9th hole pond.*



After Hominy Hill staff drained the pond, **Asst. Park Superintendent George Richdale** worked with **Steve Clayton** and **Andrew Wehmann of C&R** to secure and transport fill, so that **Hominy Hill’s Asst. Superintendent Larry Cunningham** could build a special roadway for heavy equipment access into the pond.

Actual dredging of the pond was completed by the Monmouth County Mosquito Commission who sent over a 57 foot long-reach excavator with an operator to scoop out years of silt, golf balls and who knows what else from this large water feature.



*Larry builds a special access road into the pond.*

On the transport end, **Frank Biddle of Equipment Services** and **Bill Murray of Shark River Golf Course** each loaned a mason dump truck—which, along with Hominy Hill’s own truck—formed the assembly line-like operation needed to cart away all the spoils. The drivers were **Greenskeepers Alejandro Roman, Brad Bradach** and **Sr. Greenskeeper Greg Sharin**, who



operated all three trucks (at about 3 cubic yards a haul) every day for about a month to cart away all the silt cleared from the pond.

*This large Mosquito Commission excavator travels out on the new “road” to dredge the pond. The spoils are then carted off by Hominy staffers Alejandro, Brad and Greg.*

Before, during and after photos show transformation of this water body from an almost marsh-like state to a nice, clear pond. By the way, since dredge spoils cannot be shipped off-site they were taken to no-mow areas, and were also used to create new visual features (mounds) on others parts of the course.



*Before: Water drained, it is obvious this pond could use some help.*



*During: The process went like clockwork, taking about a month while the course was closed for winter.*



*After: Now, you can see the pond filling up.*

### East Freehold Staff Get a Place of Their Own.

What's so exciting about the new Maintenance Facility at **East Freehold Showgrounds**? First, this is a long awaited addition to the site that will allow staff, for the first time, to have on-site offices and heated storage/work bays for vehicles and equipment. Previously, they worked out of older buildings at **Baysholm**. Second, like many of our newer buildings, this facility will have solar panels to offset electricity costs. This new maintenance building is located off Center Street.



December, building is well underway



November 2011. Prepping the site, located next to the garage and gas tanks.



By February, our fifth set of solar panels were installed. As of late March, the building was nearly complete.

## Welcome New Hires!

All effective 2/27/12 at Thompson Park

**Paul Gleitz**, Principal Planner at A&D

**Allison Gibney**, Recreation Leader,  
Visitor Services

**Miguel Escalante**, Mechanic/Welder,  
Equipment Services

**Matthew Robinson**, Mechanic Light Repair,  
Equipment Services

## Congratulations & Farewell, Retirees!

**Albert "Pete" Waters**, Stock Clerk,  
Central Supply 3/1/12

**Alan Boyce**, Principal Park Ranger,  
Shark River Park 4/1/12

**Robert Duncan**, Golf Superintendent,  
Pine Brook Golf Course 5/1/12

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY

### May

1 Drew D'Apolito 2 Steve Clayton 2 Vincent Maresca  
3 Laura Lieneck 6 Tim LaVance 7 Heng Chin 7 Craig Fraser  
7 Brian Sullivan 8 Patti Conroy 8 John Eisemann 9 Ken Thoman  
9 Bob Ward 10 Ann Sage 11 Cathy Barfield 11 Marijane Bruncati  
11 Rob Kolczynski 11 Janet Ryan 12 Dave Compton  
12 Peter D'Angelo 14 Laurie Marswillo 15 Chris Davidson  
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

### June

2 Liz Huntington 3 William Neugebauer 7 Andy North  
7 Bill Vaughn 8 Regina DeVea 9 Spence Wickham  
12 Jeanne Bezio 12 Christopher DeMaio 13 Nick Podsvirow  
15 Aileen Desiata 15 Nick Samaras 16 Stephanie Weise  
18 George Moran 18 Matt Ruding 19 Tom Dillon 19 Eric Doren  
19 George Siebert 19 Edward Zarella 20 Bill Kampe  
22 Karen Rutt 23 Alan Archer 24 Vern Hasselbrock  
26 Mike Janoski 26 Betty Leong

### July

2 Travis Bryan 2 Jason Miller 3 William Vega 5 Anthony Ribera  
6 Richard Brunelli 6 Thomas Osborne 6 Charlie Todd  
8 Brian Corrigan 8 Bryan Whalen 9 Chris Plantamura  
10 Keith Bennett 13 Dennis Janwich 13 David Loichle  
14 William Bellingham 14 Paul DeJesus 21 Larry Cunningham  
21 Donna Dugo 21 Barbara Reeves 23 Kerry McKenna  
24 Anna Luiten 24 Mike Vaccaro 27 Bill O'Shaughnessy  
30 Harold Ayers 30 Pat Douglas 30 Martin Gonzalez  
30 Paul Lippert 30 Ryan Ponnwitz 31 Jose Bruno

# Green Link



An Employee &  
Volunteer Newsletter  
of the Monmouth County Park System

Monmouth County Park System  
805 Newman Springs Road  
Lincroft, NJ 07738-1695

May/June 2012

PRSR STD  
US POSTAGE  
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PARK SYSTEM

## Can You Identify This Structure?

The red barn should give you a hint that the site is Huber Woods Park, which is near the water, but that's all we are going to say! Answer inside.



## Can You Guess What This Tool Is Used For?

Hint: Farm or Historic Site experience helpful.

