



The Current

Volume 1/Number 2

Summer 2006

Greater Washington National Parks Teeming with Summer Activities for all

Events in the Greater Washington National Parks will provide for an enjoyable summer. Here's a sampling:

C&O Canal National Historical Park.

"Canal Fest/Rail Fest," celebrates the canal and railroad heritage of Western Maryland beginning Friday, July 7 (5:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m.), Saturday, July 8 (10:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.) and Sunday, July 9 (noon to 5:00 p.m.). All events take place at the Canal Place Heritage Area, 13 Canal Street, Cumberland, MD. Highlights include ranger-led tours of a replica canal boat, Terminus Basin walking tours and a human train-pull.



Families participate in a fun-filled day of activities at the annual Waterlily Festival at Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens in N.E. Washington, D.C.

Rock Creek Park. Fort Stevens Day, July 8, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Located between 13th Streets and Georgia Ave., N.W., events will commemorate the Union defense of Washington against Confederate capture. A dramatic presentation at 10:30 a.m. recounts how President Abraham Lincoln was nearly killed at this site.

National Capital Parks-East. Water Lily Festival at Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens, Saturday, July 15, 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., 1550 Anacostia Drive, N.E. Blooming lilies and lotus plant provide material for photo contest, art contest and children's puppet theatre.

Harpers Ferry National Historical Park. Niagara Movement Weekend, featuring music, dramatic readings, youth activities, book signings of the late 19th and early 20th century civil rights efforts and a documentary on W.E.B. DuBois will be shown. The Niagara Movement is often referred to as the cornerstone of the modern civil rights movement. Friday, August 18 (7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.), Saturday, August 19 (10:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.) and Sunday, August 20 (7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.). All activities held at Mather Training Center grounds.

Anniversaries:

--145th anniversary of the First Battle of Manassas, Saturday, July 22, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Manassas National Battlefield Park, VA.
--144th anniversary of the Battle of Second Manassas, Saturday, August 26, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Manassas National Battlefield Park, VA.
--144th anniversary honoring the Battle of Antietam, Saturday, September 17, time TBA. Antietam National Battlefield, MD.

National Public Lands Day. Saturday, September 30, many Greater Washington National Parks will host events affording residents an opportunity to help care for public lands such as national parks. Volunteers needed!

Call (202) 619-7222 for more information on any of these events.

by Toni Braxton, Public Affairs Specialist,
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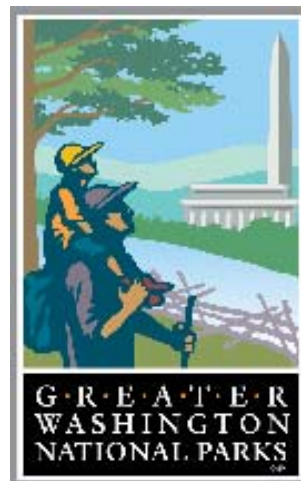
Regional Director's Corner

We hope that many residents and visitors will take the opportunity to enjoy their Greater Washington National Parks this summer. There is an abundance of activities to enjoy in our National Parks and the need for respite from our busy schedules is more important than ever.

As you enjoy these wonderful places, please be mindful of the environmental conditions and note any special precautions you should observe to make your visit safe and enjoyable. We are dedicated to making sure that you enjoy yourself and return home safely – but we need your help and cooperation. Please review pre-visit information in our brochures and websites, pay attention to regulations and signage, and interact with our staff and our volunteers who are there to help you get the most from your visit.

Enjoy your Greater Washington National Parks and return often!

Joseph M. Lawler
Regional Director
National Capital Region



IN THIS ISSUE:

- Regional volunteers honored at awards ceremony.
- New visitor center under construction at Monocacy National Battlefield.
- Task force leads effort to reduce drownings in Potomac River.



Regional Director Lawler and C&O Canal NHP superintendent, Kevin Brandt, pose with award winners.

Volunteers honored at 3rd Annual Awards Ceremony



The C&O Canal National Historical Park, one of its friends groups and a volunteer at that park won the regional and national Hartzog Awards for volunteers and volunteer programs for the second year in a row.

The C&O Canal Association received the regional Outstanding Park Volunteer Group Award for preserving the 184.5 mile towpath and open spaces within the park and for 110 volunteers having completed 10 service projects.

Norman Liebow received the regional Outstanding Individual Park Volunteer Award. Liebow was recognized for helping to found, build and maintain the C&O Canal's Great Falls Bike Patrol Program, donating 581 hours to the bike patrol. The park and its staff received both the regional and national Hartzog awards for Outstanding Park Volunteer Program.

In 2005, the C & O Canal was the winner of both the regional Volunteer Program and national "Take Pride in America" award for Outstanding Federal Volunteer Program.

by Polly Angelakis,
NCR Volunteer Coordinator
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Work continues on Marine Corps Memorial

First "facelift" work in over 50 years



Repair and rehabilitation of the memorial will significantly improve the experience of visitors to the park, improve visitor safety, and increase accessibility for persons with disabilities.



Visitors to the Marine Corps Memorial—known to Washingtonians as "the Iwo Jima Memorial"—will soon be able to see the results of the first major renovation work in over 50 years.

Work on the plaza surrounding the famous sculpture and adjacent grounds includes the repaving of the memorial plaza, walkways and reviewing stand, waterproofing and ventilating the base of the sculpture, installation of a new lighting system, a new irrigation and drainage system to the parade deck and accessible sidewalks from Meade Street to the Memorial Loop Road. The project also includes upgrading site utilities, including new underground water and electric lines.

The \$3 million project will make the Memorial compliant with Americans with Disabilities Act standards and provide an even better visitor experience. Work is expected to be completely finished in late 2006.

by Dana Dierkes, Supervisory Park Ranger,
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New Visitor Center for Monocacy National Battlefield

Facility to open Spring 2007



Monocacy National Battlefield recently broke ground on a \$3.5 million interpretive facility which will enable visitors to experience the battle of Monocacy in a variety of contexts. The long-awaited structure will be located just off of Maryland Route 355 on the northern approach to the battlefield. The two-story building will devote an entire floor to exhibits that will immerse visitors in a series of vignettes depicting the stories of Monocacy. In addition, the battle will be examined in its historical and political context rather than segregated as a mere one-day event. Artifacts and activities will be intermingled to encourage diverse audiences to learn more and explore the battlefield itself.

Since 1991 visitors to the park have been greeted in an interim contact station housed



Pictured left to right: Ajay Bhatt of SouthEastern Construction, Commissioner Michael Cady, NCR Regional Director Joe Lawler, Bud Otis, Former Congresswoman Beverly Byron, Senator Paul Sarbanes, Julianna Albowicz, and Monocacy NB Superintendent Susan Trail.

in the lower level of the modified Gambrill Mill. The new visitor center will provide offices for Resource Education and Visitor Services staff, curatorial storage, park library and a museum store. Additional space will permit the park to serve educational groups, bus tours, professional researchers and others in a more professional manner and will adequately address health and safety issues currently lacking in the adapted Gambrill Mill Visitor Center. The project is scheduled for completion by spring 2007.

by Cathy Beeler, Chief of Resource Education
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Grassroots Cleanup Yields 200 Tons of Trash



Alice Ferguson Foundation

Despite heavy rains and falling temperatures, volunteers turned out to participate in the 2006 Potomac Watershed Clean-up.



Nearly 200 employees and volunteers from six Greater Washington National Parks—Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, Rock Creek Park, the Chesapeake & Ohio National Historical Park, the George Washington Memorial Parkway, the National Mall & Memorial Parks, and National Capital Parks-East—participated in the 18th annual Potomac River Watershed Clean-Up on April 8th.

Organized by the Alice Ferguson Foundation, over 340 sites along the Potomac received assistance yielding just under 200 tons of debris—including cars, bicycles, over 2,000 car and truck tires, tree stumps, a Civil War-era sword and thousands of aluminum cans—within a 65-mile stretch of the river.

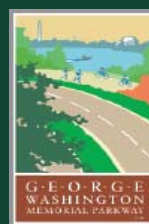
The Alice Ferguson Foundation has begun the “Trash Free Potomac Watershed Initiative,” a multi-organization effort to work toward a trash-free Potomac River by 2013. Many local and regional governments and elected officials have signed the pledge, which includes the removal of trash along the Anacostia River, a major tributary into the Potomac.

The 2007 Potomac River Clean-up is scheduled for Saturday, March 31st. Interested volunteers may learn more by visiting www.potomaccleanup.org

*by Kirsten Talken-Spaulding,
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David Vela Named New GWMP Superintendent



David Vela, a 15-year NPS veteran, began duties as the Superintendent of the George Washington Memorial Parkway (GWMP) on June 5, coming from Lyndon B. Johnson National Historical Park, serving as that park's Superintendent and Texas State Coordinator for the NPS' Intermountain Region.

“David brings a passion for parks, leadership skills, and years of experience in building relationships and partnerships with government agencies, gateway communities, and strategic partners,” NCR Regional Director Joe Lawler said.

Vela began his NPS career in 1981 at San Antonio Missions National Historical Park, transferring to Appomattox Court House National Historical Park in 1984, then moving to Independence National Historical Park in Philadelphia in 1986. After leaving the NPS for 12 years, Vela returned in 1998 as Superintendent of Palo Alto Battlefield National Historic Site in Texas. Vela will manage a 7,600-acre park which protects landscape and native Potomac shoreline and features more than 25 sites associated with George Washington's life.

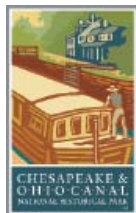
*by Bill Line, NCR Public Affairs Officer,
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Drownings Plummet Following Task Force Formation

NCR Receives Hecht Public Safety Award for Leading Successful Effort



NCR Regional Director Lawler, and Superintendents Mel Poole and Kevin Brandt receive Hecht Safety Award from NPS Director Fran Mainella.



In 2004, there were five drownings of park visitors in the Potomac River Gorge (Washington Aqueduct dam to Key Bridge). The National Capital Region (NCR) and others were concerned about an upswing in the number of deaths by drowning and injury in the Gorge. NCR Ranger Services, the George Washington Memorial Parkway, the C&O Canal and the U.S. Park Police took the lead in forming an interagency, interdisciplinary task force to address this situation.

Key developments included media events that reached over

two million persons in greater Washington, installation of warning signs in English, Spanish and Vietnamese, safety shoreline patrols by rangers that contacted several thousand park users and a river safety day that focused on safety education.

As a result of these efforts and some good luck, no drowning or major injury occurred in the Gorge during 2005, the safest period in 17 years. For its efforts the NCR and its partner agencies received the 2005 Andrew Clark Hecht Public Safety Achievement Award at a river safety media event in late May. The award is given for outstanding accomplishments and programs

to improve visitor safety in national parks.

The task force will continue its efforts by further analyzing patterns of drowning and injury, expanding patrols to areas of the Gorge with significant visitation but few patrols, continuing media and educational outreach to reach large audiences in the region, developing a new multi-agency search and rescue map, and better coordinating incident response efforts by public safety agencies.

*by Einar Olsen, Assistant Regional
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Upcoming Events

For GWNP event information, call 202-619-7222



Independence Day Celebration
July 4, 2006
On the National Mall

National Park Service helps Greater Washington and the Nation celebrate Independence Day with a parade, music and fireworks.

Event highlights include:

- 40th Annual Smithsonian Folklife Festival, 11:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m., between 7th and 14th Streets. Evening performances are from 5:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
- “America’s 2006 Independence Day Parade” 11:45 a.m. Constitution Avenue proceeding westward from 7th to 17th St.
- Netherlands Carillon Concert, 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., next to the U.S. Marine Corps War Memorial (Iwo Jima Statue) in Arlington, VA.
- National Park Service’s Independence Day Concert, 5:30 p.m., Washington Monument Grounds.
- “A Capitol Fourth 2006” Concert, 8:00 p.m., on the west lawn of the U.S. Capitol. Fireworks show begins at 9:10 p.m.

Antietam Salute to Independence
July 1, 2006, 7:30 p.m.
Antietam National Battlefield
301-432-5124

24th Annual Waterlily Festival
Saturday, July 15, 2006, 10:00 a.m.
Kenilworth Park & Aquatic Gardens
202-426-6905



A 70th Anniversary Program
Saturday, August 26, 2006, 1:00 p.m.
Catocin Mountain Park
301-663-9388

“Spies in the Park”
Sunday, July 23 and Sunday, September 3, 3:00 p.m.
Prince William Forest Park
A walking tour of the camps used from 1942-1945 by the Office of Strategic Services (forerunner to CIA).
703-221-4706

Greater Washington National Parks

Where you are never far from history and nature

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



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GWNP's SUMMER concerts

Concerts are scheduled throughout the summer in your Greater Washington National Parks. Most concerts are free and open to the public. Pack your picnic basket, gather your family and friends, and enjoy an evening of entertainment at one of our many parks. Performance schedules vary. For more information, please call 202-619-7222.

Venues include:
Carter Barron Amphitheatre
Fort Dupont Park Amphitheatre
National Mall & Memorial Parks
Netherlands Carillon, GWMP,
Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts

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