Volunteer Dinners and Awards!

Regional and National Award Winners!

The C&O Canal recognizes its hardworking volunteers with various internal awards throughout the year. In addition to park awards, a few of our hardworking volunteers hit milestones and received National and Regional awards!

Steve Dean, Level Walker and Culvert Crawler, received the 2016 regional Hartzog Enduring Service Award for his efforts with the park handbook, the Level Walker program, and of course documenting the park’s historic culverts!

Vinh Le-Si received the National 2015 George and Helen Hartzog Volunteer Award for contributing over 1,000 hours last year with the Palisades Bike Patrol, the Billy Goat Trail Stewards, Mercer boat repairs, and updating park bulletin boards. He was presented with the award this year at a ceremony in Washington, DC!

Finally, the C&O Canal’s volunteer program was the recipient of the Hartzog Park Volunteer Program Award. Through the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal volunteer program, 3,620 volunteers contributed 78,012 hours to the park in 2016, for a value of 1.8 million dollars!

VIP of the Year Winners!

Our VIP of the Year awards were announced at the volunteer appreciation dinners this October!

Eastern MD VIP Award: Ed Mroczka (Mercer Maintenance Crew, Bike Patrol)

Western MD VIP Award: Champ Zumbrun (Canal Classroom Corps, Advisory Committee)

Central VIP Award and VIP of the Year: Jim Tomlin (Level Walkers, PATC)

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Jim Heins and a team of fearless C&O Canal Association (COCA) volunteers worked this summer to replace the signs on 72 locks throughout the park. Jim hatched the plan and plotted with NPS Staff (which, as a staff member says, “can be daunting, even though C&O Canal staff are all smart, good-looking people.”) Jim also assisted in designing the new signs and negotiating the budget.

Installation alone took two months of logistics and field-work, including creating a pulley system to get materials to the berm side of the canal in areas where it isn’t accessible by vehicle.

Observant readers may have noticed that 72 signs were replaced when there are 74 locks along the canal. This was a strategic move by Jim and the team due to the upcoming construction on Locks 3 and 4. Jim hopes to have park superintendent Kevin Brandt join volunteers for the installation of the final two signs.

Park visitors were thrilled to see the new signs. One even commented that they take pictures every year with the lock sign that matches their age. The new lock signs will be noticed and appreciated for years to come.

Thanks, Jim, Skip, and COCA!

“\textit{We do good work}” but sometimes, mistakes happen- don’t worry, this sign was corrected after the picture was taken! (Photo Courtesy Jim Heins)

\textbf{Lock Sign Saga}

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To get materials to the berm side of the canal, sometimes an improvised pulley system had to be used. (Photo Courtesy Skip Magee)
Fish Rescue: A Slippery Situation

Volunteers came to the (fish) rescue!

As part of an ongoing project, the Georgetown canal boat was moved upstream and Locks 3 and 4 were inspected by contractors for repair and rebuilding. For contractors to look at the locks, sections of the canal had to be drained, and many park visitors were concerned that fish would lose their habitat and die in the dry canal.

Armed with waders and nets, a group of volunteers and supporting staff members helped pull fish from Locks 3 and 4, including a shockingly large catfish (below.) The fish were brought to nearby streams and rivers. Thank you to the volunteers!

Palisades Bike Patrol Gets Social

While the Palisades Bike Patrol has always done yearly picnics, a few bike patrollers noticed there was a gap between when they could get together. This summer, Candy Grueff, Mary Horwitz, and Carolina Kenrick decided to create an informal bike patrol social event to supplement the picnic get-togethers.

“You don’t have to RSVP or anything, just show up, drop $2.50 in the box, and get a donut and a cup of coffee!” These gatherings allow new patrollers connect to the group without the pressure of a large event. After trying a few different dates and times, Candy settled on 9am, the second Saturday of every month, and had as many as 20 people attend!

Bill Knight, a bike patroller and “fabulous” baker, occasionally brings beignets or scones. After a few get-togethers, bike patrollers began to request their favorite treats, and Candy was more than happy to oblige.

“While the Bike Loaner Program is setting up in front of the tavern, we’re having coffee around the side! It’s a great way to help people connect,” she says. Keep an eye out for the coffee socials when they start again in the spring.

Volunteers in other districts, please get in touch if you’d like to start events like this with your group!
Centennial volunteer recognition coin (courtesy NPS)

Centennial Challenge Coin Winners!
We’d like to recognize some of our amazing volunteers who worked over 201.6 hours in the NPS’ Centennial year! They will be receiving their Challenge Coins at an event in early 2017!

Deena Barlev          John Hutchinson          Dward Moore
Nate Bickford         Ric Jackson             Charlie Morton
Peggy Blanchard       Curtis Keltner           Joan Paull
Dell Pillers/Cline    Russ Kennedy            Alan Redding
Steve Dean            Bob King                 Tom Stanford
Sebastian Diaz        Bill Knight              Mark Stover
Ned Goddard           Vinh Le-Si               Ingrid Sunzenauer
Jim Goheen            John League             Charles Thornton
Karen Gray            Don Libes                Jim Tomlin
Tom Hall              Norman Liebow            Bonnie Troxell
Jim Heins             Megan Mannas             Dong Vo
Susan Howard           Lowell Markey           Ken Zabielski

We will be placing an order for more coins at the end of December, 2016, so please contact the Volunteer Office if your name is not on this list and you have completed over 201.6 hours this year!

Norman Liebow reached 10,000 volunteer hours this year, a number so amazing there isn’t an official award for it! If you don’t know Norman, he is a Palisades Bike Patrol volunteer that staff and visitors are always excited to see. One visitor even named their bike after Norman as a way of thanking him for his help! We are working hard on a way to recognize Norman for this fantastic commitment!

The President’s Lifetime Achievement Award (above, picture courtesy CNCS) is given to volunteers who have contributed more than 4,000 hours of service in their lifetimes. This year, two C&O Canal volunteers qualified for this prestigious award.

Ric Jackson, coordinator of the Palisades Bike Loaner Program, has helped thousands of visitors enjoy the towpath on two wheels. He recruits, trains, and manages a volunteer crew as well as a fleet of a hundred bicycles.

Charlie Morton, a front desk volunteer at the Williamsport Visitor Center, is quick to help out visitors and fellow volunteers alike. He is knowledgeable about the canal and other attractions in the area, and offers to fill in wherever an extra hand is needed. Charlie is pictured to the left, with Emily Hewitt and his award. (courtesy NPS)
New District Supervisors!

Volunteers may have noticed new faces in Park Service uniforms around the park this fall! Each district has a new Ranger!

Brendan Wilson, Supervisory Georgetown District Park Ranger, comes to the C&O Canal from Flight 93 National Memorial in Pennsylvania.

Pete Peterson, Supervisory Palisades District Park Ranger, comes all the way from Grand Canyon National Park!

Matt Graves, Supervisory Western Maryland District Park Ranger, was most recently stationed at the Appalachian National Scenic Trail, but years ago he was a “canawler” on the C&O at Great Falls.

If you see any of these new rangers in the field, please say hello and let them know what projects you are working on!

Acting Volunteer Coordinator Leads the Way!

Rebecca Jameson, who many volunteers knew as a ranger in Great Falls, filled the position of Acting Volunteer Coordinator while Emily Hewitt operated as Acting Education Coordinator. Becca was very excited to work with the volunteer office because her NPS career began with an SCA internship in Great Falls, and then as Assistant Volunteer Coordinator right here at the C&O Canal, before she moved to Palisades! Her detail started off with festivities as she was master of ceremonies at the volunteer appreciation dinners!

After a few months as Acting Volunteer Coordinator, Becca was offered a position at Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park. She will be missed!