

The Green Way

KINGSTON GREENWAYS ASSOCIATION
A NEW JERSEY NON-PROFIT CORPORATION

www.kingstongreenways.org

SPRING 2011 No. 17

Spring is a time of renewal! Please take a moment to complete the membership form and mail it in the enclosed remittance envelope.

You may also go directly to our web site to join or renew online:

<http://www.kingstongreenways.org/forme.html>

COMING EVENTS

**KINGSTON GREENWAYS HOSTS THE
MERCER COUNTY WILDLIFE CENTER ANIMAL AMBASSADORS
Saturday, April 2nd, 2 PM**



Come meet the animal ambassadors from the Mercer County Wildlife Center, a state and federally licensed facility that cares for injured, ill and displaced native wildlife. This one-hour program will feature four animals from the Center that for various reasons cannot be released back into the wild. These animals travel to schools and community events throughout the year, acting as ambassadors for their wild counterparts.

Past programs have featured a barred owl that sustained neurological damage, a turkey vulture with a damaged wing, a red-tailed hawk that became imprinted to humans, and a broad-winged hawk with only one eye.

Learn more about these species, their interface with our world, and what to do and NOT do should you come upon wildlife in need of help. The program is free and open to the public, and is appropriate for all ages. The event will be held rain or shine in Kingston at the Mapleton Preserve/D&R Canal State Park, 145 Mapleton Road. If weather is inclement, seating may be limited. Email tari@kingstongreenways.org or call

609-750-1821 for more information. To learn more about the Mercer County Wildlife Center, visit <http://nj.gov/counties/mercercounty/community/wildlife/>

FPNL ARBOR DAY CELEBRATION

Saturday, April 16th, 2 to 4 PM

Meet at the Mapleton Preserve/D&R Canal State Park Headquarters, at 145 Mapleton Road for the Friends of Princeton Nursery Lands' Arbor Day Celebration. Featured will be a "behind the scenes" walking tour of Mapleton Nurseries, led by owner David Reed. He will discuss the plants that we see, talk about planting, care, and maintenance, and address visitor questions about the nursery. Visitors will be able to purchase trees from Mapleton Nurseries, a special treat, as Mapleton normally sells only "to the trade." Following the walk, Friends of Princeton Nursery Lands will plant a tree in honor of Arbor Day and give out free tree seedlings, both annual traditions. The event is free and open to all. For more information, contact Karen Linder (karenlinder@fpnl.org or 609-683-0483).

KINGSTON GREENWAYS ANNUAL EARTH DAY CLEANUP

Saturday, April 16th, 9 AM - meet at the gate to Rockingham

Sunday April 17th, 2 PM - meet at the Mapleton Preserve, 145 Mapleton Road

Due to the success of last year's twin efforts, we are again offering two Earth Day cleanups! On **Saturday**, we will meet at the gate in front of Rockingham, and collect trash along Laurel Avenue in Franklin Township. On **Sunday**, we'll concentrate on the Cook Natural Area and parts of our greenbelt that adjoin Ridge Road, Division Street, and Mapleton Road in South Brunswick Township.

Participants can expect the usual bounty of bottles, cans, cups, plastic bags, snack wrappers, balloons, cigarette butts, CDs, and Styrofoam containers. Past years' cleanups have also yielded a bucket seat from a car, a filing cabinet, a Home News newspaper machine, a work tray containing hardened cement and tiles, and the torso of a life-size blow-up doll. Vie for the opportunity to snag this year's most unusual discarded object!

No experience is required, but don't wear your Sunday best to this event! Boots, hats, and long pants are recommended attire. KGA has a half dozen very good "trash grabbers" to help wrest litter caught in brambles-- first come have first crack at these trusty tools. We also provide garbage bags, safety vests, and gloves. For more information, please call David Southgate at 609-924-3399.

KINGSTON GREENWAYS ANNUAL MEETING AND PROGRAM:

"THE D&R CANAL, GEM OF CENTRAL NEW JERSEY"

Tuesday, May 24th, 7:30 PM

Please join us at the Kingston Firehouse for a brief business meeting and a slide presentation by Canal author and historian Linda J. Barth. Did you know that for more than 170 years, the Delaware and Raritan Canal has meandered across the narrow waist of New Jersey? Did you know that the D&R was one of our nation's most successful towpath canals, carrying more tonnage in 1866 than the more famous Erie Canal? Did you know that Johnson & Johnson, Roebling, and Fleischmann's Distillery all had their start along the D&R? And did you know that the canal provides the people of central New Jersey with both a water supply and a premier recreational facility?

Linda Barth will introduce us to the people, the bridges, the locks, and the aqueducts that made the canal work. She is no stranger to the Delaware & Raritan Canal, having grown up in the canal town of South Bound Brook. For over two decades she served on the board of the Canal Society of New Jersey and, with her husband Robert, has led canal tours throughout the Northeast. The Barths enjoy cruising (at the leisurely pace of 5 miles per hour) on the historic canals of England, Scotland, France, Canada, and other countries. The author of many canal and travel articles, Mrs. Barth has served as the curator of the Mule Tenders Barracks Museum on the banks of the D&R Canal in Griggstown, New Jersey. A retired teacher, she has written two books on the D&R Canal for Arcadia Publishing. Her children's picture book, *Bridgetender's Boy*, was published by the National Canal Museum in 2005. Both books will be available for purchase after the meeting.

Members and the general public are invited to enjoy the program, and stay for conversation and refreshments!

WORKS IN PROGRESS

Cook Natural Area Boardwalk Improvement

Having obtained the grant for this project from the Federal Highway Administration, we now need permits. Getting these has proved to be not a fast or simple process. As soon as they come through, we can schedule the work, which will be to raise the walk above flood water and grass level and to widen it to three feet. (The originally proposed design using crushed stone proved not acceptable.) Hopefully this will be completed before the end of the year. We are fortunate to have Dave Reed as a very cooperative contractor, and look forward to completing the final stages with the help of a team of volunteers.

RICCIARDI TRACT UPDATE

Last summer, Kingston Greenways Association submitted a grant application to assist in the purchase of the 14.13-acre Ricciardi Tract in Princeton Township. This supports the efforts of the New Jersey Conservation Foundation, Mercer County, Friends of Princeton Open Space, Princeton Township, the Open Space Institute, Save Princeton Ridge and

the Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed to protect an environmentally sensitive area known as the "Princeton Ridge".

We have not yet heard from Green Acres about whether our grant application will be funded, but efforts to protect this heavily wooded property are still proceeding. The Township of Princeton has approved a bond to provide a bridge loan, as it is not clear how long it will take for NJ Green Acres to provide funding for the purchase. The contract between the New Jersey Conservation Foundation and the Ricciardi family was also extended beyond its original December 2010 deadline to help facilitate the purchase.

The property in the Ricciardi tract, along with other open space areas that are part of a proposed Princeton Ridge Preserve, form a continuous greenbelt that includes areas in Princeton Township historically considered Kingston and extends across the Millstone River into the Kingston part of Franklin Township. Completion will require much time and effort, but if preservation efforts are successful, the Princeton Ridge Preserve will connect with the D&R Canal State Park, Rockingham State Historic Site, and the Kingston Trap Rock Quarry. These are all underlain by the same diabase formation that makes up the "Princeton" ridge, known locally known as the Kingston/Rocky Hill Ridge.

LETTERS NEEDED IN SUPPORT OF THE D&R CANAL COMMISSION

The abolishment of the D&R Canal Commission is still a very grim possibility. The DRCC was established by statute, so it cannot be eliminated without a vote of the legislature. The next page consists of a letter that can be printed and mailed to Governor Christie, Senate President Stephen Sweeney, and NJDEP Commissioner Robert Martin, and your local state senator urging them not to decommission the DRCC—or craft your own letter, and send to the addresses provided. Many thanks for your activism!

GOOD NEWS TO CLOSE THIS ISSUE OF THE GREEN WAY

In November, Plainsboro Township Committee adopted two ordinances to rezone the St. Joseph's Seminary property to allow for educational and cultural arts uses on the site. The buildings will be zoned for educational and arts type uses, including schools, performance areas, practice areas, dormitories, eating space, and other uses associated with a school. It was recently announced that the American Boychoir School, the French American School of Princeton, and the Wilberforce School will operate the Princeton Center for Arts & Education (PCAE) at St Joseph's. The PCAE, a nonprofit entity, has signed a 20-year renewable lease with the Seminary, which will continue to be owned by the Eastern Province of the Congregation of St. Vincent de Paul. It is wonderful that this historically rich and beautiful landscape is to remain a protected part of the Kingston greenbelt.

Best wishes to all for a green and pleasant spring!

Tari Pantaleo, President, Kingston Greenways Association

Date

Governor Chris Christie
Office of the Governor
PO Box 001
Trenton, NJ 08625

Re: Proposed Abolishment of the D&R Canal Commission

Dear Governor Christie,

I oppose the proposed abolishment of the D&R Canal Commission recommended by DEP Commissioner Robert Martin. The Commission has provided invaluable oversight for the D&R Canal corridor for over 36 years; it is a model of resource-based planning, regulation and enforcement. The Canal traverses five counties and 39 municipalities. The Commission has been able to plan and implement regulation in a unified way, which has preserved a unique corridor rich in diverse historic and natural resources.

The Canal Commission is revenue neutral, as its funding is provided by fees charged for the review of projects.

An important purpose of the Commission is to have citizen oversight of public and private projects that impact the Park and the water supply for 1.5 million residents of New Jersey. Eliminating the Canal Commission will not save New Jersey taxpayers any money, but it will lead to the degradation of central New Jersey's most used and greatly loved Park, and the historic and natural corridor within which the Park lies.

Please do not abolish a commission that has served its mission so well, and at no expense to the public.

Sincerely yours,

Name

Address

cc: NJ DEP Commissioner Robert Martin
Senator Stephen M. Sweeney, Senate President
Senator Bob Smith, Chair, Senate Environmental Committee
Senator

ADDRESS LIST:

Governor Chris Christie
Office of the Governor
PO Box 001
Trenton, NJ 08625

NJ DEP Commissioner Bob Martin
401 E. State St.
7th Floor, East Wing
P.O. Box 402
Trenton, NJ 08625-0402

Senator Stephen M. Sweeney, Senate President
935 Kings Highway
Suite 400
West Deptford, NJ 08086

Senator Bob Smith, Chair, Senate Environmental Committee
216 Stelton Rd.
Suite E-5
Piscataway, NJ 08854

Address of your local state senator:

If you live in Plainsboro, South Brunswick or West Windsor (District # 14):
Senator Thomas Goodwin
3691A Nottingham Way
Hamilton Square, NJ 08690
Phone: 609-631-9988 Fax: 609-631-0324
Email: SenGoodwin@njleg.org

Lawrence, Princeton Borough or Princeton Township (District # 15):
Senator Shirley K. Turner
1440 Pennington Road 1st Floor
Trenton, NJ 08618
Phone: 609-530-3277 Fax: 609-530-3292
Email: SenTurner@njleg.org

If you live in Montgomery Township or Rocky Hill Borough (District # 16):
Senator Christopher Bateman
36 East Main Street
Somerville, NJ 08876-2308
Phone: 908-526-3600 Fax: 908-707-4578
Email: SenBateman@njleg.org

Franklin Township (District # 17)
Senator Bob Smith
216 Stelton Road #E-5
Piscataway, NJ 08854-3284
Phone: 732-752-0770 Fax: 732-752-1590
Email: SenBSmith@njleg.org