

AMERICORPS CAPE COD THE WAYPOINT

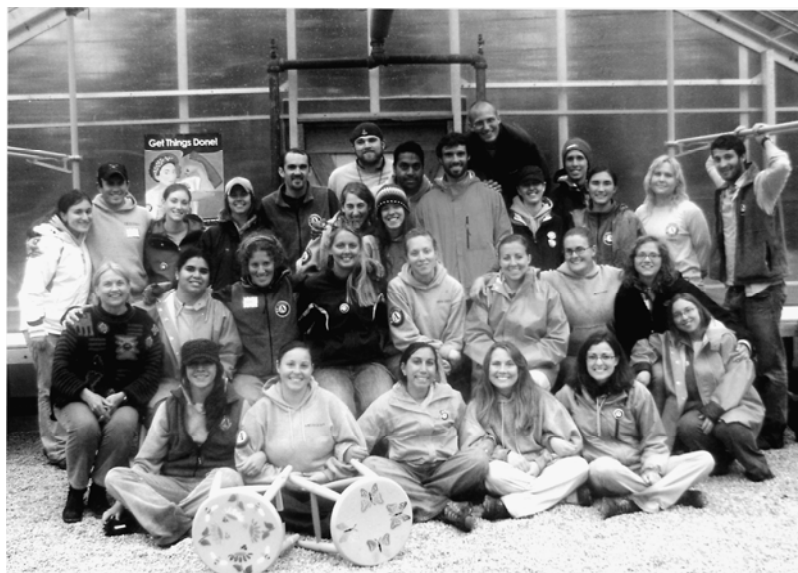
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July 2008



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Dear Readers,

It's hard to believe that Year IX is coming to an end. And quickly! As we use this, our last COD day, to put together the Waypoint, lots of memories come flooding back. Since our March issue, AmeriCorps Cape Cod members and staff have planned and carried out many successful events which you will read about in this issue – like the one above at Meetinghouse Farm. We hope you enjoy reading about them as you are allowed yet another glimpse into this ever-changing and exciting program.

While this Waypoint might give you the facts and hopefully a few laughs, it will most likely not be able to convey the depth of our experiences this past year, be they marked by our relationships with each other, the number of beach visits, bike rides, the smell of low tide, or the mannerisms of others that we have now made our own. While we each carry different memories, we all know what it's like to put on a pair of chest waders and wait in anticipation – to leak or not to leak. If nothing else, this we share in common. We would not be sitting here if it weren't for our fearless house supervisors, Amanda and Becca, our dedicated staff, Mary, Ashley, and Greg, and, of course, Darlene, who hugged us through the year – to say the least. Thank you all. And to all you members of year X: wishing you nothing but well-sealed waders.

AmeriCorps Week at Meetinghouse Farm

By Samantha Alarie-Leca (Bourne)

May 11-18, 2008 marked the second annual AmeriCorps Week, during which programs across the nation took time to showcase their service achievements, honor their community supporters, and raise awareness about the AmeriCorps mission. AmeriCorps Cape Cod members celebrated by organizing a week-long community engagement event at Meetinghouse Farm in West Barnstable. Generous grant funding was provided by the Massachusetts Service Alliance and Barnstable County after an enormous effort by Program Specialist Greg Powell with the guidance of Michael Maguire. The Meetinghouse Farm project incorporated three of AmeriCorps Cape Cod's main focus areas: land management, community education, and volunteer engagement, making it an excellent choice for the AmeriCorps week celebration.

Meetinghouse Farm, formerly a privately owned tree nursery, was purchased by the Town of Barnstable in 2003. The 23-acre

(Continued on page 2.)

Meetinghouse Farm (continued)

conservation site, including a 3000 square foot greenhouse and several nature trails, is currently managed by the private non-profit citizens' group Meetinghouse Farm, Inc. The organization intends to revitalize the property and establish a community farm modeling sustainable agricultural and horticultural principles. Through a variety of recreational and learning opportunities Judy Desrochers, Meetinghouse Farm, Inc. president, hopes to inspire people of all ages to engage in gardening and farming activities.

The combined service of volunteers leading up to and during AmeriCorps week helped advance the farm towards this vision. Student and adult volunteers transformed a portion of the greenhouse into a living classroom available for use by local schools. New plant benches, a freshly painted interior and an updated ventilation system were just a few of the improvements made. Grant funds also helped purchase new books and additional educational resources.

In total, approximately 150 students in grades K-12 from local schools were present throughout the week. They participated in service learning activities such as invasive species removal, seed planting, and painting stools for the newly renovated classroom. AmeriCorps Cape Cod members led these service activities with accompanying lessons on a variety of subjects including botany, nutrition, and ecology.

The week concluded with a community festival on Friday afternoon, with family-friendly activities and a barbeque. Service partners and representatives from organizations across the Cape manned educational booths for a green exposition. The festival was a fun and informative event highlighting local



Students plant a flowerbed near the greenhouse.

efforts to promote sustainable and environmentally friendly practices. It was also a great opportunity to reintroduce the Barnstable community to Meetinghouse Farm and AmeriCorps Cape Cod.

Since the conclusion of AmeriCorps week, community volunteers and AmeriCorps members have continued service activities on the farm. Several vegetable plots were planted and the squash, beans, and tomatoes are already flourishing. All of the vegetables harvested this year will be donated to NOAH Services Center, a shelter run by the Housing Assistance Corporation that serves homeless individuals throughout Barnstable County. Through the hard work and dedication of many, Meetinghouse Farm is well on its way towards becoming a vibrant community farm. AmeriCorps Cape Cod looks forward to continuing this rewarding service

Barks Coming Soon to Pilgrim Park

By Mike Towle (Wellfleet)

With Arbor Day quickly approaching, AmeriCorps members were anxious to prepare a project appropriate for the occasion. A brainstorming session helped members develop the idea for "Bark Park," a combination of two great things: puppies and planting. Members organized a two day land management and tree planting event for the Pilgrim Bark Park in Provincetown.



The site is currently a modest dirt lot on the corner of Shank-painter Road and Route Six, but community members have a vision for it to be something more. Since the property functions as a leaching field, the land cannot be used for new construction. In an effort to find a use for the property and to discourage illegal dumping, the area will be recreated as a dog park. Candice Crawford of Provincetown is an active supporter of this project and was the project's contact.

On Saturday, April 5th twelve community volunteers and six AmeriCorps members took up axe and shovel to clear the land of trash, unwanted shrubs, and buried debris. AmeriCorps offered the guidance and equipment critical to seeing the job completed while community members provided great manual support. With the land prepared, further progress can begin.. AmeriCorps returned on Arbor Day to plant four pitch pines and one oak tree. The planting was an appropriate finish to this project. The bark park is expected to open this summer.

At Right: Casey Lutz, Mike Towle, Ben Winterhalter, Christina Imrich, NEED Pete, and Sanjoy Paul survey their work.

Another Great Blitz at Thompson's Field

By Christin Marshall (Wellfleet)



Program Coordinator Mary Lawrence and Member Leader Mike Towle pose with volunteers after clearing invasive plants.

Partnering with The Town of Harwich and The Harwich Conservation Trust, AmeriCorps Cape Cod was instrumental in making the 7th annual Thompson's Field Blitz Week a successful and record-breaking event. Throughout the week of April 7-11, AmeriCorps members engaged 370 students and community volunteers in 475 hours of service learning and over 600 hours of service.

This year's project differed from the past events as a new fire fuel-reduction component was added to the traditional mission of

ridding selected areas of invasive plants. Town influence guided the project towards reducing the number of dead trees in the north end of the property with the hope of creating a corridor that would serve as a firebreak. While some volunteer groups cut out tangles of bittersweet, others removed dead trees that posed a fire danger. AmeriCorps worked with students to drag dead wood and brushy invasive plants on tarps to a burn pile; they welcomed help from the Harwich Highway Department's chipper for the larger pieces. The chipper moved about the site, saving trips to the burn pile and creating woodchips to control erosion on existing walking trails.

Volunteer groups ranged from 6 year-old girl scouts to high-school students from Cape Cod Tech and Southeast Alternative School. After a safety talk, the young volunteers worked hard to fell trees with handsaws while AmeriCorps members supervised and talked with students. Most groups were on-site for 3 hours, providing sufficient time to cut invasive plants as well as to participate in an educational nature walk. The walk highlighted local plant and bird species, the history of the property, invasive plants, and a certified vernal pool. Every student was eager to inspect the salamander egg masses that AmeriCorps members retrieved from the pool.

The event gave AmeriCorps members unparalleled exposure to community members while they supervised hundreds of volunteers and made friends with the dozens of dog owners who frequent the property. At the end of the week, AmeriCorps members enjoyed food provided by The Harwich Conservation Trust and watched as their giant burn pile destroyed all bittersweet and honeysuckle that they had cut. AmeriCorps members and staff provided over 550 hours of service valued at more than \$13,200.

Cape Walk '08: From P-town Up!

By Nikki Toner (Bourne)

Through intense heat, rain, and exhaustion the walkers pressed on, from Herring Cove Beach in Provincetown to Scusset Beach in Bourne. Held bi-annually by Cape Cod Pathways, Cape Walk promotes a Cape-wide network of walking trails to showcase historical points of interest and gorgeous views of beaches, marshes, and woods. This year's walk, held over nine days from May 31 to June 8, had roughly thirty 'through' walkers, those who completed all 98 miles end-to-end. Each day people from all over Cape Cod and beyond joined the march through the scenic vistas of the Cape, with numbers for most of the week totaling forty plus. AmeriCorps Cape Cod member Tara DiGiovanni was instrumental in planning the walk at her individual placement with Cape Cod Pathways, and several AmeriCorps members walked each day, while others provided support with the Sag Wagon, our minivan stocked with water, food, first aid equipment, and seats for weary legs.

Volunteer walk leaders did a phenomenal job of pointing out views, tree species, and areas of special interest as well as providing context, so walkers were able to take with them a deeper understanding of the areas that they passed through.

The walking itself was no easy feat, since there were hills, beaches, and even a few 'unmarked trails.' Despite this, positive energy prevailed. The walkers gave it their all, appreciating both the incredible views and the great company. Towards the end of the week you would have thought them the best of friends, like they'd known each other for years. There were a few characters in the group and each day was filled with laughter, jokes, and the occasional song. It was a sight to see on day four when sixty walkers turned out and while walking in a straight line began singing "Danny Boy." Whether you walked for just one day or all nine, you learned so much about the land and your fellow walkers – reason enough to feel lucky to be part of such a unique experience. We spend so much time in our cars driving from place to place glancing out a window at the views that pass by; it was grand to see so many people step outside for a walk!

Check out a walker's photos at
<http://walkingcapewalk.blogspot.com/>

Pavlovian Fish in Buzzards Bay

By Rebecca Prosser (Bourne)

I reach into the white bucket for the hundredth time, pull out a 5-inch long Black Sea Bass with one cataract, and lay it laterally on a tray in front of me. The tail starts to flap, so I toss it back into the bucket for a little more time in the anesthetic solution. Tagging 5000 fish with the Marine Biological Laboratory is no small service project, and the actual tagging is just one component of the assembly line. The fish first have to be relocated from their tanks with dip nets and seine nets, and then individually sorted to ensure that each tagged fish is large enough and healthy. The final contestants are placed in a bucket with anesthetic solution that safely puts the fish to sleep after about five minutes. Then the AmeriCorps volunteers with the retailer guns insert the tip of the gun under a scale, just under the dorsal fin. After tagging a hundred or so, a "shooter" can tag five or six fish a minute, a rate that was necessary to finish the momentous task of tagging thousands of Black Sea Bass.

These tagged bass are part of an experiment to test an innovative open ocean aquaculture program, called aqua ranching or acoustic ranching. Scott Lindell, MBL's director of the Scientific

Aquaculture Program, and research assistant Simon Miner have already demonstrated in the lab that these fish can be trained to respond to a sound: after a couple weeks of playing a certain tone and then distributing food pellets, the fish are trained to associate the sound with feeding. The idea is to put 5000 fish in a geodesic sphere (32 feet in diameter and 16 feet tall) in Buzzards Bay, and every three days play a tone for ten seconds, and then feed the fish. After four weeks, the fish will be released into the open ocean to forage on their own. Three days later, the tone will be played again and hopefully the fish will return to the dome to get fed again.

If this works, acoustic ranching may be used to enhance fisheries and potentially offer an alternative to fish farms, whose tight quarters can promote disease transmission and create pollution. And obviously, the ability to press a button and have thousands of one fish species swim to an enclosure would be beneficial. AmeriCorps' assistance with tagging the 5000 fish was instrumental to the project, and will allow the researchers to determine how many of the fish return to the dome.

Plants, Paths, Progress...and More!

By Christina Imrich (Wellfleet)

Many hands make light work! On May 19th, Barnstable County AmeriCorps Cape Cod members worked with NPS maintenance staff on several site enhancement projects. With over 20 people spread throughout the property, and assistance from NPS personnel and their heavy equipment, the day was a whirlwind of activity that ended with smiles throughout.

Starting this past winter, AmeriCorps member Christina Imrich planned this clean up event as part of her placement with NPS Highlands Center Project Manager, Lauren McKean. Their



NPS Staff Bob Luzi compacts dirt spread by NPS maintenance Joe McGrahan and AmeriCorps members Dave Quinn, Amanda Howe, Danielle Craft, and Mike Towle (L to R)



Members Heidi Fuchs, Mike Towle, and Caroline Schmittiel fill in newly constructed flower boxes (L to R)

main goal was to spruce up the entrance to entice people beyond the front gate. The improvements began at the end of April with the planting of eleven native trees, including six cherries placed along the road.

AmeriCorps members worked with NPS maintenance staff to create a path to the coastal overlook platform and to build three flower boxes made from waste lumber donated from Eastham and Wellfleet Department of Public Works. Flower boxes were

(Continued on page 5.)

Plants...and More! (continued)



Entrance BEFORE clean-up



Entrance AFTER clean-up (Payomet tent in background)

filled with indigenous plants and were placed to enhance the entrance. Other projects included: trimming shrubs and installing a bench, solar gate light, and new fire gate. Clean-up activities were also in preparation for this year's Highlands Fest.

Cape Cod National Seashore Planning Assistant Chelsea Clarke

commented on the day. "It's been very exciting to see how the Highlands Center improves each year, building upon other year's work. Everything we do to improve the site is a step in the right direction!"

Visit the Highland Center and Payomet Performing Arts Center websites at www.hcitruro.org and www.ppacruro.org

Solar Sprint on a Rainy Day?!

A Firsthand Narrative by Angela L'Heureux (Bourne)

When planning events, a coordinator can only take care of so much; there is always a point when fate takes over. The Junior Solar Sprint (JSS) is an educational program for middle school students to design, build and race model cars powered by the sun. Working in groups, they learn about teamwork along with engineering and renewable energy. From day one at my individual placement at Cape & Islands Self-Reliance as the Junior Solar Sprint Coordinator I was told that I was in charge of making it be sunny on the day of the competition. That early in the year, as a newcomer to the solar world, I had no idea how imperative a sunny day was to this competition.

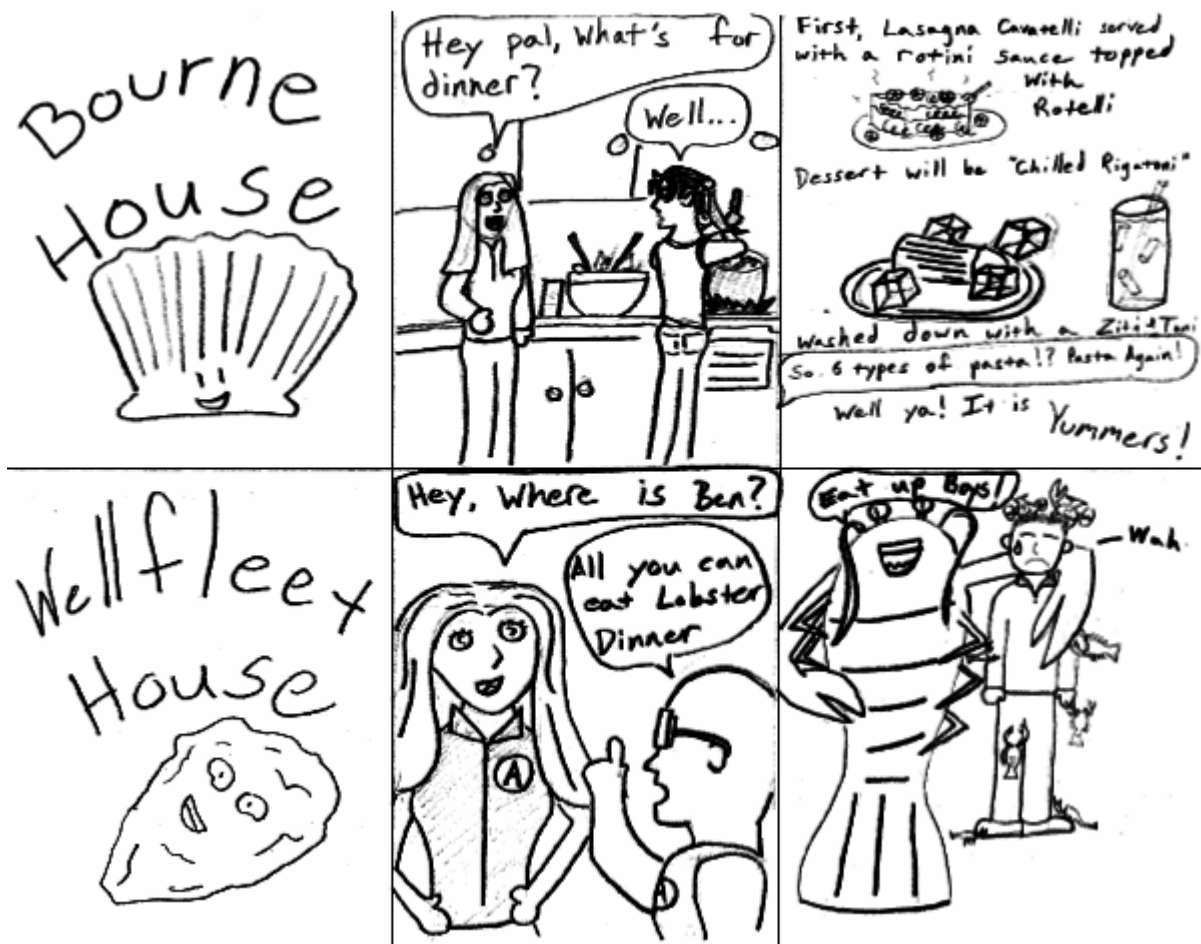
After months of planning, teacher workshops, and school visits, it all came down to the weather. I had planned the JSS on Saturday May 10th at the Cape Cod Community College tennis courts. This date was a few weeks earlier than last year; knowing the weather in New England I was hesitant, but optimistic. The day before, while rushing around to finish last-minute things, I got the bad news: it was going to rain the day of the event. Although the weather disappointed me, all was not lost – and, after all, the show must go on. I moved the event from the soggy tennis courts outside to inside in the college gymnasium. Eight

months into my service with Self-Reliance I was well-versed in all things solar and knew that having the JSS indoors meant the playing field would be leveled with battery packs for power.

That morning a team of AmeriCorps volunteers and my supervisor Richard Lawrence met at the Community College to ready the gym. Students and families started to arrive before we finished setting up, so the rainy weather was not stopping anyone. Students from all over Cape Cod and Southeastern Massachusetts had worked hard on their designs and they were going to show them off no matter what. Thirty-one teams came to compete in the race, which is not all about speed. Student's cars are also judged on innovation, technical merit, and creativity. After a morning full of cheering fans and a few cars that didn't make it off the starting line, we made it to the awards ceremony. A team from the brand-new Montessori Middle School of Cape Cod came out on top in the speed category with their craft "The Hawk" and raced in the regional competition on June 7th in Springfield, MA. Other schools that placed well were Mat-tacheese, Cape Cod Academy, and Keith Middle in New Bedford. Rain or shine, this was the first event I planned by myself, and I learned from all the setbacks along the way.

Blau!

Cartoons by Mike Towle



Summer on Cape Cod: We Made It

By Caitlin Welsh (Wellfleet)

In the fall I wrote at a time when life on the Outer Cape held bittersweet promises for the founding Wellfleetians. The region quickly revealed itself as a haven for those eager to spend quality time at work and at play in the woods on the fringe of the sleepy harbor town. Many sampled raw oysters for the first time, mingled at monthly potlucks on the south end of town, got pummeled by the surf while trying to ride a wave, and explored various backwoods trails in exploration of their new surroundings. We naively thought, "So, this is 'The Cape'."

Fast forward to November, when the stragglers from tourist season had long since retreated and we had to come up with creative distractions outside of service and trips to "The Bomber." Since growing up in the Midwest I've learned to ride out some pretty nasty winters, and I have to say that the coastal climate was the least daunting aspect of the season.

Winter in Wellfleet was weathered at the side of many a burn pile, to which countless sweatshirts and even a few tools fell prey. Many thought, "Surely my friends grow tired of living post-college lives in bustling city centers and would welcome respite and a change of scenery." Unfortunately, most friends did not. So we remained sequestered in the Le Hac house, eagerly awaiting the seasons that would serve as our reward.

It started with the usual telltale thaw from February through March, followed by extended periods of "blah" throughout April and May – gray skies, rain and chill made almost unbearable by the ceaseless winds, punctuated by the occasional brilliant blue-sky day.

Finally – and seemingly overnight – the return of green. It's June on the Cape and while many may suffer from oppressive clouds of pollen and the occasional (Continued on page 7.)

Summer (continued)

road-raged tourist, there's little else to complain about – Moby Dick's chowder is as creamy as ever, Ryder Beach sunsets no longer require excessive layers (although a layer of DEET helps), and the cooling tides come as a welcome reward at the end of a long day of service. Few summers will compare to this, and even fewer will be so well-earned.

The Last Retreat

By Angela L'Heureux (Bourne)



As AmeriCorps Year IX comes to a close, the members had one last chance to reflect upon a year of service and take in the summer beauty of the Cape. Camp Greenough in Yarmouth is usually a Boy Scout camp, but for three days at the end of June it belonged to us. The 26 members of Bourne and Wellfleet came together one last time to camp out and have a lot of fun. We brought our own tents, transforming the camp site into a little village, with nearly 15 tents. Eastern Mountain Sports donated kayaks so we could explore Greenough Pond, which also has a dock and sandy beach for volleyball and sunbathing.

The majority of both days were spent at the beach swimming, reading, and having fun under the watchful eye of fellow member and lifeguard Mike Towle. When not at the beach, the members played rousing games of soccer, football and ultimate Frisbee in the sports field. The wooded area also offered pathways for bikers and runners to get out and explore. Stories were told around the campfire at night and everyone had a chance to reminisce about the year's projects and experiences.



Members have fun playing soccer.

Even though it rained on Thursday night and things got a little soggy, it didn't stop anyone from having a good time. A highlight of the trip was when Darlene came to visit the corps and surprised everyone with one of her little known talents: baton twirling...with fire! With only about three weeks left here on Cape Cod as a group, the end of year retreat was a great way to wrap up and take a break after a long year of service.

Bingo! An Adventure.

By Erin Der-McLeod (Wellfleet)



What is there to do in the Outer Cape on a Tuesday night? If you drive down Route 6 every day, you might notice a sign in front of the Eastham Elks Lodge for Bingo. After seeing their parking lot full of cars on my drive home from Hyannis on Tuesday nights, it seemed like an activity worth looking into. After all, what else is open in Eastham past 7 PM?

Unlike the Bingo played in elementary school, where you tried to put five tiles in a row on little cardboard game boards, Bingo here on Cape is serious business. Cash prizes generally range from \$50 to \$200. Games are played every night of the week, with a different town hosting Bingo each night. Tuesday nights are Eastham nights, and \$11 will buy you single game cards for all 30 games. This may be a bit steep for the AmeriCorps budget, but \$6 will allow you to play the first 15 games.

When Christina, who graciously came along with me to this uncharted territory, and I entered the main hall, we quickly learned we were out of our league. Expecting a friendly neighborhood game of Bingo, we did not anticipate the involvement and fast-paced nature of the games that would ensue. While we struggled to keep track of our single game sheets, the older women around us vigilantly stamped the numbers on their two to four game sheets, all the while keeping track of the sheets of those around them. I would hate to be the number caller at these games. Every time he miscalled a number, he was heckled with disgruntled shouts of "What's the madder with you?" and "Get outta here!"

Nevertheless, though these bingo players obviously took their games very seriously, they were also friendly and did not hesitate to help us rookies. When the games began, we looked like deer caught in headlights. They noticed and kindly showed us what patterns we had to form on our game sheets. Rather than the mere 5 in a row pattern one might expect to look for, you had to look for patterns with names like *crazy I*, *telephone pole*, and *stamp*. Without the help of the ladies across from us, we would have been baffled by such names. During one of the early games, the woman sitting directly across from us got one of these patterns and yelled out BINGO. An Elks Lodge Member verified that her board was a winner and placed a crisp \$50 bill in her hand. She then took that \$50 bill and tapped our game sheets, "blessing" them for good luck. From that moment on, things looked up.

In the end, neither of us won, but it was an unexpectedly enthralling night. Coming close to winning \$50 or \$100 during a couple games was more exciting than the typical Tuesday spent in the house. If nothing else, we enjoyed the two scoops of ice cream for \$1 that you can buy during the intermission. I plan on going back so I can one day see a crazy pattern form on the sheet in front of me and yell out BINGO!

Nauset Cares: Orleans Elementary Blooms

By Mike Towle (Wellfleet)

Butterflies! Flowers! Children! Children planting flowers around butterflies! Clearly, this project aimed to be the “cutest” yet. In order to achieve this goal, AmeriCorps member Mike Towle worked with Dan Connolly, the Orleans Tree Warden, and Diane Carreiro, Principal of Orleans Elementary School, to create Flower Power Planet Earth, a school beautification project that would involve volunteers of all ages.

With big goals for Orleans Elementary, the project developed into a two day event. Goals included clearing a safe fire escape trail, restoring a butterfly garden to an outdoor classroom, and planting flowers around ornamental rocks. On Tuesday, April 22nd, seven AmeriCorps members went to Orleans Elementary to prepare the area for the next week’s “Nauset Cares” activities. Workers were fortunate to have great weather and all the preparatory work was completed. Dan Connolly’s right hand man, Bob, decorated the grounds with two unique rocks; one of them was pink! Nice work, Bob.



Member Caitlin Welsh and a helper plant flowers by the front entrance to Orleans Elementary.

With the grounds ready for planting, Flower Power Planet Earth took place Saturday, June 9th. Despite the rain, the day was a great success and volunteers had fun completing the projects. Children ranging from first to fifth graders planted many flowers alongside Nauset High’s Volunteer Day Group participating in this “Nauset Cares” event. Some parents generously donated their own plants and worked with their children to beautify the site. At the end of the day, participants celebrated with pizza and a raffle. One lucky child went home with a six foot stuffed

dragon, which Dan was very sad to see go.

Special thanks to Dan Connolly for providing all the plants in addition to his expertise, Diane Carreiro for organizing many of the project’s logistics, and to all of the community volunteers who helped make this project bloom, after all.

The Art of Recycling

By David Quinn (Wellfleet)

Coke cans. Old magazines. Chicken wire. Broken fishing line. Bottle caps. Preparation H boxes. These are not things you would typically find on display at a Chatham art gallery; but then again, RecycleFest 2008 was not your average Chatham art show. For one day this spring, Chathamites put aside their picturesque paintings of harbor dinghies, rustic seaside cottages, and other quintessential New England scenes in favor of something a little more, um, trashy.



One of the Fest’s Entries

The art contest was the main attraction of RecycleFest 2008, an event organized by *ChathamRecycles*, with a goal of inviting Chatham residents to visit their transfer station to learn more about the town’s recycling efforts. *ChathamRecycles* is a work-group comprised of concerned citizens, town officials, and one AmeriCorps volunteer with a mission to educate and encourage residents, visitors, and businesses to reduce their trash output and increase their recycling efforts.

Artists of all ages, young children and senior citizens alike, entered the recycled art contest. A panel of judges decided to split the first place prize between two entries. Christopher DeTraglia

of Chatham won for his creation of a monkey in a tree using nothing but old chicken wire, while AmeriCorps member Andrew Brown won for his model of a fish made of debris collected from the banks of the Cape Cod Canal during Canal Cleanup 2008. Ms. Moye’s 3rd grade art class from Chatham Elementary School who won “Best Group Project” for their performance of a circus made of papier-mâché animals.

In addition to recycled art, the event included an educational display about the processing of recycled materials, a mercury thermostat and thermometer exchange booth, composting lessons with free compost, free paper shredding, and other gift giveaways, including t-shirts and reusable shopping bags. The event was a huge success; the weather was perfect, everyone had fun, and visitors learned something about how the transfer station works and about Chatham’s recycling efforts. *ChathamRecycles* is grateful to all of the local businesses who helped make the event possible and hopes that this was the first of many RecycleFests to come. For a complete list of contest winners, go to <http://www.chathamrecycles.org/rfart.shtml>

Green Tips for Traveling

By Tara Di Giovanni (Bourne)



As summer approaches we look forward to longer days, warmer nights, swimming in the ocean, and the infamous vacation from work. The word 'vacation' essentially alludes to the idea of travel, and with travel come money, crowds, itineraries, transportation and packing.

Let's start with getting there. Many people first look into flights for their destination of choice perhaps without realizing there are other options out there. Little do people know that buses, trains and even car rentals can save quite a bit of money, and more importantly, the large output of emissions compared to flying. Nowadays, car rental companies offer hybrid cars to take a bite out of carbon footprints associated with travel.

"Pack Lightly. Every additional ten pounds per traveler requires an additional 350 million gallons of jet fuel per year, which is enough to keep a 747 flying continuously for 10 years."
-The Green Book

Packing is next. Suitcases, duffle bags, plastic bags...whatever works! Like many people, I tend to over-pack. It's not an easy habit to crack, but instead of packing a pair of pants and shirt for each day, try packing fewer separates that match well with one another. Layering is always an option as well as wearing clothes inside out. Spilled coffee on your pants? Throw a lightweight skirt over it and call the fashion police later. Making a lasting impression on a place isn't as important as making a lighter impact on your environment. As a result of being more 'green' and environmentally conscious, we can easily bend the hygiene laws to accommodate a lighter-traveling practice.

Let's spring into shopping. As much as we all love to bring home souvenirs and mini (or in some cases, ridiculously large) remembrances from a vacation, we as travelers need to make more conscientious decisions when purchasing goods. Going local is just about the best thing you can do. Local farmers' markets and arts fairs not only get you the most closely linked object from the place you are visiting, it also should give you a sense of authenticity. Buying a mug from a local potter or a nice red pepper from a farmer makes all the more difference in shipping and transportation. Now really think about it – if you take a trip to Seattle, WA would you buy an apple grown and shipped up from Chile or a more localized Washington State apple with less mileage associated with it?

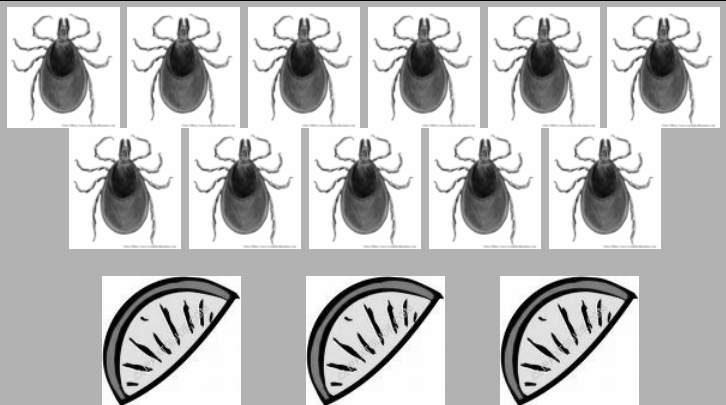
What about when you want to get around your destination of choice? What types of transportation will you use? Taxi, limo, private jet? No! The less expensive, the better. There are so many eco-friendly choices the options border conveniently ridiculous and just plain ridiculous. Bikes are the best way to go in my opinion. Biking allows one to enjoy the scenery and get a fair workout all at the same time. Many major cities have bike routes or bike lanes – you just have to look into how extensive the routes are. Trains and bus rails fall in after cycling. Say you want to travel to Boston or Washington, D.C. and don't want to deal with the hustle and bustle of driving in the city. Trains are a great way to go! You can park up to 20 miles outside of the city and not have to worry about finding a parking spot or garage to gamble with. Metro and T stops are easy to navigate and usually have a few friendly people around in case you have urgent questions – or try hopstop.com.

As this 'green' lifestyle evolves each day, the small simple things individual people tweak in their routines help in a huge way. If we first as individuals, then as a whole, move towards more sustainable practices that help our earth more than harm it, we will be more grounded as a society and less dependent on imports involving a lot of time and travel. My main point in writing this is to say be smart, live long, and travel often in a more environmentally conscious way.

Tick Tally

Total ticks found (imbedded):

Potential cases of Lyme disease, treated with antibiotics:



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

**CHECK
US OUT ONLINE!**

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



Highlands Fest 2008

By Christina Imrich (Wellfleet)

On July 12th, the Highlands Center at Cape Cod National Seashore was a-buzz with people who came to enjoy Highlands Fest, the Wonders of Wind. The day started with the documentary, "Portrait of a Coast," followed by a discussion with the creator of the film, James Gabriel and Graham Giese of Provincetown Center for Coastal Studies. Through out the day, visitors made pin-wheels with AmeriCorps Cape Cod and kites with Truro Center for the Arts at Castle Hill. They also met and spoke with nationally-renowned sculptor Donald Gerola about the three monumental wind sculptures he recently installed at the Highlands Center. These sculptures are twenty-five feet tall, brilliantly colored, and rotate in the wind. They are on loan to Cape Cod National Seashore for five years.

Tony Hoagland, former fellow of Fine Arts Work Center in Provincetown held a poetry reading while children enjoyed professional storytelling through Payomet Performing Arts Center in Truro. Speakers from Cape Cod Community College, Cape Light Compact, Cape and Islands Renew, Cape Cod National Seashore, and AmeriCorps gave presentations on wind energy in



Members pose with one of Donald Gerola's sculptures.

general, and wind on the Cape. The day concluded with evening performances of Shakespeare's The Tempest in Payomet's tent. Over 200 people came to Highlands Fest this year, a great success!

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