



# The Current

Volume 2/Number 2

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## Georgetown Waterfront Park – A Vision Fulfilled



In January, the vision of over 30 years to develop the Georgetown Waterfront as part of the Park System of the Nation's Capital was realized when construction began on the first phase of Georgetown Waterfront Park for the National Park Service. When finished in Spring 2008, this will be the largest new park in the District of Columbia since Constitution Gardens was completed in 1976.

The new park will create the vital final link in a 225-mile contiguous green space along the Potomac River from Mt. Vernon, VA to Cumberland, MD and provide local, regional and international visitors with a magnificent urban park. The first phase includes open lawns and informal gardens, environmentally engineered bio-edges that preserve native plants and enhance water quality, new pathways for walkers, joggers and hikers, a bike path connecting Rock Creek Park with the Capital Crescent Trail, a labyrinth to encourage reflection and contemplation and granite overlooks that provide scenic river views and historic images of the Georgetown Waterfront. Designed by the international landscape architecture firm, Wallace Roberts & Todd, this partnership project will reclaim an industrialized site along the Potomac Waterfront between Washington Harbour and the Key Bridge and completely rebuild the existing small park at the foot of Wisconsin Avenue.

The planning, design and construction of this new park has been a partnership among the National Park Service, the National Park Foundation, the community and the District of Columbia. This nearly \$18 million project has been achieved without the expenditure of any National Park Service funds. About \$12 million was raised in private donations, lease revenues from the former parking lot and District of Columbia transportation appropriations to build the first phase of the park from Wisconsin Avenue to Key Bridge.



the park and includes its signature elements – the interactive fountain and amphitheatre created by a pergola and river stair for viewing the finish line of the shell races – making this park a unique landmark on the Potomac Waterfront.

*by Sally Blumenthal, Deputy Associate Regional Director for Lands, Resources, and Planning, NCR, sally\_blumenthal@nps.gov*

A second partnership has been launched to raise another \$6 to \$7 million over the next 18 months for construction of Phase II – the Wisconsin Avenue Terminus. This will form the lively centerpiece of

## Regional Director's Corner

This issue of the Current is dedicated to our partners and the partnerships that exist between our park staffs and a variety of private organizations and friends groups whose assistance greatly benefits the work of our Greater Washington National Parks.

For example, the contributions of the National Cherry Blossom Festival, Inc. are many and varied, with both organizations' efforts complementing the work of the other. We know this from our longstanding relationship, from visitors who tell us they like what they see and from the ever-growing programs made available to the public during this spectacular time.

The Alice Ferguson Foundation partnership clearly benefits our high school students from this region, and has also helped produce improved environmental health of the Potomac River from its annual spring cleanup, with everyone the beneficiary.

Visitors expect the NPS to be the stewards and protectors of the substantial public treasures we all enjoy here. Our efforts are enhanced and fulfilled through the help of our many partners. We invite you to learn about them and join in!

Joseph M. Lawler  
Regional Director  
National Capital Region

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- Music, Research, Restoration Enhanced — Antietam National Battlefield.



Taking the oath of office began this visitor's presidential event.

## Volunteers help make "President for a Day"



Approximately 1,300 visitors explored the White House Visitor Center and were "sworn into office as President

for a day" on Presidents Day 2007 with the help of seven National Park Service rangers and 11 volunteers from President's Park. During this special programming, visitors of all ages had an opportunity to sample some of the sights, sounds, activities and personages that have helped make the White House America's most historical residence.

Adults and children chatted with Abraham Lincoln about his decision to preserve the Union during the Civil War, children pulled up a chair at First Lady Dolley Madison's dining table and learned how she saved the portrait of George Washington when the British burned the White House in 1814. Throughout the day all had a chance to use a quill pen, sit for a portrait, write their own presidential legacy, play period games, design their own "White House china," deliver a presidential speech, and play the "Who wants to be President" game.

Park staff and volunteers are vital to the success of this program, helping facilitate opportunities for visitors to make their own intellectual and emotional connections with the stories of the White House and President's Park.

by John Stanwich,  
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## Partnership Offers Unique Opportunities

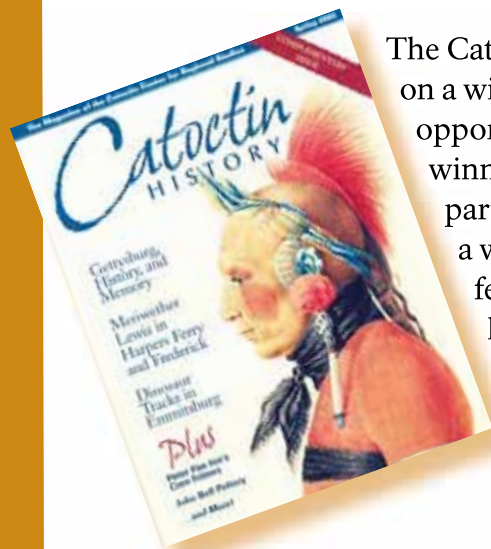


As throughout our area, the northwestern portion of the National Capital Region is an area rich in American history, with historic sites and stories spanning the breadth of our nation's development.

The Catoclin Center for Regional Studies in Frederick, MD, has been helping the National Park Service discover and interpret this history for the American people. The NPS and representatives from six local parks signed a Memorandum of Agreement with Frederick Community College (FCC) in 1998 to create the Center. FCC houses and helps staff the Center, and the NPS "loans" a historian to work part-time. The Catoclin Center collaborates with local NPS units, regional historical organizations, local and state government agencies, schools, and other groups to research and disseminate local history and culture. It offers educational opportunities for students of all ages, and helps foster the exchange of information between the NPS and the public to further the appreciation of the history of the region.



Middle school students participate in the Catoclin Center's Save Our History project on a tour of a historic African American church in Sharpsburg, MD.



The Catoclin Center sponsors conferences and workshops, conducts research on a wide variety of local historical topics, offers classes, field trips, and training opportunities, promotes preservation of historic sites, and publishes an award-winning regional history magazine, *Catoclin History*. The NPS benefits from this partnership in many ways. The Center provides training for the NPS, such as a workshop on "Slavery and the Civil War" for local NPS park historians. It features NPS authors and local NPS sites in *Catoclin History*, highlights park history in Center-sponsored conferences and publications, and produces studies for the NPS. For more information, visit the Catoclin Center's website at <http://catoclincenter.frederick.edu>

by Susan Trail, Superintendent,  
Monocacy National Battlefield, susan\_trail@nps.gov

## Partnership Project to Restore Catoclin Aqueduct

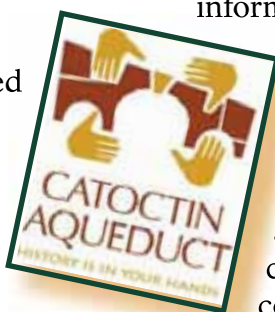


Preparations are underway for restoration of the C&O Canal's historic Catoclin Aqueduct, which carries the Canal

over Catoclin Creek at mile mark 51.5. The Aqueduct's restoration is necessary as two of the 139-year-old Catoclin Aqueduct's three arches collapsed in October 1973. Fortunately, hundreds of original cut granite stones and several segments of wrought iron railing are being recovered in this project, which is expected to be completed in spring 2009.

This ambitious \$3.5 million project is a community-wide

partnership between the C&O Canal National Historical Park and the Catoclin Aqueduct Restoration Fund, Inc., (CAR Fund). The CAR Fund is the park's fundraising partner and has committed to raising the funds necessary to complete the project. Visit [www.CatoclinAqueduct.org](http://www.CatoclinAqueduct.org) for more information.



Catoclin Creek is where 19th century transportation titans, the C&O Canal Company and the B&O Railroad, competed in 1832-34 to concurrently build parallel stone structures to convey their respective modes of transportation across a major tributary of the Potomac River, with the canal on an aqueduct and the railroad on a nearby viaduct.



Top: Aqueduct circa 1970s. Bottom: Original cut granite stones recently recovered by C&O Canal staff.

The Catoclin Aqueduct was central to the Potomac River transportation corridor that linked the nation's capital and its nearby ports of Alexandria and Georgetown with citizens and goods above the confluence of the Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers.

by John Noel, C&O Canal National  
Historic Park, john\_noel@nps.gov

# Partners & Friends

## Catoctin Mountain Park Park Partners Achieve Results



Catoctin Mountain Park staff work closely with a variety of partners. A 35-year relationship with the Appalachian and Catoctin Districts of the Boy Scouts of America of the National Capital Area Council has resulted in major work projects in the park as well as a national accessibility award. Friends of Big Hunting Creek support the protection of trout habitat. The Tourism Council of Frederick County and Frederick Historic Sites Consortium support tourism and marketing efforts in the county.

## Center for Urban Ecology Stewardship through Partnership



The Urban Ecology Research Learning Alliance (UERLA)

partnered with the George Washington Memorial Parkway, the C&O Canal NHP, and The Nature Conservancy for the Potomac River Gorge BioBlitz in June 2006.

This activity attracted more than 150 volunteer experts, who conducted intensive surveys of understudied biological organisms. During 2007, UERLA will join Rock Creek Park and National Geographic Society for a Rock Creek BioBlitz on May 18-19.



Volunteer scientists hard at work during the Potomac Gorge BioBlitz.

## Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail Students Assist Trail Planning



Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail partnerships

continue to grow through inter-agency planning and coordination, volunteer contributions, and Trail segment designations. Students



Volunteers maintain many segments of the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail.

and faculty at the University of Maryland's Landscape Architecture program helped develop a Fort Circle Parks greenway concept plan. To support development and management, the Northern Virginia Regional Commission and Virginia Dept. of Conservation and Recreation developed a plan to guide Trail projects in Virginia. Potomac Heritage Trail Association volunteers have helped local park managers with Trail segment construction in Loudoun County's linear park system, in Piscataway Park and in Nanjemoy Special Resource Management Area.

## Antietam National Battlefield Music, Research, Restoration Enhanced



Park partnerships include the "Salute to Independence" with the

Maryland Symphony, the Memorial Illumination with the American Professional Business Women's Association and interpretive events with the National Museum of Civil War Medicine. The Catoctin Center for Regional Studies and the Washington County Free Library assist the park with research projects. The Western Maryland Interpretive Association provides educational opportunities for visitors and the Save Historic Antietam Foundation assists in the restoration of the Battlefield Landscape.



Illumination ceremony at Antietam NB.

## National Capital Parks-East AWS Helps Restore Wetlands



The Anacostia Watershed Society (AWS) is an integral partner in restoring the Anacostia River Watershed. AWS is constructing and re-vegetating the tidal marshes within Anacostia Park, NCP-East.

Wild rice, once abundant along the river, has all but vanished. AWS and its volunteers, many of whom are school and college-age students, are helping to return wild rice (Anacostia genotype) to the river fringe with the goal to re-vegetate the wetlands. AWS also installs and maintains goose exclosure fencing to protect newly planted wetlands.

## George Washington Memorial Parkway Where Partnerships Abound



The Potomac Appalachian Trail Club has co-maintained the Potomac Heritage Trail (PHT) with GWMP for over 20 years. The PHT is a 10-mile-long foot trail which extends from Theodore Roosevelt Island to the American Legion Bridge. Another volunteer group, the Friends of Dyke Marsh, is dedicated to preservation of and public education about Dyke Marsh, the largest freshwater tidal marsh in the Washington Metropolitan Area. Visit [www.patc.net](http://www.patc.net) or [www.fodm.org](http://www.fodm.org) for more information.

## Rock Creek Park Partners Help Restoration Effort



The Friends of Peirce Mill is dedicated to the restoration of Peirce Mill, helping with many projects, including the Historic Structures Report. Tangible results include beam and column replacement within the Mill and the development

of plans to restore the water wheel system. Friends of Rock Creek Environment (FORCE) is a partner that promotes a healthy and sustainable Rock Creek Watershed and provides volunteers, including help with removal of massive amounts of debris along Rock Creek in summer 2006.

## National Mall & Memorial Parks Partners Assist National Mall



National Mall & Memorial Parks continues its partnership with local Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), including the Downtown and Golden Triangle BIDs to enhance the downtown parks by replacing benches and lights, supporting fountain repairs and augmenting trash pick-up. Agreements with the Trust for the National Mall and new partnership development with the Korean War Veterans Association, USA, Inc., to support memorial and park revitalization efforts are underway. Work continues to strengthen current relationships through development of a new fund-raising agreement with longtime partner, Ford's Theatre Society.

## Harpers Ferry National Historical Park NAACP helps Harpers Ferry



Harpers Ferry NHP's partnership with the West Virginia NAACP is vital to the protection of the park and promotion of its history. Before the Murphy Farm was purchased, the West Virginia NAACP submitted a resolution, passed at the National NAACP Convention, to protect this historical land. They partnered with the park to present the Niagara Movement Celebration and are working to protect and expand the park boundaries in Maryland and Virginia.

## Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts Wolf Trap Foundation: Performance Partner



Wolf Trap has been co-managed since 1971 through a unique partnership between the National Park Service and the Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts. The Wolf Trap Foundation, a private, not-for-profit corporation founded at the request of the Department of Interior, is responsible for artistic programming, ticketing, public relations and marketing, educational programs, and fundraising. The NPS and Foundation work together to create a seamless, live performance experience for all patrons.

## Manassas National Battlefield Park, Partners, Horses Benefit



Manassas National Battlefield Park enjoys a 20-year partnership with the Battlefield Equestrian Society which maintains and improves the park's 25



Historic ride.

miles of horse trails. Society members also donate thousands of hours annually through trail improvements. The park and Prince William County Police have an agreement where officers use park horses to patrol events and pay a modest donation to defray horse upkeep expenses.

# Upcoming Events

For GWNP event information, call 202-619-7222

## National Cherry Blossom Festival

March 31 - April 15, 2007

Events throughout Washington, D.C.

The National Cherry Blossom Festival® is an annual 16-day, city-wide event featuring more than 150 international cultural performances and over 90 other special events including sporting events, arts & crafts demonstrations and much more! For more information, visit [www.nps.gov/nacc/cherry](http://www.nps.gov/nacc/cherry).

Festival highlights include:

- Cherry Blossom Parade, April 14, 10:00 a.m., 7th - 17th Streets, N.W., on Constitution Ave.
- Japanese Stone Lantern Lighting Ceremony, April 18, 2:30 p.m., 17th & Independence Ave., S.W.

Ranger-led highlights include:

- Bloomin' Junior Ranger activities at the Ranger Activity Tent near the entrance to the FDR Memorial, 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., daily.
- Cherry Blossom walking tours along the Tidal Basin, daily, every hour and a half beginning at 10:00 a.m., with the last walk departing at 5:30 p.m. Meet rangers at the FDR Memorial entrance.
- Lantern Walks along the Tidal Basin, Saturday, Sunday, and Wednesday evenings throughout the festival, 8:00 p.m. Meet at the Tidal Basin Paddleboat Pavilion.
- Cherry Blossom bicycle tours, Saturdays and Sundays, 1:00 p.m., starting at the Jefferson Memorial, plaza area. Bring your own bike, helmet.

Make sure you visit the NPS Information Tent located on Independence Avenue just west of 15th Street for up-to-date information on Festival activities and services.



## Potomac River Watershed Cleanup

Saturday & Sunday, March 31 - April 1, 9:00 a.m. - 12 noon

To find a location near you, visit [www.potomaccleanup.org](http://www.potomaccleanup.org) or call the Alice Ferguson Foundation at 301-292-6665.

## National Park Week

April 22 - April 29, 2007

You are invited to experience your America by visiting one or more of your Greater Washington National Parks (GWNP) during this year's celebration of National Park Week. Renew your passion and commitment to the special resources protected by the NPS. Hike, bike, tour, volunteer, and explore a GWNP. For more information, contact 202-619-7222.

## Memorial Day Events

Monday, May 28

Memorial Day is a time to remember the U.S. men and woman who lost their lives serving their country. Help celebrate and honor these heroes by attending one of many GWNP Memorial Day events. Wreath-layings, concerts, speeches, bell ringing, and a parade are just a few of the planned activities. For more information, contact 202-619-7222.



Memorial Day ceremony at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial on the National Mall.

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

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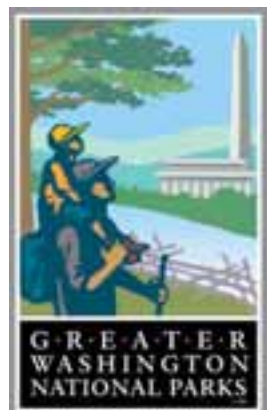
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National Cherry Blossom Festival  
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