

Somerset County Park Commission Turns 50

The Somerset County Park Commission is celebrating its 50th anniversary.

The commission was established in 1956 by voter referendum as a resource-management agency designated to provide specialized park areas and facilities that supplement municipal efforts. Fifty years later, the mission of the park system is a commitment to excellence, in promoting stewardship of land and resources, providing outstanding recreation opportunities and leisure services, and fostering an environment that is service-oriented and responsive to public needs.

The park system is home to 10,000 acres of open space, halfway to achieving its goal of creating a 20,500-acre network of park and open space facilities.

Facilities now operated by the Park Commission include a wide range of opportunities for leisure pursuits. There are five golf courses, three driving ranges, a pitch-and-putt course and a recreational putting course.

Specialized facilities include a riding stable, an environmental education center, two tennis facilities, a swimming pool and paddle boating.



Horticulture destinations include a rock formation and rare-plant garden, an award-winning rose garden, perennial garden and arboretum, and a fragrance-and-sensory garden.

Five general-use parks offer amenities such as picnic facilities, bike paths, athletic fields and fishing. The park system also encompasses several natural areas offering more passive pursuits such as bird-watching and hiking.

The Park Commission has established a tradition of providing quality and

unique programs. Therapeutic Recreation provides year-round activities and events for children and adults with disabilities, as well as a summer camp for children who have a learning disability or Asperger's syndrome.

The Environmental Education Center in Basking Ridge offers programs focusing on local environmental issues, archeology, outdoor education and bringing nature to children of all ages.

Lessons and clinics are offered at many of the facilities. The Park Commission sponsors a number of special events, including the Free Summer Concert Series, the annual concert at Commerce Bank Ballpark, the Fourth of July Family Festival, the 1770s Festival and golf tournaments.

The year-long anniversary celebration will culminate with a gala dinner Nov. 11 at the Bridgewater Marriott. For more information about the Somerset County Park Commission and other special anniversary-year events, visit www.somersetcountyparks.org or call (908) 722-1200.

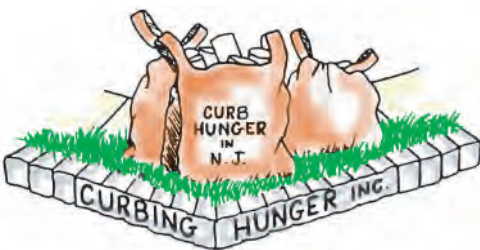
22 Tons of Food Collected to Help Curb Hunger

This is the 12th consecutive year that Somerset County has participated in the Curbing Hunger program developed by the Rev. Stephen Rozzelle of St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Basking Ridge, a former president of the Food Bank Network. The food drive started here as a pilot program in 1995.

Orange plastic bags are distributed to all Somerset County households in May, bearing the request to place canned food donations in the bags at the curb on residents' regular recycling pickup days in June. County recycling and public works crews collect the food throughout the month for distribution by the Food Bank Network and other local food pantries.

This year the county inserted 100,000 orange fliers into local newspapers announcing the collection. Fliers also were distributed to all public and private school children. Magnetic signs were displayed on the county's recycling vehicles reminding residents that June is Curbing Hunger Month.

For more information, visit www.curbinghunger.org.



Organizations serving needy residents in Somerset County are thanking everyone who contributed to a significant increase in donations to the Curbing Hunger food drive.

A total of 44,000 pounds of food were collected throughout the county during the month of June, a 37.5-percent increase over the 32,000 pounds collected in 2005.

Bound Brook Memorial Library Joins the County Library System

The Somerset County Library System this year welcomed an eighth library branch and two new member communities.

Thanks to the Board of Freeholders, the county Library Commission and their respective borough councils, Bound Brook and South Bound Brook joined the county system on Jan. 1, 2006. Bound Brook Memorial Library, a municipal library since 1913, is now a branch library.

Bound Brook Memorial Library has been closed to accommodate several major construction projects funded by the Borough of Bound Brook, including a new heating and cooling system for

the entire building, exterior waterproofing and a floor-to-ceiling renovation of the children's department on the lower level. A grand reopening is planned for the fall.

As new Somerset County Library cardholders, Bound Brook and South Bound Brook residents have been able to use library branches throughout the system while the Bound Brook branch is closed. During the first half of 2006, they borrowed more than 24,000 items.

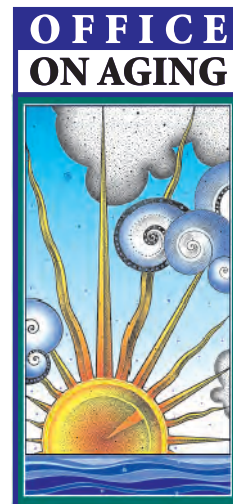
Bound Brook's 2006 budget for new materials is \$110,000. With this leap in funding, the branch will be able to



purchase many more books, audiobooks, CDs and DVDs for children and adults.

All Somerset County Library System cardholders may access the online catalog on the library's comprehensive Web site, reserve library materials and have them delivered to the most convenient library branch for pick-up.

An online calendar of events, electronic databases, digital e-books, audio e-books and many online book clubs all are available via the library Web site at www.somersetlib.nj.us.



Fall Programs for Seniors

The Somerset County Office on Aging has announced the following wellness and exercise programs scheduled for this fall. Pre-registration is required. Call Erin Toomey at (908) 704-6339 to register or for more information.

Country Line Dancing

Classes are meeting Thursdays starting in September from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. in the gym at Washington School, 614 First Ave., Raritan. Instructor is Sari Levine. Fee is \$3 per session.

Tai Chi

The fall session of Tai Chi at the Washington School will run until Nov. 7. Beginner student classes are from 1:00 – 2:00 p.m. Advanced student sessions are from 2:15 – 3:15 p.m. Classes are held at the Washington School Gym, 614 First Ave., Raritan.

The fall session of Beginners Tai Chi at the Warrenbrook Senior Center will run until Nov. 7. The class sessions run from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. and are held on the second floor of the Warrenbrook Senior Center, 500 Warrenville Road, Warren.

Each session consists of eight weekly classes limited to 15 participants each. Fran Maher is the instructor in Raritan and Brian Coffey is teaching in Warren. The cost for each eight-week session is \$40.

Hydroexercise

A variety of hydroexercise, deep-water, water-pilates, and aqua aerobics classes are being held through mid-December at the Somerset Valley YMCA on Garretson Road, Bridgewater and at the Shimon and Sara Birnbaum Jewish Community Center. Call (908) 704-6339 for dates and times. Fee at the YMCA is \$3.50 per class, and \$20 per session at the JCC.

Project Healthy Bones

Project Healthy Bones (PHB) is an osteoporosis exercise and education program for older women and men at risk for, or who have, osteoporosis. PHB is designed to improve strength, balance, and flexibility using balance and strength-training exercises. There are multiple sites throughout Somerset County. Cost is only \$25 for 6 months of exercise.

Two Towns Celebrate Anniversaries

The Somerset County Board of Freeholders extends congratulations to the Borough of Bound Brook, which is celebrating its 325th anniversary this year, and the Township of Warren, which marks its bicentennial this year.

Torpey Athletic Complex / Raritan River Greenway

Among the major new initiatives of the Somerset County Park Commission is the construction of the new Frank "Nap" Torpey Athletic Complex in Bridgewater. The project will be part of the larger Raritan River Greenway, a linear park that will open the Raritan River corridor to the public.



The initial phase of the complex included the construction of regulation baseball and softball fields, including fencing, lighting, dugouts and scoreboards. The next phase will include a multi-purpose synthetic-turf soccer, football and lacrosse field.

This new phase is scheduled for construction in the spring of 2007 and is intended to help offset the increasing demand for athletic facilities among the county's Regional Center communities

of Somerville, Raritan and Bridgewater.

In an attempt to expedite this project, the Board of Freeholders has provided a special allocation of \$750,000 from the county's Open Space, Farmland and Historic Preservation Trust Fund. This makes use of some of the additional open space funding approved by county voters in last fall's referendum.

'Consumer Corner'

New Jersey's Identity Theft Prevention Act



One of the fastest-growing financial crimes plaguing America is identity theft. On Jan. 1, 2006, New Jersey's Identity Theft Prevention Act took effect. The New Jersey Division of Consumer Affairs describes the act as "...the most comprehensive and easy-to-use identity theft prevention law in the nation which gives consumers the tools they need to protect their financial well-being."

New Jersey consumers may now:

- limit use of Social Security numbers as identifiers and prohibit public display and usage of their Social Security numbers on printed materials, except where required by law;

- require any company that lawfully collects and maintains computerized records containing personal information to notify him/her in the event that the personal data is compromised;
- require businesses to destroy records containing personal information that is no longer needed;
- file and receive a copy of police reports concerning his/her suspected identity theft; and
- request that a credit-reporting agency place a security freeze on his/her consumer credit reports.

In order to place (or remove) a security freeze on a credit report, consumers must contact each of the three major credit reporting agencies listed below and request that the freeze be placed on (or removed from) their credit reports. There is no charge to freeze a report.

Obtaining a security freeze is considered a tremendous deterrent against identity theft. However, keep in mind that while the freeze in effect, all creditors, even those you may want to do business with, will be banned from accessing your information.

EQUIFAX

Send written request via certified mail, with name, address, date of birth, social security number & proof of address, to:
Equifax Security Freeze
 P.O. Box 105788
 Atlanta, GA 30348
 For further information:
www.equifax.com

EXPERIAN

Request should be sent certified or overnight mail & must include consumer's full name with middle initial & generation, social security number, date of birth, current & previous addresses for the past 2 years, government-issued ID (such as driver's license) & proof of residence to:
Experian Security Freeze
 P.O. Box 9554
 Allen, TX 75013
 For further information:
www.experian.com

TRANSUNION

Written requests should be sent to:
TransUnion Security Freeze
 P.O. Box 6790
 Fullerton, CA 92834-6790
 For further information:
www.transunion.com



Calendar of Events

Sunday, Oct. 1 (rain date Oct. 8)

Law Enforcement Public Safety Community Day. Demonstrations, fingerprinting and photo IDs for kids, music, children's characters and more. 11 a.m.-3 p.m., Historic Courthouse, East Main Street, Somerville. Free. 908-575-3436 or 908-575-3420

Sunday, Oct. 1

1770s Festival. Historic crafts, demonstrations and children's activities. 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Somerset County Park Commission Environmental Education Center, 190 Lord Stirling Road, Basking Ridge. Suggested donation \$4 per person. 908-766-2489 www.somersetcountyparks.org

Saturdays - Oct. 7, Nov. 4, Dec. 2

First Saturday of the Month Recycling Drop-offs. 8 a.m.-2 p.m., Somerset County Recycling Center, 40 Polhemus Lane, Bridgewater. Free, Somerset County residents only. 732-469-3363

Wednesday, Oct. 18

CDBG & HOME Program Year 2007 Workshop. 10 a.m., 92 E. Main Street, Somerville. Free. 908-704-5756

Friday, Oct. 20

23rd Annual Youth Services Conference. 7:30 a.m.-2 p.m., Bridgewater Manor. \$45 per person. 908-704-6317

Saturday, Oct. 21

Household Hazardous Waste Drop-off. Final HHW drop-off for 2006. 9 a.m.-2 p.m., South County Public Works Facility, 410 Roycefield Road, Hillsborough. Free, Somerset County residents only. 908-231-7031

Monday-Friday, Oct. 23-27

Tire Drop-off. Limit 8 tires per resident. 8 a.m.-2 p.m., South County Public Works Facility, 410 Roycefield Road, Hillsborough. Free, Somerset County residents only. 908-231-7681

Friday-Sunday, Oct. 27-29

The Nature of Halloween Night Walks. Trail walks for children age 3-6 with their parents. 6-8 p.m., Somerset County Park Commission Environmental Education Center, 190 Lord Stirling Road, Basking Ridge. \$4 per person. 908-766-2489 www.somersetcountyparks.org

Wednesday, Nov. 15

Youth Council 10th Annual Youth Conference. For youth in grades 7-12. Theme: "Dance Like No One's Watching: Be True to Yourself." 6-9 p.m., 92 E. Main Street, Somerville. Free. 908-704-6307

Saturday, Nov. 18

11th Annual Turkey Trot. 5K race and 1-mile Fun Run/Walk. 9 a.m., Somerset County Park Commission Colonial Park, Parking Lot C, Franklin Twp. Fee \$15 if postmarked by Nov. 3, \$18 from Nov. 4. 908-722-1200 x226 www.somersetcountyparks.org

Friday-Sunday, Dec. 1-10

33rd Annual Festival of Trees. Mon.-Sat. 9:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Sun. 11 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Somerset County Park Commission Environmental Education Center, 190 Lord Stirling Road, Basking Ridge. Suggested donation \$4 adults, \$1 children and seniors. 908-766-2489 www.somersetcountyparks.org

Free Rabies Clinics

Remember to keep your pets healthy too! Contact the local health departments listed below for information about upcoming free rabies clinics. Participation is sometimes limited to residents of the township or borough hosting the clinic, so be sure to call first if you are not a resident.



Bernards

Saturday, Nov. 11, 10 a.m.-12 p.m.; Dec. 9, 10-11:30 a.m.; and Jan. 13, 10 a.m.-12 p.m. Municipal garage. Call (908) 766-2520 for more information.

Bound Brook

Saturday, Nov. 18, 9-10 a.m. Police station. Call (732) 356-8090 for more information.

Bridgewater

November and May. Call (908) 725-6300, ext. 259, for dates, times and location.

Franklin

Saturday, Dec. 9. Public works facility. Dogs only. Call (732) 873-2500 for times and more information.

Green Brook

Saturday, Nov. 4, 11 a.m.-12 p.m. Fire house. Call (732) 356-8090 for more information.

Montgomery

Early January. Dogs and cats only. Call (908) 359-8211, ext. 227, for date, time and location.

North Plainfield

Saturday, Nov. 4. Dogs and cats only. Animals must be six months of age or older. Not restricted to North Plainfield residents. Call (908) 231-7155 for more information.

Somerville Manville-Raritan

January and June. Call (908) 725-2300, ext. 1982, for dates, times and location.

South Bound Brook

Saturday, Nov. 4, 9-10 a.m. Municipal garage. Call (732) 356-8090 for more information.

Watchung

Saturday, Dec. 2, 9-10 a.m. Fire house. Call (732) 356-8090 for more information.



Outstanding Women Awards

The Somerset County Commission on the Status of Women will host its annual dinner honoring outstanding women of Somerset County in March 2007.

The deadline for nominations will be in December. Watch your local newspapers or visit www.co.somerset.nj.us in November for details about the dinner and the nomination process.