



**FRIENDS of the
Monmouth County
Park System, Inc.**

2012 Annual Report

From Roberta Sheridan, President

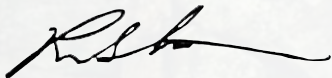
This year marked a bittersweet milestone for me. I have chosen to retire from my career and enjoy quality time with my family and friends. Sadly, I have decided to “retire” from the Board of Directors of the *Friends of the Parks* as well.

I feel privileged to have been a founding member of the *Friends of the Parks*. The Monmouth County Park System has been an important part of my life since moving to the East Coast. As a native of Seattle, I treasured the great outdoors but took their proximity for granted. When I moved to New Jersey, I realized that open space was not as bountiful. In Washington, I could drive a few miles and be in the mountains, old growth forests, or on the Pacific Coast. Here in Monmouth County, open-space was a limited resource and a valuable commodity. I came to cherish the parks of Monmouth County. They gave me comfort and helped dispel my homesickness. They were a refuge from life’s daily stresses and a source of peacefulness and serenity. To me, being one with nature is like rebooting my computer – it allows me to shut my systems down and start over – refreshed and rejuvenated.

I want to thank you for allowing me to be a part of this wonderful organization, and I wish only the best for the *Friends of the Parks* in its future endeavors.

I hope that my time here at the *Friends of the Parks* has made a difference. I hope my contributions have made an impact similar to the reverse.

With Warm Regards,



Roberta Sheridan

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Our Mission

The *Friends of the Monmouth County Park System, Inc.*, is a member-based, 501 (c)(3) charitable organization that provides financial support exclusively for Monmouth County Park System enhancements, including:

- *preserving historical and natural resources,*
- *providing recreational opportunities for urban youth, and*
- *providing activities for individuals with disabilities within the community.*

** Cover photo of Deep Cut Gardens by Michael Wojciechowski*

** Back cover photo Marlu Lake Swans, Thompson Park by Maria Wojciechowski*

Deep Cut Gardens Commemorative Tree



With this program, families and friends may add leaves to the Deep Cut Gardens Commemorative Tree in memory/honor of loved ones. In 2012, the following leaves were added by:

- Judith & Elwood Baxter in memory of Rick Geiger
- Lisa Mulligan in memory of Michael Yurkow
- Mary Jane & Harry Smith in memory of Drucilla

Bench Donation Program

This program allows families and friends to establish a lasting tribute to loved ones by placing a memorial or honorary bench in designated areas in the Monmouth County Park System. In 2012, the following benches were added:



- In Deep Cut Gardens, by Marianne Scala in memory of Ann Bonpua
- In Deep Cut Gardens, two benches were donated by Jane & Mason Wye in memory of Thomas & Ida Wye and Phillip & Mason Wye
- On the Henry Hudson Trail, by Gerald Clearwater in memory of the departed members of the Clearwater and Woods families

- In Huber Woods Park, from the Monmouth Conservation Foundation in memory of Jackie Aronson
- At the Manasquan Reservoir, from Mike Lubniewski in memory of Galina Lubniewski
- At the Manasquan Reservoir, two benches were donated by Martha & Ted Pelekanos in memory of their parents
- For Tony's Place, located within Seven Presidents Oceanfront Park, to purchase five picnic tables and umbrellas, by Challenged Youth Sports in memory of Miriam Gilligan
- For Sunnyside Recreation Area, from the SPUR Board of Trustees in memory of Susan Liu
- For Thompson Park, by Donna Tagliarini in memory of Wayne Fisler
- For Thompson Park, from Monmouth County Park System staff members in memory of Susan Liu
- For Turkey Swamp Park, by Noelle Picerno in memory of Albert Picerno



Annual Distributions

Employee Education and Training – \$7,311.00

Continuing education is an important component to keeping an organization vital. Monmouth County Park System employees were able to attend national and in-house training seminars for continuing education thanks to *Friends of the Parks* funding.



Programs for Urban Youth – \$12,429.00



Through the Recreation Assistance Program (RAP), the *Friends of the Parks* provided twenty scholarships for children from a few of Monmouth County's urban communities. The children attended week-long summer camps (including door-to-door transportation), summer concerts, boat tours, farm tours, and programs at the Monmouth County Park System's Coastal Activity Center in Asbury Park.

Programs for Volunteers – \$2,576.00

Volunteers comprise a valuable asset of the Monmouth County Park System. They participate as docents in various park locations as well as assist with programs such as therapeutic riding lessons, historical interpretation, and outdoor adventures. They also provide thousands of hours of labor in building and maintaining over 120 miles of park trails, beaches and gardens.



To honor the volunteers, the *Friends of the Parks* sponsored the National Trails Day Luncheon, provided dessert at the Annual Volunteer Recognition Luncheon, and purchased cards and postage for Thanksgiving greetings to all volunteers. In addition, this year, the *Friends of the Parks* supplied meals for the Monmouth County Hurricane Sandy Relief volunteers at the donation center in Thompson Park.

Programs for Individuals with Disabilities – \$2,020.00

The *Friends of the Parks* sponsored the Annual Therapeutic Recreation Semi-Formal held at the Holland Activity Center in Tatum Park. Young adults with disabilities enjoyed an evening of dinner, dancing, games, and prizes.

The *Friends of the Parks* also sponsored a beach outing to Seven Presidents Oceanfront Park and a trip to Disney on Ice: Dare to Dream, which included transportation, admission, and refreshments.



Special Projects Completed in 2012

Historic Longstreet Farm – \$2,343.98

The *Friends of the Parks* have supplied Historic Longstreet Farm with some new additions for the house, farm, and staff. The house will have new historic custom designed wallpaper for the entrance, hallways and stairwell. The blacksmith has a new forge and the staff has new boots, hats, jackets, and fabric for period costumes.



Historic Walnford Exhibits and Chairs – \$2,258.00

Visitors to Historic Walnford can take a trip back in time while exploring the new turbine exhibit or enjoying the peacefulness while rocking on the custom-made Philadelphia Windsor rockers on the front porch.

Outdoor Adventures – \$780.00

The *Friends of the Parks* purchased two bow boxes which hold the bows and arrows for the archery courses offered by the MCPS Outdoor Adventures Division.



Manasquan Reservoir Environmental Center – \$670.00

The Manasquan Reservoir Environmental Center's taxidermy otter has a new home in his custom-made display funded by the *Friends of the Parks*.

Events

Friends of the Parks Annual Membership Meeting

Rumson-Fair Haven Bank & Trust sponsored a buffet luncheon for the *Friends of the Parks* members who attended the 2012 Annual Membership Meeting, held at the Thompson Park Visitor Center. At the meeting, new Board members Christopher Brett and Christopher Mosley were confirmed by the membership. After a brief business meeting lead by Heather Colella, Monmouth County Park System Naturalist Tanya Dinova gave a presentation on the Bald Eagles of the Manasquan Reservoir. Monmouth County Park System Volunteer Coordinator Melissa Kelly spoke on the vital contributions of the volunteer corps to the Monmouth County Park System. Maria Wojciechowski spoke on the impact of *Friends of the Parks* funding and donation to the Monmouth County Park System and citizens of Monmouth County.



Ballads in the Woods

The Holland Activity Center in Tatum Park provided the perfect setting for the Ballads in the Woods concert

given by the D-Major Singers: Irene Hague, Lois Lyons, Pete Brady, and Jim Cusick. Wegmans of Manalapan supplied dinner and dessert.



Annual Golf Outing

The *Friends of the Parks* Annual Golf Outing was held at Hominy Hill Golf Course in Colts Neck. The outing began with a continental breakfast, followed by 18 holes of golf on the Robert Trent Jones designed championship course. The outing concluded with a putting contest, luncheon, and prizes.



Open Houses and Dedications

The *Friends of the Parks* provided the funds for refreshments for the visitors of the annual Deep Cut Gardens Open House and the Thompson Park bridge dedications this year.



The Monmouth County Fair

Billie Holiday described it best with the lyrics “come rain or come shine”, the 38th Monmouth County Fair set records for high temperatures, wind gusts, cloud to ground lightning, and rainfall. While Mother Nature



shut-down the Fair for two and a half days, the *Friends of the Parks* were able to still run eight out of sixteen raffles bringing in \$10,088. It wasn't all bad news, just look at the happy winners!



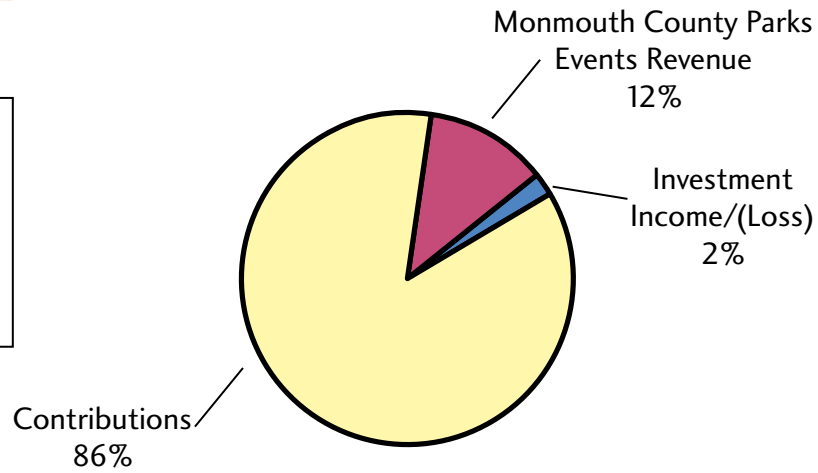
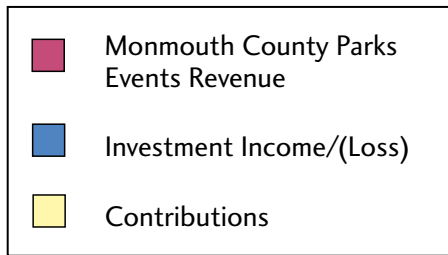
Strut Your Mutt

The owners of costume-clad dogs and numerous spectators watched canines compete in the *Friends of the Parks* Annual Strut Your Mutt Halloween Parade and Costume Contest. The contest was sponsored by Garden State Veterinary Specialists. The audience was also

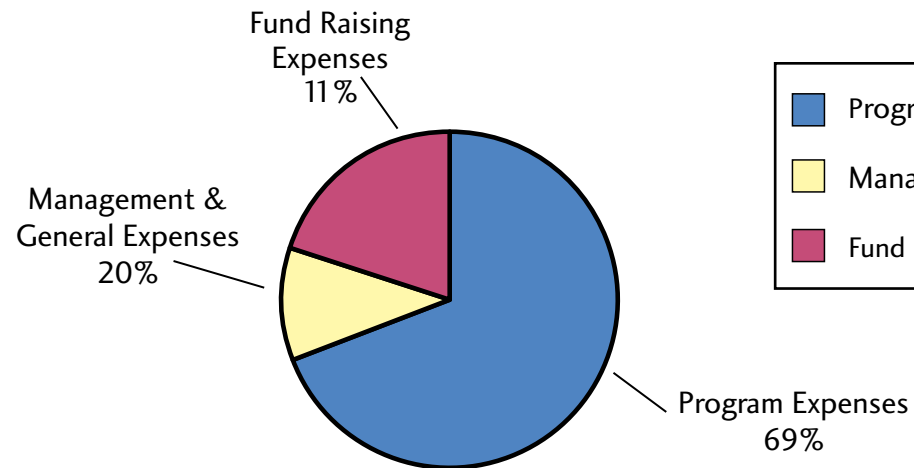
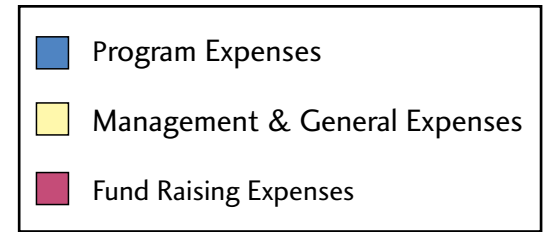


treated to a demonstration given by the K-9 Unit of the Monmouth County Sheriff's Office.

Organizations Support & Revenue



Organization Expenses



Organization Support & Revenue

Monmouth County Parks Events Revenue	\$ 28,730
Investment Income/(Loss)	\$ 4,422
Contributions	\$ 197,315
Total Organization Support & Revenue	\$ 230,467

Organization Expenses

Program Expenses	\$ 119,337
Management & General Expenses	\$ 33,739
Fund Raising Expenses	\$ 18,540
Total Organization Expenses	\$ 171,616
Increase In Net Assets	\$ (58,851)

Donors and Sponsors

The *Friends* could not operate without the generous support of donors and sponsors. They allow us to fund special projects and programs that enhance the Monmouth County Park System and enrich the experience of the visitors to the parks.

\$5,000 +

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