



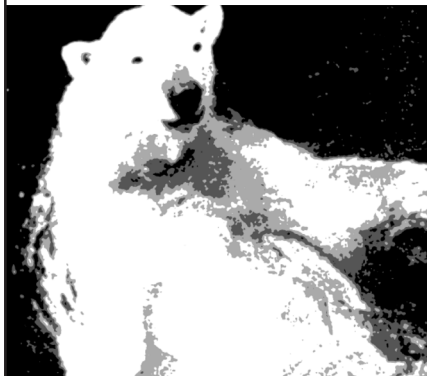
ECPC News welcomes submissions
from all parks friends groups to
ecpc@newhavenct.net or
ECPC News at the above address.

ECPC is supported in
part by the New Haven
Department of Parks,
Recreation and Trees.



Wring in the New Year with ECPC - Polar Plunge for Parks.

January 1st, 2005 Lighthouse Point Park.
11am until 1pm



Strip to your skivvies and race headlong into the icy sea! Then hit the steamy hot tubs and feast on the hearty cooked-to-order, all-you-can-eat breakfast!

Or just come to watch and eat at our fourth annual **Plunge for Parks**. Both ways you will be attending a party that benefits New Haven's legendary parks!

Money raised benefits ECPC and each Plungers' favorite parks or environmental group. We encourage teams of plungers as well as individuals representing any parks friends group or environmental organization in New Haven to compete for the grand prize. The team raising the most money gets to spend that entire sum on its park or organization - ECPC relinquishes its cut!

To join the committee, to volunteer OR to Plunge for Park call or email for pledge forms and more information.

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



I have enjoyed this past year as president of ECPC. I have been privileged to meet and work with so many people who tirelessly dedicate themselves to making New Haven parks the best that they can be, and in turn making New Haven a great place to live. There are too many to name, but I would like to thank all those who volunteered and gave up their precious time to work for ECPC this year. You all did a fabulous job. If there are any doubts, I just want to review some of our many accomplishments this year.

For the fourth year in a row ECPC brought Student Conservation Association interns to New Haven. These interns are college students who are looking to earn a little money for college while working to improve the environment. New Haven is one of the few urban areas in the country to have SCA interns working in their parks. This year the interns ran a river educational program, Quinnipiac River Discovery, in Fair Haven. Neighborhood kids came to the river to learn about aquatic wildlife, to fish and to canoe around the Quinnipiac. This great program gives inner-city children a chance to experience the wildlife right in their own backyard. The interns spent the remainder of their time helping park friends groups on projects in their parks. They helped park friends groups in Edgerton, East Rock and Jocelyn Square Park to name a few.

ECPC is an umbrella group for all of the park friends groups in the city. This year we welcomed two new park friends groups to the city, Friends of Bishop Woods and Friends of the West River Narrows. We offered Experience Your Parks grants to any neighborhood or parks friends group that wanted to sponsor an event in their local park. Our grants were used for the Cherry Blossom Fair in Wooster Square Park, for Solar Youth's West Rock Day and many other events. I encourage anyone who is interested in holding an event in a New Haven park to apply. We still have money left in the fund.

This was the first year that ECPC sponsored our own park improvement days in various New Haven parks. We partnered with neighborhood and park friends groups and spent a day each month working to improve a New Haven park. In Bayview Park we helped build a fence to block out the highway that bisects the park. We held a clean up to remove garbage from a little known park off Walley Avenue, the West River Narrows and we spent a day mulching the many trees in Jocelyn Square Park.

ECPC is also working on issues that affect your parks. We are lobbying to keep ATVs out of all of our parks. Bishop Woods Park has been devastated by illegal ATV use. ECPC is working with neighbors and the Parks Department to devise a plan to keep ATVs out of the park. Once ATV usage is curtailed, we will work on a plan to restore this valuable asset.

As we approach 2005 we have a lot of challenges ahead of us. As the city tries to balance its budget, all departments and programs must tighten their belts. ECPC's partner department, Parks, Recreation and Trees needs our support in caring for New Haven's natural and cultural heritage. Hence, the need for citizen involvement in our parks has never been greater. We must work to get more park friends groups in the city and more citizens active in their parks. We must build on our past fundraising success and increase our revenue, working toward our ultimate goal of a full-time staff person. Judging by how this organization has grown over the past five years, I think our best days are ahead of us and I feel confident in our future.

Thank you all for your membership and your support of ECPC. Without the support of citizens like you we could not do our valuable work. Have a great holiday season and I hope to see you on January 1st in the cold waters of Long Island Sound.

Stephen Wilcox, President
ELM CITY PARKS CONSERVANCY

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

ORNAMENTAL ICONS: HELPING NEW HAVEN'S HERITAGE

In our last newsletter, we introduced our newest effort to bring attention to New Haven's historic public monuments: Ornamental Icons. Our parks are graced with an dozens of monuments and plaques of celebrating our history while enhancing the aesthetic value of the city. The City of New Haven and the Parks Department are systematically conserving each piece of sculpture, stone and bronze. ECPC supports and applauds these efforts. We are selling these collectible ornaments to raise public awareness and appreciation of these features. Our initial ornament featuring the Five-Mile Lighthouse at Lighthouse Point Park is proving wildly popular!



We encourage you to participate in this campaign for sculpture while supporting ECPC's advocacy efforts. As the holiday gift-giving season approaches, consider purchasing these small collectibles. As a small gift, stocking stuffer or distinctive decoration, these ornaments are both attractive and affordable at \$12 or \$30 for 3. **ECPC members will receive discounted pricing** of \$10 each or \$25 for 3. Call or email to purchase your ornament today!

EXPERIENCE YOUR PARKS UPDATE

Congratulations to the Friends of Edgewood for rallying in the cold of early December to coordinate volunteers to help stabilize the banks of the Duck Pond off Chapel Street. FOEP received an Experience Your Parks small grant to feed their work crew for two days.

Upcoming **DEADLINES** for EYP grant requests: March-April-May applications due: **January 20**. THANKS again to The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven for renewing ECPC funding for EYP for 2005!

ECPC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Steve Wilcox, President - Cordalie Benoit, Vice President
Easter Howard, Secretary - Anna Schildroth, Treasurer
Chris Ozyc, Dave Reher, Dave Demers, Michelle Maitland,
Marge Ottenbreit, Colin Caplan, Kris Sainsbury,
Paul Larivee, Barbara Schlien ■ STAFF- Illisa Kelman

BOARD MEETINGS

6-7:30 pm, 4th Wed. of each month, NH Parks Offices
Open to the public..
Please call 946-5713 in case of scheduling changes.

ECPC STAFF NOTES AT YEAR'S END

As 2004 rolls to a close, we look forward to our best and most effective year yet. We will continue to run our successful programs such as Quinnipiac River Discovery, Student Conservation Association summer internships, Experience Your Parks Small Grants (all thanks to the generous support of the Community Foundation for Greater New Haven), and Parks Presents. We hope you will again join us at our popular FUNd raising events: Sip into Spring and Polar Plunge for Parks. And of course, we will continue to provide support for all of the parks friends groups in the city.

Looking toward the new year, ECPC hopes to expand our activities in number, scope and reach, and we strongly encourage your active participation. Working together, we can help the green jewels and public art of New Haven shine more brightly.

Email or call me at the office with ideas and thoughts. Thanks for supporting us, and Happy Holidays!

-Illisa Kelman
ECPC staff



Left to right, Riverkeeper Peter Davis, ECPC board member Dave Reher, Susan Malter - Colin Caplan

WEST RIVER NARROWS MADE TIDY

You wouldn't have known that there was a dump truck load of garbage littered on the side of the road, until it was collected into a large pile. A cleanup crew of about 10 people took a dive into the deep end of the sloping land along Whalley Avenue, just north of Billis Carousel Ice Cream. The site, a vast woodland where an early mill canal and worker's housing once stood, slopes down to the West River and includes a number of small streams.

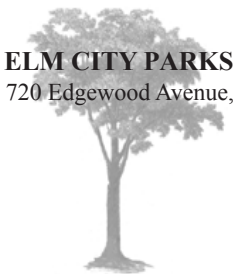
Giant tulip poplars, oaks and maples canopy birch, sycamore, locust and catalpa saplings which in turn cover a world of under brush. The site is home to wild Turkeys, White Tail Deer and many bird species.

When finished, the cleanup crew, lead by New Haven's Riverkeeper, Peter Davis, cleared over 75 bags of trash and a comparable pile of scrap metal bringing this open space back to the clean, pure and beautiful environment it may have once been. Of course, due to overwhelming traffic along Whalley Avenue and the litter bug attitude, future cleanups here will be necessary.

-**Colin Caplan**, ECPC Board member and
West River Narrows Friend Group

ELM CITY PARKS CONSERVANCY

720 Edgewood Avenue, New Haven, CT 06515



ECPC NEWS: FALL 2004

Please Open Immediately

Dated Material Enclosed

BISHOP WOODS MEMO

Louis Bennett Bishop was a local physician and ornithologist who co-authored *The Birds of Connecticut* (1913). A portion of his extensive bird specimen collections is housed at the Peabody Museum. In 1927, Dr. Bishop donated 47 acres - several within the city limits, but most over the East Haven line - to the City of New Haven. The property deed clearly states that the land is to forever remain a bird sanctuary. †

Bishop Woods contains a wonderful and diverse slice of forest within New Haven's dense urban matrix. There are two vernal ponds that we know of, many species of trees, and diverse wildlife. Its 230 foot cliffs mark the highest point east of the Quinnipiac River. From these heights, hikers can view the Q River Marsh, down towards the Long Island Sound. The park remains undeveloped except for footpaths, and has no main-gate entrance. Few people know of



Scenes from Bishop Woods Bird Sanctuary: beautiful hardwood stand (top); root exposed from tire abrasion (center); dirt biker (bottom) - J. Sherman

Bishop Woods, and fewer still venture inside. Underuse by families, hikers and naturalists has contributed to terrible abuse of this lovely landscape.



The harsh roar of ATVs and dirt bikes, and the gun firing of paint ball warfare overpower the sounds of songbirds, wild turkeys and howling coyotes. The tires of these off-road vehicles tear up and compact the paths and flats, leaving bare and barren mineral soil. Not only can plants not grow, but water can no longer infiltrate, intensifying the erosion problem. Beautiful hundred year old trees suffer as their roots exposed, and many of these trees are dying off.

I invite you to come and explore these woods in all their glory, and to see first hand the active threats to this sanctuary. If you're interested in a short hike, please contact me at joy.sherman@yale.edu. It would be my pleasure to show you this special place.

-Joy Sherman, Friends of Bishop Woods