

**Department of Parks  
Director's Report  
Thursday, September 22, 2011**

***Highlights:***

- **Park Damage from Heavy Rains**
  - **Openings and Events**
  - **Cabin John Train Repairs; M-NCPPC Employee Night at Halloween Trains**
  - **Park Project Updates**
  - **New Grant-Funded Volunteer Maryland Coordinator in Cultural Resources**
  - **Tennis Enrollment Strong, New Partnership with MCTA**
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**Events**

- SEPTEMBER 24—Annual Burtonsville Day, Burtonsville Local Park, 9:00 am – 4:00 pm.
- SEPTEMBER 25—Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, Cycle for Life, South Germantown Recreational Park, 7:00 am – 6:00 pm.
- SEPTEMBER 25—Montgomery County Recreation Department, Maryland Senior Olympics Softball Tournament, Olney manor Recreational Park, 9:00 am – 6:00 pm.
- SEPTEMBER 25—Komen 3 Day Walk for Cancer, Chevy Chase Open Space Park (used for rest area/safety stop).
- SEPTEMBER 30—“Nightmare Forest”, Davis Productions, Inc., South Germantown Recreational Park; nightly.
- OCTOBER 1 (tentative) – Ribbon-cutting for pavilion and playground, [Randolph Hills Local Park](#)
- OCTOBER 1—Harvest Festival, Agricultural History Farm Park, 11:00 am – 6:00 pm, [www.AgHistoryFarm.org](http://www.AgHistoryFarm.org).
- OCTOBER 1—MCDSN Annual Buddy Walk, South Germantown Recreational Park.
- OCTOBER 1 & 2—USTA, Maryland State Championships, Olney Manor Recreational Park, 9:00 am – 6:00 pm.
- OCTOBER 1 & 2—Bond Beebe Inaugural Kickball Invitational, Meadowbrook Local Park, 9:00 am – 6:00 pm.
- OCTOBER 5—Olney Chamber of Commerce, Community Night-Taste of Olney, Longwood Local Park, 5:00 pm – 9:00 pm.
- OCTOBER 9—Montgomery County Road Runners Club, Cross Country on the Farm, Agricultural History Farm Park, 6:00 am – 11:00 am.
- OCTOBER 11—FAM Tour in partnership with Prince George’s County, Brookside Gardens, Rockwood Manor, Oxon Hill Manor and Newton White Mansion, 10:00 am – 3:30 pm, [www.ParkEventCenters.com](http://www.ParkEventCenters.com).
- OCTOBER 13—Ellen’s Run 5K Race, Meadowbrook Local Park, 6:00 am – 11:00 am.
- OCTOBER 15—Montgomery County SPCA, Inc., 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Dog Walk and Pet Fair, Avenel Local Park.
- OCTOBER 15—Rory’s Run 5K Run, Sligo Dennis Local Park and Stream Valley Unit, 6:00 am – 11:00 am.

- OCTOBER 15— Montgomery County Road Runners Club, Black Hill 10K Cross Country Race, Black Hill Regional Park, 6:00 am – 11:00 am.
- OCTOBER 29—St. Albans School, IAC/ISL/MAC Cross Country Championship, Agricultural History Farm Park, 2:00 pm – 7:00 pm.
- OCTOBER 29— MCCA, Colombo 5K, Rock Creek Regional Park, 6:00 am – 11:00 am.

### Highlights

- The dedication of the new Tai Chi Court at Cabin John Regional Park was a great success, with hundreds attending to celebrate the life of Tai Chen master David Chen and the public-private partnership that created this beautiful new park amenity. The demonstrations of this art by dozens of participants were especially moving.
- I attended the one-year anniversary celebration of Conservation Montgomery, and we had a display there as well for the Montgomery Parks Foundation.
- Brookside Gardens Children’s Day was a busy success, in spite of spitting rain, and drew many families. The Wings of Fancy Butterfly show is now closed for this year.
- Several park locations incurred damage from heavy rain and flooding on September 8 and 9. Parks staff has done a great job repairing the damages and clearing the debris at the following locations:
  - The causeway on Black Hill Road leading to the boat ramp experienced heavy flooding for the first time and was covered by debris.
  - The footbridge over 10 Mile Creek was loaded with storm debris and part of the asphalt buckled.
  - Several sections of the boardwalk at the Crystal Rock Trail were lifted off the helical piers.
  - The footbridge and associated boardwalks over Little Seneca Creek at Hoyles Mill Conservation Park were flooded and lots of storm debris caught on the structures.
  - Seneca Landing Park on Riley’s Lock Road experienced flooding with minimal damage. A few signs were damaged but will be replaced.
  - The Poole’s Store and the adjacent building had flood damage in the basement.
  - The Lake Frank pool level rose by 10 feet and the Lake Needwood pool level rose by 8 feet.
  - There was minor flooding in the Lake Needwood Boat Shop. (Due to flash flood warnings during the 3-day period both dams were inspected twice daily and the lake levels were monitored remotely several times each day.)
- Parks staff received many positive comments about the condition of park trails for the successful Parks Half-Marathon, especially because Beach Drive and other venues had to be cleaned so quickly after the storms – they looked great.
- At Long Branch-Wayne Local Park, Facilities Management in the midst of renovating the soccer field and the Southern area staff will install temporary fencing. Park Police is increasing patrol and invasive vegetative removal is underway.

- Bradley Farms School renovations will start in January of 2012 with new play equipment to be installed, and Beverly Farms School & Park ballfields are now under renovation.
- Park Projects Updates:
  - The Black Hill Trail renovation project is underway. This trail is on the east side of the lake, Germantown side.
  - Construction at Woodstock Equestrian Park continues. Construction of the riding ring and associated facilities should start within the next week. Our Facilities Management carpentry crews are renovating the existing adjacent structures.
  - Parks staff continues to work with ICC and State Highway Administration on alignment issues with the Lake Frank Trail Connector project.
  - The newly constructed pavilion at Randolph Hills Local Park is completed. The design was completed in-house by our Park Development Division staff and the construction was completed by our Parks Facilities Management staff. We are also working with the Randolph Civic Association to plan a ribbon-cutting for the pavilion and new playground for Saturday, October 1, in conjunction with the association's annual community picnic.
  - Construction at Takoma Piney Branch Local Park also continues. The Public Art installation will occur on Tuesday, September 27.
  - Our contractor is in the process of renovating the White Flint Neighborhood Park playground.
  - This fall, the Montgomery County Department of Transportation will begin construction to widen Elmhirst Trail from Cedar lane to Elmhirst Parkway for commuting bikers.
  - Darnestown Square Urban Park: pre-construction meeting scheduled for 9/23/1
- Staff training and orientation continues for the new ParkStat/Smart Parks combined, next-generation management system in both Montgomery Parks and Prince Georges Parks and Recreation.
- Last Tuesday, Park Police staff, lead by Commander Darien Manley, joined me in testimony before the County Council's PS and PHED committees inquiry into crime trends in urban parks. The PowerPoint presentation was well-received, and noted that crime is trending flat or downward in several categories. We were praised for keeping our parks safe and for our proactive patrols of problem areas.
- Parks staff also testified at or provided information for County Council hearings on vehicle usage, ADA compliance, and Spending Affordability Guidelines for budget and CIP.
- This week, we will holding another Park and Recreation Alliance meeting with the Department of Recreation to coordinate our class and program offerings to the public and discuss pricing and related issues.
- Next week, I have been asked to participate in a high-level NRPA Urban Institute Roundtable in Washington DC regarding parks in urban areas and urbanizing counties. The

National Park Service Director and White House staff will be on the panel as well, in addition to park leaders from around the nation.

- Our Volunteer Services Office has just hired a grant-funded Volunteer Maryland Coordinator who will be working with Parks Museum Manager Shirl Spicer from September 2011 through July 2012. Karen Lee is a talented and enthusiastic professional who will be our volunteer coordinator for Oakley Cabin, the Underground Railroad Experience Trail and Josiah Henson Special Park. Our goal is to offer weekday programs for school children and senior groups through a focused volunteer program. Welcome Karen!
- Our Volunteer Services Office is busy recruiting volunteers for several fall festivals and events. All activities are approved for Student Service Learning hours through Montgomery County Public Schools and can be found on [www.ParksVolunteers.org](http://www.ParksVolunteers.org):
  - National Public Lands Day, September 24
  - Harvest Festival, October 1
  - Halloween Trains at Wheaton Train and Cabin John Train, Thursday through Sundays in October
  - Apple Festival at Brookside Nature Center, October 16
  - Community Service Week, October 16 - 22
  - Halloween Extravaganza at Meadowside Nature Center, October 28
  - Maryland Emancipation Day, November 4 – 6
  - Garden of Lights, Brookside Gardens, November 25 – January 8
- Tennis enrollment for both outdoor and indoor classes is at 650. New this year, we are partnering with the Montgomery County Tennis Association (MCTA) to run age 10 and under tennis play days on three consecutive Saturdays in September at Cabin John, Olney and Wheaton outdoor courts.
- Our contractor recently performed major track work on the Cabin John Train to repair deficiencies including welding switches and tie replacement in preparation for the upcoming Halloween Haunted Train event in October. Both trains are gearing up for the 2011 Halloween in the Parks train rides. M-NCPPC employee night is October 7, 2011 from 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm at Cabin John Train for the “not so scary” younger riders, and (for over age 8) the “scary” train ride at Wheaton Train from 7:00 pm – 9:00 pm. New this year, we will offer light refreshments for sale. For animal lovers, we are having two special Halloween Train rides. The Howl-O-Ween Cabin John Train will depart on Sundays, October 23 and 30 at 12:30 pm. Dogs ride FREE; only the humans pay.

*Mary R. Bradford*

*Director*

*M-NCPPC - Montgomery County, Department of Parks*