Liberty State Park Hosts Naturalization Ceremony


Liberty State Park was proud to host one of the 316 naturalization ceremonies that took place across the country during Constitution Week 2019. This year's keynote speaker was the NJ Attorney General, the Honorable Gurbir Grewal. Opening remarks were given by the Friends of Liberty State Park President, Sam Pesin, with closing remarks by the park's own Deputy Superintendent Jonathan Luk. Congratulations to the 50 new citizens!
Nature Center Update

The staff at the Nature Center continued to be busy though the summer months, conducting nature programs and kayak tours for both organized groups and the general public.

Progress on the Nature Center is moving forward, with new exhibits and building renovations almost completed. We anxiously look forward to the chance for visitors to experience all this renovated center has to offer.

As you walk or bike through Liberty State Park this fall, slow down to take a look at the Nature Center and see how far this building has come since Hurricane Sandy. Also, be sure to keep checking back on our Facebook page (http://www.facebook.com/libertystateparkofficial) for updates about the Nature Center’s progress and its eventual reopening!

Tugboat Replica Joins LSP Historic Collection

This summer, the Archive department at Liberty State Park was honored to accept a Pennsylvania Railroad tugboat model. It is a replica of the tugboat Jersey City that operated in the Hudson River circa 1960. About 40” long, it is authentically handcrafted with intricate details. Ronald Wos, a Korean War-era Navy Destroyer veteran and a retired commercial artist from Little Falls, made the donation accompanied by his wife, Joan and daughter, Karen. Mr. Wos supplied background materials including a photograph of the Jersey City maneuvering a platform car float carrying railroad cars up the Hudson to a pier station.

Tugs transported all types of freight, from food and farm produce to cars and other goods that were shipped by rail to the docks of the Hudson River and transported by barge to various markets along the river. The barges were capable of carrying full-size freight cars that were packed with cargo. Many tugs also served the dual role as firefighters, some of which were equipped with powerful pumps to help stop pier fires.

Ron regaled the interpretive staff with fabulous stories of growing up in Jersey City. Ron and Joan were both raised in Jersey City, however, they met on the Pt. Pleasant Beach boardwalk. He talked of his youthful adventures in the railroad yards they named “The Jungle” and played baseball on the “mud flats” that are now Liberty State Park. He learned to swim in the Morris Canal, and said his mother did not appreciate him smelling like the Hudson River! One summer, he and three friends made a raft from found timbers, using a bamboo pole as a guide. They set adrift, but quickly the current took them closer and closer to the Statue of Liberty. Ultimately, a workboat hauled them and their raft to the Colgate clock.

We anticipate compiling an exhibit of maritime vessels featuring the tugboat Jersey City.

Portions of this article were written by Ron Wos.
Bats: Going Out on a Limb

by Sarajane Bruno

During the cool autumn months, bats can be found almost everywhere. They are often viewed as a disease-spreading pest or scary part of Halloween, but there is a lot more to bats than fears over getting tangled in a person’s hair or drinking their blood. These misunderstood creatures are actually very beneficial to humans and need not be feared.

Bats are the only true flying mammal. The scientific order name for bats, *Chiroptera*, means, “hand-wing”. A bat’s wing is actually a long-boned hand with “fingers” covered by a double membrane of skin. They live in caves, trees, or old mines and will hang upside down to roost, or rest. A group of bats living together is known as a colony.

Bats can be found all over the world, and New Jersey is home to six species of resident bats. They are the big brown bat (*Eptesicus fuscus*), little brown bat (*Myotis lucifugus*), eastern small-footed bat (*Myotis leibii*), tri-colored bat (*Perimyotis subflavus*), northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*), and Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*).

Bats are nocturnal, which means they are active at night. The majority of bats are insectivores, although there are a few species of bats found in tropical regions which bite and lap up blood from cattle. Some bats also feed on nectar or fruit.

Although bats are not blind, they rely more on sounds rather than sight. They navigate their flight with echolocation, which is a sonar system using sounds that bounce back. Echolocation can help guide bats during flight or locate prey.

Bats are helpful to humans in many ways. Groups of bats are capable of eating large quantities of insects which are seen as pests, such as mosquitoes and several kinds of grubs than can decimate crops. Nectar-feeding bats are also pollinators, spreading pollen to plants to assist with healthy fertilization. Bat excrement, also known as guano, is a readily available source of fertilizer.

As helpful as bats are to people, sometimes they need help as well. In 2018, Eagle Scout Ben Ortiz designed and built bat houses for his final project. These houses provide artificial roosting structures for bats and will be installed throughout the park later this fall.
Working the Land So That It Works for Us

by Stephen Kuzminski

Stormwater management is a major concern in any urban setting. At Liberty State Park, we are always looking for ways to prevent stormwater from pooling in common areas and along walkways and roads. One of our biggest trouble spots had been just north of the Nature Center, where the Gravel Footpath links Freedom Way and the Hudson River Waterfront Walkway.

The Gravel Footpath is a vital thoroughfare in the park that leads to the most up-close views of the Statue of Liberty. This path would flood in the past, dampening the experience of visitors seeking a shortcut to the Hudson River’s many treasures. We solved this problem several years ago by digging a strategically placed swale, or large ditch, that would collect and hold stormwater before it could get to the path.

But we have not stopped there. Rather than leave the swale as simply a large puddle after storms, the Nature Center was asked to convert it into a raingarden that could make use of the excess stormwater. Raingardens are populated with plants that can withstand occasionally soggy conditions. The plants aren’t just there to look pretty. Their root systems help loosen the soil, improving drainage over time. They also help filter pollutants from stormwater before it soaks into the watershed that flows to the Hudson River and eventually to the Atlantic Ocean.

Birds, bees, butterflies, and other insects also benefit from the raingarden. The selection of native plants offers plenty of food for these essential pollinators. In fact, if you head over there now you can still catch the final blooms of the N.Y. Ironweed and Hibiscus, and the colorful berries and reddening leaves of the Possumhaw Viburnum shrubs. Keep an eye out for Liberty State Park’s many butterfly and dragonfly friends.

Help Support Liberty State Park with Dedicated License Plate

With the purchase of Liberty State Park license plates, you will be supporting the continued improvement of New Jersey’s premier urban state park. Your dollars help to maintain and restore historic structures like the CRRNJ Terminal, provide for upgrades to the Nature Center, create wildlife habitat, increase recreational opportunities, and so much more.

In 2016, license plate funds were used to install 50 new flag poles along Freedom Way which will display the 50 state flags.

Please consider becoming part of our community of supporters. For more information or to order your plates today, please visit your nearest NJ Motor Vehicle Agency or visit on line at http://www.state.nj.us/mvc/Vehicle/Liberty.htm, or by phone at (888) 486-3339. Thank you for your support.
Fox Sparrow

On a crisp, sunny winter day you might hear a high-pitched delightful tune and wonder what bird is singing that song. It is possibly the fox sparrow. Somewhere nearby in the underbrush, you’ll see a round-bellied, reddish-brown bird with some gray around its neck and eyes. The fox sparrow was named such because it has the reddish color of a European red fox. The bird feasts on seeds and berries in winter, beetles and caterpillars in summer. It can be seen in Liberty State Park most often in winter. Fox sparrows enjoy bird feeders where they pick up from the ground the seeds that are dropped by other birds.

Fox sparrows build nests of twigs and moss on or near the ground in low, dense shrubs. They may lay two to five eggs. Unlike the vespers or Henslow’s sparrows, the fox sparrow is not on New Jersey’s threatened or endangered list. Being a hearty bird with a stable population, the fox sparrow migrates to northern Canada in the spring where they build nests and raise young. They start to return to New Jersey in November and can be heard singing until March.

According to All About Birds.org, “Fox Sparrow fossils from the Pleistocene (about 11,000 years ago) have been found in Pennsylvania, Virginia, and at the La Brea tar pits in California.” This hearty sparrow has been around for a long time.

Next time you are out for a stroll in Liberty State Park, keep your ears and eyes open for fox sparrows.

References:
European Red Fox: See http://www.invasivespeciesinitiative.com/european-red-foxes
NJ Fish and Wildlife: https://www.state.nj.us/dep/fgw/tandespp.htm
All About Birds: https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Fox_Sparrow/

Friends of Liberty State Park

Please save these dates to help us help LSP:

25th annual Friends' Salt Marsh Cleanup: Saturday, April 4th, 2020 from 9:30 AM – 12:30 PM
Volunteers are welcome with no pre-registration required. Please meet at the gate at the eastern end of Morris Pesin Drive (GPS is 200 Morris Pesin Drive) Volunteers under 15 are asked to be accompanied by an adult. Please check our website’s "Upcoming Events" page for the flyer: http://www.folsp.org/events/events.html

Friends' annual Recognition Luncheon: Liberty House Restaurant, Sunday, May 3rd, 2020. Noon to 1:00 PM will be registration and hors d’oeuvres, and lunch will be served from 1:00 - 3:30 PM.

Friends' 2nd annual 5K Run and Fun Run: Saturday, June 20th, 2020 at 10:00 AM. Registration website link will be posted in November on our Upcoming Events page.

For more information about the above events or the Friends of Liberty State Park, please email Sam Pesin at pesinliberty@earthlink.net or call 201-792-1993. Also, be sure to check out the Friends at www.folsp.org, on Facebook at www.facebook.com/FriendsofLibertyStatePark, and on Instagram at www.instagram.com/friendsoflibertystatepark.
Greetings from the Garden

Liberty State Park, a green oasis which opened in 1976 as New Jersey’s gift to our nation for its bicentennial, is known as “the people’s park”. Both residents of local cities and visitors who come to the park every year can enjoy its open, peaceful space, and it is thanks to those who devote their time and effort to volunteering that this space can remain green and thriving.

Sponsored by the Friends of LSP, the Garden Beautification Program has brought volunteers from every part of our state out to the park to help keep it clean and green. Since 2002, thousands of volunteers have participated in this program, and every bit helps to keep Liberty State Park looking beautiful through all seasons.

Liberty State Park would like to thank our many volunteers, including those from the Port Authority of New York & New Jersey who helped clean the walls of the Empty Sky 9/11 Memorial and spruce up some of the surrounding garden beds the week before September 11th.

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Rosemarie, Liberty State Park's gardener, at 201-915-3418, or email rosemarie.cuillerier@dep.nj.gov.

What’s Happening at Liberty State Park?

Sunday, September 22nd
Walk for Wishes
Make-a-Wish Foundation
www.nj.wish.org/news-and-events

Sun day, September 22nd
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Make-a-Wish Foundation
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Friday, September 27th
Miles for Miracles
Torch Relay for CMN Hospitals
torchrelay.donordrive.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=donorDrive.event&eventID=509

Saturday, September 28th
Jersey City Back to School Festival
Jersey City Public Schools
www.jcboe.org

Saturday, October 5th
2019 Walk to Fight Alzheimer’s
Alzheimer’s New Jersey
www.alznj.org/

Sunday, October 6th
Carlos Negron Memorial Run
runsignup.com/Race/NJ/JerseyCity/CarlosNegronMemorialRun

Saturday, October 19th
JDRF One Walk
Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation
www.walk.jdrf.org

Sat, October 26th
Glow Walk & Run
Epilepsy Foundation of NJ
www.efnj.com/
Liberty State Park Fall and Winter Nature Programs

*** Program has no fee unless noted in description ***

Trailblazers Volunteer Days
Sunday, October 6th and 20th, 2019, and Sunday, March 29th, 2020  10:00 AM – Noon
LSP Trailblazers focus on removing invasive weeds and vines from around the trails that pass through the Richard J. Sullivan Natural Area and planting native shrubs to improve habitat. We recommend that you wear long sleeves and pants, sturdy shoes, and work gloves if you have them. Gloves and trash bags will be provided. Sunscreen, insect repellent and water are also recommended. Recommended for ages 10 and up.

Fall Bird Walk
Saturday, October 19th and Sunday, November 24th, 2019  10:00 AM - Noon
Located along the Atlantic Flyway, Liberty State Park is home to over 250 different species of birds. Join us as we explore varied habitats and learn to identify some of our resident and migratory birdlife. Please dress to be outdoors and bring binoculars if you have them. We will have a few pairs available to borrow. All ages welcome.

Everlasting Autumn Wreath Workshop
Saturday, October 26th, 2019  9:30 AM – 12:30 PM
We will use natural materials found in Liberty State Park to create ornamental wreaths. Once dried, these beautiful handmade wreaths can last forever. Decorate your home or give them as gifts! Materials fee $3/person. Recommended for ages 6 and up.

Fall Leaves Walk
Saturday, November 2nd, 2019  10:00 AM - 11:30 AM
As the weather starts to cool and the leaves begin to change, it’s a perfect time to come explore the beauty of fall at Liberty State Park. Join our Park Naturalist on this guided walk and learn how to identify some of our trees by their fall colors. Please dress to be outdoors. All ages welcome.

Holiday Pomanders Workshop
Saturday, November 16th, 2019  10:00 AM – Noon
Join us for a hands-on workshop to learn about the history of this holiday tradition and create your own beautiful fruit pomander to take home! Materials fee $3/person. Recommended for ages 6 and up.

Winter Evergreen Trees
Saturday, December 7th, 2019  10:00 AM - 11:30 AM
Come on out to Liberty State Park and join us for an evergreen investigation. We will learn how to identify different types of evergreens and about the valuable role these trees play in nature. Please dress to be outdoors.

Winter Waterfowl Walk
Saturday, December 14th, Sunday, January 26th and Sunday, March 8th, 2020  10:00 AM – Noon
Liberty State Park is a key destination for migrating winter waterfowl. Join us for a guided walk along the river to learn about some of these winter visitors. Please dress to be outdoors and bring binoculars if you have them. We will have a few pairs available to borrow. All ages welcome.

Recycled Papermaking
Saturday, January 11th, 2020  10:00 AM - Noon
Come create your own, unique, hand-made recycled art from used paper and other natural materials. Materials fee $3/person. Recommended for ages 5 and up.

Recycled Crafts
Saturday, February 8th, 2020  10:00 AM – Noon
Think twice before throwing away that egg carton or toilet paper tube. Join us in this fun, hands-on workshop and learn how to re-purpose common household items into unique crafts. Materials fee $3/person. Recommended for ages 4 and up.

Beach Walk and Cleanup
Saturday, March 21st, 2020  10:00 AM – Noon
Join us for a beach cleanup and scavenger hunt at Caven Point Beach! We will meet in the middle lot on Morris Pesin Drive and then walk over to our beach area. Also, please be sure to dress to be outdoors and wear old shoes that can get wet and muddy. All ages welcome.

Pre-registration is required for all programs. For more information or to register for a program, please contact the Nature Center at 201-915-3400 x202 or email LSPNatureCenter@dep.nj.gov. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Groups of more than six, please call for special arrangements.
October History Programs at Liberty State Park

Please meet at the Information Desk located inside the CRRNJ Terminal building at 1 Audrey Zapp Drive. For more information, call 201-915-3400 x202 or email LSPNatureCenter@dep.nj.gov. Pre-registration only required if noted in program description. Groups of more than six, please call for special arrangements.

CRRNJ Terminal History Walking Tour
Tuesdays ~ Wednesdays ~ Thursdays
8:00 AM - 3:00 PM
Tours available on request depending on staff availability
Join us for a walking tour of the CRRNJ Terminal and learn about its rich history and unique architecture.

Architecture of the CRRNJ Terminal
Wednesday, October 2nd
1:30 PM - 3:00 PM   FREE
Join our historic interpreter on a walking tour of the CRRNJ Terminal building and learn about the variety of architectural features found throughout this impressive structure.

Trail of the Blue Comet
Wednesday, October 9th
1:30 PM - 3:00 PM   FREE
Journey back in time to learn about the trail of the famous Blue Comet train all the way to its final destination of Atlantic City. This program will include a discussion about the lasting impact of the Blue Comet, artifacts from the train, and a clip from the documentary, “Deluxe: The Tale of the Blue Comet.”

Tales from the Morris Canal
Wednesday, October 16th
1:30 PM - 3:00 PM   FREE
Once a key factor for transportation in the 19th century, the Morris Canal made history for its use of inclined planes and locks to transport coal and iron to cities in the Northeast. Come travel through time to learn the history of the Morris Canal and discover what remains of the canal here in Liberty State Park today. We will meet at the Info Desk inside the CRRNJ Terminal for an introduction and then take a short walk to the Morris Canal Big Basin.

The Historic Trilogy
Wednesday, October 23rd
1:30 PM - 3:00 PM   FREE
The CRRNJ Terminal, Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island stand together as the Historic Trilogy. Come follow the trail of the immigrant experience. This program will include a tour of the CRRNJ with views of Ellis Island and the Statue of Liberty. We will meet at the Info Desk inside the CRRNJ Terminal.

Explosion at Black Tom
Wednesday, October 30th
1:30 PM - 3:00 PM   FREE   Pre-registration required
Join us for a tour and discussion of the dynamics of the land known as Black Tom then and now, and how the events leading up to the explosion served as a catalyst for America’s entry into World War I. Artifacts from the site of Black Tom will be on display. We will meet at the Info Desk inside the CRRNJ Terminal for an introduction and then drive over to the Black Tom site for the second part of the program. Limited transportation will be available to the site, so please contact us to reserve your space. You can also follow in your own vehicle.
SAVE THE DATE!

Saturday, February 22\textsuperscript{nd}, 2020
Liberty State Park CRRNJ Terminal

In celebration of the 91\textsuperscript{st} anniversary of the inaugural run of the Blue Comet train, join us at the Central Railroad of New Jersey Terminal for Blue Comet Day! Journey back in time to learn about the trail of the famous Blue Comet train all the way to its final destination of Atlantic City.

For more information about Blue Comet Day, please contact the Nature Center at 201-915-3400 x202 or email LSPNatureCenter@dep.nj.gov.