Still Planting After All These Years

BPA marks 22nd Arbor Day on April 24, 2010

Members and friends of The Burnham Park Association celebrated the beauty and wonder of trees (and the 40th anniversary of Earth Day) by planting four magnificent native trees: two Red maples, a Pin Oak and a London Plane Sycamore in our neighborhood’s bucolic Burnham Park.

BPA members, including Joe Attamante, Imre Bajusz, John Bartholomew, Scott Bruen, Tom Bowman, Chris Carcich, John Darwell

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(Addler extraordinaire), Rob Pica, Don Siebert, Ed Villhauer, along with Douglas Vorolieff and John Codd from the Alexander Hamilton Neighborhood Association provided the muscle, ably assisted by Debbie Bruen who arranged that our hardy workers were nutritiously fed.

Rakes and trash bags in hand, cleanup crew Jen Carcich and sons, Graydon and Mason, with Kay Kribs, Susan Mellen, Suzanne Mutz-Darwell, Joanne Villhauer and members of Boy Scout Troop, Den 4 of Pack 513, led by Kelly Woods, were all overseen by our stalwart President Lynn Siebert, who not only provides our inspirational spark, but, as archivist sans portfolio, wields a mean camera!

It was a gloriously beautiful day! We want to thank Buffy O’Brien for her beautifully designed fliers publicizing the event. And, our very special thanks go to Charles Jones, of Morristown’s Department of Public Works, who met with BPA Vice-President Joe Attamante to mark tree locations, then mobilized the equipment and manpower to dig, (then re-dig) holes for our trees, including one tree which had to be relocated due to a high water table. Thank you Charles and crew!

We cannot imagine a better way to celebrate BPA’s 22nd Arbor Day and the 40th annual Earth Day than to plant these trees and give our future neighbors the shade and quiet beauty we now enjoy.

Clean and Green: Green Strip Cleanup a success!

Thanks also to everyone who participated in our Green Strip cleanup. Your efforts keep our neighborhood beautiful!

Although the weather was a bit cool, neighbors Jen, Chris, Mason and Graydon Carcich; Sonya and Kyle Williams, Ed Villhauer and Joe Attamante met at 9:00 am to clean the green island between East and West Lake Blvds.

We walked gingerly; careful to avoid sinking in the mud of recent rains, collected several large bags of trash, as bemused neighborhood deer wondered who was invading their space!

With Sadness, BPA notes the passing of David Carter, Patriarch of the Burnham Family:

We were saddened to learn this month of David Carter’s death. Many of you know that, in 1911, the visionary and generous Frederick and Catharine Burnham donated Burnham Park to the Town of Morristown to provide a place of natural beauty, rest and relaxation for all. It is a legacy we have treasured over the years and whose stewardship the BPA proudly sustains. The Burnham heirs have been wonderfully supportive over the years and have participated in several Arbor Day celebrations including the one at which this photo of David was taken (April 2004). As you can see from some of the excerpts from his obituary, David (and other members of his family) continued the Burnham legacy of open space protection and a selfless concern for the public benefit. The Berkshire Farm Center and Services for Youth, soon to celebrate its 125th anniversary, also established by Frederick and Catharine, is a non-profit social service agency serving at-risk youth and their families. They have a residential facility in Canaan, NY and a variety of programs—group homes,
**MOM AND TOT EVENTS:**

Morristown Moms & Tots & More (MMATAM) is a grass-roots community group that welcomes all families and their child care providers. The group was started by local mom, Jennifer Carcich, in 2005, especially for families in the Burnham Park area and quickly grew to include families in the Morristown/Township/Plains area. The group recently moved over to an interactive website, www.bigtent.com, to better facilitate communication among members. No need to worry about “aging out” of this group as we are expanding to make this a true local family support group. This group is very much about “Community Spirit” because we are here to support each other and our community. We really do believe “it takes a village to raise a child”.

We hold playdates, Infant Playdates, Stroller fit classes, Moms Night Out, Dinner Playdates, Dads Night Out, Field Trips, Book Club, Discussion groups and so much more...

Come and join in on the fun! This grass roots community group welcomes all families and their child care providers to join. Go to www.bigtent.com and search for us under zip code 07960.

To raise funds for repair of the Morristown/Morris Township Public Library, MATAM held a lemonade stand at the Earth Festival on the Green in Morristown on Saturday, May 22. Donations of any amount were accepted to help the library which recently experienced enormous damage due to an underground explosion. Parents from Morristown MATAM held storytime at the high school for the loan of their 10 gallon jug!

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foster homes, home-school support, family support...all throughout NY State. Check out their website at www.berkshirefarm.org.

We will be working with the Burnham descendants in honoring David when we undertake our Centennial celebration planning.

**Special News Flash:** We have just been notified that the Burnham family plans to establish a David L. Carter Memorial Tree Fund for Burnham Park to be administered by BPA. Details will follow in a subsequent newsletter. We are honored and touched by this news.

**Here are some excerpts from David’s obituary:**

EAST AMWELL TWP. — David Leland Carter died peacefully, with his family in attendance, on Friday, April 30, 2010, after suffering a severe stroke. He was 82. After graduating from Phillips Exeter Academy in 1945, David served in the Army as medic, stationed in Germany. He was a member of the Class of ’49 at Princeton University.

David came to the Hopewell area in 1959. He spent nearly his entire business career in municipal bonds, working for a variety of firms in New York City, and retiring as a senior vice-president for the Government Development Bank for Puerto Rico in its New York office. For 10 years after retirement, he and his wife, Hope, ran a small company renovating old houses.

He moved to East Amwell in 1983 and was particularly supportive of the preservation of land in the Sourland Mountains, placing more than 60 acres of his own land into preservation.....

We also know he was an accomplished carpenter, avid sportsman, who loved nature, travel and serving the public (on the East Amwell Planning Board and Township Committee).

David is survived by his wife, Hope Hemphill, whom he married in 1955; two daughters, Ann Carter Lyons and Alantha C. Carter; his son, Stephen W. Carter; and two grandchildren, David and Lane Mehlert. He is also survived by his brother, Burnham Carter, and his sister, Alison Carter Mitchell.

Memorial contributions can be sent to Berkshire Farm Center and Services for Youth, 13640 Route 22, Canaan, NY 12029. Mark it attn.: Loris Turner, CFO, and say it’s for the David Leland Carter Professional Development Fund.

**ROAD LITTER**

Thanks to the vigilance of BPA Vice President Joe Attamante, the area along upper Western Ave as it becomes Jockey Hollow Rd. and Sugar Loaf Rd. is cleaner than it was in February and March. Gone are the coffee cups, plastic bottles and other debris. Shortly after the opening of the Southgate athletic complex on the Sugarloaf Rd. side of Delbarton’s campus, Joe had noticed a sudden increase in trash, especially on Sugarloaf Rd. near the entrance to Delbarton.

To address the situation, he called Township Public Works Director Dave Eschman (who replaced recently retired Jim Stoia) and Adolph Schimpf, Delbarton facilities director to alert them and ask what each might do to remedy the eyesore. Dr. Schimpf sent a crew to clean up the portion that abutted Delbarton’s property, while Mr. Eschmann said a crew would clean the Western Ave., Jockey Hollow portion as well as the Sugarloaf Rd. portion if need be (since he was aware of Delbarton’s commitment to police it).

Several weeks later, Dr. Schimpf said his crew had seen trash falling onto Sugarloaf Road from Morris Twp. recycling trucks that sometimes take a shortcut through Delbarton’s Southgate entrance. One resident also reported seeing trash falling from a Morris Township recycling truck and signaled the driver who

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stopped; apparently unaware he was losing trash, he apologized and retrieved it. Once informed of this, Mr. Eschmann said he’d ask drivers to make certain that tarpaulins covered the trash and that the sides of their trucks were up and locked.

Please keep an eye out for trash along sides and call the Twp. if you see any—and of course, don’t succumb to temptation and toss coffee cups or water bottles; and alert your children to the importance of keeping our neighborhood clean and beautiful!

**THIS LAND IS MY LAND, THIS LAND IS YOUR LAND?**

Residents Encroach on Burnham Park

John Codd, a Hazel Street Morristown neighbor and former Chair of the Morristown Board of Adjustment, takes daily walks with his Lab “Indy” in Burnham Park. Over the last few months he’s noticed that some neighbors whose properties back on to the Mendham Road side of the park were engaging in unauthorized alterations to the park and the larger of its two ponds!

He alerted Rick Wise, Morristown’s Supervisor of Public Works as well as the Burnham Park Association. His April 28 letter addressed to the Morristown Town Council, with copies to Mayor Dougherty and Environmental Commission Chair Clarke, Mr. Codd detailed some of the alterations such as:

1. Piping water from one Mendham Rd. property under Town land and having it drain directly into one of the ponds. This pipe was spewing unknown effluent into Burnham Park pond.

2. Clear cutting a 15-20’ hole in the Riparian Buffer Zone installed by the Town. Mr. Codd added that there were at least two areas where trees and shrubs had been severely cut back or removed.

His letter then raised the question: “Where do we draw the line in allowing property owners to trespass and change Town lands? If an adjacent property owner is permitted to physically adapt the Park to its needs, can residents of Mendham do so also when they visit? ”

On May 21, Morristown Engineer Jeff Hartke invited BPA’s Joe Attamante to meet with Mr. Codd, Morristown Public Works Supervisor Rick Wise and assistant Charles Jones re the concerns cited in Mr. Codd’s letter.

To accomplish their self-serving alterations in this public park, these homeowners had to dig and install a pipe and remove the shrubbery and other native plants painstakingly installed in the park as part of a multi-year coordinated effort (by the Town of Morristown, the Whippany River Watershed Action Committee, the Burnham Park Association, the Boy Scouts, The Morris Land Conservancy and Omni Environmental engineering consultants) to complete a riparian buffer zone around the pond in order to:

a) help reduce erosion
b) stabilize the banks along the pond
c) reduce and filter runoff into the pond and, critically,
d) to discourage the burgeoning goose population in the park by obstructing the clear line of sight geese prefer as they approach the pond and island or leave the water for the banks.

The construction of this buffer zone is one of several actions BPA has taken to reduce the overall goose population whose polluting droppings foul the shoreline and pollute the ponds. The several year effort to install this barrier (with town approval), starting in 2001, required countless hours of work by dozens of members of the Burnham Park Association and all the parties mentioned above, who worked in rain, cold and heat to plant hundreds of native plants, under the supervision of Omni Environmental. Photos of that effort are posted on the www.burnhampark.org website in the “gallery” of photos. (also see related goose egg adding article below)

It is unfortunate that a few property owners have taken it upon themselves to encroach on a public park and undo the work of so many neighborhood volunteers which was intended to benefit everyone, (including the encroaching homeowners), by stabilizing the banks, improving drainage, and reducing the goose population with their dangerously polluting defecation. The result would be a cleaner, safer, more beautiful park.

Along with Mr. Codd, BPA has urged Morristown’s Town Engineer and Director of Public Works Jeff Hartke and/or Town Council to officially advise the involved homeowners against such encroachments on the Town’s parkland.

To date, Mr. Hartke has provided the homeowner who installed the pipe with absorbent filter socks to absorb debris emanating from the pipe. In addition, Mr. Hartke says he will have the pipe effluent tested and pending analysis will take appropriate action. Meanwhile, he will continue to monitor the area for encroachments and ask town maintenance crews to report any changes.

In walking the site a second time on May 26, we observed town employees taking a sample from a second pvc pipe emanating from another Mendham Rd. property which suddenly gushed effluent. We also noticed that a large swath of shoreline behind several homes (part of the riparian buffer zone, see above) was almost completely denuded of shrubbery. A pile of brown bushes was dumped behind one property: we asked whether town employees had perhaps cut and left it; the town officials responsible said they had not. These have also been brought to the Town’s attention.

We are hopeful that appropriate education and action might be taken to not only address the current encroachments but prevent similar ones from occurring in the future.
Report from Goose Island or
The Adventures of the
HMS Addler and her hearty crew!

"Vice-Admiral" Jonathan Darwell, submitted the following report on the daring adventures of BPA's Addlers (pictured below):

Goose-Bothering season is just about complete, as what geese are left on the pond are now molting and won't be able to fly again for another few weeks.

We achieved our first successful site aversion exercise on Sunday 23rd, managing to get the vast majority of birds on both the Upper Pond and Main Pond, the football field and a few that were hiding up near Burnham Parkway, to fly out northwards (though this is just coincidental!). We timed it just about right this year; there is a very small window between clearing the nests once the geese have stopped laying, and them starting to molt. Last year we got it wrong by about a week. Next year I think we should try to aim for at least 2 days consecutive site aversion.

Firstly, a BIG ENORMOUS THANK YOU to all who participated in this event, and made it the success it was, especially: Jen and family, psychic kayaking and geese-chasing; Brian and Becca for the loan of the kayaks; Buffy and Jack the Wonder Dog, goose-chasers par excellence; Ryan, the real kayaker amongst us, (sorry we couldn't provide the white water) Sonya, for organizing the loan of the kayaks, being fearless and also a very adept kayaker; Mike the nice policeman who came to check on what we were doing; Kay, support and helper as usual; Douglas, without whom we wouldn't have even known how to start; Marla and David who couldn't be with us but were there in spirit and helped hugely with the adding;... and me, getting soaking wet seems to be my specialty.

The net result (up to this morning) is that there seems to be a genuine reduction in the number of geese around the ponds. Although zero tolerance is our target, I don't think we can achieve that in reality and we have to accept that some geese are very persistent and regard Burnham Park as their home. These geese are true "residential geese" (as opposed to "migratory geese") as they were born here and don't even know where Canada is, let alone have heard of it.

In terms of the goose population control, we have had a very successful year, as we did last year. There were just about the same number of nests over both ponds, and well over 100 eggs. This year we used wooden eggs to replace fresh eggs, with of course, the floating water test for each egg as per Humane Society regulations. Wooden eggs make it much easier and faster than oiling and replacing the eggs with the benefit that once done, the eggs need not be checked again; it stresses the geese less since if all the eggs in the nest are wood, there is no need to force the geese off the nest to check; and the final result is that we have no eggs rotting which is a huge benefit for the Addlers (though I have no sense of smell - actually I have few senses left at all).

Buffy, Marla, Jack and I checked the nests on the island the week before; there were no new eggs so we retrieved all the wooden eggs and flags together with a number of golf balls that the geese themselves had added, and destroyed the nests. Buffy, Jack and I checked the Island again on Sunday before the site aversion, and there were no geese at all (much to Jack's disappointment!) So Goose Island had become Desert Island.

The net result is that there were only 3 goslings this year, from a nest that was not on the island; these may be down to 2 now, possibly due to the Snapping Turtles.

The "Please do not feed" signs (designed by Buffy, supplied by the Town with Lynn's help) that we put up are mainly still there; I think one was ripped off by a family that were throwing huge volumes of bread for the geese and claiming they didn't see the signs. Unfortunately, we only cater for English and Spanish speaker, we forgot about the purely moronic and vindictive elements... But such is life!

A few sundry snippets:

- The geese seem to get used to anything placed in their nests and will protect golf-balls, wooden eggs, plastic fishing floats, sand-filled plastic eggs and, I am led to believe, potatoes!
- We buried the fresh eggs on the island; something (possibly a raccoon) is diligently digging out the eggs after they have been buried.
- All four of the nests on the Upper Pond had been raided and the eggs taken or eaten. We saw a large groundhog there a few weeks ago, but it could be foxes or raccoons as well.
- HMS Addler continues to serve us well, is still floating and still an effort to manhandle out of the shed. I am thinking of renaming her HMS Fearless, and promoting myself to Vice-Admiral, a rank that I think befits me....
- And thanks to Lynn and the BPA for help in funding the cost of the wooden eggs.

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(Buffy has brought up the point that we are no longer addling, but replacing the eggs with wooden ones; we should really have new name for this, maybe wood-egging, but please have a think and let me know if you have better suggestions.)

Finally, this has been a wonderful season of camaraderie and fun, we have been blessed by the weather, and found some new members who have fitted in perfectly and are a very welcome addition. We have done a wonderful job and I hope the benefits of this effort lead to a greater use and appreciation of what is an exceptionally beautiful park. Long live the BPA!!

Thank you to all; it has been an absolute pleasure working with you all. Next year will be even better, I promise!!
—Jon

P.S: The results of the voting for the various categories were unanimous:
- Best Goose Chaser, Jack, the Wonder Dog
- Best Goose Bother, Jack
- Best nest de-gooser, Jack
- Best crew member, Jack
- Best wooden egg juggler, Jack
- Best kite retriever, Jack (well actually it was Sonya!)

I am sorry if this shows as certain bias, but I plead insanity with the privilege of being the Captain!

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Update: Northfields Athletic Fields at Delbarton

On May 17, 2010, the Morris Township Planning Board granted approval to Phase II of Delbarton’s “Northfields” athletic fields complex. It will include tennis courts, bleachers, a Victory Arch, a Colonnade and a 16,000 sq. clubhouse. The original location for the garbage dumpster was moved in response to residents’ concerns.

PSE&G’s Susquehanna-Roseland Right of Way proposal—Wrong for the Environment!

NJ residents and visitors visit the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area to walk, bike or hike its trails, take a boat out, or sit in the shade by the river. They also come to the park for its quiet beauty and to escape the intrusion of technology on our senses and every part of our lives.

We are concerned that PSE&G’s proposed right of way expansion, the Susquehanna-Roseland transmission line, through the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, across the Appalachian Trail and the NJ Highlands will degrade New Jersey’s water and land resources and adversely affect our health.

The transmission line’s route traverses some of New Jersey’s prime watershed and recharge land that is the source of much of our pure water. Construction of new and widening of existing access roads to build the massive footings needed to support the 175’ foot high transmission towers visible from much of the park will require the removal of massive amounts of earth and vegetation, and calls for moving the Appalachian Trail. The resulting erosion and silting will pollute our water and destroy habitat essential to many endangered and threatened species. And the heavy construction equipment required will compact the earth, increase runoff, and reduce the soil’s ability to replenish ground water.

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Membership/Dues Payment

I/We enclose our 2010 Burnham Park Association dues of:

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Name: __________________________________________
Address: _______________________________________
Telephone: __________________________ Email: _______________

If making additional contribution, please indicate amount and purpose (e.g. plantings for Arbor Day, etc.)

Amount: __________________ Purpose: __________________

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If approved, the increased coal burning needed to generate the power these proposed lines must carry will spew mercury and greenhouse gases into our air that rain will then deposit on our land, streams and reservoirs, increasing the gases and pollution already fouling our air and water.

In addition, the suggested alternative routes will interpose towers and power-lines into the park visitors’ experience. Even if we accept the posited need for increased power, alternatives to mounting them atop giant towers, such as burying transmission lines would eliminate their intrusion on the National Recreation area and the Appalachian Trail. Moreover, alternative, NJ generated renewable energy sources are available.

The Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area and the Appalachian Trail that passes through it are irreplaceable; if they and the surrounding land and water are despoiled, they are gone for generations. Most important, New Jersey residents need to know the clean water, land, forests, and wetlands on which they and all life depend are protected.

What Can You Do?
Please write the National Park Service and/or the NJDEP to urge them to stop this unnecessary and damaging encroachment on New Jersey Highland’s water sources and one of its last open spaces.

National Park Service
DEWA PPL EIS-Planning Division
12795 West Alameda Parkway
PO Box 25287
Denver, CO 80225-0287

NJDEP:
Lou Cattuna, Supervisor
Division of Land Use Regulations
NJDEP
PO Box 439
Trenton, NJ 08625