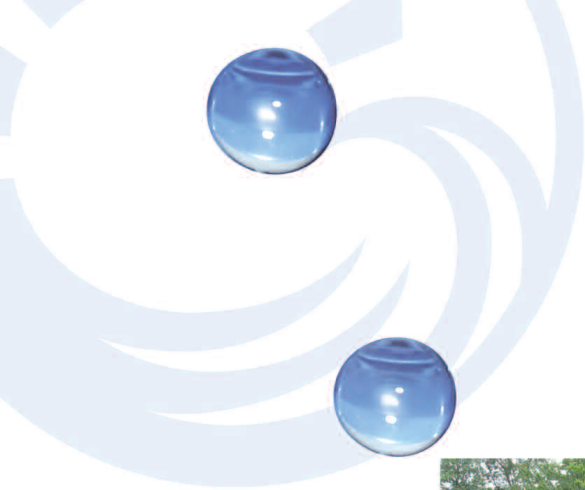


SYNERGY

(from the Greek *syn-ergo*, meaning working together) is the term used to describe a situation where the final outcome of a system is greater than the sum of its parts – a dynamic state in which combined action is favored over the sum of individual component actions.



JOHN H CHAFEE BLACKSTONE RIVER VALLEY NATIONAL HERITAGE CORRIDOR



2008 ANNUAL REPORT

"How could drops of water know themselves to be a river? Yet the river flows on"
– Antoine de Saint-Exupery

In the Blackstone River Valley, synergy describes the energy that, piece by piece, action by action, is building a region with a shared heritage. While we tend to look at individual actions, efforts and accomplishments over the past year, it is the sum of that work that is much greater than its parts. This year, the Corridor Commission recognizes the achievements of individuals, organizations, and agencies, holding the vision that all of this – drop by drop – keeps the Blackstone flowing.



CORRIDOR COMMISSION

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DONNA WILLIAMS, VICE CHAIR

MICHAEL CASSIDY, TREASURER

SENATOR RICHARD T. MOORE, SECRETARY

LOUISE REDDING, IMMEDIATE PAST CHAIR

MATTHEW AMORELLO, PAST COMMISSIONER
MA TURNPIKE AUTHORITY

WILLIAM ANKNER, PAST COMMISSIONER
RI DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

KENNETH BIANCHI, BLACKSTONE, MA TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

ROBERT BILLINGTON, BLACKSTONE VALLEY TOURISM COUNCIL

PAUL CLANCY, WORCESTER CITY COUNCIL

MARY K. CONNOR, CITIZEN ADVOCATE

SAUL KAPLAN, RI ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

PATRICIA MEHRTENS, HISTORIAN, BURRILLVILLE, RI

DANIEL O'CONNELL, MA DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS & TECHNOLOGY

BRONA SIMON, MA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

BURTON STALLWOOD, RI STATE MARSHALL

DR. W. MICHAEL SULLIVAN
RI DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

RICHARD SULLIVAN, MA DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION & RECREATION

CONGRESSIONAL MEMBERS

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SENATOR JOHN KERRY, MA

SENATOR JACK REED, RI

SENATOR SHELDON WHITEHOUSE, RI

CONGRESSMAN JAMES MCGOVERN, MA

CONGRESSMAN RICHARD NEAL, MA

CONGRESSMAN JAMES LANGEVIN, RI

CONGRESSMAN PATRICK KENNEDY, RI

CORRIDOR STAFF

JAN REITSMA, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

CHUCK ARNING, LEAD PARK RANGER

CHARLENE BERRY-JENSEN, COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT SPECIALIST

SUZANNE BUCHANAN, PARK RANGER & VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

RAY BOSWELL, PARK RANGER

PETER COFFIN, PARK RANGER

MEGHAN COUTURE, RECEPTION / STAFF ASSISTANT

BARBARA DIXON, SPECIAL EVENTS COORDINATOR

JOANNA DOHERTY, COMMUNITY PLANNER

DIANE KEITH, LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT

KEVIN KLYBERG, PARK RANGER

PAULINE LOZEAU, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

BILL MAURER, ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

VALERIE PAUL, VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

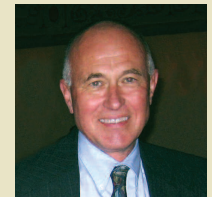
HAL WELCH, COMMUNITY PLANNER / SPECIAL PROJECTS

“One of the distinctive features of the Corridor is its depth of visible landscape history... The scale, density and longevity of the Valley’s mill communities make this region a unique and significant environment for telling the story of American industrial development... The depth of this landscape history encourages visitors to appreciate the layers of change and, more importantly, to value the presence of the past in the contemporary environment.”

— Gabrielle M. Lanier, Associate Professor of History, James Madison University, Scholars’ Visit Report, 2008

MESSAGE FROM THE COMMISSION

We know the Blackstone River is the core of the Corridor. We take our name from it. It is at the center of the story we tell about industrialization and the changes it brought to our economy, social systems and landscape. It reflects in many ways the history of the Valley: innovation, growth, abundance, decline, neglect, rediscovery, and restoration. As it flows from the headwaters in Worcester County, Massachusetts, down to Narragansett Bay in Rhode Island, it reminds us to look back as well as forward, symbolizes what we seek to preserve, and at the same time continues to power change.



The theme of this report, synergy, carries a message linked to this energetic, continuous flow of our river. We, too, encounter obstacles on our way to achieving the goals the United States Congress set for us in 1986, most significant among them in recent years, and especially 2008, the economic downturn and its impact, not only on the Commission but on many of our partners, some now struggling to survive. Yet we keep moving forward, sometimes even more energetically, our projects and initiatives, from restoring historic structures and cleaning up the river to using it as a tool to teach children about our history and environment, and training volunteers to create a long-lasting, community-based program of community pride, preservation and reinvention.

The river combines the energy and characteristics of its tributaries into something that is larger than the sum of its parts. Our work is really to help the flow and energies of many initiatives come together into a partnership network, a powerful force that can make a difference for the better both locally and valley-wide. Without our partners, the Corridor Commission would be powerless. The diversity of ideas, passions and abilities that drive our partnerships is what allows us to plan our projects, mobilize support in the community, and get them done, together.

This job is far from done. In 2009 we continue work on many of the projects described in this report and are even taking on some new ones. We also continue our effort to ensure an ongoing presence of the National Park Service after 2011, the year in which congressional authorization is currently scheduled to expire. We invite you to be very involved in that process. Above all, we recommit ourselves to supporting our partners, in particular those who are struggling, so they remain part of our flow and our collective energy.

Please join us.

Ted Sanderson, Chair

Jan Reitsma, Executive Director



WOONSOCKET GOES HOLLYWOOD

During the fall and winter of 2008, our quiet “Depot” in Woonsocket was transformed into a functioning train station in the fictional town of Bedridge for the filming of the movie “Hachiko: A Dog Story”. Hollywood transformed the area around the Depot in Woonsocket into the thriving “Main Street” that we envision for communities throughout the Valley and the Depot became an active passenger train station again. Whether movies reflect life or life is reflected in movies, having the Woonsocket Depot as an authentic setting for telling a story reinforces the preservation work in the Valley that creates the sense of place here that even Hollywood can’t recreate.

FISCAL YEAR 2008

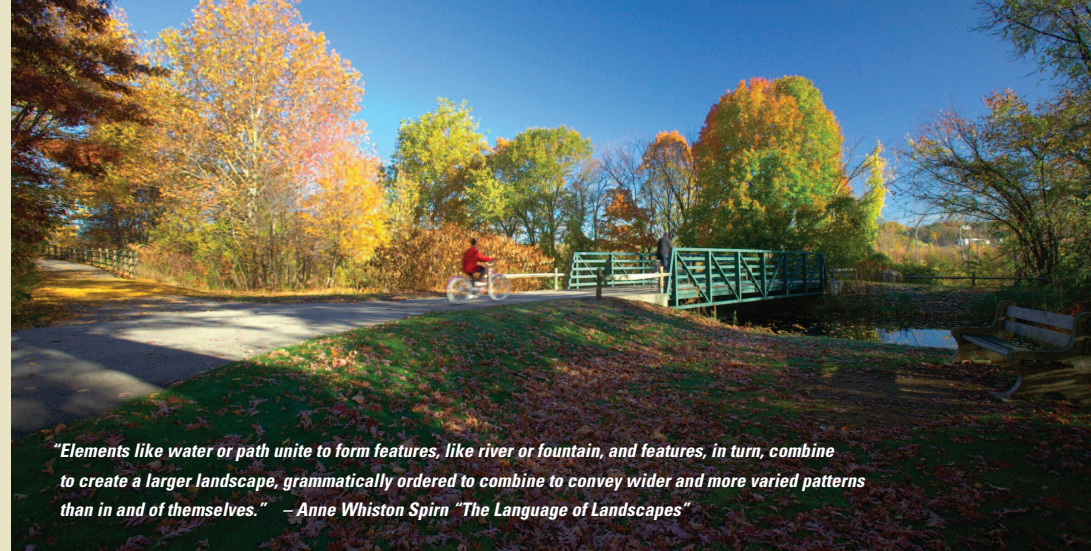
THE COMMISSION IS SUPPORTED BY FEDERAL APPROPRIATIONS THAT LEVERAGE SUBSTANTIAL LOCAL, STATE AND PRIVATE FUNDS TO PURSUE A WIDE RANGE OF PROJECTS THAT BENEFIT THE BLACKSTONE VALLEY COMMUNITIES.

COMMISSION OPERATIONS \$694,000.00

APPROPRIATIONS THROUGH NATIONAL RECREATION AND PRESERVATION PORTION OF THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE BUDGET TO SUPPORT COMMISSION OPERATIONS AND ADMINISTRATION.

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE SUPPORT \$353,000.00

APPROPRIATIONS THROUGH THE OPERATION OF THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE BUDGET TO PROVIDE TECHNICAL SUPPORT FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION, PLANNING AND DESIGN, ENVIRONMENT, AND INTERPRETATION



"Elements like water or path unite to form features, like river or fountain, and features, in turn, combine to create a larger landscape, grammatically ordered to combine to convey wider and more varied patterns than in and of themselves." – Anne Whiston Spirn "The Language of Landscapes"

PHOTO BY SCOTT NADOW



IN MEMORIAM: SENATOR CLAIBORNE PELL

When Claiborne Pell passed away on January 1, 2009, the Heritage Corridor Commission lost one of the earliest proponents of the Corridor vision and a Congressional force that advocated for the Blackstone Valley's federal designation in 1986 and its reauthorization in 1996. As a Senator from Rhode Island from 1961-1997, Pell was the state's longest serving senator and was a tireless advocate for the Heritage Corridor in Washington. Senator Pell helped to shape the Corridor's early development and helped to provide the critical resources needed to carry out our vision. We will all remember Senator Pell for his support, enthusiasm and perseverance and we will continue to carry out the work that will realize his vision for the Valley and serve as a living legacy for his congressional efforts.

INTRODUCTION

In 2008 we were able to view the Blackstone River Valley through new eyes when nationally recognized scholars visited the Valley to help evaluate the region's significance as part of a National Park Service Special Resource Study. What they found here was what we have known for years – a place rich in layers, stories and significance. We are all part of these layers and we contribute in the many different ways that are described in this report. This year we shared the Blackstone River with urban youth, we had a design competition in Pawtucket, RI and we formed a bikeway patrol in Rhode Island. There were ongoing efforts to clean the headwaters and substantial progress in developing the visitor centers in both Worcester, MA and Pawtucket, RI. Partnerships ranged from the individual actions of local residents attending preservation workshops to the support of agencies in both states building the Blackstone River Bikeway and local organizations saving historic buildings in East Douglas and Blackstone, MA. The Corridor Commission and our many partners continue to form a whole greater than the sum of its parts. During the closing remarks for the Scholars' Visit, Gary Kulik summarized his thoughts as:

"Do you want to talk about importance? This is where the cotton industry began. This is where this incredibly important global and regional phenomenon began... one of extraordinary significance in American history. Its history is the story of the cultivation of cotton and the tragedy of slavery and the Civil War. It's a story that extends to the clothing shops of New York City. It's a story that continued in the South, continued further south in Colombia, other parts of South America and continues today in China. Global and regional. Great, great significance in this Valley. ...you are living in the midst of a historical treasure. I wish you all success in preserving it, sustaining it, interpreting it for yourselves, your children and the generations to come."

We discovered that the Valley itself has a synergy – an effect beyond the boundaries that was greater than we had measured in the past. We are all the keepers of this "historical treasure" – working in different ways, but adding our efforts to the greater whole. We recognize the value of each contribution and encourage you to continue preserving, sustaining, and interpreting in your own way as we move through the next few years of redefining a course for the Corridor.



REDEFINING THE CORRIDOR

Staff and Commissioners have been working closely with the National Park Service (NPS) Northeast Regional Office on the Blackstone River Valley Special Resource Study (SRS). The SRS will explore the potential for a permanent NPS presence in the Valley with a particular focus on those sites and landscape features that relate to the region's industrial development.

A critical phase of the study was completed in February, when six nationally-renowned scholars – with expertise in industrial history, economic history and cultural landscapes – visited the Valley. The group concluded that the type of industrialization that occurred in the Blackstone Valley, with small-scale industries employing entire families, had an enormous impact on the industrialization of the nation as a whole. This approach gave rise to the mill village, a model that was replicated across the country but nowhere as intensely as the Blackstone Valley. Future phases of the SRS will involve an evaluation of the inclusion of Valley sites in the national park system and an assessment of management options.

In tandem with the SRS, the Commission has undertaken a Boundary Study to determine if new communities should be added to the Heritage Corridor in order to further protect our critical resources. Public meetings on the potential boundary expansion will be held early in 2009, and a final report with recommendations will be finished by the early summer.



LANDSCAPE PRESERVATION 101

As an outgrowth of last year's Heritage Landscape Inventory, the Corridor Commission, in partnership with the Quinebaug-Shetucket Heritage Corridor and the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (MA DCR), offered a series of preservation planning workshops in 2008. Nearly 200 people attended these workshops, which encouraged communities to act now to preserve special places in the Valley for future generations. Participants learned about local preservation bylaws and smart growth strategies, and got tips on how to pass the Community Preservation Act, rehabilitate mill buildings, and protect and support farms. The Commission is working to replicate this program in Rhode Island in 2009.

"Landscapes are like musical or choreographic scores that must be performed to be fully experienced"
– Anne Whiston Spirn, *"The Language of Landscape"*

RENEWING HISTORIC PLACES

Critical preservation work was completed at two important historic sites in the Valley in 2008, with support from the Commission and the Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund. At the Southwick-Daniels Farm in Blackstone, MA the exterior restoration of the ca. 1830 farmhouse was completed. One of the best preserved farms in the Valley, the project is helping to bring the farm back to its former glory.

The Douglas Historical Society oversaw the restoration of the skylight at the ca. 1833 E.N. Jenckes Store in the village of East Douglas, MA. Based on plans prepared by a NPS architect, the project included repairs to the roof framing and wood window sash, as well as the installation of wood storm windows that filter out ultraviolet light. With this project, the Douglas Historical Society has taken an important step to protect the Jenckes Store and the remarkable artifacts that it houses, which speak to 19th-century village life in the Blackstone Valley.



GETTING PEOPLE ON THE RIVER

After years of planning and design, significant work was completed at the Blackstone Gorge in Blackstone, MA. Through a partnership with the MA DCR and the Blackstone River Watershed Association (BRWA), landscape improvements, an enhanced river access and an accessible path were constructed in November.

Construction has started at the Manville Dam Landing site in Cumberland, RI and the Woonsocket Landing project is in final review at the Rhode Island Department of Transportation with construction slated for 2009. Construction at the Tricentennial Park in Sutton, MA is complete, with interpretive signs to be installed this Spring. These three projects were the result of ongoing Commission support, strong partnerships with the communities and state transportation agency funding.

Two more access sites in Uxbridge, MA will be constructed in 2009 through a partnership between the Commission, the BRWA and the Town. In Rhode Island, a partnership with the Blackstone River Watershed Council (BRWC) has resulted in four additional access sites in the planning and design stage. The BRWC has also worked with the Lincoln Water Commission and the Town of Lincoln to develop a conceptual design for a river access and boat storage facility near the Blackstone River Bikeway.



MOVING AHEAD ON THE BIKEWAY

In Rhode Island, two new segments of the Blackstone River Bikeway were completed: the City of Woonsocket built one segment as part of its construction of Riverside Park and another section, which includes a 540-foot long elevated boardwalk through the Lonsdale Marsh, was built in Central Falls and Cumberland. The total length of the bikeway in Rhode Island is now 11 miles.

In Massachusetts, the Bikeway received a major cash infusion with \$4.6 million from the Massachusetts Highway Department (MHD) for the design of a 16.5-mile stretch through Uxbridge, Northbridge, Grafton, Sutton and Millbury. Work on a final alignment and 25% design of this section is underway. A public hearing was held in January, 2008 to review plans for a segment in Uxbridge and Millville, with 75% design expected in 2009, and the Town of Blackstone is working with MHD and MA DCR to start design of the segment that runs through Millville and Blackstone along the Southern New England Trunkline Trail. The Commission secured \$290,000 in Alternative Transportation in Parks and Public Lands funding, to design the bikeway segment connecting the new visitor center in Worcester to Union Station downtown. The goal of the Commission is to have the entire bikeway in Massachusetts in planning and design over the next year.



REDISCOVERING THE BLACKSTONE CANAL

Working closely with the MA DCR, the Commission has made steady progress toward preserving segments of the Blackstone Canal. In Northbridge, MA the landfill is being stabilized and capped by the Northbridge Landfill LLC, opening up a new section of the canal for the public to enjoy. In Millville, MA the MADCR is working to purchase land adjacent to the Millville Canal Lock and proposed Bikeway, made possible through the cooperation of the landowner and the advocacy of town resident Margaret Carroll. In addition, the Commission is partnering with Preserve Rhode Island to complete a study of the Blackstone Canal in Rhode Island. The study will assess the condition of the canal and identify segments for future preservation.



PAWTUCKET VISITOR CENTER

The Commission is working with the City of Pawtucket, RI, Slater Mill, and the Blackstone Valley Tourism Council to design, fabricate and install new exhibits in the Pawtucket Visitor Center. Lorna Ross from the Rhode Island School of Design has been developing the plans, which include a tourism wall map, exterior building banner, exhibit on the evolution of industry in the Valley, new graphics and visitor amenities. Some changes have already been made, providing better visitor services and inviting visitors to explore Slater Mill across the street. Additional changes will be in place by the end of 2009.

BRWC RECOGNIZED

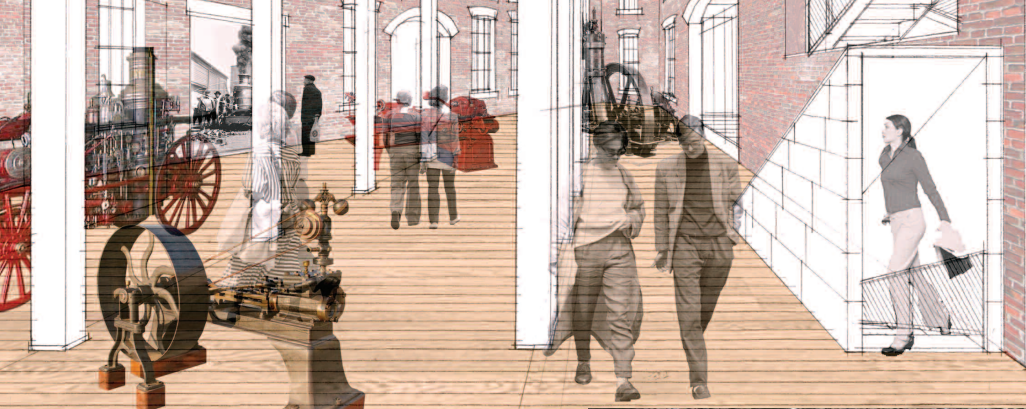
On April 22, 2008 (Earth Day) members of the Blackstone River Watershed Council (BRWC) in Rhode Island were recognized by the President and the EPA for outstanding efforts in preserving New England's environment, including work to restore fish passages at the first four dams of the Blackstone River.



TOWARD A FISHABLE AND SWIMMABLE RIVER

Efforts to improve water quality in the Blackstone River continued in 2008 when, in September, the US Environmental Protection Agency issued the final permit for the Upper Blackstone Water Pollution Abatement District (UBWPAD) sewage treatment plant in Worcester. The permit retains stringent limits for nutrients (nitrogen and phosphate) that were proposed in the draft permit. The Commission supported stricter limits and worked with the City and other officials to focus on how to implement them in the most cost-effective way. Earlier in the year, the Commission worked with the Blackstone River Coalition (BRC) and UBWPAD to bring experts from around the country to Worcester to share the latest information about nutrient reduction technologies and best practices.

The Blackstone River Coalition and the Commission have focused on working with municipal leaders to promote better storm water management practices for existing and newly planned development. This year the BRC worked with the Town of North Smithfield, RI to obtain a grant that enabled the Town to incorporate storm water management in the planning and design for "Branch Village," a major redevelopment project.



WORCESTER VISITOR CENTER

Design is almost complete on the Corridor's "Worcester Blackstone Visitor Center"! Commission staff are working with the City of Worcester, Massachusetts Highway Department (MHD), Worcester Historical Museum (WHM) and the Central Massachusetts Convention and Visitors Bureau (CMCVB) to keep the design of the project moving forward with anticipation of construction beginning in 2009.

The City, in partnership with WHM, executed a design contract with Lamoureux-Pagano Associates, Inc. (LPA) of Worcester in 2007. Land Works Studio and designLAB Architects, both of Boston, are working under the direction of LPA and have developed conceptual designs and cost estimates for the building and the site amenities. Museum Design Associates of Cambridge started developing plans for exhibits inside and outside the facility. The Commission presented WHM with \$162,000 to advance work on the exhibit design in 2009.

TRACES OF THE TRADE

The Commission partnered with Massachusetts Foundation for the Humanities, Worcester Historical Museum, Northbridge Historical Society, and Alternatives, Inc. to screen the documentary "Traces of the Trade: A Story from the Deep North." After the screening, NPS Rangers gave a walking tour in the mill village of Whitinsville, exploring the relationship between slavery and the textile industry.



WELLNESS WALKATHON

Congratulations to the CorridorKeepers for coordinating the outstanding Wellness Walk-A-Thon, held May 3, 2008. The event featured a five mile walk along the Blackstone River Bikeway to promote health and wellness. Participants, vendors and exhibitors highlighted some of the incredible resources available in the Valley and opportunities to get involved.

FOOTSTEPS IN HISTORY

The 3rd annual Footsteps in History event took place during Columbus Day weekend, with more than 100 historic sites and programs throughout the Corridor welcoming more than 15,000 visitors. The program, a partnership between the Commission, the MA and RI State Historic Preservation Offices, regional tourism agencies and Chambers of Commerce, was supported by a \$120,000 Preserve America grant.

3RD ANNUAL CANALFEST

This year's CanalFest in Worcester, MA was a great success, attracting families, canal enthusiasts and residents from the City and region. A 72 foot long reconstruction of the Blackstone Canal was the centerpiece of the event, demonstrating the potential impact of uncovering and re-watering the canal in downtown Worcester. The event was supported by a wide range of partners, and featured kayaking, wagon rides, music and a range of family activities

BROAD STREET REVITALIZATION

The Blackstone Valley Tourism Council and the cities of Pawtucket, Central Falls, and Cumberland, RI, have been working together to develop a cooperative approach to Broad Street, an important transportation corridor. The partnership seeks to revitalize Broad Street and to celebrate the diverse communities that call it home. The Commission helped with this effort by providing interpretation, educating both visitors and residents about the rich heritage of the area. A NPS ranger led two Thursday Night Walkabouts, in Lonsdale and Valley Falls, and participated in three new Broad Street International Food Tours, which included a guided boat tour followed by a meal at one of the diverse restaurants in the area.

VOLUNTEERS IN PARKS

The Volunteers In Parks program continues to grow, with VIPs contributing 58,924 hours in 2008. That translates to \$1,149,607.00 of in kind volunteer services – which is why we want to say "thanks a million" to our VIP's!

Volunteers can be seen throughout the Valley – at historical sites, on the river and now on the Bikeway! The Blackstone River Bikeway Patrol, funded through a VIP grant, was created in 2008. The Bikeway Patrol has established relationships with the Greenway Alliance of Rhode Island and the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (RIDEM), who manages the bikeway in Rhode Island, and regularly offers bike maintenance, safety tips and directions to bikeway users. The group has developed innovative ways to share the natural, cultural and historical resources of the Valley. The group's success resulted in the creation of a Junior Bikeway Patrol, to encourage youth to be active in the outdoors and to serve as stewards of the Blackstone River Bikeway. Check out the Bikeway Patrol volunteers in action at www.blackstonebikewaypatrol.org.



*"The significance of the Blackstone Valley lies in its role as a regional network in which technological expertise, labor, and capital interacted. This complex movement of people is also deeply rooted in place: the river, canal, mills, villages, farms, and cities."
—Alison K. Hoagland, Professor of History and Historic Preservation,
Michigan Technological University, Scholars' Visit Report*



CONNECTING THE PAST TO THE FUTURE BY ENGAGING YOUTH

In response to national and regional emphasis within the NPS on the need to more effectively engage youth, the Commission secured funding from the Youth Partnership Program to develop partnerships with Groundwork Providence and Family Resources Community Action in Woonsocket, RI. Through two programs in the summer of 2008, about forty teenagers, age 13 to 17, learned about the NPS mission, programs and career opportunities, and about the history of the Blackstone River Valley and the Roger Williams National Memorial (ROWI). The students helped with water quality testing, assisted with cleanup and improvements at ROWI and presented a public program about environmental awareness. We look forward to continuing the program in 2009 and expanding it into Massachusetts.

PAWTUCKET DESIGN COMPETITION

In 2008, the Commission partnered with the City of Pawtucket, RI on a local design competition for a sculptural element at the Pawtucket Visitor Center – the Gateway to the Blackstone Valley and the City's Arts and Entertainment District. Eleven entries were submitted and three teams were commissioned to develop their designs. The winners are Joshua Enck and Nicholas Hollibough of Providence, whose design, "Canter and Shed" would rise 18 feet above street level and include a walking path. Pawtucket plans to raise the funds to fabricate and install the sculpture in the near future.



PHOTO BY BELINDA MAZUR

8TH ANNUAL GREENWAY CHALLENGE

This year's UniBank Blackstone River Valley Greenway Challenge was true to its name. Dire predictions of hurricane-force winds and torrential rain forced postponement 48 hours before the scheduled event. A week later, 75 teams totaling over 400 people participated in the 57.5 mile course that included paddling, bicycling and running. This year, due to popular demand, the Challenge added mountain biking. The Greenway Challenge Logistics Committee worked in partnership with MA DCR and Team Bums, one of Massachusetts' oldest mountain biking clubs, to chart a 6.5 mile course from Plummers Landing to Goat Hill Trailhead in Northbridge, MA. This year's Challenge also featured a new site – West Hill Park in Northbridge, managed by the Army Corp of Engineers.

RIDEM hosted the finish line celebration at the Kelly House in Lincoln, RI. At 4:18:25, the Great Canadian team had the overall fastest time – reclaiming their championship title.

THURSDAY NIGHT WALKABOUTS

A total of twelve Thursday Night Walkabouts were offered in 2008, including a new addition, campfire stories presented at the site of the Worcester Blackstone Visitor Center. Other programs included tours of Hopedale, MA, Valley Falls, RI and the Hunt House in East Providence, RI. The Walkabout series is an opportunity for visitors and residents of the Valley to get an in-depth tour of some of the wonderful sites within the Corridor. By participating in multiple Walkabout programs, visitors can not only learn about many different places in the Valley, but begin to see how those sites are all inter-connected by the Corridor's major historical themes. Keep an eye open for the 2009 Walkabouts, which will begin in June.

CONFERENCE ON RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

For the third year in a row, the Commission presented the Blackstone Valley Historic Symposium. This year's program, "Roger Williams and America's Journey towards Religious Freedom" was a partnership with Brown University and attracted historians, scholars, practitioners and interpreters. In addition to vibrant discussions about Roger Williams and his view of the world, the symposium included a site visit to Hassanamesit Woods in Grafton, MA, which highlighted recent archaeological findings about the Nipmuc families who, well into the 19th century, called Hassanamesit home. The event provided a starting point for new partnerships and collaborations that will benefit Roger Williams National Memorial and the Corridor.

STAFF TRANSITIONS



Welcome Bill Maurer
Bill Maurer has been named Administrative Officer for both the Blackstone Heritage Corridor and Roger Williams National

Memorial. He is transferring from Cape Cod National Seashore where he worked as Housing Management Specialist and, before that, in Visitor Services. He recently served as acting Administrative Officer at the Salem Maritime National Historic Site, Saugus Iron Works National Historic Site and Boston Harbor Islands National Recreation Area and his many professional abilities include working as a mediator in the federal government as well as in the private sector.



Welcome Jennifer Gonsalves
Jennifer is the new full time site supervisor for Roger Williams National Memorial. Her career with the National Park

Service began with the dedication of New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park in 1998. She is a New Bedford resident and she holds a B.A. in English Literature from UMass Dartmouth and a Masters degree in Community Planning from the University of Rhode Island.



Welcome Valerie Paul
We welcome Valerie as a new Volunteer-in-Parks (VIP) coordinator in the Corridor. A VIP herself, Valerie Paul has been a human resources

professional since 1981 and president of Catalyst Consulting since 1998. She transferred many of her skills to a volunteer interest of her own in 2001 when she and her husband, Bill, founded the Blackstone Valley Sugaring Association to educate area residents about the history of maple sugaring and to expose them to a hands-on experience. She holds a B.S. in Psychology from Worcester State College.



Farewell Liz McConnell
After 17 years at the Heritage Corridor, we bade farewell to Liz McConnell as she moved west to become the Administrative Officer at Black

Canyon of the Gunnison National Park in Colorado. In her many years at the Corridor, Liz filled several roles, from administrator to project manager to planner to support person during Expedition 2000 and 2005. She had a passion about the mission of the Corridor and always accepted new challenges. We are still discovering the true impact she had on the Corridor. We wish her well in her new adventures.

2008 CORRIDOR STAR AWARDS

The Corridor Star Awards recognize individuals or partner organizations and their accomplishments that have contributed to the Corridor Commission's mission, goals, projects and programs. We thank the following award winners for their contributions to the Blackstone River Valley in 2008.

Patricia McAlpine
Kenneth Rogers
Paul Carvalho
Francis J. Deary III (Posthumously)
Patricia Perry
Rosemary Longo
Michael Yacino

TENTH ANNUAL JOHN H. CHAFEE HERITAGE AWARDS

In the spirit of the late Senator's legacy of community service, environmental stewardship, and historic preservation, the tenth annual John H. Chafee Heritage Awards acknowledge the exemplary contributions of these individuals and their commitment to the Blackstone Valley.

Bill Wallace

As the Executive Director of the Worcester Historical Museum, Bill Wallace has always shined the spotlight on Worcester's history as the city of innovation and enterprise. He has been a tireless advocate, enthusiastic partner, and creative force for many successful projects and programs that highlight Worcester as the headwaters of the Blackstone River. More importantly, Bill "gets it," understanding that Worcester's history is only made stronger in combination with the stories of the entire Blackstone Valley, recently working with the Corridor to complete the Valley's first comprehensive history book. He has been the driving force behind the development



PHOTO COURTESY OF GREATER WORCESTER COMMUNITY FOUNDATION. DAN VAILLANCOURT PHOTOGRAPHER.

of the Worcester Blackstone Valley Visitor Center and has taken the design from "just another redeveloped mill" to a world-class site and facility for Worcester and the entire Valley. He has always been a supportive partner, sharing his skills,

experience, insight, and occasionally that all-knowing grin that is all his own. Bill's work in Worcester and throughout the Corridor will benefit both visitors and residents in the Blackstone Valley for generations to come.



Brian Wood

As a member of Boy Scout Troop 131, Brian Wood has centered his project work within the Blackstone Valley.

He has participated, led and organized many Blackstone River related activities including river clean-ups and storm drain stenciling. He has been instrumental in fixing erosion damage and making trail improvements at Massachusetts Audubon Society's Broad Meadow Brook Sanctuary in Worcester, MA. He has also helped to increase the wood duck population at the West Hill Dam in Uxbridge, Massachusetts.



Sarah Marsland

From the age of three, Sarah Marsland could be seen with her father, John Marsland, volunteering with the Blackstone River Watershed

Council/Friends of the Blackstone. Sarah has participated in countless clean-ups, races, canoe rentals, Rivers Day activities and a variety of public events, always lending her assistance and sharing her enthusiasm for the Blackstone River. As a river advocate, she spearheaded and organized a letter writing campaign in support of the Blackstone River Fish Ladder Project and she continues to be a role model for community involvement to her peers.

