



## Helping Harpers Ferry

### A Note From the Volunteer Coordinator

The 2010-2011 season has been one of tremendous accomplishment! Harpers Ferry National Historical Park continues to benefit from the knowledge, skills and most importantly, enthusiasm that our volunteers bring to the park.

Since 2008, the park has received \$2.5 million of service from our volunteers. From the traditional volunteer positions in visitor services, living history, cultural resources, natural resources, grounds maintenance and education to new position offerings in information technology and volunteer management, Harpers Ferry Park continues to be a life-long learning laboratory for all.

Our highly competitive intern program repeatedly brings in top quality students looking to obtain an on-the-

ground experience before entering the workplace. Without these valuable volunteers *Helping Harpers Ferry*, the park would not have been able to provide such a quality visitor experience this season.

New among the intern ranks was a position solely dedicated towards supporting the park's diverse volunteer program. This position, in addition to assistance from a seasonal employee and part-time graduate student intern, was pivotal to the continued success of the park's volunteer program. All three students significantly contributed to the development of this newsletter, but most importantly, the creation of a VIP Handbook and Vision Plan. I am very pleased to introduce these important documents which provide the program

with both current consistent guidance as well as future direction. I don't know of any other park unit within the National Capital Region of the National Park Service that has put together such a comprehensive handbook or has articulated a true mission and vision for their volunteer program. Thank you Julie, Becky and Samantha!

Lastly, a tremendous amount of appreciation must be expressed to all of the park's volunteer supervisors. Without your dedication and willingness to share your time, talents and passion for the work you do, we would not have the successful program we do today. Thanks to everyone!

- Jess Liptak  
Volunteers & Outreach

# New VIP Handbook

Be sure to keep a lookout for our new Harpers Ferry Volunteer Handbook! This document is a handy guide for any volunteer at Harpers Ferry. It includes everything from community service opportunities and volunteer policies to information about the National Park Service and Harpers Ferry. Coming this fall, the handbook will be available for download on the park website or can be sent electronically. A hard copy will be provided to each volunteer supervisor.



# Upcoming Events

## Freedom's Run - October 1

Come help us staff the Harpers Ferry aid station for the historic Freedom's Run, which winds through four of our national parks! Contact Jessica Liptak at 304.535.5017 for more information.



## In the Shadows of John Brown: The 1861 Battle of Bolivar Heights

Dates: October 15 - 16, 2011

Times: 11 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Two years to the day after John Brown's Raid, Union and Confederate troops clashed on Bolivar Heights. Activities will include; living history, ranger conducted programs and family/youth activities.

# A Thank You to Boy Scouts



Boy Scout troops from around the region participated in several meaningful volunteer projects at Harpers Ferry this past spring and summer. Their work is important to us and appreciated!

**A thank you** to Jerry Prentice and all scout troops who took part in the School House Ridge South clean up this past May! What a tremendous endeavor in the making and undertaking. Jerry's leadership and precision led to an extensive clean-up engaging over 250 scouts and scout leaders.

**A thank you** to Troop #1022 from Ellicott City, MD for battling nature! These awesome scouts took time out of their biking trip to hand weed our archaeologically sensitive Armory grounds field.

**A thank you** to Troop #957 from Warrenton, VA for beautifying our park! Older scouts cleaned and waxed the waysides in Lower Town for two hours and younger scouts removed trash for an hour on Virginus Island.

**A thank you** to the troop from Manassas, VA for hauling bamboo! Schoolhouse Ridge South is home to invasive bamboo species and these dedicated scouts spent four hours removing previously cut bamboo from our farming fields.



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

If you or someone you know might be interested in volunteering at Harpers Ferry Park, please contact the park's volunteer coordinator at the address, phone number, or email listed below. Volunteer today and give back!

**Harpers Ferry  
National Historical Park**  
Volunteer Coordinator  
P.O. Box 65  
Harpers Ferry, WV 25425

**Phone**  
304.535.5017

The National Park Service cares for the special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

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2011 SCA Crew Members

## Students Preserve Heritage

This summer, under the direction of park landscape architect Steve Lowe, six high school students and two adult leaders from the Student Conservation Association (SCA) worked hard to protect and preserve the natural and cultural resources of Harpers Ferry Park.

The SCA is a national program modeled after the Civilian Conservation Corps. Harpers Ferry SCA crew leaders Leah Cantor and Nick Marcet stated, SCA has over 80 crews of students nationwide working on conservation projects in all 50 states. These leaders oversaw a devoted group of teens that took three weeks out of their busy summer vacations to camp at our park and immerse themselves into several service projects.

These student volunteers had a busy schedule of projects to accomplish during their time with us. Not only were they repairing sections of the historic worm fence that line our battlefields, but they also removed invasive bamboo groves located on Schoolhouse Ridge South.

Their main goal, however, was to finish taking down the 1,000 foot tree line located on Schoolhouse Ridge North. When the tree line was finally removed, visitors have the same unhindered view that Stonewall Jackson had during the 1862 Battle of Harpers Ferry. Crew member Maggie Mechnick enjoyed the historical context of her community service project. "I liked seeing the same view that the Union and Confederate troops saw." In fact, all crew members were excited that they contributed to the park's visitor experience.

For the SCA crew, helping out Harpers Ferry was not the only goal in their minds, it was also about engaging in activities that contributed to personal growth. "We were busy and it was hard work to do," said crewmember Wendy Vargas, who was back with SCA for her second year. "The goal was to get that tree line done and to feel proud of ourselves afterwards."

We salute the SCA for their time and effort put forth to improving Harpers Ferry.

## One Year Ago . . .

The Harpers Ferry Volunteers-In-Parks Program won the National Take Pride in America Award in the Federal Volunteer Program category! The Volunteer Program was recognized for its tremendous number and variety of volunteer opportunities and for logging over 38,000 volunteer hours in 2009. Our program was selected out of hundreds of other nominations from across the country representing outstanding examples of public lands stewardship. Today, volunteers of all ages and skill levels remain supporters of our program and continue to experience a large variety of opportunities at Harpers Ferry National Historical Park.



## Volunteer Recognition

Congratulations to our summer Volunteers of the Month! All of our recognized volunteers receive a certificate signed by the Superintendent and a token of appreciation.

### June

Lori Epstein, Archaeology and Museums

### July

Harpers Ferry Middle School Shop Class, Education

### August

Julie Sawnor, Volunteer Management

### September

Aaron Ladd, Tom Linders, and Seth Morphis, Natural Resources

# Volunteer Profiles

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**Anne Long** is a Visitor Services volunteer who has been donating her time to Harpers Ferry for 15 years. Not only does she interact with park visitors, but she also enjoys helping people with genealogies and book research. Having a broken leg at the time, Anne decided that she did not want to feel sorry for herself anymore, so she started to volunteer as a way to research and give back to the national parks. Anne was drawn to Harpers Ferry because she came across some letters written by her great uncle, who was captured at the Battle of Harpers

Ferry. Having lived in so many places around the world, Anne especially enjoys talking to foreign visitors. Anne lives by the motto, "To save a river is not about rivers, it's about the human heart." Anne is passionate about volunteering and believes it's "important to connect to visitor's interests and find out why they are at Harpers Ferry. I hope to build a bridge to their passions and I hope that they will also contribute to national parks." A thank you goes out to Anne for her commitment to being a park steward over the years!



Two afternoons a week, friends **Dorothy Strange** and **Martha Zimmerman** volunteer with the Museum Management program. Both women have been preserving park history by removing staples and paper clips from archives and relocating them into acid free folders. Martha jokes that she originally started volunteering to keep herself out of trouble! In actuality, however, both Dorothy and Martha expressed that they were drawn to Harpers Ferry because they love nature, history, and especially national parks. Growing up, Martha often camped at national parks, and

Dorothy lived in Yosemite for a time. While Dorothy began volunteering to keep herself busy after her husband passed away and Martha just recently started volunteering. Dorothy was excited to find a memo written and personally signed by Bill Clinton. "It was great to hold in my hands a paper with his signature on it," Dorothy states. Martha always enjoy coming across photographs of the Scottish Castle that once stood on Bolivar Heights because she remembers visiting there with her girl scout troop. Thank you to Martha and Dorothy for preserving our heritage!



This is the second summer that Rocky Knoll teacher **Mark Walker** has volunteered with the Education program. Two days a week, Mark does office work, such as reviewing lesson plans, and works with the Congressional Youth Leadership Conference (CYLC) scholars who visit the park. Originally drawn to the idea of volunteering when his family was visiting the park, Mark has remained ever since! Mark appreciates the sense of family that he feels here and loves national parks, so it is interesting

for him to learn about NPS from the inside out. Mark enjoys CYLC the most, and especially likes to find out where all of the young scholars are from. Before embarking on a family vacation to New Mexico recently, while volunteering at the park, Mark met a scholar from that state who gave him some useful tips about the best places to visit there! Mark describes his community service as "A way to give back. Harpers Ferry is a neat place." Thank you Mark for your dedicated service to our park!

# A Summer Spent with the NPS



**Andrew Childers**

Harpers Ferry was a hot spot for college internships this past summer! The park had 17 interns volunteering in almost every park discipline. We asked some of our interns how they contributed to the park every day and what they enjoy most about volunteering with us. Here is what they said . . .

Visitor Services intern Andrew Childers, a junior at San Francisco State University, staffed the Information and Visitor Centers, and gave tours on Bolivar Heights. His favorite experience was when he swore in and presented badges to 16 Junior Rangers at once. Andrew said, "Harpers Ferry rules! Just learning about this place was incredible."



**Stephanie Lalle**

Stephanie Lalle, a senior at Penn State University, and Katey Stauffer, a junior at Gettysburg College, both worked with the park's education staff this summer. Both were involved with the CYLC program, but each had their own projects as well. "I worked on a brochure for the terrace garden-Harpers Ferry Middle School Project," said Stephanie. Katey added, "I looked up grants and researched improvements for the CYLC War Correspondence station." While Katey most enjoyed working with War Correspondence students, Stephanie said her favorite experience was presenting a wetlands puppet show to children at a local library.



**Katey Stauffer**

Natural Resources interns Aaron Ladd and Tom Linder, seniors at Shepherd University worked with the park's Natural Resources Specialist. In addition, each completed his own project. Aaron conducted a case study to see if sewage plant discharge into the Shenandoah river had an environmental impact, and Tom studied the movements of destructive ash borer beetles. Both commented on their favorite experience which was right after the spring flood. Aaron stated, "I rescued carp from the cotton mill ruins," and Tom added, "It was awesome to see the high waters raging around the blown out dam."



**Aaron Ladd**

Nate McDonald, a junior at Davis and Elkins College, and Julia Sell, a sophomore at Hollins University, were Living History interns this summer, with Julia also interning in Education as well. Both Julia and Nate staffed exhibits and interpreted to visitors in period clothing. "I never did the same thing twice and I enjoyed learning about new things, like how to cook over an open fire," explained Julia. Nate most enjoyed interacting with park visitors and commented, "I liked knowing that most of them appreciated what I was doing," that is interpreting through the proper use and display of period clothing.



**Tom Linder**

Without the commitment of these and the rest of our interns, park staff could not have accomplished the superior quality customer service and the meticulous care of park resources, so a hearty thank you goes out to all of them!



**Nate McDonald**



**Julia Sell**