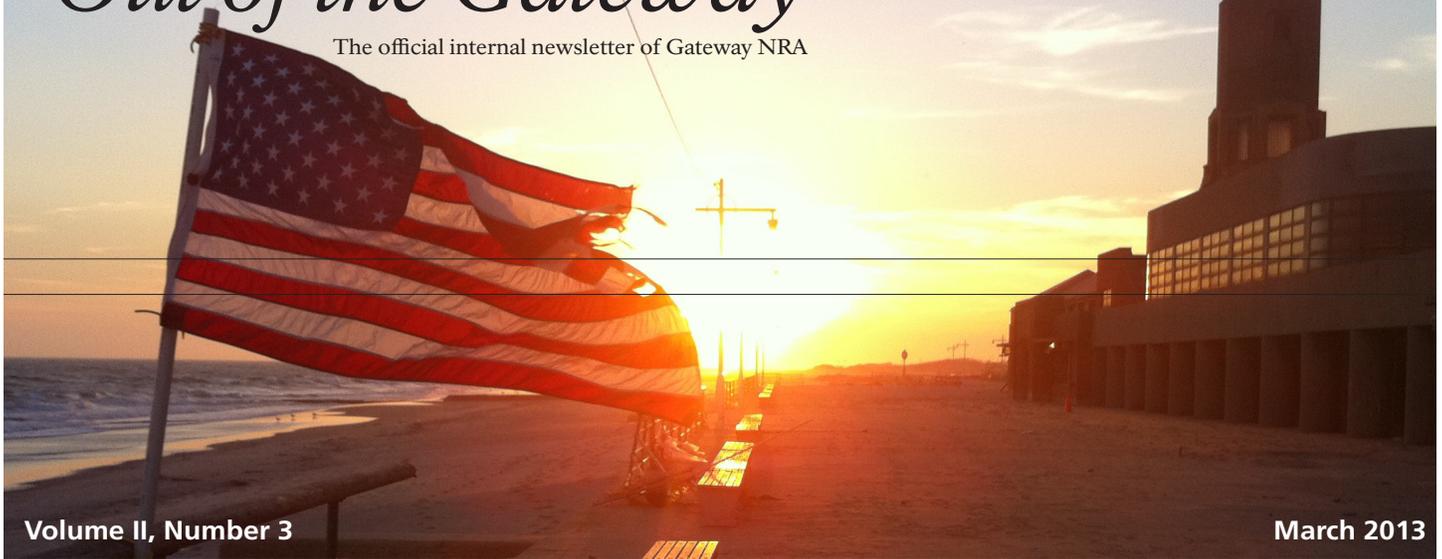




# Out of the Gateway

The official internal newsletter of Gateway NRA



Volume II, Number 3

March 2013

# Sandy hits Gateway, Gateway hits back

By John Harlan Warren, External Affairs Officer

On October 28, 2012, forty years and one day after the park was founded, GATE survived the toughest challenge in its history.

Hurricane Sandy hit all three park units hard. The docks at Nichols Marina were decimated, along with most of the boats docked there. Ferry docks at Riis Landing sailed from Fort Tilden to Plumb Beach. The West Pond at Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge was breached and is no longer freshwater. A record seven-foot surge covered most of Sandy Hook, flooding basements and rupturing the Multi-Use Path in several places. Waves swept through the bathhouse at Jacob Riis Park. Dunes were flattened as they protected infrastructure behind them.

Far more damaging was how the storm affected people. Many employees had to evacuate their homes. Some will not be able to return to places where they lived for decades. Employees lost power and heat for days or weeks; some saw their houses flooded. Some lost vehicles.

Our neighboring communities suffered unimaginable horrors. Homes washed away. Over 100 houses in Breezy Point burnt down. Dozens who lived near Miller Field and Fort Wadsworth lost their lives.



**Masthead:** Jacob Riis Park on Veterans Day. NPS PHOTO by John Noble.  
**Above:** The breach in West Pond. NPS PHOTO by Tomas Liogys.

While many of us were still sorting out how the storm had changed our personal lives, GATE staff began the process of stabilization and restoration along with hundreds of federal employees from all over the nation. Some areas have already reopened and most of the park will open in May. The work is far from over, but we have made a strong start.

This issue of the newsletter tells the story of Sandy in the words of employees, partners and volunteers. It is only the first draft of a new, unfinished chapter in the park's history. The ending is up to us and we are writing it together. ♥



**The Superintendent Speaks**  
by Linda Canzaneli

**Sandy's lessons**

When I will think of Hurricane Sandy in the future, I will think of Gateway's remarkable employees. So many of you set aside your normal duties to help out, whether it was driving Incident Management Team workers where they were needed, processing their pay and purchases or staffing a gate or a desk. Our employees proved to the entire NPS how much we care about our park and what a skilled and talented staff we have. I am grateful to all of you, whether taking on work completely unlike your position description or maintaining services as best as we could. Thank you.

Hurricane Sandy changed our park, and our lives, forever. We saw so many of the resources where we work every day, from the West Pond to the Great Kills marina to the offices in Sandy Hook's headquarters to the maintenance equipment at Miller Field, changed or destroyed. Recovery will take years, not months, and it will sometimes be agonizingly slow. Please remember the same spirit you showed during the first few weeks after the storm. We can do this and we will do this together.

Even now, many of you do not have your lives back. You may be looking for new housing or waiting on major work to your

home. You many have lost priceless keepsakes. Know that the entire park staff cares about you and feels your loss. As superintendent, I promise to continue to work on your behalf. Sandy was not my first opportunity to see the effects of a hurricane on a park and a community. At Jean Lafitte (New Orleans) and Biscayne (South Florida) I saw the physical and emotional effects of hurricanes – not only when they hit but years after on anniversaries of the storms or when other hurricanes threatened.

We need to learn lessons from Sandy. We need to review and re-write pre-storm plans. We need to figure out what we did right and what we could do better. We must continue to work safely. I am proud that no major injuries occurred at Gateway despite all the work with chainsaws, heavy machinery and electrical repairs. I am proud of how you looked out for yourselves and each other.

We must be wise with the tax dollars we receive. Rather than rushing to rebuild what was lost, we need to plan how the park might face future storms in an increasingly unpredictable climate. Can we rebuild stronger, safer? Do the same resources need to be rebuilt in the same place, or would another location serve visitors better? IS the investment sustainable or will it be washed away after the next storm?

Gateway will come back. It will not be the same, but our future will be a good one- even better than before- because of you. ♥

**Junior Ranger**



Taylor Wolfe became GATE's first Junior Ranger after Sandy. A local resident, she and her family visited Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge during Thanksgiving weekend. NPS PHOTO by Jason Wickersty.

**GMP meetings to return**

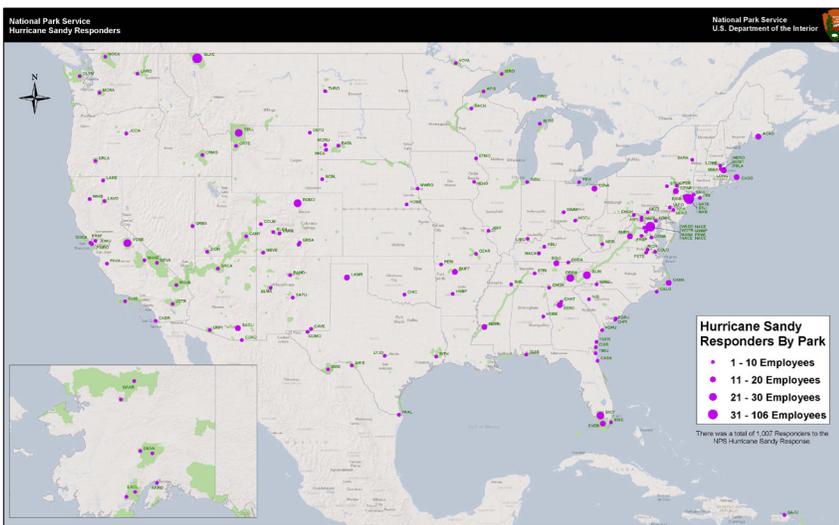
The Draft General Management Plan/ Environmental Impact Statement will be released this summer for public review. GATE will host a number of open houses this summer. Date, locations, and times of the open houses will be announced later this spring. ♥

**WELCOME**

- Jeffrey Bodurka**, maintenance, SHU
- Mark Carazo**, maintenance, SHU
- Harold Geissler**, dispatch, U.S. Park Police
- Romale (Orlando) Lovelace**, law enforcement, SHU
- John Mahoney III**, maint. mechanic, SIU
- Rory McGinn**, dispatch, U.S. Park Police
- Peter Tserpes**, maint. mechanic, JBU

**FAREWELL**

- Steve Battista**, sergeant, U.S. Park Police
- Jean Holloway**, park ranger, SIU
- Ben Pendleton**, human resources officer
- Rance Robeson**, public affairs assistant
- Steve Salgo**, park ranger, public affairs
- Robert Viscardi**, electrician, JBU
- Gary Zbel**, facility ops specialist, SIU
- Martin Zweig**, major, U.S. Park Police



Exactly 1,007 federal employees and retirees, from across the street and across the country, joined the Incident Management Team (IMT). Headquartered at Fort Wadsworth, IMT oversaw stabilization at all New York Harbor parks. Over 100 GATE employees joined the team during their six weeks of operations. NPS GRAPHIC.

# Most of GATE to open to the public by summer

by Daphne Yun and John Harlan Warren

By Memorial Day, most of GATE will be open once more to the public, including several guarded beaches.

Reopening plans began while the park was still stabilizing areas for safety. When the last Incident Management Team (IMT) employees left in late December, GATE staff continued to dig out sand from beach centers and to begin to fix damaged buildings and structures.

Since the storm, several areas quietly reopened. Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge, Frank Charles Park, Hamilton Beach and areas of Great Kills Park reopened by Thanksgiving weekend. Fort Wadsworth opened before Christmas. Most of Floyd Bennett Field reopened in February, with campgrounds opening March 1. Crooke's Point at Great Kills Park, a prime fishing area, reopened March 15.

Sandy Hook Unit will reopen to the public on May 1, including the public campground. A ceremony will commemorate the reopening of the Hook that day. To make a reservation at any GATE campgrounds, please visit <http://www.recreation.gov>.

Most guarded beach areas will be open as normal by Memorial Day weekend. The beaches at Great Kills Park on Staten Island and Jacob Riis Park in Queens will be open. At Sandy Hook, beaches B, Gunnison and North Beach will be available. Other beaches will be open as soon as they are ready. Repairs to the ferry service and bike path at Sandy Hook will not be completed by Memorial Day weekend. Fees for parking at Sandy Hook and Riis will remain unchanged from last summer.

Recreational fields received storm damage throughout the park, but employees are working hard to see that most of them can reopen as soon as possible. Facilities at Fort Tilden in Queens, including ball fields used by the Rockaway Little League, will be open. Some athletic fields at Miller Field will be open and available to accommodate youth leagues at the beginning of the spring season.



Dunes helped save Sandy Hook during the storm; now it's our turn to save the dunes. Volunteers plant dune grass on a cold March day. PHOTO by Natalie Gregorio; used by permission.

Some areas of the park may or may not be open by Memorial Day. An underwater assessment began March 1 for Nichols Marina at Great Kills Park, and the park expects to have a report by the end of March. Once the report has been received, the park will identify next steps and continue to move forward.

In areas still closed to the public, GATE continues to uncover and recover. Tons of sand still bury beach centers at unopened Sandy Hook beaches. It is hoped that all seaside beaches can be dug out and reopened during the summer. Sections of Jacob Riis Park beach saw significant sand erosion as a result of the hurricane. Sand dunes throughout the park will need rebuilding and replanting. The project to protect the Belt Parkway at Brooklyn's Plumb Beach, which was underway when the storm hit, will continue in July.

Not all areas of the park will be ready for the public by summer or even for the rest of the year. Fort Tilden's shore will

remain closed this summer due to safety concerns. In Brooklyn, Canarsie Pier will remain closed until an engineering study is completed. ♣



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

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Gateway National Recreation Area was created by Congress in 1972 for urban residents to enjoy a national park experience in the New York metropolitan area. Gateway spans 26,000 acres, across two states and three boroughs of New York City. Visitors can hike, bicycle, kayak and enjoy organized sports, marvel at historic forts and aircraft and reflect on the tranquility of nature.

**Gateway National Recreation Area**  
210 New York Avenue  
Staten Island, New York 10305

Follow "Gateway National Recreation Area" on Facebook and check out our daily updates on Twitter (GatewayNPS).

Web: <http://www.nps.gov/gate/index.htm>

Phone: 718-354-4606

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





## The one that got us

by Fire Chief Tim Regan

I can recall the exact moment that I first heard of a Hurricane named Sandy that might come up our way. I was having pizza and another customer was laughing and watching the news, saying, "This is going to be the one that gets us!" My first thought was great, another hyped-up storm to deal with. But he was right, it did get us. It got me too.

After a few years of sweet talk, I finally convinced my wife Patti to sell our 1851 Greek revival in Keyport and move to park housing in Sandy Hook's Fort Hancock. It was part economics and part dedication to be closer when I was needed. On September 9 we moved in to an historic building the Army built in 1905 and began to make it our own. On October 28 we left, expecting to return in a week or so. Just this month we moved again, this time out of the house that we were just learning to love!

Since the time Sandy struck, all of us were affected tremendously by Sandy. We saw the park that we love decimated, from Riis to Great Kills across the Bay to Sandy Hook. Little of our beloved Gateway was spared. Hardest hit were the park employees and their families who lost homes and those, like me, who lived in park housing at Sandy Hook. Fourteen staff members and their families, who took great pride in living in this quiet barrier island habitat which is also an historic American gem, can't live here anymore. Tom Hoffman, who has called Sandy Hook home since 1974, lost so much of his life's work in the storm as

well as his home. It has been tough for all of us, but we have persevered somehow. We will keep looking out for each other.

For me it has been a long road both at work and on the personal side. My wife and daughter lived apart from me for over two months, seeing each other on brief dinner dates and on the weekends, the byproduct of not enough room in the hotel or at my in-laws' house. My office was flooded and unusable. The firehouse itself, built in 1905, had weathered the toughest storm of its life, collapsing the garage door. The waters rushed in and destroyed just about everything. Just last week Chief of Maintenance Brian Forseth, who also serves as a firefighter, found his firefighter turnout gear still zipped up in its carrying bag, hundreds of yards from the firehouse in dense brush where the outgoing storm surge deposited it. So many other items just floated out, never to be seen again!

After the storm hit, GATE staff set up fire and emergency medical operations from the top of the Route 36 Bridge.

From there we answered calls in the park and in nearby Sea Bright, along with the National Guard, as looters fired shots below the bridge. This was not the Jersey Shore I have known for the last forty years. When we finally got a park building back (the Fee Building) we had no toilets and no food. We scrounged what we could to keep working.

After the first three weeks we did a quick cleanup and reactivated Building 76, or Firehouse No. 2. This building had not served as an active firehouse since just after World War II, but for the next four months the old place was pressed back into service. During the months after the storm we answered nearly one hundred fire and medical calls, about what we do in an average year. The NPS crew even extinguished a fire in the Incident Command Post when an electrical fire threatened to spread throughout the building. The crew had just put out a basement fire in the Borough of Sea Bright before anyone else arrived and saved the home.

*(continued on page 7)*



Sandy Hook's fire team and volunteers set up temporary quarters in Building 76. NPS PHOTO by C.J. Gutch.

# Exciting, exhausting, inspiring: serving as a Sandy safety officer

by Park Guide Sheridan Roberts

As the hurricane began, my friends and I walked to the East River to watch the tidal waters rise. We saw shorebirds and waterfowl that do not frequent this stretch. We saw the Williamsburg bridge half-lit (Brooklyn) and half-dark (Manhattan). As the week unfolded, housemates gathered in a candlelit Lower East Side to make delicious meals from perishable items. Those of us who had the usual amenities shared showers, flashlights and blankets with those who didn't.

Somehow, Sandy's impact still seemed far away and not quite real. I was disappointed that I wouldn't get to play my role as 'Zoo Creeper' in the Rockaway Artists Alliance 'Zoophobia' themed Halloween house at Fort Tilden. After a week or two of waving emergency vehicles in and out at Fort Wadsworth's front gate and hearing about damage to the park and surrounding communities, I decided to get involved in GATE's recovery effort. I wanted to do hands-on work in the field.

There was a need for Safety Officer presence with operations in Jamaica Bay. I took several online courses and joined the Incident Team as a Safety Officer (SOFR) Trainee. For the next several weeks, I worked 12 – 15 hour days with active and retired employees from federal agencies all around the country.

My day started with several meetings each morning: the 6 A.M. briefing led by command staff of the Incident Management Team, then Operations meetings and break-out sessions. By 8 A.M., I headed out to the field.



A tree falls in Brooklyn: Jordan Black, one of the sawyers from Great Smoky Mountains who joined the Incident Management Team (IMT), clears a road in Fort Tilden. NPS PHOTO by Sheridan Roberts.

Being a Safety Officer taught me about conditions and operations in all areas of the park bordering Brooklyn and Queens. Finally, I saw for myself the changes Sandy had wrought. I interacted with the public and learned first-hand how much small pockets of the park mean to people who come to it every day.



Sheridan Roberts holds a trophy she found in the sand at Jacob Riis Park. "The way the figure raises his hand in victory made me think of how the park would persevere and triumph in the end," she said. NPS PHOTO.

I interacted with the saw and machine crew from Great Smoky Mountains and Cape Hatteras, as well as with resource advisors, firefighters and hand-crews from western parks, all of whom expressed appreciation about having a GATE employee to help inform decisions in the field. My SOFR partner Mark Ringenary and I identified and flagged hazardous conditions at Fort Tilden, Breezy Point and Riis Beach. Working with U.S. Park Police (USPP), we re-routed traffic so that trees could be safely removed from phone lines along a heavily used roadway. At the Jacob Riis Park bathhouse, we outfitted staff with personal protective gear.

As the need for safety presence in Jamaica Bay wound down, I moved to Operations at Great Kills Park to observe and assess activities of a contracting sand re-distribution team. I completed and filed load tickets for heavy equipment including off-road dumptrucks, payloaders, sand-sifters and hydraulic excavators.

My experience as part of the Sandy recovery effort and the IMT was invaluable. I learned a great deal from talented GATE staff with whom I had barely crossed paths before and also from employees from various agencies, field and command staff alike. The chance to play a helpful role on such a smart team was inspiring and significantly broadened my appreciation for the mission of the National Park Service. ♥

## Sandy Hook gets an ambulance



On March 22, the Twin "W" First Aid Squad in West Windsor, N.J., donated an ambulance to Sandy Hook. Thank you!

# Mapping hurricane damage, stabilization and recovery

by GIS Specialist Mark Christiano and Cartographer Natalya Apostolou

When over 1,000 employees from all over the NPS come to your park after a terrible incident, they need a lot of maps. During Hurricane Sandy, GATE's GIS staff (both of us) joined the Incident Command System, managing GIS data for all 14 NPS sites in the New York area.

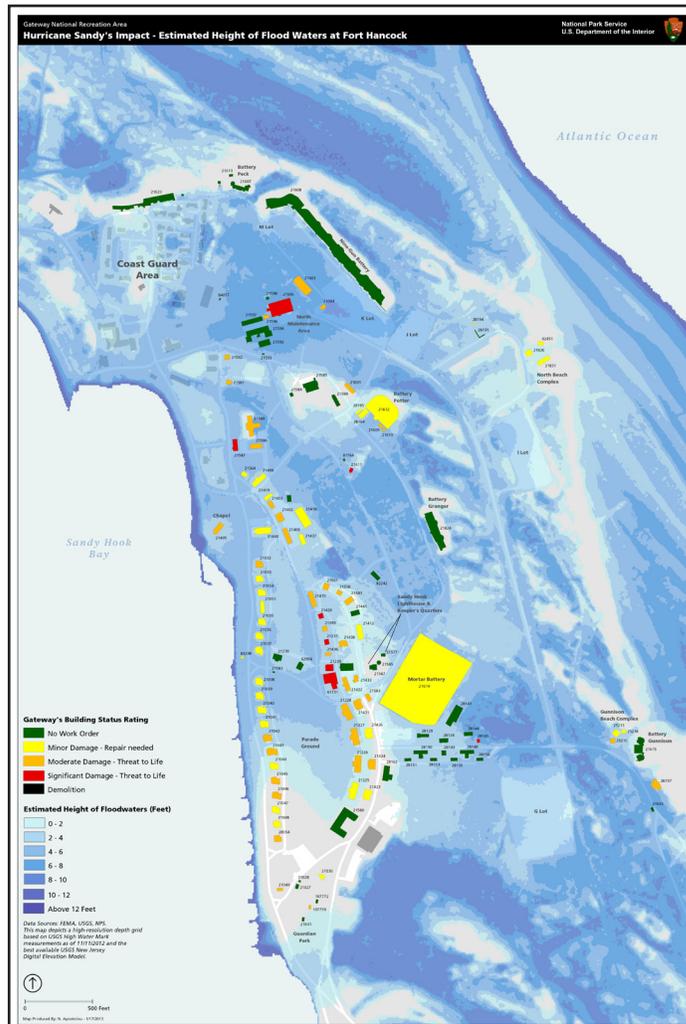
Initially, our goal was to provide maps and information to IMT responders from all around the country who were unfamiliar with the lay of the land.

As the incident progressed, we shifted to progression maps. (See Map 1 of Jamaica Bay, below.) The maps depicted each of the parks with a simple green, yellow or red rating system to illustrate the progress of stabilization by the Incident Management Team.

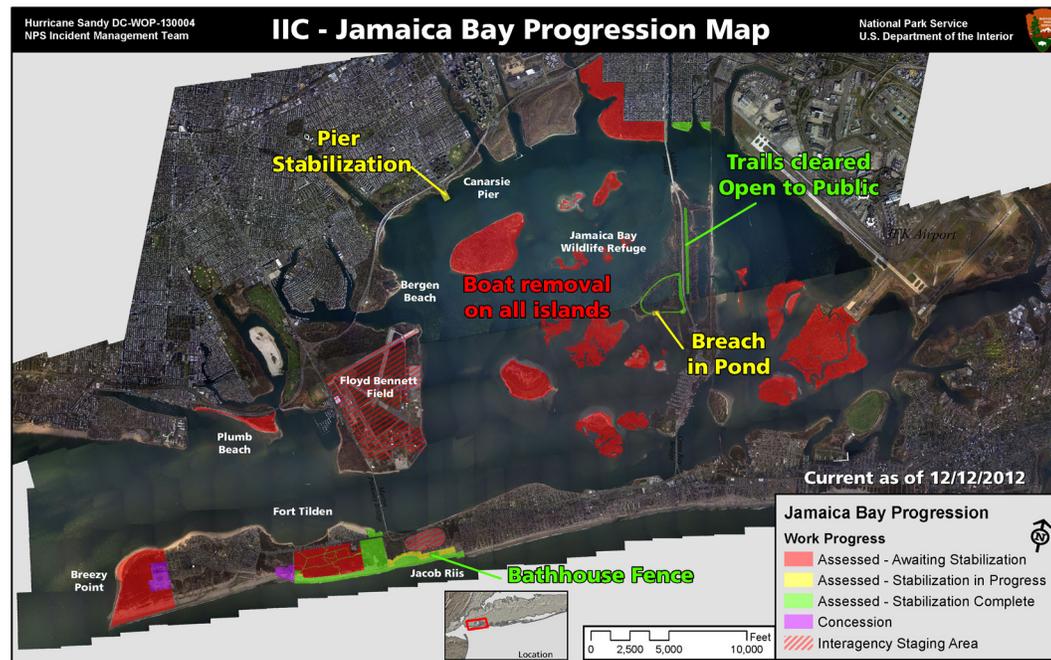
As crews finished areas and reported back, maps were updated and published the next morning. The GIS team also created maps to visualize data collected by the FMSS teams, so you could tell which building had been damaged, and to what extent.

GIS professionals from across the country answered the call. Specialists from Acadia, Cape Cod, Cape Hatteras, Glacier, Channel Island and Eastern River and Mountains Network rotated in and out. Throughout the six weeks of the incident, two or three people met the mapping needs of the incident in general, while one person was assigned solely to provide GIS support to resource advisors with the IMT.

As the incident wound down, work shifted to mapping the storm's impact. We combined FEMA data, which showed estimated depths of flood waters, with FMSS data to give



Above: Washover of flood waters at Sandy Hook, October 27. Below, left: Stabilization work at Jamaica Bay, December 2012. NPS GRAPHICS by Mark Christiano and Natalya Apostolou.



planners and park managers an idea of how storms affected the parks and which buildings are potentially at risk during future weather events. (See Map 2, Sandy Hook .)

Despite working the demanding schedule, we feel very grateful to have had the opportunity to be part of the IMT. We met and worked with so many talented colleagues who we learned a great deal from. Overall, it was a positive experience, giving us a chance to use our skills in a time of crisis. ♣

**The GATE way is the SAFE way!**

# A solid Foundation for the Hook before & after Sandy



**Above:** Foundation board members and spouses serve hot meals to relief workers. **Left to right:** Kim Colucci, Ellen Phillips, Suzanne Lizotte. *Photo by Jane Preziosi, Sandy Hook Foundation.*

## By Betsy Barrett, president, Sandy Hook Foundation

Since 2004 the Friends group, Sandy Hook Foundation (SHF), has invested substantial resources and much energy into restoring/rehabilitating Sandy Hook's Lighthouse Keepers Quarters. Little did we know that the Keeper's House would be spared from major storm damage and become park headquarters for several months after Hurricane Sandy.

Currently, park rangers sit at computers on folding tables on the first floor while SHF shares space with the park's law enforcement staff on the second floor. During the first few months after the

storm, Sandy Hook Unit park rangers and Incident Management Team (IMT) members had to be content with cold sandwiches and MREs while working long hours outside or in buildings without heat. SHF Board members and their spouses launched an effort to make hot lunches available for all, warming hearts and stomachs at the same time.

The Foundation is now focused on the park's reopening on May 1, 2013. SHF is booking bands for the Wednesday night summer concert series, planning the annual End Of Summer Party on September 6 and seeking other ways to help the park prepare to welcome its guests when the Hook reopens May 1.

SHF is very proud of the role it has played in building a successful



**Red Bank school students and teachers take a robotic device from the water which shoots video of underwater conditions.** *PHOTO by Greener NJ.*

partnership for the National Science Foundation between teachers and students at Red Bank Middle School and marine scientists from Rutgers. To build on this, the New Jersey Sea Grant Consortium, our colleagues from NOAA, and staff from Brookdale Community College have submitted a new grant application to build on this work. Be sure to see the video at <http://www.greenernewjersey.org/client-videos/>.



**Before the unit reopens, a new roof is being added to the Lighthouse Keepers Quarters.** *PHOTO by Jane Preziosi, Sandy Hook Foundation.*

Meanwhile, the Lighthouse which has stood through so many emergencies before this latest storm will celebrate its 250th year in the summer of 2014. In preparation, the new roof and exterior cleaning and painting of the Keeper's Quarters and Light will be ready for the celebration! ♥

## Moving (continued from page 4)

In the past few weeks, park firefighters spent over eight hours moving back into the 1905 Firehouse. With the help of maintenance we had a warm building with a new door. With the help of our dedicated firefighters we became the first fully repaired and occupied building that was severely damaged in the storm. I am proud of everyone who made that happen.

So as I sat by my fireplace in my not-so-historic 1982 condo this week, my wife and I realized that it is the tough times that bring people closer together. She also reminded me that I am no longer in charge of deciding where we move for a really long time! ♥



**Scavenging items from the firehouse after the storm.** *NPS PHOTO by C.J. Gutch.*

# Many agencies use Floyd Bennett Field as emergency HQ

By Supervisory Park Ranger John Daskalakis

Although many people suspected that Hurricane Sandy would pass like Irene a year earlier with some minor flooding and little notice, NPS staff prepared for a severe event. What frightened many of us afterwards was how severe the storm really was and how the repercussions were felt beyond the park in the immediate communities and in our lives.

Here at Floyd Bennett Field, immediately after the storm, residents and park staff gathered around each other, when there was little infrastructure or even warm lighted spaces to count blessings and make basic assessments of what had just happened. Soon the Incident Management Team (IMT) arrived, followed by a frenzy of emergency services swarming Floyd Bennett Field, making a small city of the normally quiet historic runways.

The groups that came first brought the first light of hope to communities that saw their streets become swirling ocean and their memories washed away. The first weeks were about providing food, water, gasoline and a warm space. Teams brought medical care, heater meals, bottled water, search and rescue personnel, generators, shelters and precious gasoline here to the field for dispersing to the public.

At Floyd Bennett, ambulances lined up for the call (*see above photo*), gasoline trucks staged, search and rescue teams mustered, helicopters landed, and



Dozens of ambulances wait for the call at Floyd Bennett Field. NPS PHOTO by John Warren.

the beginnings of a supply line took shape with 2,200 National Guardsmen, Army Corp of Engineers, NYC Police Department, Fire Department, the Red Cross and the Federal Emergency Management Agency supplies arriving fast and departing as quickly. It took an army to provide all the relief that was needed, yet with a smooth operation that only IM protocols could provide.

Park staff adapted to the change of landscape and the new demands and needs of the communities around it, working to accommodate the incident teams from far away, with the answers, guidance and memory of what had been and what should be, to guide them.

As the emergency became a recovery, needs changed, and so did the landscape  
*(continued on next page)*

## From lobster fishing to LE by Law Enforcement Ranger Benton Shattenberg

I was lobster fishing about two miles off the coast of Sunshine, Maine, when I received a call from my supervisor at Sandy Hook asking if I would like to come back to the Hook for hurricane relief work. I could barely hear him over the rumble of the diesel engine but I gladly accepted his offer. I gave my notice to the the captain of the lobster fishing vessel, packed my bags and then waited. After having my bags packed for over a month I got the call from my supervisor with a start date.

While waiting for my position to start, I began looking for places to live. That proved to be very difficult in an area demolished by the storm. Fortunately one of my colleagues found an apartment for us to rent that was reasonable. It was not the best apartment I have ever seen, but we were rather desperate because we had been couch surfing for almost a week and needed a place we could shower and do our laundry. As a seasonal ranger, work in the winter is hard to come by and definitely worth the trouble.

Every day I am employed with the Park Service I am thankful, even in the park that is not yet open to the public. ♥



School buses queue up for gasoline at Floyd Bennett Field. NPS PHOTO by Tim Colyer.

# STLI refugees work at GATE

by Park Guide Erin Schoppmeyer, STLI

In the last few months, you may have noticed some new faces around Fort Wadsworth, be it at the entrance gates, in the business office or extra officers patrolling GATE. These new fixtures are not new to the National Park Service staff but are in fact your neighbors from Liberty and Ellis Island.

Hurricane Sandy did major damage to the electric, water and sewage systems at STLI. Until major repairs are completed, hundreds of park employees have no work. Thanks to the kind people here at GATE, many of us were able to find a temporary home while repairs are made at the Statue and Ellis.

The most obvious presence of these employees is at the front and back gate entrances to Fort Wadsworth. They have been placed here to be a “first face of the park” to visitors, residents and employees alike.

“Our goal is to be able to answer any questions people coming to Fort Wadsworth may have and to be a friendly presence to all who enter,” said Barbara Tate, who oversees operations at the gates. “When we first started at these gates we were instructed to check IDs for everyone coming because the park wasn’t open initially after Sandy hit. Now that the park is open to the public again, these ID checks are no longer required.”

Currently, eight STLI employees work the gates: Steve Buccellato, Pheona Dasilva, Taylor Jeffrey, Tayanna McCombs, Chris Mullin, Erin Schoppmeyer, Janice Stewart and Barbara Tate.

In the contracting office, Paula Aviles and Caval Farrel have been lending vital hands in cleaning up the incident command team purchases. “Believe it or not,” Aviles explained, “there is still much paperwork associated with the incident even though the majority of people in the incident were de-mobed a few months ago.”



STLI Park Guide Erin Schoppmeyer staffing the front gate at GATE's Fort Wadsworth. NPS PHOTO by Daphne Yun.

By far the greatest increase of Statue and Ellis employees can be seen in the United States Park Police. Almost two dozen officers work at GATE on Staten Island. After the storm these officers have been invaluable to the safety and security of the park.

While Liberty Island will reopen to the public on July 4, Ellis Island will remain closed. GATE staff will be seeing us “new” employees awhile longer. Say hello to your new friends! ♥

## Floyd Bennett Field (continued)

of Floyd Bennett Field. Emergency supplies and storage and ambulance staging became epic woodpiles with grinding and burning, of excess wood. A beehive of workers from the NYC Rapid Recovery Program staged boilers, electrical conduit and hot water heaters to help make homes whole all across the Rockaways and Broad Channel. They gave back light, heat and electricity to about 200 homes daily.

Now that the park has helped provide recovery to the local communities, we prepare for people to recreate and to re-create their lives, to find solace in the open air and to smile again. ♥



### Cultural Resource of the Season

by Museum Curator Felice Ciccione

While much of the infrastructure and many park buildings sustained damage as a result of Hurricane Sandy, the museum collections themselves were unharmed during the storm. While all buildings that housed artifacts lost power and some sustained damage, there was no direct damage to the artifacts. Historic documents stored at Fort Hancock, which were not officially part of GATE’s collections, had to be dried out.

Immediately after the storm, as part of the Incident Management process,

## Hanging GATE’s history out to dry

the areas holding museum collections were examined and evaluated. Museum professionals from various areas in the NPS worked with the Cultural Resource Division in the park to determine how best to preserve the park’s artifacts, especially artifacts stored at Sandy Hook.

The museum collections storage building at Sandy Hook still has no power, heat, running water or phone service and will probably remain so for the foreseeable future. Therefore, we have begun moving the museum collections to Fort Wadsworth to ensure their safety and security in the coming years. ♥



First aid for history: Barracks 22 at Fort Hancock serves as a hospital ward for historic documents. NPS PHOTO BY C.J. Gutch.

# Volunteers dig GATE. Literally. (And gather, haul, etc.)



**Volunteers for America**  
by Volunteer Coordinator  
Keith White

Since Hurricane Sandy, we had have had 971 volunteers who have contributed 3600 hours towards recovery.

The first post-Sandy volunteer cleanup was not until January 26, 2013, two months after the storm, to ensure the safety of volunteers. Since then we have conducted recovery projects every Saturday at Sandy Hook and Floyd Bennett Field.

We have collaborated with Clean Ocean Action, Jersey Cares, M.A.S.T., National Wildlife Foundation, Wounded Nature, locale schools, fraternities and sororities during these recovery projects. Volunteers have assisted in general debris pick up, camp site restoration, dune grass planting, trail maintenance, beach cleanup, and sand removal/relocation to name only some projects tackled since late January of this year.

If not for these selfless individuals, GATE would not be as far as we are in the recovery process. Therefore, I would like to offer my personal thanks and gratitude to all volunteers that have helped, who are helping, and those that will be helping the park in its post-Sandy recovery efforts.



Last month at Sandy Hook's Area B beach plaza, 24 Volunteers-In-Park used push brooms, square shovels and wheelbarrows to remove sand from last fall's hurricane. NPS PHOTO by Conrad Wisniewski.

Volunteers are the life blood of the NPS. We would not have been able to reopen so many of the areas of the park so soon if not for the hard work of hundreds of volunteers. If you would like to join us, contact me at [Keith\\_White@nps.gov](mailto:Keith_White@nps.gov) . ♥

# Radiation cleanup underway at Great Kills Park



**Making GATE GREEN**  
by Environmental Protection  
Specialist Kathleen Cuzzolino

The NPS has awarded a contract to Tidewater, Inc., through an Inter-Agency Agreement with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, to investigate and clean up radiological contamination at GATE's Great Kills Park on Staten Island.

Previous investigations at the site have identified the primary contaminant to be Radium-226.

Crews hired by Tidewater started work on January 14. As of February 26 they have completed the installation of approximately 18,000 feet of perimeter fence, cut back vegetation on over 133 acres and completed a combination of walk-over and drive-over gamma survey of 108 acres -- approximately 41% of the survey area.



A crewmember surveys Great Kills for gamma radiation. NPS PHOTO by Kathleen Cuzzolino.

This current action is part of the park's efforts pursuant to the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA), commonly known as the Superfund law, which defines the process for cleaning up hazardous substances.

For more information about the site history and previous environmental investigations at Great Kills Park, please visit <http://www.nps.gov/gate/parkmgmt/greatkillscleanup.htm>. ♥

Contact EAP for Sandy-related **stress**.

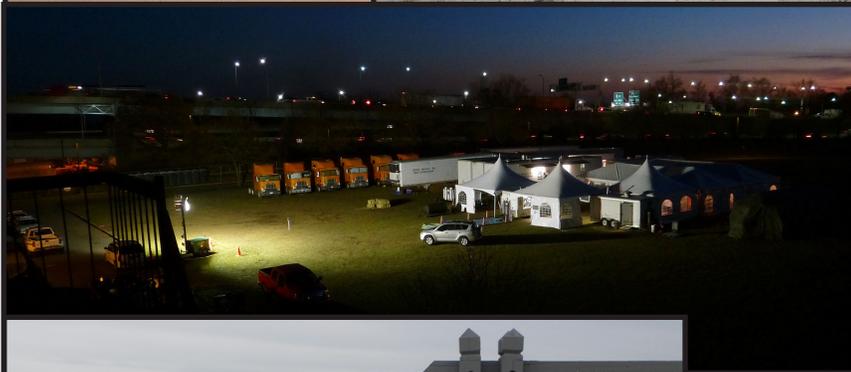


Long after a crisis has passed, the emotional pain can surface or resurface. If you feel unhappy, helpless or just need to talk, **DOI's Employee Assistance Program** is there to listen at **800-869-0276**. Calls are free and confidential. **Web:** <http://www.eapconsultants.com> (DOI password is "interioreap")

# Wildlife Refuge hosts Sandy "Before/After" exhibit



An exhibit of photos from Hurricane Sandy's effect on GATE is currently on display at the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge in Queens. The masthead photo was also part of the exhibit.



# Harbor Conservancy promotes kayaking at Great Kills

by Blanca Begert, Harbor Conservancy

Thanks to two grants totalling \$100,000, both obtained by the National Parks of New York Harbor Conservancy, more kayak programs will be offered to Staten Islanders at Great Kills Park.



Last summer, Park Ranger Earnestine Robinson conducted kayak programs at Great Kills Park. PHOTO by Francesca Simondi, intern, CRT.

The National Recreation Foundation (NRF) awarded both grants to the Harbor Conservancy. Elsie McCabe Thompson, who sits on the boards of both the Harbor Conservancy and NRF, advocated on behalf of the kayaking grants.

The grants provide for kayaking on Staten Island after Hurricane Sandy devastated communities bordering both Miller Field and Great Kills Park. One grant will allow the Staten Island Unit to expand the existing program by hiring staff to conduct more in-depth programs this summer and to purchase additional kayaks and safety equipment.

Additional funds will purchase a modular kayak storage structure which can be moved in the case of an impending storm on the level of Sandy. It will also allow for the purchase of new floating docks for the public boat launch ramp, a popular facility on the bay side of Great Kills Park which was severely damaged during the hurricane.

Marie Salerno, president of the Harbor Conservancy, said, "We stand ready to do all we can to support recreational programming in Staten Island for the season and beyond." ♥

# Seeking a "new consensus" to preserve Fort Hancock

by SHU External Affairs Officer John Harlan Warren

A group of citizens, chosen by Interior Secretary Ken Salazar, will meet over the next two years to advise GATE how to preserve historic buildings within Sandy Hook's Fort Hancock through adaptive reuse. The Fort Hancock 21st Century Advisory Committee held its first meeting January 23-24 at the Ocean Place Resort in Long Branch, N.J.

"This is our last, best chance to save Fort Hancock," said Superintendent Linda Canzanelli in her opening remarks at the January meeting. "Fort Hancock deserves a new lease on life, and its future is in our collective hands."

The 20 committee members were chosen by the Interior Secretary in September under the Federal Advisory Committee Act of 1972 (FACA). FACA groups provide advice to federal agencies to solve complex issues. Members submitted applications last May. The committee's charter calls for the committee to meet four to six times a year for the next two years. The charter can be renewed if necessary.

FACA groups hold committee meetings in public, with time set aside for public comment. Written comments can also be submitted to the committee through Superintendent Canzanelli, who is the committee's Designated Federal Officer. All materials handed out during meetings are available on the website at <http://forthancock21stcentury.org/home>

The group brings together experts from diverse areas of expertise: business, historic preservation, local officeholders, natural resource scientists, real estate, history enthusiasts, recreation, education and hospitality.

Canzanelli called for "a new consensus" on the future of the historic district, encouraging the committee to think broadly about practical solutions that could be implemented quickly. She also set out guiding principles for the park. "We will not compromise the peace and serenity of Sandy Hook itself," she said. "Fort Hancock can flourish without disturbing Sandy Hook's beaches and wildlife habitats." Canzanelli also said that the park does not need to build new buildings. Finally, she called on the fort to offer "a range of experiences and opportunities for all people, with all levels of income."



The historic buildings of Fort Hancock, like the wooden porches after Hurricane Sandy, need support. NPS PHOTO by John Warren.

Hurricane Sandy has added a new question for the committee to consider: should an area so vulnerable to storms like Sandy be rehabilitated? However, some of the historic buildings on Officers Row were on high ground and stayed dry. While wooden porches need repair, overall the buildings fared well. ♥

# After Sandy, NJ Sea Grant brings the ocean to schools

by **Kim Kosko, Communication Director, NJ Sea Grant Consortium**

When Superstorm Sandy forced the closing of its headquarters at Fort Hancock in October, the New Jersey Sea Grant Consortium (NJS GC) Education Department staff took to the road with their marine science expertise and special programs throughout the winter.

Since so many New Jersey school districts were impacted by Superstorm Sandy, NJS GC utilized that time to develop and expand its *Oceans to Go* in-school Marine Science Programs. The programs offer “hands-on” marine science topics that support state content standards and stimulate student’s science skills and natural curiosity about marine and coastal creatures and habitats. They can be booked for in-school, after school or as evening family science events.

According to Rosemary Higgins, NJS GC College and Special Programs Coordinator, a new series of afterschool programs were conducted throughout November and December at Our Lady of Mount Carmel School in Asbury

Park as part of their 21st Century Grant Program. “The students at Our Lady of Mount Carmel have been eager to learn about our local marine animals and especially enjoyed the *Sand Lab* and *Lenape* programs,” Higgins observed.

Other programs were offered at Bayberry School, Fairview School and Linden Public School # 1 and the Department is continuing to work with Linden Public

Schools and Bolger Middle School to present family science programs, including: *What Lives In A Shell?*, *Horseshoe Crab Investigations*, *Sand Lab* and *Terrific Terrapins*.

NJS GC looks forward to returning to Building 22 by early spring, ready to resume our schedule of field trips and K-12 programs. Visit <http://www.njseagrant.org> for more information. ♥



Our Lady of Mount Carmel students meet a terrapin. PHOTO by Martha Samuel, NJS GC.

## Be safe: fight on-teh-job cmpalency



**The GATE Way is the SAFE Way**  
by Safety Officer Eugene Kuziw

However, when it comes to safety, complacency can be a literal “killer” on the job. It is dangerous to go on “autopilot” when working on the job.

Webster’s Dictionary defines **complacency** as “self-satisfaction especially when accompanied by unawareness of actual dangers or deficiencies.” Complacency can affect productivity, quality and safety.

Each moment we work with hazardous energy, whether it be a forklift, automobile, power tools, electricity or even walking from one end of the facility to the other, we must focus on the task.

**Here is an example:** Aoccdrnig to a rscheearch at Cmabrigde Uinervtisy, it deosn’t mttar in waht oreldr the ltteers in a wrod are, the olny iprmoetnt tihng is taht the frist and lsat ltteer be at the rghit pclae. The rset can be a toatl mses and you can sitll raed it wouthit a porbelm.

One technique found to be effective in battling complacency in your own actions is to watch the actions of other while they work. This raises your awareness of your own complacency. It may also raise your coworker’s awareness if you share with them some of the observations you made that would allow them to do their job in a safer manner. It can be a win-win.

You probably didn’t have trouble reading that. This is an example of how complacency works. We get used to words starting with certain letters and being a certain length. We skip over it because we “know” what the word is.

Try this technique today as you are working and feel yourself going into the complacent state of autopilot. You’ll find that it can work well --for everyone. ♥

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