



FIRST DAY WINTER FESTIVAL



Please join ECPC for a great start for 2008! Tour the Lighthouse; enjoy a hearty breakfast; make a sand/snow sculpture; walk the beach; search for hidden treasure; warm yourself by the fire; and enjoy the games and the atmosphere of good people having a good time OUTSIDE IN WINTER. And yes, of course join in the 7th annual Polar Plunge. This year

we will have a kid (age 6-18) plunge at noon, individual plunge at 12:30, and the Group Plunge at 1:00. A professional photographer will capture your image and they will be on sale to benefit ECPC. We have a "no photographs, please" plunge section, too! For a \$20 fee, Plungers will receive a polar cap, breakfast and use of the hot tubs. In addition, Plunger may raise funds for their New Haven Parks and open space groups and keep 100% of those funds for their respective groups.

As this is a volunteer driven fundraiser for ECPC, park friends and openspace groups, we are always in need of volunteers (new and prior), new ideas, and additional sponsors. Volunteer for one hour and receive a polar cap or breakfast; volunteer for two and receive both and hug from me (a rare commodity). This event would not be possible without the continued support of the Statton Faxon Law Firm, Shoreline Stone Supply, Christopher Martin's Restaurant, and the New Haven Parks Department.

I will see you on the first. Please dress warmly!

-Chris Ozyck, First Day Organizer 627-0178

SUCCESS STORIES FROM FOEP

The Friends of Edgewood Park reformed in late 2006 and packed 2007 with many accomplishments:

- signed up over 100 families and individuals in an inaugural membership campaign;
- designed a new playscape;
- held free activities for prechildren through the Nature Pals program;
- ran free children's activities at Art Walk and at the Edgewood farmers' market;
- advocated with the police and city leaders for safety and programs in the park;
- led clean-ups and beautification projects; and
- volunteered at parks department programs, including the Fall Festival (see photo).

Friends of Edgewood Park also held a fundraising blitz to meet a \$2,500 challenge grant from the Emily Tremaine Foundation. The money will be put toward programs and infrastructure improvements, and to provide a foundation to help Friends of



Please help ECPC start 2008 strong with a year end donation.

We decided to give you, our members and supporters, this bit of good cheer rather than to formally ask for money. But we do need your support to continue and expand our advocacy efforts on behalf of New Haven's parks and open spaces. ECPC is a 501(c)(3) and your gift is tax deductible to the extent allowable by law.

Thanks, and happy holidays!

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

This year to celebrate the holiday season, we decided to give rather than ask. Instead of our annual appeal we are sending you this special issue of our Newsletter.



We have a lot to tell you about. Our 2007 medallion is available. The medallion celebrates the monument at Defenders Square. This monument commemorates a unique Revolutionary War event, which is told in the insert that accompanies each medallion. See article on page two for more details. Also remember that the 2004 Lighthouse, 2005 Columbus Statue and 2006 Angel of Peace medallions are still available.

Once again, we will host the Polar Plunge on January first, a great opportunity to raise money for your favorite park, park friends group or for ECPC while enjoying the festival atmosphere. This year the carousel is under repair so we will have children's games, an ice and sand sculpture competition and horse carriage rides as well as brunch and the Plunge. The Polar Plunge is a great family event and fun for those zany plungers too.

Some city parks friends groups are not represented on the ECPC Board. We need you and want to hear about your needs. We meet once a month, on the fourth Wednesday of the month at 6:00 for about an hour and a half. See if your favorite park is listed here:

Edgerton Park Conservancy, Fort Nathan Hale Restoration Projects, Inc., Friends of Bayview Park, Friends of Beaver Ponds Park, Friends of Bishop Woods Bird Sanctuary, Friends of East Rock Park, Friends of Edgewood Park, Friends of Jocelyn Square, Friends of Lenzi Memorial Park, Friends of Lighthouse Park Carousel, Friends of Rainbow Park, Friends of West River Memorial Park, Friends of West River Narrows Area, Historic Wooster Square Association, Proprietors of the Common & Undivided Lands (New Haven Green), West Rock Ridge Park Association.

If it is not, please tell us of it, and we will add it to our list. If you have any questions or want more information about our board please call me 624-6737 or email cordalie.benoit@aya.yale.edu. If you are not ready to join the board, but have park-related needs, we can still help you with those. We want to know your park needs and ideas.

Finally, please keep in mind that we offer "Experience Your Parks Grants" in the amount up to \$250.00 for events that are open to the public and utilize our wonderful parks and squares. See our website <http://www.cityofnewhaven.com/Parks/ecpc.asp> for more information and an application or call us at 946-5713 or email us at elmcityparksconservancy@yahoo.com.

Have a safe and joyous holiday. I hope to hear from you in 2008.

Cordalie Benoit, President

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

ECPC Board of Directors

Cordalie Benoit, *President* Easter Howard, *Vice President*
Steve Wilcox, *Secretary* Anna Schildroth, *Treasurer*
Chris Ozck, Dave Reher, Dave Demers, Colin Caplan, Kris Sainsbury, Paul Larrivee, Barbara Schlein, Dare Burts, Diane Scarponi

Staff, Illisa Kelman

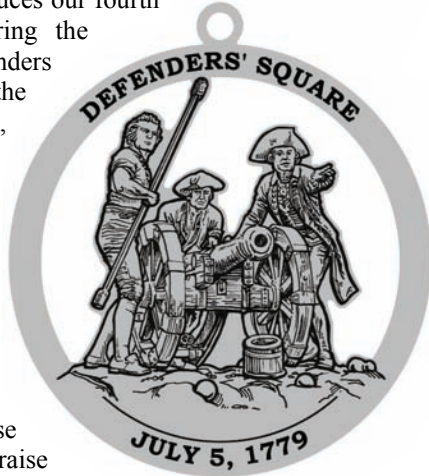
Board Meetings take place on the 4th Wednesday of each month at 6pm at the New Haven Parks Department Administrative Offices, 720 Edgewood Avenue.

Open to the public.

If you wish to attend, please call 946-5713 or email elmcityparksconservancy@yahoo.com.

ECPC CELEBRATES THE DEFENDERS MONUMENT

ECPC proudly introduces our fourth pewter medallion, featuring the Revolutionary War Defenders Monument, located at the convergence of Congress, Columbus and Davenport Avenues. The City of New Haven and the Parks Department are currently restoring each sculpture in our parks, and Defenders is one of the sculptures slated for restoration.



ECPC is selling these collectible medallions to raise awareness of and appreciation for these sculptures and to highlight the renewed interest in their conservation. The Lighthouse (2004), Columbus (2005), the Angel of Peace (2006) medallions are still available. By offering a new medallion every year, we hope to increase the breadth and effectiveness of this program. By purchasing these medallions, you are demonstrating support for public art while aiding ECPC's advocacy efforts. These medallions are attractive and affordable at **\$12 each or \$30 for 3, and \$10 each or \$25 for 3 for ECPC members.** To purchase your medallion, call, email or visit our web site and download an order form from *Public Art in the Parks*.

4TH ANNUAL KIMBERLY SQUARE CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTING REPORT

QUESTION: What has over 1,000 glittering lights and 700 colorful ornaments; is crisscrossed with over 300 feet of shiny gold garland; is accented by at least 400 red velvet bows; and is topped off with a very special, very beautiful, Christmas star?

ANSWER: The 4th Annual Kimberly Square Christmas Tree!

Standing at 18' our 2007 tree is a beauty. December 1st was a cold evening, but that didn't stop families from coming out to take part in their tree lighting. At 5:00pm the park was full of friends and neighbors singing Christmas Carols, laughing and chatting, putting on silly hats, and telling Christmas Tales. At 5:30, the sounds of a *Santa Delivering Fire Engine* could be heard heading our way, its loud, deep horn bellowing. As we looked down Howard Avenue, we could see red lights flashing wildly as it slowly approached Kimberly Square. The Engine's siren joined in the cacophony, punctuating the chilly night air with its shrillness. The caroling stopped and we heard the chant of *SANTA! SANTA! SANTA!* The engine pulled up beside the park and Santa stepped down off the truck and into a sea of excited youngsters. The children escorted him from the truck into the Park and to the tree where, after a brief countdown, Santa magically lit the tree. Over 1000 lights flashed, shimmering off the garland reflecting in the children's eyes. The tree actually took my breath away.

Santa, Mrs. Santa and a very helpful Alex Elf began handing out gift bags to each child, and a Christmas pin to each lady. John Dye of our Hill South Management Team gave the blessing and Alderman Jorge Perez said a few kind words. Thank you to everyone who stopped by, and to all the Kimberly Avenue merchants who donated toward the event. More than THANK YOU to our tree team, without whom our tree would not be as beautiful. Another wonderful community event! -Kris Sainsbury

NEW MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

ECPC welcomes our two new board members, Diane Scarponi of Friends of Edgewood, and Dare Burts, of Friends of Rainbow Park!

ECPC PARTNERS FOR MORE YOUTH BASEBALL AT EAST SHORE

Last summer, Annex Little League and the Parks Department asked ECPC to help secure grant funding for the purpose of lighting their two ball fields at East Shore Park. ECPC provided both writing assistance and our tax exempt status required by the funder, the Baseball Tomorrow Fund, Major League Baseball's grant-giving foundation. We got the grant, and the lighting was installed by late summer, in time for Annex to host several night games and practices! It is our hope that the new lights, in addition to more evening practices and games, will make possible the expansion of the league to 500 *additional* children, aged 5 to 13, as well as summer and fall tournament and division play.



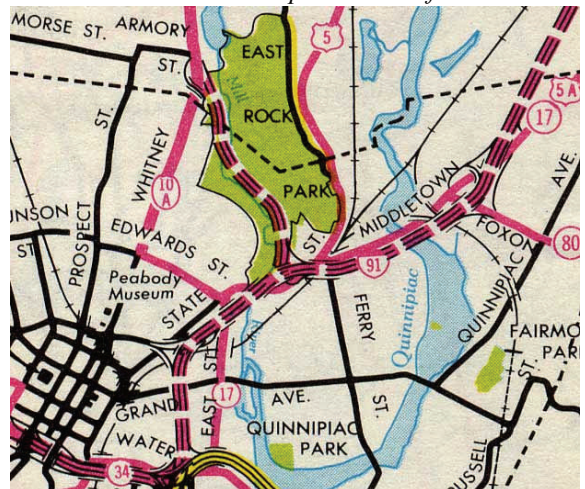
TRIBUTE TO TOM

New Haven, ECPC and East Rock Park lost a champion when Tom Holahan died on August 18, 2007. He served Elm City Parks Conservancy as a board member and, for a time, as its treasurer. He mapped the path which will become the Mill River Trail. But many would say his biggest contribution to East Rock Park was to something which didn't happen.



Tom as a "Polar Bear"

Proposed Path of Interstate 91



This map vividly illustrates the proposed path of Interstate 91 with the planned highways exit ramps – directly through the College Woods section of East Rock Park. Tom led the charge in averting this disaster which resulted in the realized ramp system that curls and recurls around Willow Street. Without Tom and the efforts of others who formed Friends of East Rock Park (FERP), the highway ramp would have gone right through College Woods to Whitney Avenue at the Hamden line.

When you walk your dog in College Woods, play soccer or basketball, or watch the young ones use the playground, play softball or race alone the track, or you enjoy a cookout or attend an event at the pavilion or visit the ranger station, or just enjoy the view, you can thank Tom Holahan. - Cordalie Benoit



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