



ECPC is supported in part
 by the New Haven
 Department of Parks,
 Recreation and Trees.

ECPC News welcomes submissions
 from all parks friends groups to
 ecpc@newhavenct.net or
 ECPC News at the above address.

EXPERIENCE YOUR PARKS UPDATE

Congratulations to those Parks Friends groups which were recently awarded an iExperience Your Parks grant (funded project in italics):

Fort Nathan Hale	\$250	<i>Historical Re-enactment Event</i>
Wooster Square Park	\$250	<i>Cherry Blossom Festival</i>
Bay View Park	\$250	<i>Fence Raising Work Day</i>
West River Narrows	\$250	<i>9/15 Cleanup (see article reverse side)</i>
Solar Youth	\$250	<i>10/2 West Rock Day Youth Activities</i>

Upcoming DEADLINES for EYP grant requests: Dec.-Jan.-Feb. event applications due: **SEPT. 21**, March-April-May applications due: **DEC. 14**. Also THANKS to The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven for renewing ECPC funding for EYP for 2005!

Parks Presents

Each month from June through October, ECPC holds a community service event in a different city park. Our goals are to organize needed maintenance and beautification a *present* to each park, while also becoming a greater *presence* in the parks system. By joining a **Parks Presents** event near you, you'll meet neighbors and improve the quality of your environs. Of course, attend events at parks across town too to see what like-minded people in other city neighborhoods are up to! In July we staged an old fashioned fence raising at Bay View Park and in August, mulched 40 trees at Jocelyn Square

Below, ECPC President Steve Wilcox working hard.



YOU DON'T NEED TO BE AN ECPC MEMBER TO
 JOIN US FOR EVENTS! COME CHECK US OUT:

SUNDAY, SEPT. 12

WEST RIVER NARROWS (see *Mystery Park* on reverse)
 Park Cleanup and Party
 Contact Colin Caplan at 397-2002 or bigc@snet.net

SATURDAY, OCT. 16

BISHOP WOODS BIRD SANCTUARY (see story at right)
 Bird Hike with the New Haven Bird Club
 Date tentative- Contact Dr. Kimberly Thomas at 467-8891



Elm City Parks Conservancy is the only not-for-profit parks advocacy organization serving New Haven's parks system. Our mission is to partner with parks friends groups, parks users and New Haven's Dept. of Parks, Recreation & Trees to strengthen public awareness, participation and preservation of New Haven's beautiful and historic parks system.

ECPC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Steve Wilcox, President - Cordalie Benoit, Vice President
 Easter Howard, Secretary - Anna Schildroth, Treasurer
 Chris Ozyck, Dave Reher, Dave Demers, Michelle Maitland,
 Marge Ottenbreit, Colin Caplan, Kris Sainsbury,
 Paul Larivee, Barbara Schlien ■ **STAFF-** Illisa Kelman

BOARD MEETINGS

6-7:30 pm, 4th Wed. of each month, NH Parks Offices

Helping New Haven's Heritage

ECPC is pleased to announce renewal of our monument restoration efforts with a new program: *Ornamental Icons*. Each year, ECPC will select a park monument to be memorialized in cast pewter and sold to raise funds for city-wide conservation efforts. Our parks are graced with an abundance of monuments and plaques of historical value and artistic merit, and although these collectible ornaments will last forever, these grand symbols of our heritage may *not* without ongoing maintenance. The City of New Haven and the Parks Department are nearly done with a massive three-year renovation effort of five monuments. ECPC applauds this progress and would like to support further efforts.

The inaugural ECPC monument medallion will feature The Five-Mile Point Lighthouse at Lighthouse Point Park. As a small gift, stocking stuffer or distinctive decoration, these ornaments will be tasteful and affordable at \$12 or \$30 for 3. **ECPC members will receive discounted pricing** of \$10 each or \$25 for 3. Call or email to purchase your ornament today!

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

In the northeast corner of New Haven, on the border with East Haven, lies a park that most city residents have never visited and many have never heard of. **Bishop Woods** is 47 forested acres and includes the highest point in New Haven east of the Quinnipiac River. This land was donated as a bird sanctuary to the city by Dr. Louis B. Bishop, a noted bird lover.

Unfortunately, in recent years the park has been neglected and has become something quite different from what Dr. Bishop envisioned. The park is now a playground for ATVs & dirt bikes. Parts now resemble a dirt bike track more than a bird sanctuary. Some brazen individual has gone as far as bringing in a backhoe to create dirt ramps for the vehicles. Stolen cars have been abandoned and were leaking oil and engine fluid into the streams and forest floor. Instead of peace and quiet, a visitor is often confronted with the loud din of racing motors. The sheer quantity of riders has compacted the soil to such an extent that the trees are stressed and new plants cannot establish roots in the soil.

But Bishop Woods is starting to turn around. A determined group of neighbors are leading the fight to save the park. They are in the process of creating a park friends group with the help of ECPC. Most of the abandoned cars have been removed and neighbors have held clean-ups to collect the garbage.

The group has had success lobbying the Parks Department for barriers to stop cars and ATVs from entering the park. This has stopped most traffic but dirt bikes can still enter with ease.

There are other issues that still need to be addressed. The park lacks a proper entrance and there is not even one sign naming the park. A parcel of land bordering the park, that would make a perfect entrance, is in the process of foreclosure. Neighbors are hopeful the city can acquire it to make a proper entrance.

Bishop Woods has the potential to be a refuge from the urban environment, a place where residents can walk and spend time in nature, away from the roar of modern machinery. The place Dr. Bishop envisioned, where the only noises are the sounds of birds and other wild creatures. ECPC is dedicated to doing all we can to help save this precious space. Why not come see the park yourself and imagine what could be? The park can be accessed from behind Bishop Woods School on Quinnipiac Ave. ECPC and Friends of Bishop Woods are planning a walk/ bird watch in October that everyone is welcome to join (see *Park Presents note at left*). Look for a postcard in your mail soon!

Enjoy the coming fall season and I'll see you outside,

Stephen Wilcox, President
 ELM CITY PARKS CONSERVANCY

ECPC Notes at August's End

This June, for the fourth consecutive summer, ECPC hired **Student Conservation Association (SCA)** interns to assist with programs and to supplement summer parks staff. This year we welcomed Rosana Grafals, a Rutgers grad student from Puerto Rico, and Anthony Cardullias, an undergraduate at Kent State, Ohio. The two helped coordinator Tom Straub run **THE QUINNIPIAC RIVER DISCOVERY (QRD)** Program; worked in **Quinnipiac, Edgerton, Jocelyn Square, Bayview & East Rock** parks; and provided assistance to board & staff. Rosana and Tony proved to be hard workers, lovely people and a great asset to QRD. We will miss them! Some thoughts from QRD staff follows:

The Q-River Discovery Program, which offers free canoeing, fishing, crabbing and wildlife viewing to kids and adults at the Clifton Street boat launch in Fair Haven, seemed to grow even bigger and better this year. Our goal was to teach children in Fair Haven an appreciation for the natural splendor of the Quinnipiac River watershed. Our hope is that these kids will grow up and want to protect the river for future generations. This year we had over 250 kids & adults attend our programming. For the first time guest speakers from Fair Haven gave guided environmental awareness tours and workshops which QRD staff were able to incorporate into our regular program. Another first was to bring our program on the road for three consecutive weeks to kids at the Fair Haven library.

I really want to thank everyone who made this year such a success including: *SCA interns Anthony and Rosana; brain trust Chris Ozyck and Illisa Kelman; guest speakers Chris Wilhelm, Dave Zakur, Oliver Barton, and Ian Christman; librarian Betsy Goldberg, and volunteers Dave Rehr and Michelle Maitland.* I know that all the kids who came this year can't wait for QRD to come back next summer!

- **Tom Straub, QRD Coordinator**

The most important thing I learned while working on the Q-River Project was how much I liked working with kids. Most of the children who came did not have an outdoor recreational outlet, and to see the smiles on their faces was very rewarding. Some even gave me hugs! It was enjoyable to witness the program transform as we gained more experience. We came up with more activities and attendance grew as time went by. What I learned and experienced cannot be taken away from me ever. I really enjoyed this summer and I want to say thank you to SCA and to Elm City Parks Conservancy. - **Anthony Cardullias**

New Haven's Mystery Park: West River Narrows

...Far out Whalley Avenue, behind Billis' Carousel and Meineke Muffler Shop, sits a long neglected New Haven treasure... **West River Narrows Park.** This hidden yet beautiful site was once the center of a dozen 200 year-old mills, as well as the home of Parker Paper Company, the first in the nation to produce fine paper from cotton waste. In the 1840s, the Scottish boys who provided most of the labor also gave the neighborhood its nickname "Scotch Row."

Features of the park include fast moving rapids, a pedestrian bridge, dirt paths and a complex of archaeological ruins. These include a 350 year-old mill flume, remains of the Parker Company, house foundations and more. A wide variety of wildlife and native plants inhabit the park.

The West River Narrows Park Friends Group is holding a cleanup on **SUNDAY, SEPT. 12** at this unique and under-utilized open space (see inside for contact info). An ECPC *iExperience Your Parks* grant will help provide garbage bags, gloves, bio-soap, pizza, ice cream & snacks. The park, at over 80 acres, is bounded by Whalley Ave. and Valley Street, as well as Ramsdell Street. Meet at Billis' Carousel at 10 am. Pants and boots are useful to protect against poison ivy and muddy areas. Please join us and keep the Narrows beautiful.

ñ Colin Caplan

The QRD Program was a great learning experience, not only for the kids and families, but also for us, the people running the program. We learned to be part of the Fair Haven community. We also discovered the best ways to communicate important ecological/ environmental/ historic information to both kids and adults. At the same time, families taught us that this community has a lot to give and that they ARE very interested in their river. They do want to enjoy and learn from it. That is one of the main reasons why they need programs like QRD. Such programs will encourage them, especially the kids, to take advantage of their river and community, as useful resources for community and environmental unity. - **Rosana Grafals**

Q-River Discovery Project is a joint project of the Quinnipiac River Group, New Haven Parks Dept and ECPC. Thanks to the River St. Collaborative and Junta for Progressive Action for their involvement; to Missy II and Bayer Corp. for their support, and to the Community Foundation for Greater New Haven for funding. ECPC also thanks Board members Dave Demers and Cordalie Benoit, staff at SCA, and Ian & Carolyn Christman for their help with the ECPC-SCA program.

PLAN A DAY OF PARKS FAMILY FUN!

NEW HAVEN FOLK FESTIVAL: Fri.-Sun., Sept. 17-19

In lovely Edgerton Park. Visit www.ctfolk.com for ticket information.

CANOE NEW HAVEN: No Canoeing Experience Necessary
Canoes, life preservers & certified canoe leaders are provided FREE so you can escape into nature and see New Haven parks from a new perspective.

Sat. Sept. 18 Morris Creek Hawk Festival (Lighthouse Pt) 11 am-3 pm

Sat. Sept. 26 West River 10 am-2 pm

Also offered during these Parks Dept. Fun Family Festivals!

SAT. OCT. 2 West Rock Day Lake Wintergreen 10 am-2 pm

SAT. OCT. 16 East Rock Day Mill River 10 am-2 pm

SAT. OCT. 23 Edgewood Day West River or Edgewood Pond 10 am-2 pm

and **Save the Date** for **POLAR PLUNGE: SAT., JAN. 1, 2005**

11 am-1 pm: Fun Family Brunch, LI Sound Swim and ECPC Fundraiser!

Plan to host your New Year's Day get-together watching local "polar bears" from the Lighthouse Point carriage house (and for you "bears" don't forget to call for a pledge form.) Money raised benefits ECPC and Plungers' favorite parks. To join the committee, to volunteer OR to Plunge for Parks Call or email 946-5713 or ecpc@newhavenct.net



West River rapids churning through West River Narrows Park (C.Caplan)

ELM CITY PARKS CONSERVANCY

720 Edgewood Avenue, New Haven, CT 06515



ECPC NEWS: FALL '04

Please Open Immediately

Dated Material Enclosed

