

The Green Way

KINGSTON GREENWAYS ASSOCIATION

A NEW JERSEY NON-PROFIT CORPORATION

www.kingstongreenways.org

Spring 2014 No. 23

Spring is a time of renewal! Please renew your membership now with the enclosed remittance envelope. You may also go directly to our web site to join or renew online: <http://www.kingstongreenways.org/forme.html>

COMING EVENTS

KGA EARTH DAY CLEANUP SESSIONS

Saturday, April 26, 2014, 9 to 11 AM and 2 to 4 PM



*9 to 11 AM--Rockingham
Historic Site, 84 Laurel
Avenue, Kingston*

Volunteers will collect trash around Rockingham and along Laurel Avenue.

*2 to 4 PM--Cook Natural Area
parking lot, 32 Heathcote
Road, Kingston NJ 08528
(intersection of Ridge Road,
Division Street, and Heathcote
Road)*

Volunteers will collect trash in the Cook Natural Area and parts of the Kingston Greenbelt

that adjoin Ridge Road, Division Street, and Mapleton Road. Volunteers may also report to the Mapleton Preserve at 145 Mapleton Road, Kingston. Cleanups will originate at both locations.

Boots, hats, and long pants are recommended. Garbage bags, gloves, grabbers, and safety vests will be provided. Meet great people, and leave the landscape cleaner than you found it! For further information, please call David at 609-924-3399.

**KGA ANNUAL MEETING AND PROGRAM-- NATURAL BEAUTY:
SOMERSET COUNTY PARKS**

Wednesday, May 7, 2014, 7:30 PM

Kingston Firehouse, 6 Heathcote Road, Kingston



After a brief business meeting, Clifford Zink, award-winning historian, preservation consultant, and author, will give a presentation on the subject of his latest book, **NATURAL BEAUTY: SOMERSET COUNTY PARKS**. He will trace the development of Somerset County's park system from its roots in the County's agricultural past through its evolution over nearly six decades into an organization utilizing creative public-private partnerships to preserve open space and serve more than 2,000,000 visitors and program participants annually.

Businessmen and political leaders worked tirelessly to establish the Somerset County Park Commission in 1956 by public referendum, and they adopted a visionary plan to preserve prime open space and provide excellent recreational opportunities for the public. Since that time, inspired public officials and professional staff have implemented and expanded the plan into a countywide network of 26 parks encompassing more than 13,500 acres.



Colonial Park Rose Garden

Somerset County parks today include award-winning facilities like the Environmental Education and Equestrian Centers at Lord Stirling Park, the horticultural centers at Colonial Park and Leonard J. Buck Garden, the Torpey Athletic Center, and the Neshanic Valley Golf Course. The Parks also contain exceptional landscapes and natural areas like Natirar and Sourland Mountain Preserve, the largest county park in New Jersey.

The meeting is open to the public, and refreshments will be served.

60th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION OF MARQUAND PARK
Sunday, April 27, 2014, Noon to 3 PM

For those who took a walk with us in Marquand Park in spring of 2010, this will be a lovely opportunity to revisit this Princeton gem. For those who missed it, this is your chance! To learn more about Marquand Park , visit <http://www.princetonnj.gov/parks/marquand.html>

SPIRIT OF NEW JERSEY HISTORY FAIR
Saturday, May 10, 2014, 11 AM to 5 PM

Three Kingston groups will participate—KGA, Friends of Princeton Nursery Lands, and the Kingston Historical Society. The event takes place at Washington Crossing State Park in Titusville, NJ, rain or shine. The History Fair will feature several centuries of New Jersey's history in commemoration of New Jersey's 350th anniversary. Included are demonstrations, displays, games, contests, dramatizations, reenactments, encampments, music and many special events. Admission is free; a suggested donation of \$8.00 for parking is requested per vehicle.

RECENT EVENTS
CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT
December 15, 2013

Only one of the two Kingston adult eagles was spotted, although both were in their nest tree the following Monday. The one that was seen was flying over the seedbeds near Mapleton Nurseries at 8:30 am. Karen Linder did see a juvenile from below, flying over Mapleton Road earlier that week, the first she had seen since the last batch of young fledged last year.



Photo by Brenda J. Jones

Highlights for Karen, who led the count, were two behavioral treats. The first was a red-bellied woodpecker hammering away on a Japanese maple, about one foot off the ground, so intent on his excavation that he paid no attention to the counters, who were close enough to see the cache of grubs that he uncovered and gobbled down. The second was a flock of juncos, jumping up to get seeds off the bent-over grasses, and slipping on the icy crust of snow when they landed.

FALL FOLIAGE WALK

October 20, 2013

In celebration of the 100th anniversary year of the founding of Princeton Nurseries, Rick Henkel led a walk through the Nurseries' Kingston site. Rick was formerly Sales Manager for Princeton Nurseries, where he worked for 32 years. After leaving the Nurseries, he founded Princeton Horticultural Services, which he continues to run. Rick has an extraordinary knowledge of trees, and knows the Kingston Site and its trees intimately.



Photo by Jonathan Michalik

HEATHCOTE FARM DEVELOPMENT

A development consisting of condos and townhouses on the hill adjacent to the Cook Natural Area has received preliminary approval; start of construction is anticipated before the end of the year. KGA had long hoped that this area could have been preserved as open space. The building will impact the otherwise unspoiled historically agricultural atmosphere that pervades the Cook

Area, but what is planned is better than alternatives. In fact, it is a laudably well-designed development. During hearings held by the architect, KGA made suggestions to divide the rather stark straight-line condo building into two angled blocks, giving a less intrusive appearance in the context of the Natural Area, and also to add more tree screening of the buildings from the Natural Area. These were readily agreed to by the architect.

Further features of the development that KGA is pleased to see are that much of the “sledding hill” will be preserved, available for public use, and that there will be public access through other parts of the area. Also the public parking for the Cook Area will be improved and have a safer access. We encourage our members to make full use of these improvements to the Cook Area.



KEEP IT GREEN UPDATE

Kingston Greenways Association is a member of NJ Keep It Green, a coalition of 185 park, conservation, agricultural and historic preservation groups working to create a long-term, dedicated source of funding for the preservation and stewardship of New Jersey's natural areas, waterways, parks, farmland and historic sites. With all funds from the 2009 bond measure fully allocated, the need for such funding is more critical than ever.

We are disappointed in the Assembly's failure to act on legislation that would have asked voters to dedicate a small percentage of sales tax revenues for open space, farmland and historic

preservation efforts, a measure that the State Senate approved in June by a bipartisan, super majority vote of 36-2.

Newly introduced legislation would ask voters to approve dedicating 6 percent of Corporate Business Tax (CBT) revenues for open space, farmland and historic preservation. The proposal would generate approximately \$150 million annually for preservation and stewardship programs. An additional 2% of the CBT would be dedicated for the purpose, as would the 4% of the CBT currently dedicated to other environmental programs, including underground storage tank removal, hazardous cleanup, watershed management and capital improvements in State Parks. The State Park Service currently has a backlog of urgent projects of \$300 million and now, with the diversions of its CBT funds to those areas impacted by Hurricane Sandy, will probably not be able to address the backlog for at least five years. The Coalition is divided on aspects of the proposed bill, but it is hoped that it can be reworked under the leadership of co-sponsoring Senators Bob Smith and Kip Bateman to achieve broad support, both in the Legislature and the environmental community, in time to appear on the November ballot.

A draft report by the state Department of Environmental Protection entitled the State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan indicates that at least 650,000 acres still need to be preserved to protect water quality, provide parks and other recreational opportunities, and support the economy. In addition, at least 400,000 acres of farmland must be protected to maintain a viable agriculture industry. It also highlights the importance of recreation and parks to the quality of life in New Jersey and to redevelopment initiatives, especially in urban areas. Green Acres has more than 1,100 park development projects in every county of the state. The report acknowledges that a long-term, stable funding source will be required to meet New Jersey's current and future conservation and recreation needs, especially as New Jersey's population continues to grow and the public demand for parks and open space increases.

For more information, please visit <http://njkeepitgreen.org/>

IN CLOSING...

Thank you for being part of Kingston Greenways Association! We appreciate your interest, advocacy, and support, and always welcome your comments and suggestions. Share your ideas with us at one of our events, or communicate with us in any of these ways:

Write: PO Box 391, Kingston NJ 08528-0391

Email: <http://kingstongreenways.org/>

Call: 609-750-1821

We would also be glad to hear from anyone who would like to consider serving on our board of trustees!

Tari Pantaleo

President, Kingston Greenways Association

<http://kingstongreenways.org/>