



# The Lowell Volunteer Partner

Volume 10 Winter 2010 Issue

Lowell National Historical Park



**2009 First Bloom Project  
Planting at Swamp Locks**

*Division Reports . . . . .* 3,6,8  
*Spindle City Corps . . . . .* 4  
*Middlesex Comm. College . . . . .* 4  
*Banjo & Fiddle Contests . . . . .* 5  
*First Bloom . . . . .* 7  
*Volunteer Spotlights . . . . .* 9  
*2010 Calendar . . . . .* 10



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
Lowell National Historical Park

## Volunteer Management

J. R. Roberts

### Volunteer Phone #'s

Vol. Asst: 978-275-1737  
Vol. Office: 978-275-1740  
Fax: 978-275-1745  
Sick Phone: 978-275-1785  
Snow Phone: 978-970-5001

### Mailing Address

67 Kirk Street  
Lowell, MA 01852-1029

### E-mail

Lowell\_NHP\_Volunteers@nps.gov

### Web Site

[www.nps.gov/lowe/supportyourpark](http://www.nps.gov/lowe/supportyourpark)

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

**EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA™**



With 2009 behind us, all of the numbers tallied, and the reports sent off to the regional and national offices, I can take some time to reflect on the past year. 2009 was a year of major transition for the Volunteer Program

at Lowell National Historical Park. Starting with the retirement of longtime Volunteer Program Coordinator Mike Wurm (and numerous other changes within the management structure of the Volunteer Office), as well as its relocation to the Visitor Center, we ended up surprisingly, well-equipped to face 2010. After assuming a leadership role in the Volunteer Office and being joined by Volunteer Program Assistant VIP Miriam Perkins, I began to set up an improved system of accountability for volunteer hours and manage-

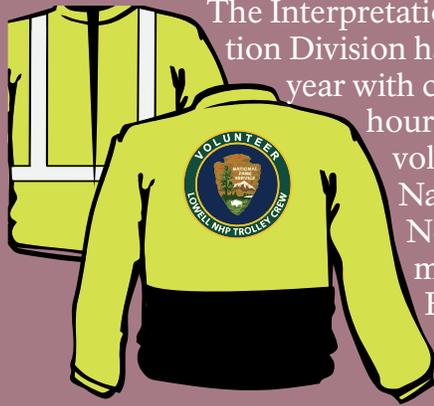
ment of the numerous requests that were coming in on a daily basis. There were times that the workload appeared daunting and the future menacing. Fortunately, National Park Ranger Kathy Caulfield returned to the Volunteer Office in March and provided much needed help with organizing and overseeing the volunteer program. At the same time, Lowell NHP Maintenance Volunteer Coordinators Deb Harding and Sheila Carman also returned to the park and help to fill the gaps in that area which began to loom large on the horizon. Without the daily assistance of these four people, I'm sure the 2009 volunteer program at Lowell National Historical Park would not have even gotten off the ground. They quickly set about preparing a schedule of stewardship events and programs to have in place before the volunteers arrived. By May, we were in full swing! The organization really paid off as spring turned into summer and the volunteer program really heated up. The biggest volunteer event of the year, Lowell Folk Festival®, went off with only a few minor glitches.

Lowell NHP is fortunate to have a large amount of people who want to give their time and efforts to help out. It also requires a lot of oversight to make sure that things run smoothly and people get placed where they can do the most good. As we look forward to 2010, we can feel more comfortable with the approaching schedule of events, having weathered a full year as a team. There are some new additions to the Volunteer Office staff for 2010. VIP Ron Bernard joined us in the fall of '09 to help fill behind both Kathy and Miriam as they both returned to school and reduced their time in the office. Greater Lowell Tech High School students Katie Dion and Katie Mullin joined us in December and will be assisting with database management and maintaining the volunteer web pages. VIP Barry Green continues to assist the office with the production of the newsletter and VIP Diane Novelli assists with Volunteer Spotlight interviews. I am grateful for all of their past and continued assistance.

In 2009, Lowell NHP logged nearly 80,000 hours of volunteer time donated by more than 2,300 volunteers. This is no small achievement. Each and every one of you deserves a round of applause for the generous donation of time and effort you have given to help this park achieve its administrative, interpretive, and stewardship goals. We would like to see those numbers increase for 2010. I can safely say that the Volunteer Office is committed to making that happen. We hope to see and hear from you in the coming year. You will be hearing from us as we gear up for National Volunteer Week in April, the spring clean-ups, and the summer festivals. We've also taken a first step toward enhanced collaboration among groups and stronger community connections by offering links on our updated web pages to our partners' volunteer services. Check them out. I want to wish you all a Happy New Year. May 2010 prove to be prosperous and healthy for each and every one of you.

J.R. Roberts - Park Ranger/Volunteer Program Management

## Division of Interpretation & Education



The Interpretation & Education Division had a very busy year with close to 60,000 hours donated by volunteer staff, National Senior Network Community Service Employment Program, Community Teamwork Inc.

Senior Volunteer Program placements, and University of Massachusetts Lowell Federal Work Study Program students. There were a few new things in 2009 worth highlighting. The addition of volunteer First Mates on the park's canal boat tours proved to be very successful and will most likely continue in 2010. The LNHP volunteer trolley crew received new safety raincoats which make them more visible and safe on dark, rainy days and nights. It

has been noted that those VIPs have a certain "glow" now due to the bright reflective nature of the coats. The Lowell High School Mail Team also got new jackets and hats in LHS burgundy to help with their identification. They are quite proud to be wearing their school colors while they deliver mail for the park. Spindle City Corps continued with their involvement in the City of Lights Parade, Monster Bash, Winterfest, and their summer programs with the Art Ship Enterprise and the SCC Youth Theater Project. The summer SCC Maintenance crew also continued in 2009, assisting with routine grounds work and maintenance projects. Education also got assistance from volunteer Museum Teachers with their academic school-year programs and from Junior Camp Counselors for the Summer Camp sessions.



# SPINDLE CITY CORPS

Working in partnership with Community Teamwork, Inc. (CTI), Lowell National Historical Park (LNHP) expanded its youth offerings under the Spindle City Corps (SCC) umbrella with the mission of service, diversity and education for the 2008-2009 school year and for the summer of 2009. September 2008 marked the kickoff of the Year Round Spindle City Corps comprised of 12 youths who assisted LNHP and CTI staff with projects in the community such as Monster Bash, Winterfest and MLK Day of Service. Summer offerings included two SCC maintenance teams that worked with LNHP maintenance staff assisting with backlogged projects such as painting fences and cutting brush. The Youth Theater Program team presented first person costumed

interpretation programs throughout the Park and city. The Artship Enterprise team traveled in an art studio on wheels presenting projects to neighborhood youths in a multitude of venues. A major goal of the summer was to integrate the maintenance, theater and Artship teams to work cooperatively to serve the community and to create learning experiences for all team members. This included camping together, offering opportunities for maintenance team members to work on the Artship and including all team members on service trips and camping trips as feasible. One major event was CTI Day where all team members hosted 150 youths ages 5-11 from the CTI summer day camp program to enjoy a day of activities at LNHP.



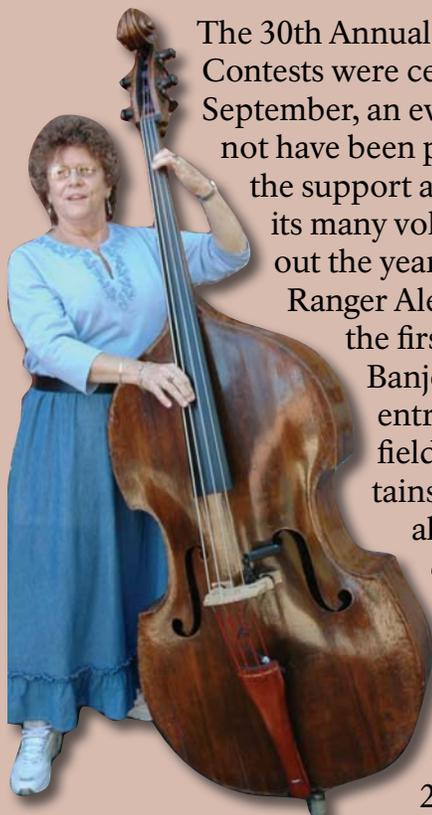
## Middlesex Community College - Seasons of Service

In 2008 Middlesex Community College (MCC) held their first school wide Day of Service. In September MCC started their new "Seasons of Service" program to give students, faculty and staff the opportunity to volunteer



throughout the year at various locations. Approximately 30 volunteers cleaned up the Prescott St Walk Way and the area around the fountain. This new program looks like it's going to be a great success.

## The Banjo & Fiddle Contests 2009



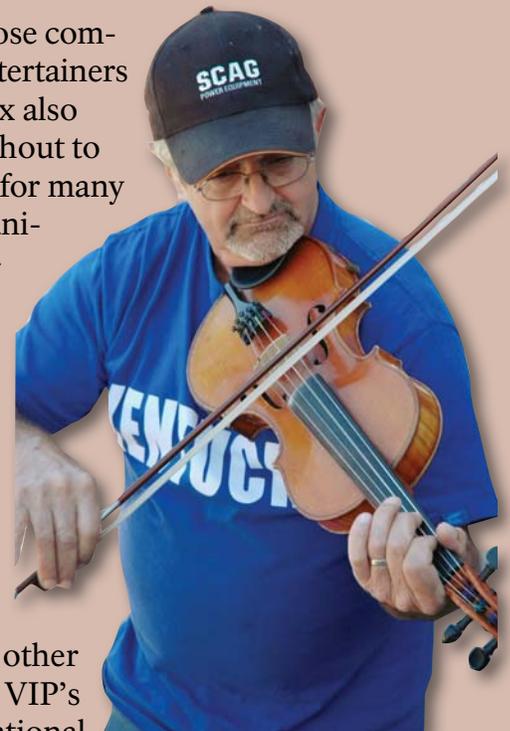
The 30th Annual Banjo & Fiddle Contests were celebrated this past September, an event that would not have been possible without the support and dedication of its many volunteers throughout the years. Organized by Ranger Alex Demas in 1979, the first contest had 9 Banjo and 13 Fiddle entries. Today, the field generally contains 80-100 entrants, all of whom are considered to be volunteers.

Stepping up to the plate with administrative help for the past 20 years have

been Helen and Bruce Blaschke who met Alex when he presented a musical program to their Girl Scout Troop. This year, Helen provided a quilt at the Contests for all the musicians to sign or write a note of "Thanks" to Alex for his many years of being the glue that

keeps this loose community of entertainers together. Alex also sends out a shout to Rich Hamm for many years of organizational support. Rich is also very involved as a volunteer for the Lowell Summer Music Series.

On the day of the event, other Rangers and VIP's of Lowell National Historical Park assist Alex in any way they can to keep things flowing smoothly. This year, the Contests had to be moved into the High School due to severe rains, but all seemed to go well as one could see these musicians so happy to be spending a day reuniting with old friends in harmonious chords.



## Division of Maintenance & Facility Management

Under the direction of Maintenance Volunteer Coordinators Sheila Carman and Deb Harding, and Lowell Canalwaters Cleaners Executive Director Bill Moreau, nearly 700 volunteers provided Lowell NHP's Division of Maintenance & Facility Management with over 17,000 hours of assistance in FY 2009. Volunteers cleaned up the city's canal and walkways, planted gardens and educated local citizens about environmental and ecological issues. Events such as Earth Day, National Public Lands Day, corporate cleanups, and Stewardship Saturdays all helped to beautify the

city and provide a better place in which to live, work, and play. Middlesex Community College, Boston Cares and Motorola each conducted a Day of Service in the park and Metabolix adopted the Western Canalway next to the Wannalancit Mills as their very own, providing two cleanup days during the year. Most of the work done by these volunteers would likely fall to the limited maintenance crew of the park and would not get accomplished in such a timely fashion without their assistance. Keep up the good work!



## Division of Cultural Resources & Programming

In 2009, the Division of Cultural Resources & Programming benefited from nearly 900 hours of volunteer support. Clee Ace continues to assist the division with administrative support in the collections management office and Jeanette Dose keeps the park library open to the public on Thursdays. Lindsey Tapper also joined the division for an internship

through the museum studies program of Tufts University. Lindsey not only learned about the park's collection and the management thereof, but she also used the collection to research and mount a temporary exhibit about the Proprietors of Locks & Canals on the Merrimack River at the Visitor Center



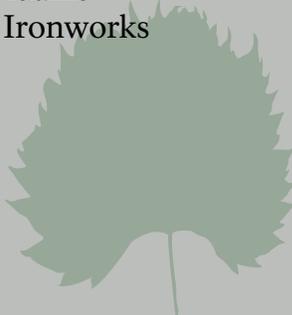
# First Bloom

First Bloom teaches children the science of native plants, encouraging them to protect the environment in national parks and in their own backyards. A collaborative partnership between the National Park Foundation, Lowell National Historical Park, Community Teamwork, Inc., and Community Gardens Greenhouse, the First Bloom project in Lowell provided opportunities for children from the Robinson Middle School to learn about plants native to the area. They “dug in” by designing their own garden and planted along Swamp Locks.

First Bloom participants traveled to Adams National Historical Park and Saugus Ironworks

National Historic Site to participate in planting events with children from other First Bloom programs in the Boston area. They also hosted these children at an Earth Day event sponsored by Community Gardens Greenhouse.

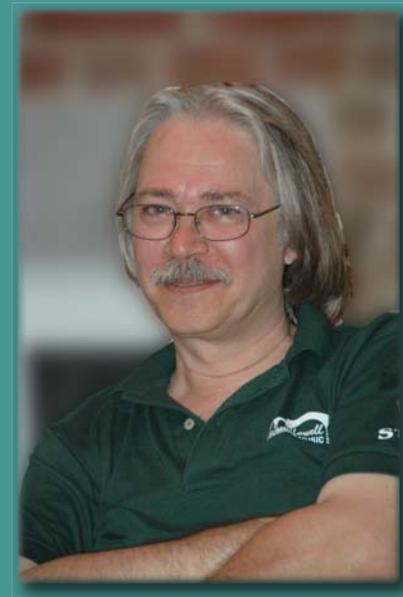
The 2010 First Bloom Project will focus on replanting the historic garden in front of the Moody Street Feeder Gatehouse on Merrimack Street using non-invasive native plants. The opening of the garden is scheduled for May 15, 2010 during National Historic Preservation Month and Doors Open Lowell.



## Office of Heritage Development & Preservation

Events such as the Lowell Summer Music Series, Lowell Folk Festival®, Doors Open Lowell, and the partnership with the Seashore Trolley Museum of Kennebunk's National Streetcar Museum in Lowell as well as operation of their vintage streetcar 966 all fall under the direction of the Office of Heritage Development & Preservation. All enjoyed considerable success with volunteer support in 2009. Using federal economic stimulus funding, The Career Center of Lowell was able to provide the Lowell Summer Music Series with approximately 25 summer positions for local youths. Combined with the continued support of longtime, seasoned

Summer Music Series volunteers, the events at Boarding House Park were well staffed and well attended this summer. The Lowell Folk Festival® received over 18,000 hours of volunteer support from 1,200+ volunteers. These events rely on community support to continue to be successful and the event partners all appreciate the work given by the volunteer staff. The National Streetcar Museum opened every weekend and Streetcar 966 operated every weekend from Memorial Day to Columbus Day due to the continued support of volunteers and the UMass Lowell Federal Work Study Program.



## Communicating the Word - by Philip Lupsiewicz, Media and Communications

I seem to spend more and more time in front of a computer these days, more than I care to for sure. The computer is one of the best tools for creating and communicating content on park offerings, events and news. In many ways, it can be overwhelming, especially when we gear up for the Lowell Folk Festival, if only I had more help. Well, I'm happy to say help arrived when John Morrison contacted the park about volunteer opportunities. John has worked his career in audio-video production and AV system design. His timing couldn't have been better. Not only were we gearing up for the folk festival, but I had recently been tasked with designing and managing the audio-video upgrade of the Boott Events Center. Immediately, John was able to provide input on evaluation of the needs for the Events Center as well as research as to what would work best in the center with our budget. In between meeting with staff on the upgrade, John jumped onto the internet and began researching sites



of interest to contact about the folk festival. In no time at all, over 150 sites agreed to support the word about the festival, expanding our presence on the internet more than it's ever been. It's always hard to say exactly where people learn about our festival, but I'm confident that John's efforts were seen by anyone who went to the web to gather information on it. Also, next time you have the opportunity to visit the Boott Events Center, do pause for a moment to marvel at the thought which went into its upgrades and improvements, I'm thrilled to have had the opportunity to work with John.



## Spotlight: Pauline Golec



Pauline Golec's whole life has truly been one of volunteerism and a deep love of Lowell long before anyone saw its potential as a site for a National Historical Park. However, since this is a wrap-up of VIP activities for 2009, we are only able to mention a few of Pauline's many contributions here.



Perhaps closest to her heart is her role as a teacher at The Tsongas Industrial History Center two days per week. Retirement from full-time teaching in 2001 did not stop Pauline from sharing her knowledge of Lowell's cultural and ethnic experiences that are so important for the school groups to understand when they visit from other areas of New England. Equally important and without fanfare, Pauline is a superb model for other teachers from Lowell NHP and UMass Lowell. Lowell National Historical Park Ranger William Morton described Pauline as "enthusiastic about children, education, history, and the city of Lowell." He went on to say that "Pauline's energy and dedication are inspiring to the younger teachers. She is regarded as an excellent resource for Lowell's complex issues of ethnicity and culture." In agreement with William's remarks, Tsongas Industrial History Center Assistant Director Sheila Kirschbaum added that "Pauline is a

good friend, a good professional colleague, a resource for Lowell's history, a community activist, and simply a nice person."

Pauline was raised in Lowell and educated in local schools, graduating from the {then} Mass State Teachers College in 1962. As a person of Polish descent, Pauline was instrumental in the founding of the Lowell Polish Cultural Committee, formed from a group previously known as the Polish Regatta Committee. As we all know, these early cultural groups joined together for local Regatta Festivals which eventually contributed to Lowell being chosen as a site for National and then Lowell Folk Festivals. To this day, Pauline serves as the Ethnic Chair, aka Ethnic Food Coordinator, bringing together the "older" traditional groups with the "newer arrived" Southeast Asian groups in providing the food tents which are such a popular draw for visitors to the annual Lowell Folk Festival. Outside of LNHP, it would surprise no one to learn that Pauline is active on the Parish Council of Holy Trinity Roman Catholic Church. She is also on the Board of Directors of the Lowell Historical Society, the grant distribution committee of the Greater Lowell Community Foundation, and is a Trustee and Scholarship Chair of the Lowell Festival Foundation.

As I write this, I can hear Pauline humbly protesting that this is too much attention being given to her, that she is just doing what she loves for the city that she so obviously loves. Well, Right Back At Ya, Pauline!!

# 2010 CALENDAR:



**April 3, 9:00 AM** – Lock Tender Training with Lowell Parks & Conservation Trust

**April 18-24** – National Volunteer Week

**April 18, 12:00-4:00** – Keep Lowell Beautiful Community Gardens Greenhouse Earth Day

**April 24, 8:00-1:00** – Earth Day Downtown Clean Up, kick-off at 8 AM - Middlesex Community College

**April 24** – Junior Ranger Day

**May 1, 9:00-12:00** – Great American City-wide Clean-Up

**May 8** – Volunteer Field Trip to Minuteman National Historical Park

**May 15, 9:00-1:00** – First Bloom Gardening Project @ Moody Street Feeder Gatehouse, & Boston Cares Clean Up

**June 5, 9:00-1:00** – Acre & Western Canal Clean-Up

**June 5, 9:00-1:00** – National Trails Day Clean Up

**June 12, 10:00-2:00** – RiverFest 2010, Riverwalk Clean Up

**July 17, 9:00-1:00** – Pre-Folk Festival downtown canals clean-up, LCC

**July 23-25, 9:00-12:00** – Folk Festival sites set-up

**August 21, 9:00-1:00** – Canal Clean Up,

**August 21, 10:00-5:00** – Southeast Asian Water Festival Recycling

**September 18, 9:00** – Litter Index

**September 25, 9:00-1:00** – National Public Lands Day Clean Up

