



# Volunteers-In-Parks News



Superintendent Kevin Brandt and Jim Heins  
Photo credit: Joshua Nolen/NPS

## Lock Sign 16!!



Kevin Brandt painting the finishing touches to the sign.

Photo credit: Jim Heins

Lock Sign 16, the last marker for the lock sign project was installed on April 28th by Jim Heins, Superintendent Kevin Brandt and Park Ranger Joshua Nolen. Jim, Skip and other C&O Canal Association members have been working hard to get these installed throughout the park. This project began as a way to recognize the Centennial of the National Park Service. Jim and his team have replaced 72

lock signs along the 184.5 miles of towpath. Jim was the fearless leader of this project and in addition to replacing the signs, he also helped with the budget negotiations and the design of the signs. It was great to have Kevin assist in the last installation.

A big thank you to Jim, Skip and the C&O Canal Association!



Minor prep work for the installation.  
Photo credit: Joshua Nolen/NPS

## VIP Speaker Series Speakers Needed

Do you have an interesting skill or hobby that relates with the canal? Is there a favorite section of the canal you enjoy and want to share your knowledge with the public? The volunteer office is looking for speakers for August and October of this year!

Past programs have explored the Underground Railroad, Eagles, Culverts, OneHealth, Canal Myths and Truths. One volunteer chose to do a bike ride to the Seneca Sandstone quarry.

There are many possibilities and this is a great way to share your passion and interests with fellow volunteers and the public. If you are interested and would like to know more, please contact Assistant Volunteer Coordinator Kelsey Smith at [kelsey\\_smith@nps.gov](mailto:kelsey_smith@nps.gov).

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National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

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

This newsletter was written, produced and edited by the C&O Canal's Volunteer Office staff.

Thanks to: Carrie Wittmer, Dorothy McQuaid, Josh Whitman, Joshua Nolen, Kristi Shelton and Taylor Little for their contributions!

## Call for Future Newsletter Submissions

Do you want to share what's going on in your area of the park? E-mail article ideas to [CHOHVIP@gmail.com](mailto:CHOHVIP@gmail.com)!

## New Staff



Photo credit: Cyrus Chimento/NPS

**Kelsey Smith** is the Assistant Volunteer Coordinator through the Student Conservation Association (SCA). Kelsey has a bachelor degree in History from the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point. When she is not working she enjoys golfing, camping and going on adventures.



Photo credit: NPS

**Carrie Wittmer** is the Western Maryland District Interpreter, Volunteer and Media Coordinator. Before coming to the C&O Canal she worked at Grand Canyon National Park as an education technician and a mule packer. She enjoys sharing her love for wild places and national parks with visitors.

## Hartzog Award Winners!!

Multiple Hartzog Awards were bestowed upon volunteers and the C&O Canal in early 2017.

The Enduring Service Award went to **Jim Heins** of the C&O Canal Association. Jim has volunteered with the canal for over 20 years. Last year, Jim organized and negotiated the funding for the the installation of 72 lock signs along all 184.5 miles. Over the years, Jim and his team have installed approximately 190 waysides and 15 bulletin boards.

The Individual Volunteer Award went to **Jim Tomlin** of the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club (PATC). Jim and his team of "GPS Rangers" from the PATC, photographed and recorded all GPS data for over 1500 signs in the park. Jim has also been a Level Walker with the C&O Canal Association for eight years.

The C&O Canal was honored with the Park Volunteer Program Award. Congratulations and thank you all our volunteers for your hard work and dedication!

## Goodbye Dorothy!!

**Dorothy McQuaid**, the former Assistant Volunteer Coordinator and Education Intern, has taken a position as a Seasonal Interpreter at Catoclin Mountain Park. We wish her all the best!



## Snakehead Fishing Derby



Participants watch a DNR employee fillet a snakehead.

Photo credit: Kristi Shelton/NPS

On Saturday, June 3rd, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, U.S. Fish and Wildlife, and the C&O Canal NHP hosted the 2nd annual “Stop the Snakehead” fishing derby to raise awareness and reduce the negative impact of snakeheads in the park.

Snakeheads are predatory, invasive fish native to Asia that were found reproducing in the canal in 2015. They negatively impact native fish through predation and competition. Snakeheads most likely found their way into the canal using the locks around Great Falls.

Nearly 500 people registered for the event to fish anywhere

between Violette’s and Swains Locks.

The main event, based at Pennyfield Lock, hosted activities for children and adults. One activity was a fish-print station, where kids could paint small snakeheads and press them onto t-shirts. There was also a fillet station, where people could learn how to fillet a snakehead and take home free fillets from previously caught snakeheads. Anyone who caught a fish of any kind received a raffle ticket for a chance to win prizes like hats, t-shirts and gift cards.

Many different species of fish were caught but only one snakehead was caught at the very end of the event. Those who caught other species were encouraged to throw them back in the canal.

-Kristi Shelton  
Agricultural Program Intern



Photo credit: Andrew Landsman/NPS

## Williamsport and Oldtown Fishing Rodeos

Fishing Rodeos were held in Williamsport and Oldtown on June 3rd. Youth fishing rodeos are a good way to introduce young people to fishing and usually held in small bodies of water, such as the Canal.

This was the 69th consecutive year for the Oldtown Battie Mixon Fishing Rodeo. The event was held at Lock 70 and roughly 1,400 children and adults attended. The event was sponsored by the Cumberland Department of Parks and Recreations and CSX Transportation.

Williamsport hosted the 21st annual Fishing Rodeo and Family Fun Day. Nearly 80 children ranging in age from 3 to 15 participated and competed for a variety of prizes donated by local merchants. Park volunteers measured fish, and counted the number of fish caught and served as judges.



Oldtown Fishing Rodeo  
Photo credit: NPS



Canal Trust intern Tess Longnecker and her hearty team of Boy Scouts at Spring Gap  
Photo credit: Chris Stubbs

# 10th Annual Canal Pride Days

Mother Nature did not make it easy for this year's Canal Pride Days. In spite of rain and cold more than 320 volunteers completed 41 different beautification projects at four different event locations within the C&O Canal National Historical Park.

Following a morning thunderstorm on April 29th, 55 volunteers made Cushwa Basin in Williamsport look great in preparation for the Conococheague Aqueduct Ground-breaking Ceremony.

On May 6th, a persistent rain and the rising Potomac River did not deter 67 volunteers from taking care of the area around the Brunswick Boat Ramp.

On May 20th, 110 Boy Scouts and Scout leaders helped refurbish Spring Gap Campground during the first nice day of the event season.

The third time was indeed the charm. After it was rained out twice, 91 volunteers came out to our re-scheduled Great Falls event on a sunny June 10th to paint, plant grass seed, clean the Mercer canal boat, and much more.



The Lock 30 vegetation removal team at Brunswick Boat Ramp.  
Photo credit: Paulie Ward

Other Canal Pride events this spring included the removal of over 50 bags of invasive garlic mustard from the Dam 5 tow-path by Grace Academy students. Marriot Hotels employees beautified various areas in the Carderock Recreation Area and FedEx Ground employees cleared vegetation from the Rail Trail at Cushwa Basin.

Our special thanks to Canal Pride sponsors: REI, Guest Services, Inc., National Environmental Education Foundation, M&T Bank, the Community Foundation of Frederick County, and Friends of Historic Great Falls Tavern. Thanks also to our volunteers, participating organizations, NPS staff, volunteer project leaders, and photographers.

-Josh Whitman  
C&O Canal Trust



David Long introduces students to the Paw Paw Tunnel and poses the question: “Would it have been better to build the canal along the Paw Paw bends, or to spend the time, money, and effort to build the tunnel?”  
Photo credit: Dorothy McQuaid/NPS

# Canal Classroom Corps

This spring, dozens of schools brought thousands of students out to the Canal to explore the Paw Paw Tunnel, operate the locks at Williamsport, or take a boat ride at Great Falls. These educational (and fun!) field trips would not be possible without the Canal Classroom Corps (CCC) team. Many Canal Classroom Corps members are retired teachers who enjoy the combination of fresh air and inquisitive minds. A CCC member commented at training, “I get the most pleasure when I see a student ask a question and see their eyes light up when they have an understanding of the answer!”

The CCCs and students aren’t the only ones having fun on field trips. One of this spring’s final field trips was at the Paw Paw Tunnel, where Education Coordinator Hollie Lynch and

Education Interns Seth Meyers and Dorothy McQuaid joined in. A sunny day with a light breeze provided comfortable hiking weather as the group of 40 students climbed up the Tunnel Hill Trail, stopping to ponder views, signage, plants, and animals. CCCs as well as Ranger Lynch discussed how the tunnel was built in an era before bulldozers and backhoes. Students had the opportunity to mark waypoints on GPS units and recorded distance traveled and elevation. “We’re 100 feet above where we started- is that a lot?” “Well, what if you climbed a 100-foot tall ladder?” “Yeah, that’s a lot!”

Field trips like this and those at Cumberland, Williamsport, and Great Falls, are all made possible by Canal Classroom Corps educators. Students frequently send thank you notes referring

to their CCC group leaders as ‘so smart!’ or ‘awesome.’ CCCs explain historic and natural resources, demonstrate hands-on activities, and lead groups to their own discoveries. Thank you to all our wonderful Canal Classroom Corps members!

- Dorothy McQuaid  
Education Intern



CCC Member David Long and Education Coordinator Hollie Lynch discuss plans for the day.  
Photo credit: Dorothy McQuaid/NPS