

# The Waypoint

AMERICORPS CAPE COD

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## Where Are They Going?



### WELLFLEET HOUSE

Tim Dugan	<i>Sacramento, CA</i>
Brian Dinizio	<i>Cape Cod, MA</i>
Meg Letts	<i>Boulder, CO</i>
Monica Farmer	<i>Tucson, AZ</i>
Erin Der-McLeod	<i>Brewster, MA</i>
Alex Soper	<i>Cape Cod, MA</i>
Greg Rompala	<i>Punta Gorda, FL</i>
Sam Miller	<i>Brewster, MA</i>
Crystal Morris	<i>Cape Cod, MA</i>
Jess Regan	<i>New York City, NY</i>
Abbey Woods	<i>The Island of Infinite Possibilities</i>
Amie Vos	<i>Wellfleet, MA</i>
Lisa Buchs	<i>Wellfleet, MA</i>
Amanda Howe	<i>Brewster, MA</i>

### BOURNE HOUSE

Harry Johnson	<i>Amherst, MA</i>
Christin Marshall	<i>Bourne, MA</i>
Korinda Walls	<i>Bourne, MA</i>
Amanda Baranowski	<i>Latin America</i>
Jenny Burkhardt	<i>The Island of Infinite Possibilities</i>
Meredith Titterington	<i>Punta Gorda, FL</i>
Davis Brush	<i>Jackson, WY</i>
Maria Downs	<i>Olivebridge, NY</i>
Jaclyn Hochreiter	<i>The Island of Infinite Possibilities</i>
Megan Horbin	<i>Flagstaff, AZ</i>
Nicole Frame	<i>Washington, DC</i>
Ashleigh McCord	<i>Bourne, MA</i>
Melany Levesque	<i>Portland, ME</i>
Phil Wegert	<i>The Island of Infinite Possibilities</i>

**“Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It’s not!”** *Dr. Seuss, The Lorax*

# How to Scavenge for Food (and other AmeriCorps life lessons)

by Lisa Buchs (Wellfleet)

Some would call me an expert. I have a sixth sense that tells me if there's food nearby. And if there's food nearby, you can rest assured I'll get some. It's not that I'm starving in AmeriCorps, I just don't believe in letting opportunities pass by. My strategy is simple: I make my way to the kitchen just when the food is ready and employ my subtle psychological pressure. I might say, "What's that you have there?" Or I might flatter, "That looks SO good!" It all depends on who's cooking and what they're making. It takes practice and a little luck, but once you get the hang of it, you'll find yourself with a bite of everyone's dinner every night.

As I was finagling a bite of steak and a cookie one night, I realized that my year with AmeriCorps Cape Cod has provided me with a number of life lessons. Sure, I've learned about Cape ecology, volunteer recruitment, and land management. But the list doesn't end there. Here are just a handful of what I like to call AmeriCorps Life Lessons.

1. If you see or smell good food somewhere, you CAN have some.
2. The definition of "dirty clothes" is totally flexible and subjective.
3. If you don't label your things, they are not yours.
4. Poison ivy is everywhere and you will get it. Just deal.
5. If you don't wash your own dishes, someone will find out. And they'll get you.
6. Swimming in the pond is just as good as a shower any day.
7. The weather forecast isn't right. It's never right.
8. There is no such thing as bringing "too many layers."
9. Never take a flushing toilet for granted.
10. Nothing is ever lost. It's just "borrowed."

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## Horseshoe Crab Census

By Melany Levesque (Bourne)

The AmeriCorps Cape Cod members have been surveying horseshoe crabs for about 2 months on local beaches. Bourne members were trained at the Waquoit Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve in Falmouth, and monitored crabs along the dike out to Mashnee Island in Bourne. In Wellfleet, members surveyed populations at the Mass Audubon in Wellfleet Bay. Information obtained by the members will be used in research to better understand the recent decline of the crabs' populations.

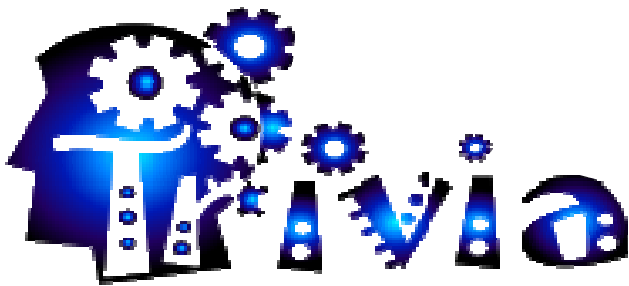
Surveys are taken at specific times of the day in accordance with the tides. At the beginning of a survey, a team of two or three members arrives at the site with materials in hand. The members flip a coin to choose where the survey will start. Based on the coin toss, the members then start at one end of the beach or the other and walk the length of the beach in 5-meter measurements called quadrats- one member on the sand and one in the water. When horseshoe crabs are spotted, the members record whether crabs are male or female and whether or not they are found in a "cluster"- a group of two or more crabs. When all is said and done, the member has recorded how many crabs were seen in about 48 quadrats, what sex they were, and if they were in a group or not. Other information recorded includes the weather, water temperature, and if crabs were seen outside of the measurement area.

### HORSESHOE CRAB FACTS!

- Despite their name, they are more closely related to spiders, ticks, and scorpions than crabs.
- They possess the rare ability to regrow lost limbs, in a manner similar to sea stars.
- Horseshoe crab blood has many useful properties for medical research.
- Every year approximately 10% of the horseshoe crab breeding population dies when rough surf flips the creatures onto their backs, a position from which they often cannot right themselves.



Bourne House member Jaclyn Hochreiter checks out a horseshoe crab during a night census at Mashnee Island.



## A Bourne House Obsession

by Christin Marshall (Bourne)

1. What Canadian Territory includes the Easternmost point in Canada? The Westernmost?
2. At what famous battle was Davy Crockett killed?
3. In *Anchorman: The Legend of Ron Burgundy*, Will Ferrell plays an anchorman working in which US City?
4. In the Jules Verne novel, *Around the World in 80 Days*, Phileas Fogg seeks to travel around the world using what means of transportation?
5. Who acted in *Gattaca* and *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil* before landing a lead role in *Enemy at the Gates*?
6. The anatomy of an insect is generally organized into three parts. Name the 3 parts.
7. Which two planets in the solar system do not have moons?
8. What is the longest word in the English language that does not use a traditional vowel (it has a “y”).
9. In his lifetime, one famous Expressionist painter sold just one piece of art: “Red Vineyard at Arles.” Who was this artist?
10. What were the names of the two Hardy Boys—amateur detectives who appeared in a series of mystery novels?

(ANSWERS ON PAGE 10)

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## The Top 10 Most Exhilarating Compliments an AmeriCorps Cape Cod Member Can Receive

By Melany Levesque (Bourne)

10. Sweet timesheet! You handed it in on time and everything!
9. You chainsaw?! Gosh, is there anything you can't do?!
8. Have you used loppers before? You're an expert!
7. Could you give me some advice on living with 4,875,629,304,595 people? You seem like you might be good at that.
6. You are so knowledgeable about feeding mass quantities of people!
5. I like your foulies... Do those come in any other shades??
4. You seem like a food stamp kinda guy/gal...
3. Wow, gray is amazingly flattering with your skin tone.
2. Boy, you can really get things done!
1. Daaaaaaaang are those waders you're wearing leaking? They look like they're patched up real nice!









(Picture on the left) Volunteers and Americorps members successfully begin their collection of trash and recyclables from the Cape Cod Canal.



Wellfleet resident, Amie Vos, aka Barky Wolfson, is escorted out in handcuffs for the W.E.T. Fest play



Bourians, Ashleigh McCord and Amanda Baranoski do a little dance in their waders.



After several rainy and muddy days, the Taylor-Bray Farm boardwalk awaits some final touches.



Members proudly show off the Americorps Week boardwalk at Taylor-Bray that was dedicated to our wonderful Program Director, Darlene Morris.



Canal Cleanup collected 774lbs of trash, 1/2 will be sold as recyclables for the town!



Ashleigh McCord and Maria Downs show off their skills in program outreach during the Canal Cleanup.



Melany Levesque, Maria Downs, and Meg Letts get muddy while digging the holes for the Taylor-Bray boardwalk.

(Picture below) Lisa Buchs and Greg Rompala prepare the boardwalk railings.



Maria Downs tackles some stubborn invasives at the annual Americorps Week.



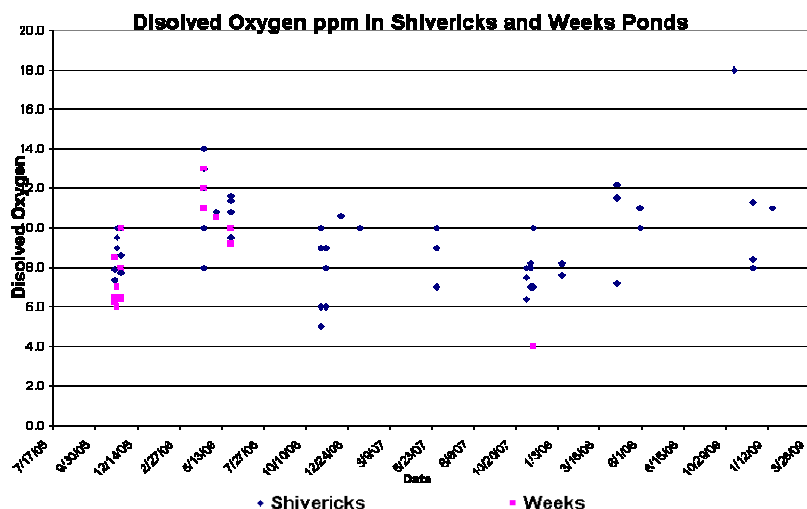
Wellfleet house residents Crystal Morris, Meg Letts, and Samantha Miller, plant trees with the Orleans Tree Department for Arbor Day.



# Lawrence School Pond Study

by Davis Brush (Bourne)

AmeriCorps Cape Cod and Lawrence Junior High School's Pond Study are celebrating their tenth birthday this year: Congratulations! The Shiverick's and Weeks Pond Study is a collaborative effort between Falmouth Junior High School, Waquoit Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve, and AmeriCorps Cape Cod. This unique partnership allows all of the eighth graders from Lawrence Jr. High School in Falmouth to get out and perform a variety of water quality assessments. Each student participates in three different pond study days measuring groundwater levels, conducting a suite of water chemistry tests, and performing a shoreline survey for the effects of non-point source



pollution. The Lawrence School Pond Study introduces students to the process of using science to address a community problem or concern. They learn to ask not just whether a body of water is polluted, but *why* and *how* it might be polluted, and what can be done to restore it to health.

Ten years of data indicates that the pond has not changed much over the course of the study. The adjacent graph of dissolved oxygen levels in the two ponds shows that there has been a healthy level of oxygen in both ponds with some seasonal variation. Maybe this is do to the fact that the teachers at the school, Waquoit Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve, and AmeriCorps Cape Cod have been educating students about the pond's ecosystem and why its important to protect it. Happy sampling, and thanks to Lawrence School for being a community leader and environmental custodian!

# Beach Grass Planting with the Sandwich Montessori School

By Megan Horbin (Bourne)

AmeriCorps Cape Cod teamed up with the US Army Corps of Engineers to plant beach grass on Mashnee Dike in Bourne with the Sandwich Montessori School. AmeriCorps Cape Cod revamped their education focus area into a service-learning category so that students could learn about their environment and then be able to apply their knowledge to a project.

Cheryl Allen, a teacher at the Sandwich Montessori School contacted the Education Coordinator about doing a service-learning project with AmeriCorps Cape Cod after receiving a brochure about their new service-learning initiative. After discussing possible options, AmeriCorps contacted Park Ranger John Pribilla at the Army Corps of Engineers and decided on the idea of beach grass planting.

On Wednesday, March 11<sup>th</sup>, six AmeriCorps members presented an interactive lesson on the beach ecosystem to the 1st through 5th grade Montessori class that covered how dunes are formed, erosion, the plants and animals in the beach ecosystem, and the role of beach grass. Members prepared the students for what they would be doing during the following week by explaining the tools they would be using, safety procedures, and climate.



When March 18th arrived, the entire Montessori School of approximately 40 students, their teachers, and chaperones came to Mashnee Dike and put their newly learned skills to the test. Participants planted beach grass on the 750' x 20' plot of beach as well as filled in foot trails that led to the beach from the main road. Students were also able to see animal tracks in the sand, discover other vegetation in the dunes, and learn about the history of the dike and canal.

Park Ranger John Pribilla and the Army Corps of Engineers rewarded the volunteers with pizza, soda, and a movie about the Canal during their lunch break.

During the afternoon, AmeriCorps members continued to plant beach grass in an effort to preserve and curtail beach erosion. The Leadership Class at Bourne High assisted by erecting a fence for sand management. Mashnee Dike is a nesting ground for Piping Plovers and with the help from volunteers on that day, the land was made into a more stable and conducive habitat for the natural wildlife and vegetation.

# RecycleFest!

By Sam Miller (Wellfleet)

Have you ever gone to a celebration at the local dump? May 9<sup>th</sup> hundreds of people came to the Chatham Transfer Station (aka the dump and recycling center) for RecycleFest...an event to learn about and celebrate recycling. The event was envisioned by a local workgroup called ChathamRecycles, made up of people wanting to see an increase in the town's recycling rate. Community events such as RecycleFest creatively educate people about the benefits of recycling and provide resources that allow increased recycling involvement.



*Bourne members Jenny Burkhardt and Melany Levesque give out recycling-related freebies!*

The main focus of RecycleFest this year was e-waste collection\*. Over the course of 4 hours, 5.92 TONS of e-waste was collected from community members and taken off Cape to be recycled. Other collections and booths scattered around the Transfer Station encompassed all three aspects of the recycling triangle—Reducing, Reusing and Recycling. During the day 18 bikes were collected for Bikes not Bombs—the bikes are used for community-based education and development projects for programs in inner-city Boston, Central America and Africa. The Girl Scouts helped out by running a blanket and towel collection area for the Brewster Animal Rescue League—and 375 items were collected! Cape and Islands Shredding provided free document shredding, and many Chathamites purchased home recycling bins and composters. Visitors also had the opportunity to pick up freebies including ChathamRecycles

T-Shirts, cloth shopping bags, bumper stickers, window clings, buckets of compost, and new mercury-free thermometers and thermostats. And all of this went down on a rainy Saturday at the Transfer Station! What a way to celebrate recycling!

**\*Every year, 1.9 million tons of discarded electronics are sent to the landfills.**

Electronic waste (or e-waste) has become an increasing issue due to escalating production and use of technology such as computers, MP3 players, and TVs. Inadequate electronics disposal methods cause toxin release into the environment and lead to illegal shipment of hazardous electronics to developing countries. Despite ongoing efforts of organizations and law-makers to ethically and responsibly recycle electronics, many companies continue to ship their collected electronics to U.S. landfills.



*E-waste collectors with a truck full of electronics*



*AmeriCorps members and the Chatham Recycles group show off some recycling bins.*

The Basal Action Network works towards e-waste recycling accountability—visit their website at <http://www.ban.org/> to view lists of recyclers who uphold principles of social and environmental justice when dealing with e-waste.

Want to test your e-waste knowledge? Take the “What’s Your e-Waste IQ?” quiz at <http://planetgreen.discovery.com/>



# AmeriCorps Week 2009 at Taylor Bray Farm

By Tim Dugan (Wellfleet)

From May 11<sup>th</sup> through the 15<sup>th</sup>, AmeriCorps Cape Cod served Taylor-Bray Farm in Yarmouth for its second annual Americorps Week. AmeriCorps received a fifteen thousand dollar grant from the Massachusetts Service Alliance, matched by Barnstable County, to fund a week of restoration and beautification projects, most notably a handicapped accessible raised garden bed plot and a one-hundred-eighty foot boardwalk extending into the marsh at the back end of the farm.

Throughout the week, locals looked on as the boardwalk stretched into the treacherous mud, offering a glimpse at the natural beauty of the marsh that lays dormant behind a field of phragmites, save for an osprey couple and the occasional red-winged blackbird. Along with natural resource management, AmeriCorps Cape Cod also advocates environmental education. Over one hundred-fifty students from seven schools across Cape Cod discovered the grandness of nature's potential at Taylor-Bray: from the plague of invasive species to the miracle of verma-composting, from the fragility of a three-hundred and seventy year old farm to the awe of its eclectic domesticated and wild flora and fauna. Inspired and educated, these students aided corps members by mulching blueberry bushes, clearing phragmites and bittersweet and filling the newly constructed raised garden. The students left the farm with recycled paper containing seeds, on which they reflected on their service and brought them in all directions to plant the seeds of environmental appreciation and respect in their families and communities.



Bourne member Megan Horbin helps construct the 180 foot boardwalk into the marsh.



Amanda Howe, Nicole Frame, and Harry Johnson prepare a raised garden bed which will enable handicap access to the community garden.

AmeriCorps Cape Cod celebrated the end of the week with a lunch and ceremony to acknowledge successes of both the week and a decade of AmeriCorps service to Cape Cod. Corps members, staff, and alumni joined service partners, community supporters, elected officials, and friends to celebrate the program. Friend of Taylor-Bray Farm Jack Duggan, former Americorps staff member of eight years Gretchen Glaub, Senator Patrick O'Leary, and Leah Thomas are just a handful of members of the ten year old family tree that came to reflect upon service and congratulated Darlene Johnson-Morris, AmeriCorps Cape Cod founder and director for her courage to create, her determination to develop, and her endurance to sustain the program.

AmeriCorps Week is finished, but AmeriCorps Cape Cod's partnership with Taylor-Bray Farm and Cape Cod will be remembered by anyone who ventures to

the end of the Darlene Johnson-Morris boardwalk, a place where they will find the true nature and serenity of Cape Cod.



# Year 10 Celebration and Alumni Weekend

By Erin Der-McLeod (Wellfleet)

For the past 10 years, members of AmeriCorps Cape Cod have journeyed to Barnstable County from all over the country. This May, members from as far back as Year 1 once again voyaged across the bridges to reunite with old friends and to celebrate a decade of service.



*The completed boardwalk celebrates 10 years of AmeriCorps Cape Cod and the dedication of founder Darlene Johnson-Morris.*

vided by service partner Ethan Estey. After dinner, members took pictures in their respective years, watched a presentation of members' reflections put together by Gretchen Glaub, and roasted marshmallows by a camp fire.

Former members had the opportunity to re-visit the Cape throughout the weekend, starting on the Lower Cape and working their way towards the Upper Cape. Friday night, Le Hac hosted an open house in Wellfleet. Past Wellfleetians, Bournians and service partners were able to see the house and the improvements made to it over the years. The house was packed, as members looked at their old rooms, socialized in communal areas, and played games in the front yard as if no time had passed. Visitors then migrated to Newcomb Hollow Beach for a favorite pastime among Wellfleetians, a beach bonfire.

Saturday activities were held on the Mid Cape at Camp Wingate Kirkland in Yarmouth. Throughout the afternoon, members old and new mixed and mingled in open recreation activities such as volleyball, touch football and bocce ball. When daylight dwindled, service partners arrived and the camp provided a buffet style meal. For a true taste of Cape Cod, staff shucked oysters and steamed clams provided by service partner Ethan Estey.

With new memories to take home, the celebratory weekend concluded with Sunday brunch on the Upper Cape. As members made their way off Cape, they stopped in the Bourne House for pancakes and one last gathering with old friends. It was a weekend to remember the high attendance was a testament to the influence this program has had on members' lives over the past 10 years.



*Wellfleet member Brian Dinizio serves at Taylor Bray Farm for AmeriCorps Week 2009.*



*The Year 10 members and staff responsible for coordinating a successful AmeriCorps week enjoy the finished boardwalk.*

# Eel-evator

by Monica Farmer (Wellfleet)

As part of my individual placement at Harwich Conservation Trust (HCT), I have been helping with their eel program. Each spring eels make their way from the Sargasso Sea in the North Atlantic Ocean to estuaries and then rivers from Central America to Greenland. Some eels make their way to Harwich, swimming upstream from Saquatucket Harbor to Cold Brook, where a flume blocks their path to Grass Pond.

To aid in the eels' migration, HCT volunteers and staff have created an "eel migration ramp," affectionately called an "eel-evator" by Harwich Assistant Harbormaster Heinz Proff. Eels swim up the ramp and into a bin. Each day eels captured in the bin are counted. On Thursday mornings Kelly, a volunteer, and I count the eels. The number of eels we have counted has varied from about 20 to over 500. Their size has also ranged from about 4 cm glass eels to one-year-old eels 20 cm in length.

It is interesting to see how the number of eels captured fluctuates from week to week. Perhaps the variation is due to the phase of the moon? Little is known about the migration of eels, but somehow the lucky ones make it to Cape Cod, kind of like us.



## Red Cross Shelter Simulation

by Harry Johnson (Bourne)

If there is one thing I've most enjoyed about this year, it's the large variety of projects we have worked on. I have had so many opportunities to do things I never have before, and likely never would have if not for this year. As a small sample, we've done horseshoe crab counting, trail maintaining, and leading school field trips. My most recent project was again new, though somewhat more unexpected than usual. This time, my job was to be a DART (Disaster Animal Response Team) simulation volunteer, aka, Dog Walker.

This was not exactly what I had in mind when I joined AmeriCorps. I'm really more of a cat person and have never owned a dog, nor did any of my friends. But regardless, it was a job I needed to do, to care for a small, friendly animal by taking it for walks all day outside in the sunshine and petting it. It was hard to not accept the project based on the perks.

The reason I spent the day with a dog was that I was role-playing as a shelter resident during the Cape's first regional shelter simulation. Having a large, regional shelter open with a large number of planned staff is still a fairly new idea with Barnstable County, which was leading the simulation with assistance from the Red Cross and DART. The simulation would help the County practice and improve for such an event. Allowing shelter residents to bring their pets with them is equally a new idea for shelters, which usually arranges for a pet to be taken to a kennel. DART is an organization that provides shelter to pets, helps families bring their pets with them, and cares for pets while at the shelter. In order to practice the logistics of such a task, they would need pets and people to act as their owners.

Thus, I and several other AmeriCorps members found ourselves caring for a number of dogs for the day. Personalities ranged from sweet, to overwhelming separation anxiety. Being confused over paperwork, having little to no experience with caring for a dog, and frazzled over trying to control my stressed dog around a good half a dozen other large, stressed, barking dogs, I gave the DART members a fairly accurate exercise in how a shelter resident would be reacting while checking in their dog. It's reassuring to know that now, when a shelter opens on the Cape, it will both run

### TRIVIA ANSWERS!

1: Easternmost = Newfoundland, Westernmost = Yukon Territory, 2: The Battle of the Alamo, 3: San Diego, 4: An air balloon, 5: Jude Law, 6: Head, thorax, abdomen, 7: Venus and Mercury, 8: Rythms, 9: Vincent Van Gogh, 10: Frank and Joe Hardy



# An Open Letter to Year 11

By Ashleigh McCord (Bourne)

To the next crew of AmeriCorps Cape Cod members,

Congratulations! Despite the currently dismal economic climate, you have somehow managed to secure yourself some pretty sweet employment for the next year. You're already ahead of me and several others in that respect, but that doesn't mean you've got it easy. To help you prepare for a year of service on the Cape, here are some hints and insights I hope will serve you well while you are Getting Things Done.

Let's start with the important things. Even if you don't normally eat them, **YOU WILL HAVE MORE FREE DONUTS IN THE NEXT YEAR THAN YOU HAVE EATEN IN YOUR LIFE TO DATE.** Period. Accept this as fact, and don't fight it. You'll work off enough calories chainsawing to make up for it.

You will have some bad service days. Don't let them get to you, because in a few months the thought of falling face-first into poison ivy while hauling trees in howling wind and horizontally blowing snow might actually make you laugh, and will definitely make you appreciate the good days (don't worry, they'll be the majority). I've found that a spectacular sunset is a pretty good remedy for a tough day (or, if the weather is uncooperative, a crossword puzzle and some hot chocolate work wonders).

**EAT LOTS OF ICE CREAM.** Sorry for those lactose-intolerants out there, but the Cape is pretty much ice cream heaven. While some are open year-round, most will only be options toward the beginning and end of your Corps year. So waste no time and ensure that you have no ice cream regrets – be adventurous and sample every delicious frozen treat the Cape has to offer (I am available for consultation if you have questions). There is no shame in making excuses to drive 40 minutes to a prime ice cream location.

Seriously though, most importantly: the best memories you make this year might just be the ones that were unplanned. Whether it's a spontaneous second Thanksgiving dinner on a snowy day, an unexpected romp in the ocean in your waders when you were too late to arrive at a stranding, or an impulsive day trip to an ice cream factory in the mountains (can you sense a theme?), take every opportunity to spend time with your new housemates and to continually explore the Cape.

While I might be little more than a puddle of tears in the corner on move-out day this July, I can take some solace in the fact that I've got a busload of new friends to visit all over the country (and maybe a few who will be illegally squatting in the center of the Hyannis rotary with me come July 26<sup>th</sup>), and that a new Corps (that's you!) will be stepping in to continue serving the Cape. You've got a lot of big shoes to fill (52, to be exact), but I suspect you're up to the challenge.

So here's to you, Year 11, from the members of Year 10! May your waders never leak, and your loppers always be sharp.

Serving America,  
Year X





**AmeriCorps Cape Cod**  
**P.O. Box 427**  
**Barnstable, MA 02630**



*Thanks to all the alumni, service partners, and supporters who joined us this May for a successful Year 10 Celebration and Reunion!*

**CHECK  
US OUT ONLINE!**

<http://www.rdoac.org/ameriCorps/>