



# The Quarterly

## Letter from the Superintendent: More Storms

The ravages of Hurricane Isabel were still visible when Gaston's rains stalled over Richmond on August 30. The rain fell fast and furious until more than 13 inches swamped the area in about six hours, overwhelming man-made and natural drainage systems. The volume of water redefined roads as raging rivers and cars became floating weapons of mass destruction. Houses flooded. Park resources sustained major damage like the creek bank and pedestrian bridge at the Beaver Dam Creek Battlefield and the road to the Watt House and Gaines' Mill Battlefield. Repairs are estimated to cost about \$30,000.

Near Chimborazo Medical Museum, Mother Nature may be reclaiming her ravine that traditionally ran north to south, channeling water to the James River. Historically Broad Street stopped at 29th Street west of the ravine. The ravine was filled in the post-Civil War years, Broad Street and the streets south of it were extended. Now Gaston's water has caused a dramatic slump of the filled land at 31<sup>st</sup> & Grace Streets, spawning unease about the stability of several nearby blocks. Land is also slumping dangerously on the south side of Chimborazo Hill. Our headquarters and the Medical Museum seem stable although the basement

flooded, requiring corrective action. Thankfully, park property damage has been relatively low and all park staff are safe.

However, no one needed sheer grit and determination more than education specialist Pat Ferrell, who endured a particularly traumatic experience during Gaston. As she drove home from the Tredegar Visitor Center, waters began to rise in that area of the city. With roads along the river closed and traffic clogging 7<sup>th</sup> Street Pat turned onto Main Street, but the water soon rose around her car. As she talked to her husband on her cell phone, water began

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## Park and Henrico County Sponsor First-Ever Walking Tour at New Market Heights Battlefield

On Sunday, September 26, Henrico County and Richmond National Battlefield Park historians will provide for the first time a two-mile walking tour across portions of battlefield that witnessed the heaviest fighting of the Battle of New Market Heights. The program will begin at 2:00 pm with opening remarks from Congressman Bobby Scott, representative for the 3<sup>rd</sup> District, which includes New Market Heights, and Henrico County officials. Parking will be available off Buffin Road in Varina. Portions of the trail are through thick woods so be sure to bring insect repellent and sturdy footwear.

Just before dawn on September 29, 1864, over 3,000 United States Colored Troops, black men serving under white officers, left their camps on the James River at Deep Bottom Landing to lead the Union attack on New Market Heights against approximately 2,000 Confederate soldiers, including those of the legendary Texas brigade. Two bloody assaults were made



Sergeant-Major Christian Fleetwood, pictured above, wears the medals he received for valor at New Market Heights. Inset: Medal of Honor

against Confederate forces firing from behind earthen fortifications. After two desperate hours of combat the USCTs reached the works but at a cost of more than 800 men killed, wounded or captured. For their valor in the attack 14 African American soldiers and two officers received the Medal of Honor.

Only 17 medals were awarded to USCTs throughout the entire Civil War.

Prominent historian Dr. Louis Manarin will join National Park Service historians to provide commentary on the significance of the Battle of New Market Heights. Manarin recently completed his two-volume study titled *Henrico County Field of Honor*, which details the Civil War's impact on the county.

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## Superintendent's Letter

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entering the car. She opened the car door just wide enough to get out and climbed onto a nearby train trestle. People on the balcony of an Amtrak station across the street saw her there and urged her to climb higher because water was everywhere, flowing fast and rising. Pat clung to the trestle for over three hours, expecting that either the flood would dissipate or that someone would rescue her. Neither occurred. At 9 p.m. Pat could see that the current had slowed, so she carefully lowered herself into the water and swam across Main Street, bumping into submerged cars as she went. She reached the deserted train station, used a pay phone to call her husband and dried off with some paper towels from a bathroom. Around 1 a.m., Pat saw fire trucks and cars nearby and waded through the water to them. When she emerged, nobody said anything to her, and it was only later that Pat realized it was because she was in uniform and people thought she was part of the emergency response. Many hot showers later Pat reports that she now has a great story for when she teaches First Aid and CPR.

*Cynthia MacLeod*

## Maggie L. Walker NHS Redefines Visitor Experience

Visitors to the home of Maggie L. Walker entered from a rear porch since the site opened in 1985. They made their way past the partially restored laundry room and kitchen eventually reaching the parlor where Mrs. Walker greeted her guests.

This route always worked satisfactorily, but did not create the optimum visitor experience. To improve the experience, goals and objectives were created for the house tour. One major change is the use of the front entrance to her home as the start of the tour.

From the visitor center, visitors now are guided along the sidewalk in front of Mrs. Walker's home and given background on the Jackson Ward community during the 1920's. After a momentary pause on her front porch to hear about the uniqueness of the home's furnishings, visitors will enter the home as though they were guests of Mrs. Walker coming to pay her a visit. They will experience the grandeur of her parlor and hear about the visits of Mary McLeod Bethune and Booker T. Washington. From there they will be escorted into her library where she prepared many of her speeches surrounded by filled bookshelves and framed images of her contemporaries, whom she admired and emulated. The tour will continue through the house, ending in her bedroom



Visitors like the Mellmans of Bonita Springs, Florida, can now enter Mrs. Walker's house through the front doors during tours.

where she passed away from the effects of diabetic gangrene in 1934.

This change in the tour route combined with the implementation of a new furnishing plan will help us to better educate visitors about Maggie Walker's life, her family, her amusements, triumphs and tragedies, and the period in which she lived. Objects from the collection that have been in storage for years will be added to rooms in precisely the spot where Mrs. Walker placed them. Other objects necessary to create a lived-in experience will be purchased and added to the display. The response from visitors thus far who have felt a greater connection to Mrs. Walker is one of the most rewarding experiences to those of us who work here.

## Special Events Schedule for RICH/MAWA

**September 25-26**--Fort Harrison Anniversary Program. Join Richmond National Battlefield Park for a weekend series of talks, tours and living history demonstrations with volunteers representing Confederate and Union soldiers. Saturday 10 am to 5 pm, Sunday 10 am to 4 pm. Candlelight tour Saturday, 8pm.

**September 26**--Battle of New Market Heights Commemorative Tour. Henrico County and NPS historians will join together to present the first ever special event on the county's recently acquired battlefield lands at New Market Heights. 2pm

**October 2-3**--2nd Street Festival with City Celebrations. Festival events include: live music on two stages, children's activities, delicacies, and shopping in the marketplace. Tour Mrs. Walker's home and several other buildings that are part of Maggie L. Walker National Historic Site. Saturday 9am to 6pm; Sunday 1pm to 6pm.

**October 9-10**--Encampment at Drewry's Bluff. Living history volunteers representing Confederate sailors will depict garrison life inside the Drewry's Bluff fortifications. Saturday 10am to 5pm, Sunday 10 am to 4 pm.

**December 2-3**--Volunteers are welcome to join Maggie L. Walker National Historic Site park staff for a tree trimming and decorating party. Maggie L. Walker's residence and the adjacent street will be decorated for the holidays. Thursday and Friday 9am to 5pm.

**December 11**--Holiday Open House at Maggie L. Walker National Historic Site and "A Jackson Ward Christmas" in cooperation with the Historic Jackson Ward Association and the Black History Museum. Saturday 1pm to 5pm.

# Teachers Institute Brings Park Stories to Life for Virginia Educators

Richmond National Battlefield Park presented its first Civil War Teachers Institute, a week-long experience for 20 teachers and curriculum specialists from around the state of Virginia. This diverse group of teachers quickly became a team as they engaged in exciting curriculum-based experiences to explore Virginia's Civil War. All this was made possible by a grant from the National Parks Foundation.

A sample of the teachers' ten hour days included: Civil War Richmond bus tour, tours of Belle Isle and Brown's Island, a canal boat cruise, field trips and hands-on activities at Richmond National Battlefield Park, Petersburg National Battlefield and Chancellorsville Battlefield. The highlight for the teachers was a special invitation and tour of Virginia's Executive Mansion by the First Lady of Virginia, Lisa Collis.

Evening programs involved a variety of topics including: African Americans, women, children, the common soldier, and music during the Civil War. Evenings also offered teachers an opportunity to share lesson plans, create

new programs and gather resources for use in the classroom.

This exciting weeklong learning adventure immersed the group into the military and personal stories of the Civil War that they will share with teachers and students throughout the state of Virginia.

The teachers were asked to evaluate the program at the end of the week. Here is what two had to say:

"You pumped new energy into a teacher who has always loved history but who got weighed down by the SOL burden. You have taught me to use the resources that are around me. The National Park Service has a face and it indeed is a face of an educator."

"This was truly one of the greatest education experiences I have been involved with. I am

## Employee Profile: Leslie Winston

Leslie Winston is a law enforcement ranger at Richmond National Battlefield Park and Maggie L. Walker National Historic Site. Since 1988 he has preserved and protected the resources found here in our two National Parks by preventing theft or destruction, as well as educating and informing the public about the laws that are in place protecting the resources for future generations.

Leslie has also worked at George Washington Birthplace National Monument and Colonial National Historical Park. He has had extended training and detail assignments to places like the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center in Georgia, Ranger Skills at the Grand Canyon, Wildland Fire Fighting across the country and Presidential and security details in Pennsylvania and Massachusetts.

Leslie joined the National Park Service because of life experiences that instilled him with the love and respect of America's rich natural, cultural and historic resources. "I also have the fond appreciation and memory of having visited several National Parks during the summer of 1969 while on vacation with my parents and sisters."



First Lady of Virginia, Lisa Collis, front second from right, stands next to Pat Ferrell for a class photo at the Executive Mansion.

really excited to teach the Civil War, the kids will benefit tremendously."

We are extremely appreciative of the efforts of the park's education specialist Pat Ferrell, who developed and conducted this very successful program.



Leslie Winston, Visitor Protection Ranger for Richmond NBP and Maggie L. Walker NHS

In ten years, Leslie sees himself teaching middle or high school. "I believe that it's critical that our youth be taught with kindness and compassion and with the experience of someone who has been through a career as varied as mine has been with the National Park Service."

Leslie, who was born here in Richmond, has three sons, one daughter and a grandson. His wife Betty is the director of the Virginia Office of Volunteerism and Community Service. His pastime is rooted in family, friends and community and assisting his children in becoming good citizens, instilling in them the adage "to whom much is given, much is expected."



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Richmond National Battlefield Park was established in 1936 to commemorate the battlefields around Richmond, Virginia, Capital of the Confederacy, 1861-1865.

Maggie L. Walker National Historic Site was established in 1978 to preserve and protect the home of the first woman to found and be president of a bank.

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# The Quarterly

## New Market Heights Continued

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It is scheduled to be published this fall.

There will also be a special event at nearby Fort Harrison. On September 29, 1864, Union infantry attacked and captured the fort, which they held to the end of the war. Living history volunteers representing Union and Confederate soldiers will provide talks and demonstrations throughout the weekend of September 25 and 26. In addition, on Saturday evening at 8:00 pm there will be a candlelight tour of the fort. Bring a flashlight and insect repellent and wear your good walking shoes.



**A Living History volunteer portrays a Confederate soldier at Fort Harrison. The camp will be open 10 am to 5 pm on Saturday and 10 am to 4 pm on Sunday.**

Call 804 226-1981 x. 30 to learn more about the walking tour on September 26.

Richmond National Battlefield Park's web site has the full story on the USCTs at New Market Heights. Go to [www.nps.gov/rich/default.htm](http://www.nps.gov/rich/default.htm) to learn more.

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