



Howell Park Golf Course

November/December 2012

What Are The Chances?!

Is this lightning bolt in a photo taken at Dorbrook Recreation Area (left) the exact strike that hit and burned down an old smokehouse in Thompson Park (right) last summer? It just may be. Here's how it happened...



On July 18, 2012 during one of many thunderstorms we had this past summer, Recreation Supervisor Bob Ward was monitoring weather conditions as they were impacting Dorbrook's evening swim lessons. As he was looking out the Visitor Center window toward the pools, he snapped this lightning strike (above left). Shortly after, Bob heard a radio call for a fire at Thompson Park. Because the general direction of the lightning strike was to the north, toward Thompson, he wondered whether he captured the very strike that ignited an smokehouse in the woods between

Marlu Lake and Longbridge Road (above right). Consulting Google maps (using the position of Dorbrook's white shelter building seen in the middle of the photo, left), the line of site from Bob's office at the VC extends directly across Swimming River Reservoir, exactly aligned with the burned building.

But wait, this story has another weird twist. Earlier in the spring, a park visitor contacted the Park System to report that a family of black vultures had been nesting in this very same building. When Naturalist Sam Skinner visited the barn to check it out, all the hatchling vultures had died. And so the question remains, is it possible the black vultures—who tried without success to nest in the barn—brought nature's wrath upon the site?

It's All In The Numbers!



It's a dog's world; June at Fisherman's Cove.

400,000

Number of mutt mitts used annually in all the parks.
– Central supply

1,500 (approx.)

Hole-in-ones at all our golf courses since the first course at Howell Park opened in 1967.

– Ben Friedman, Operations

DIRECTOR'S CORNER



“LOOKING FORWARD”

By Secretary-Director
James J. Truncer

As we reflect upon what we have accomplished over this past year, we still need to think about what remains to be done. Some of the items that come to mind are continuing our efforts to:

- Preserve open space;
- Provide additional recreation opportunities;
- Protect natural and cultural resources of county significance;
- Connect our open space areas by greenways and trail corridors;
- Make operating improvements to be more efficient and effective; and
- Be prepared to meet changing and unforeseen needs and events.

Some benefits of what we do are:

- Provide livable communities;
- Enhance and protect property values;
- Guide future growth and development;
- Protect the quality and sustainability of water supplies;
- Improve the quality of life;
- Promote and maintain a healthy society;
- Protect and preserve native plant and animal species for the benefit of future generations (we may hold the keys to curing man's ills and ensuring his survival); and
- Provide opportunities for children to develop as part of a healthy and productive society.

Our challenge is and will continue to be to effectively promote the benefits we provide.

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We need to be sure that each of us understands our mission and uses every opportunity we may have to communicate what we do for the betterment of our current and future generations. I truly believe that we can and do make a difference.

“Actions are the seed of fate. Deeds grow into destiny.”

--Harry S. Truman, 33rd US President



One way to meet changing and unforeseen needs is to be prepared. At this year's 2nd annual training for summer camp counselors, Jim Butler of Sports & Fitness illustrates how NOT to handle an uncomfortable encounter with a park visitor using this video—starring Dorbrook Senior Ranger Nick Podsvirow as a “disgruntled parent.”

The Fair That Almost Wasn't

Open for only 18 of its planned 36 hours, the 2012 Fair was a very disappointing year with regard to weather. While things got off to a great start with a well-attended and fun-filled opening night on Wednesday, the Fair was closed Thursday and again Saturday afternoon at 12:45pm due to impending storms. After re-opening again at 5pm, the Fair was shut down for good at 9:30pm Saturday night, and not a minute too soon.



Extensive pre-planning included a detailed review of the Emergency Plan (and use of an air horn, pictured with Al Weaver and Sam Skinner), that helped staff execute the tough calls they had to make concerning the weather.



A highly organized 2012. Fair Chair Patti Conroy and Co-Chair Helen Fiore (pictured with Co-co-Chair Karen Jarmucz) worked well throughout the Fair, a team effort they like so much they've decided to repeat the line-up again next year. Yes, that's right! Patti has agreed to be Chair again next year.

Just as the last visitors cleared out, a serious thunderstorm storm hit the area, with East Freehold and the Fairgrounds at its epicenter.



Staff from throughout the parks attended a pre-meeting, on-site.

Caused enough damage to the tents and grounds for staff to cancel the fair altogether on Sunday.

Certainly, you can't control the weather but staff and visitors alike couldn't help but wonder afterwards if we should begin considering a change of date sometime in the future.

New for 2012

In spite of the weather, the 2012 Fair offered a lot of new acts and activities. Here's just a sample:



Airborne! A BMX daredevil performance, Hell on Wheels.



Dock Dogs replaced the Lumberjacks.



Volunteer Matt D'Amico (center) helps out at the new, miniature 6-hole golf course.



The kids mini-golf was a big hit, just check out that colorful set-up! Carpenters Joe De-Pierro (left) and Ryan Bennett (right) with Courtney Kling (center) of Golf Administration.

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A Few Unusual Sights

After working the Fair year after year, maybe you feel like you've seen it all? Well, check out these novelties!



A cake in the shape of a military tank, a first place winner in the cake decorating category.



From the 4-H animal tent, this Wyandott Chicken has dramatic black edging around its feathers, called lacing.

Another dramatic black edging looks like eye- liner on this Dwarf Hotot rabbit, giving it a 'gothic' look-also from the 4-H animal tent.



Bitter melon, this Asian vegetable took first place in the "Other Vegetables" category.



Cogs the Robot was also a novel feature on the 2012 midway.

A Whole Lotta Love

This year's Fair mascot, a snowman in the "Winter Magic in the Parks" tent, received plenty of attention!



Lisa Bonelli of Visitor Services is giving the snowman a hug because she's so relieved he's finally finished!



The snowman is the center of attention for this opening night shot with Naturalists in the MCPS tent. (standing l to r) Shamma Huq, Lindy Farrar, retiree Irma Philmus, Allison Astalos, Karen Jarmusz, Peggy Ross and (seated) Lisa Bonelli, holding 'Blizzard' the snowdog.



Lisa is shown stitching quilt batting to the snowman's chicken wire frame, a strange sight for the larger sections.

When an impending storm threatened to damage the snowman, Lauren Gerber of



Therapeutic Rec. came to the rescue and held him steady as he was carted away to safer ground—a good thing since he was surprisingly easy to dent.

Dynamic Duos

Teamwork occurs by twos for this next set of Fair photos.



Jim Butler of Sports & Fitness at Dorbrook and Naturalist Erika Bozza of Huber Woods Environmental Center.



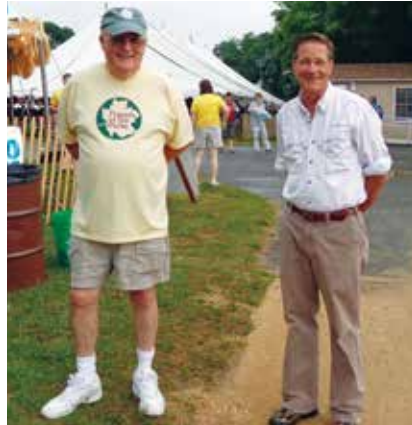
Principal Park Ranger Chris Davidson of Bayshore and Senior Park Ranger Nick Podsvirow of Dorbrook.



Supervising Park Ranger Scott Schaff of Turkey Swamp and Asst. Superintendent of Parks George Richdale.



Last year's Fair Chair Rachel Cohen and Principal Park Ranger Mary Mautner, both based at Dorbrook.



Secretary-Director Jim Truncer and Assistant Director Bruce Gollnick at the Friends booth.



Holmdel Park Ranger Frank Sardon and Seasonal Park Ranger Mark Davidson of East Freehold.

Tattered!

The final storm that closed the Fair caused power outages and downed trees all around Freehold Boro and Township. On site, staff reported plenty of wind (the rain fell sideways!) and lightening, with garbage cans and recycle buckets blowing across the grounds.

Weather reports said winds reached 50-60 mph; almost 2 inches of rain fell in and around Freehold.



Tents both large and small sustained damage from the wind.



Sunday was a vision of tattered tents, tree branches and debris. The trailer of the on-site attendant from the tent vendor was hit directly by a tree, which crushed in the roof. Many trees in the back end of the park by his trailer were sheared off from the winds. Thankfully and most importantly, no one was hurt. With all the closings from the storms, we look forward to next year and hope for better weather.



A closer look at this tree reveals some interesting damage. Note the twisting of the trunk edges.



Tree bark appears to have just 'peeled' off (modeled by Friends Director Maria Wojciechowski.)



This tent was 'speared' by a branch.



The occupant of this trailer was fortunately bending over to tie his shoes when this branch came down; he was unharmed.

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Wild Wildlife

Mother of All Catfish. Is this giant specimen, caught last May on Mother's Day in the Manasquan Reservoir, a whopper or what? Check out that belly! We know the angler caught this 20 lb. channel catfish from a boat (but we don't know what bait he used).



Catfish

Endangered Sturgeon Washes Ashore at Popamora Point.

Last February, this Shortnose Sturgeon carcass was discovered at Popamora Point. Our area has two species of sturgeon, the Atlantic and the Shortnose, which can be very difficult to distinguish. Both spawn in fresh water then move to saltwater to live, and are prized for caviar and meat. Overfishing and pollution have impacted both. The Shortnose has been on the endangered species list since 1967, the Atlantic was just added this past April 2012.



Shortnose Sturgeon

Did you know? The NJ State Division of Fish and Wildlife recently updated the Endangered/Threatened Species of NJ. Check it out at : www.nj.gov/dep/fgw/tandespp.htm

Wild Encounters on the Trail. During a July 8 hike on the Appalachian trail (just west of Stokes State Forest in Blairstown) leaders Jan Galanti and Lois Lyons, along with 11 attendees, encountered their first of three noteworthy wildlife sightings that day: a timber rattlesnake (an endangered species). Jan heard the unmistakable rattle first, spotted the dark brown snake



Timber Rattlesnake. Photo from www.nps.org/EricButler.



The actual timber rattlesnake as seen on the trail. Photo provided by hiker Ann Hopko.

on the trail edge, and instinctively held out her walking stick in case the snake decided to strike (which it didn't). The group waited for the snake to stop rattling, then passed without incident.



Baby Porcupine

The group also saw this baby porcupine in a shrub, and later, a young black bear crossing the street by their bus as they were driving out.

In Memoriam:



AL PICERNO: It is with great sadness that the Park System and staff at Turkey Swamp Park say goodbye to friend and co-worker, Ranger Al Picerno who passed away on June 7, 2012. Al started with the Park System in the spring of 2006 and spent his entire Park System career at Turkey Swamp Park. Manager Chris Plantamura remembers Al as someone who loved talking to people. "He was a great storyteller, and one of his favorite things was making sure visitors had all the information they needed about the park. We still get letters from visitors asking about him." Al was also an avid fisherman (at Turkey Swamp Park, of course!) and an early bird, according to Chris. "He was always the first to arrive in the morning with his newspaper, and was really up on current events. Everyone enjoyed his company."



Commissioners of the early 1970s, (standing) Freeholder Buddy Allen, Jim Truncer and Robert Laughlin. (seated) Ross Maghan, Victor Grossinger and Donald McKelvey.

DONALD MCKELVEY. The Green Link wishes to acknowledge the passing of former Board of Recreation Commissioner Don McKelvey, who served from March 1, 1966 until December 31, 1975. A lifelong resident of Wall Township, Mr. McKelvey had retired to South Carolina and was living there when he passed away on Wednesday, July 25, 2012. As a Commissioner, he served as Vice-Chair from January 1969 until the expiration of his term. He is remembered warmly by Mr. Truncer, who said he was "an affable person with a great sense of humor. An avid outdoorsman, he had strong ties to his Wall Township community, where he was well-known and well-liked." Mr. Truncer also recalls, with a chuckle, that Commissioner McKelvey liked to collect errant golf balls along Route 18, overshot from the eastern edge of Shark River Golf Course, where he used to play.

More Staff Photos at the Fair!



Camp Counselors of Sports & Fitness Matt Puchalski and Melissa Rivera direct Fair traffic with Blue Claws Mascot 'Buster.'



Jen Kaczala of Administration works the Home & Garden tent.



Frank Biddle of Equipment Services carts away the snowmobile used in the "Winter Magic in the Parks" tent.

Congratulations Courtney Kling

In addition to helping launch some terrific new golf programs this year—the Ladies Players Club at Pinebrook and *Putting Under the Stars* at Charleston Springs (as well as the golf demo for the Fair, see p. 3) —Recreation Leader Courtney Kling is also a serious player. She shot an impressive 76 to claim First Flight Low Gross (3rd place overall) at the New Jersey State Golf Association's 9th Women's Public Links



Championship in July against 53 competitors. Way to go, Courtney!

Media coverage of the tourney mentioned Courtney's "uncanny ability to focus."

Welcome New Hires!

Michael Alfano was hired on July 16, 2012 as an Exhibit Artist in the Graphics Dept.

Glenn Miller started on August 13, 2012 as a Golf Superintendent at Charleston Springs, North

Congratulations & Farewell, Retiree!

Purchasing Supervisor Fran Lorelli, September 1, after 17 years.

OOPS...The Green Link apologizes for listing Jen Troisi of Sports & Fitness as a Recreation Leader last issue. She has been Asst. Recreation Supervisor since 1996.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

November

1 Ivan Gottstein 2 Frank Bradford 3 Rich Pillar 3 Paul Zimmer
11 Bill Diehl 11 Tony Eng 11 Mark Miller 11 Jim Truncer
16 Paul Basquill 16 Sean Pierson 17 Ryan Rochelle
18 Jed Jesiolowski 19 Daniel Buecher 19 Mark Foulks
19 John Wallace 21 Christina Miller 23 Mike Dollear
24 Ann Marie Osnato 25 Philip Patterson 26 Tom Ketcham

December

3 Matt Chalupski 4 Frank Sardoni 6 Alejandro Roman
7 Marcia Floden 8 Darrin Morrissey 8 Alan Roberts
11 Marcus Novak 12 Mary Naughton 13 Joe Sardonia
15 Andrew Spears 16 Tanya Dinova 17 Jeff Semanchick
18 Tim Parkans 19 Don Sadowski 22 Ilona Szabo de Bucs
23 Justin Dunn 24 Ken Olsen 26 Susan Baranowski
27 Joshua Storch 29 Sarah Bent 29 Kevin Dunn 31 Scott Augun

January

4 Mary Mautner 4 Jen Nixon 5 Diane Elwood 5 Tom Swords
6 Valerie Ferris 9 Pat Cernak 9 Joe Smith 12 Keith Heckman
12 Alvin Lopez 12 Beverly Miller 12 Jerry Ostrander
14 Andrew Wehmann 15 Bob Melick 16 Kathleen Ferraro
16 Melissa Kelly 16 Paul McCue 17 Greg Shannon
18 Patrick W. Becker 20 Russ Anderson 20 Courtney Bison
22 Steve Moraghan 22 Kevin Wilhalme 23 Jan Galanti
25 Shelagh McCarthy 26 Brad Roe 26 Gregg Wolff
27 John Schanck 28 Rachel Cohen 29 Lisa Horner
29 Andrew Stegner 30 James Januskiewicz 30 Dave Pease
31 Bob Schneider

Green Link

An Employee & Volunteer Newsletter
of the Monmouth County Park System

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

November/December 2012

PRSR STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
MONMOUTH CO.
PARK SYSTEM



Polar Bear (Rug)

Wild Wildlife?

These two clearly non-native species were spotted in the parks this summer. Fortunately for us, it was at the appropriately titled Eco-Elephant Flea Market, held in at Dorbrook.

The brainchild of Cultural Services, this annual event combines the idea that its “**ECO**logically friendly” to re-use and recycle your goods, with the concept of a “white-**ELEPHANT** sale” to get rid of possessions you no longer need.



(Sock) Monkey



Rec Program Coordinator Ann Sage and frequent event Volunteer Ralph Maratea staffed the MCPS booth at the market to promote upcoming programs (like Drum Line).