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Winter 2013



**Celebrating
more than 25 years
of advocacy for New
York's parks and
trails**

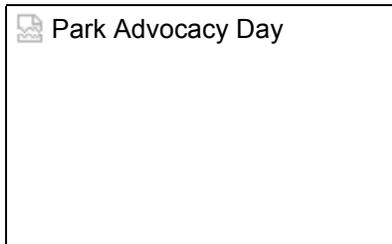
Stay connected!

There are lots of ways to stay

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Support parks at Park Advocacy Day

Gov. Cuomo's proposed budget is good news for parks: it includes a [\\$90 million investment](#) to address the backlog of infrastructure needs and critical safety repairs at NYS Parks and Historic Sites. In addition, the state's five-year capital plan includes \$90 million annually in new funding for the state park system in each of the next 5 years. The proposed budget also includes an additional \$19 million for the EPF, providing critical funding for state and local parks and trails.



Now the Legislature and Governor must come to an agreement on the budget. You can help make sure these critical funds are in the final budget. **Join us for [Park Advocacy Day on March 5th in Albany](#).** [Find out more.](#)

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Show your parks some love: I Love My Park Day 2013

The first-ever [I Love My Park Day](#) (ILMPD) was an overwhelming success thanks to the efforts of Friends groups, park staff and volunteers across the state. PTNY is once again teaming up with State Parks and we want to make ILMPD 2013 even bigger and better, bringing in new volunteers and resources while providing enhanced visibility to the entire state park system.



More than [60 parks and historic sites](#) are already working on this year's event. And with sponsors like L.L. Bean, REI, Corning Incorporated Foundation, Time Warner Sports Channel and YNN, this year's event is sure to make headlines across the state and bring attention to our treasured state parks and historic sites.

Help us make this event a huge success: [contact us](#) today to

up-to-date on the latest news affecting our magnificent state park system and stay connected to other park supporters. If you're not already on our email list, visit our [website](#) to join. Friends groups can connect through the [Discussion Forum](#). You can also follow us:



Become a non-profit member

Is your Friends group a member of Parks & Trails New York? PTNY works to build the capacity of Friends groups, expand outreach and communications, and enhance advocacy efforts. With continued economic constraints, it is more important than ever that the network of Friends groups grows and strengthens.

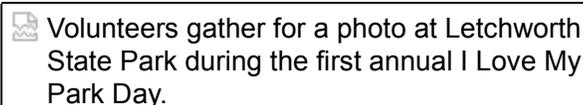
Some of the tools PTNY offers include spearheading [I Love My Park Day](#), publishing the *You Gotta Have Friends* eNewsletter, and providing [Growing the Grassroots capacity grants](#), [technical assistance](#), and an online [Friends Resource Kit](#). PTNY also gives a voice to Friends groups at the Capitol.

[Become a non-profit organization member of PTNY today!](#)

Park Friends get boost from PTNY Grants

get started.

[Learn more](#)



Volunteers gather for a photo at Letchworth State Park during the first annual I Love My Park Day.

Volunteers gather for a photo at Letchworth State Park during the first annual I Love My Park Day.

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We want to work with you!

New State Park Friends Technical Assistance Program Launched

Are you involved with a Friends group that works to promote and enhance one of New York's 214 state parks and historic sites? Are you interested in building the capacity of your organization?

PTNY is excited to announce the launch of our new program for state park and historic site Friends groups. The NYS Park Friends Technical Assistance Program (TAP) will help build the capacity of Friends organizations by working one-on-one with a few groups on areas such as communications, board development and engaging and recruiting volunteers.

By working together, we can strengthen the community of park supporters and enhance stewardship of the state park system.

[Applications](#) are due March 15. [Learn more.](#)

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Despite Sandy, parks thrive in 2012

Not even a storm of historic proportions could stop the revitalization of our state park system in 2012. NY Works projects brought improvements to 55 parks and historic sites, from playgrounds and swimming pools to roads, bridges and buildings. The improvements were noticed by visitors who came in droves; visitation was over 60 million last year, up 5% from 2011. Camping at state parks was especially popular; camping nights were up 36,000 from the year before, with 91% and 95% occupancy rates on Memorial



Sandy damaged road in state park

State parks are on the long road to recovery, thanks to renewed state spending on infrastructure needs.



PTNY's Growing the Grassroots grants

Among the winners of this year's [Growing the Grassroots](#) grants are four state park and historic site Friends groups: [Friends of Letchworth State Park](#), [Friends of the Old Croton Aqueduct](#), [Friends of Schodack Island State Park](#), and [Friends of Ulysses S. Grant Cottage](#). PTNY awarded almost \$14,000 in capacity-building grants to 10 non-profit park and trail organizations throughout the state. The groups will use the funds to increase organizational visibility, generate community support, grow membership, and attract additional volunteers. Congratulations to these groups and [all the winners](#).

Grants for Friends groups: deadlines approaching

[Public Lands Every Day](#) plans to award 25 Friends groups \$2,000 each to support a minimum of three events per site. The deadline is March 8, 2013. For more details and for an application form, see their [website](#). Public Lands Every Day is also accepting applications for their Every Day Capacity Building Grant, due April 30, 2013. For more details, visit [here](#).

Washington's Headquarters Museum

Day and Labor Day respectively. State Parks' Cyber Monday promotion was a big success with 23,000 passes sold in one day. In addition, a new phone app was launched and several special events put state parks on a national stage.

With the announcement that the Governor's [proposed budget](#) includes \$90 million for another round of funding for infrastructure needs, parks are poised to lead the state's environmental and economic efforts. Here's to keeping the momentum going for parks in 2013 and beyond!

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Make Their Day! Recognize and honor our park and trail champions

Nominations sought for 2013 Park & Trail Recognition Awards

Behind every successful park or trail project there are dedicated individuals and organizations that rarely receive the recognition they so richly deserve. It's time to honor their efforts with one of our [2013 Park & Trail Recognition Awards](#).

Award categories include:

- Public Leadership
- Volunteer Service
- Corporate Partnership
- Get Outside Award
- Outside the Box

[Nomination forms](#) must be postmarked, emailed, or faxed to Parks & Trails New York by March 26, 2013. Winners will be announced May 15, 2013.

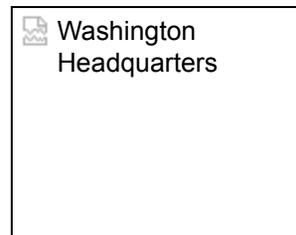
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New Study: State Parks home to many rare species

A new study quantifies the number and significance of rare species that live in New York's state parks. Professor of Biology George Robinson of the University at Albany, SUNY published his findings in the October 2012 issue of [Natural Areas Journal](#).

Dr. Robinson used a new theory to assess the importance of protecting a specific species in a given locale. The concept, called "stewardship responsibility," takes into account the percentage of the species' global population that lives in the particular region. For instance, if a species has 70% of its population in New York, it would merit more conservation efforts here than a species with only 5% of its population in the state. Thus, NY would have a

Reopens



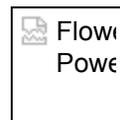
After years of renovations, [Washington's Headquarters State Historic Site's](#) Museum reopened late last year with a new exhibit, "[Unpacked and Rediscovered: Selections from Washington's Headquarters' Collection](#)." The exhibit features rare, curious and important collections not seen by the public for many years. The historic site, where General Washington spent the final critical months of the War for Independence, is a National Historic Landmark and the first publicly owned historic site in the nation.

Speaking out for parks

[Watch PTNY's testimony](#) at the budget hearing on environmental conservation, including parks, given by our Parks Program & Government Relations Director Laura DiBetta earlier this month. Laura's turn to testify comes 6 hours and 4 minutes into the hearing. (Phew - these budget hearings are not for the faint-of-heart!)

"Plants for Parks" beautifies State Parks

New York State Parks has partnered with local nurseries and



flower growers to create "Plants for Parks," a new program that will help beautify the region's state parks and historic sites. The

higher stewardship responsibility for that species.

Using data from the state's [Natural Heritage Program](#), Dr. Robinson found that NY averages 3.57 rare species in each park, with an average of 2.65 significant ecological communities. Dr. Robinson argues that these results offer clear proof that state parks are "major stewards of biodiversity" in New York. We should celebrate the state parks system for maintaining this wealth of biological heritage, he argues, but also invest in our state parks to ensure the long-term viability of these biological resources.

In other words, Dr. Robinson's study tells us something that we've probably already suspected: New York's state parks are home to some magnificent and unique ecosystems, and it's our job to protect them.

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 Rare plant in NYS parks

*NY supports 10 populations of the federally listed Northern Monk's-hood (*Aconitum noveboracense*). Photo by Stephen M. Young, courtesy New York Heritage Program.*

Weddings in the park

[Clermont State Historic Site](#) has a long history of weddings - the first documented Livingston family wedding took place on Clermont's grounds in 1793! Recently, [Friends of Clermont's](#) Special Events Coordinator, Roberta Nolan, has revived the estate's tradition of nuptials.

State Parks and Historic Sites sit close to the hearts of many New Yorkers, and what better way to share their delight with friends and family than through a wedding? Clermont is only one of many state parks that host weddings. [Glimmerglass State Park](#) welcomes weddings, as well. The [Friends of Glimmerglass](#) have a detailed [wedding website](#) with logistics to help prospective couples plan their big events. [Niagara Falls State Park](#) also has a [wedding webpage](#) for couples hoping to say "I do" in front of the famed falls.

Weddings can be a great new way for Friends to bring the community into the park, garner a little extra visibility, and maybe also a little extra cash. For some advice on wedding planning in parks, check out [Roberta's blog](#).

 Weddings in state parks

A couple overlooks the Hudson River during a wedding at Clermont State Historic Site

[New York Flower Power Group](#), a trade association, has donated flowers in this fruitful partnership where parks add a little extra color and local businesses gain visibility. [Schuylers Mansion](#) and [Saratoga Spa State Park](#) have [spruced up](#) their summer entryways, gardens, and displays with this new burst of colors. We hope the partnership continues to grow!

PIPC archival images going online

 PIPC archive image

About 400 images from the archives of the [Palisades Interstate Park Commission](#) (PIPC) are now available [online](#). For the past few months, PIPC worked with Hudson MicroImaging to digitize 1,700 glass Lantern Slides donated by the American Museum of Natural History in the 1920s as well as 300 larger glass plate negatives taken by renowned photographer William Thompson Howell. The digital versions of those images have been uploaded onto the Southeastern New York Library Resource Council's Hudson River Valley Heritage [website](#).

Dates to remember

March 5, 2013: [Park Advocacy Day](#), Albany

March 6, 2013: [EPF Lobby Day](#), Albany

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News from Friends groups

If you have news to share in the next issue of You Gotta Have Friends, [let us know](#).

Friends of the Old Croton Aqueduct honored

[Friends of the Old Croton Aqueduct](#) (OCA) are among the recipients of this year's Volunteer Spirit Awards, which were announced last month by [The Volunteer Center of United Way](#). The Friends have been active in improving and filling gaps in the OCA Trail and have worked with NYC Parks to begin the restoration of the [High Bridge](#), an historic, 165-year-old pedestrian bridge high above the Harlem River that has been closed to the public for 40 years. PTNY congratulates the Friends of the OCA on the award as well as their success in receiving a capacity-building grant from PTNY. Keep up that volunteer spirit!

 Mavis Caine, Friends of the Old Croton Aqueduct

Mavis Cain, President of Friends of the Old Croton Aqueduct, with Assemblyman Tom Abinanti, Assemblyman / Photo by Amie Getis

New Friends group for Long Point State Park

Sitting on the shores of Lake Chautauqua in the Finger Lakes is [Long Point State Park](#). The park has traditionally been used for picnicking and hunting, but much of the park is underutilized outside of hunting season. John Riley, a former cross-country coach, saw runners and others using roads rather than the park's trails and wanted to find a way to get people to enjoy all the park has to offer.

 Long Point State Park

The Friends of Long Point State Park formed only a couple of months ago and already they are making good progress and have generated a lot of interest in the community. The Friends, led by a steering committee of six people, is focused on clearing and developing the trails in the park, including possibly building a couple of bridges, and will soon begin fundraising. The Friends have developed a small flyer and a rough map of the trails in

March 15, 2013:

Applications due for [NYS Parks & Historic Sites Friends TAP](#)

March 26, 2013:

[Nominations](#) due for 2013 Park & Trail Recognition Awards

May 4, 2013: [I Love My Park Day 2013](#)

May 15, 2013: 2013 Park & Trail Recognition Awards winners announced

Resources for Friends groups

Free and low-cost technology for nonprofits

Do you crave the latest technology for your organization, but the cost is out of reach? [TechSoup](#) works to bridge the gap between non-profits and technology companies looking to donate to worthy causes free or reduced-price hardware and software. Companies include Adobe, Microsoft, and Dell. [Join for free](#) and discover what may be available to your non-profit.

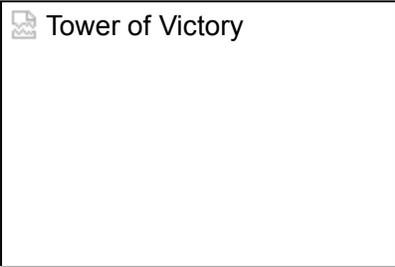
Explore State Parks

 NYS Parks logo

progress as well as started a [Facebook group](#). For more information, contact [John Riley](#).

Restoring an American monument

In 1883, Robert Todd Lincoln (only son of Abraham and Mary Lincoln, and played recently by Joseph Gordon Levitt in the film adaptation of Lincoln's life) commissioned the [Tower of Victory](#) to be built at Washington's Headquarters in Newburgh. This monument has stood guard high above the Hudson River for the past 125 years in what is now Washington's Headquarters State Historic Site.

 Tower of Victory

The Tower of Victory has stood high above the Hudson River in Newburgh for 125 years.

Unfortunately, its monumental stance has left it vulnerable to the elements. Wind and water have taken their toll on the basic structure of the monument. The gates are inoperable, the roof and its erstwhile viewing platform have been removed, and the staircases are crumbling in the once treasured monument to America's earliest president.

To prevent the tower from falling into even further disrepair, the [Palisades Parks Conservancy](#) has launched a capital campaign to raise \$1.3 million. Over \$600,000 has been raised to date. [Learn more](#) about the Tower of Victory and the campaign to save it.

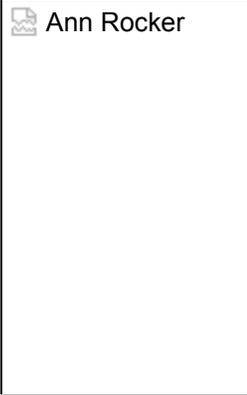
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That's What Friends Are For Volunteer Profile: Ann Rocker

Volunteers are essential to our state parks and historic sites. That's What Friends Are For, in which we profile a dedicated Friends group volunteer, is a new regular feature in You Gotta Have Friends.

When the term "community activist" was coined, it was with women like L. Ann Rocker in mind.

For the past 26 years, Ann has worked tirelessly to protect her West Harlem community from odors and water pollutants emanating from a sewage treatment plant located on the Hudson River. Due to her dedicated involvement, major changes have been made to the plant such as the establishment of programs aimed at monitoring the air and water quality, as well as the emissions from trucks and buses.

 Ann Rocker

In 1993, the 28-acre [Riverbank State Park](#) was opened on top of

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the North River Water Pollution Control Plant as part of compensation to the community for the siting of the sewage plant, turning an eyesore into an asset. Although decision-makers at the time tried to scale back the park, Ann fought to ensure the park was the robust community asset that was promised.

[Keep reading about Ann Rocker and the Riverbank Partnership.](#)

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You Gotta Have Tips: To blog or not to blog

You Gotta Have Tips is a regular feature of You Gotta Have Friends in which we provide capacity-building and technical-assistance tips.

If your Friends group already has a website or a Facebook page you may be thinking, "Why would I need a blog?" With free, customizable and easy-to-use (no website skills required!) blogging tools available, blogs present a nice option for certain projects.

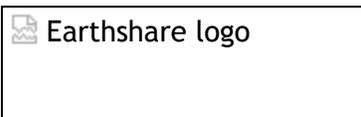


Blogger and Wordpress logos

One instance in which a blog might be a useful tool is when your Friends group is working on a long-term project on which you may want to regularly update your members and the public, such as a restoration project or a fundraising campaign.

[Keep reading about blogging.](#)

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Earthshare logo

Parks & Trails New York is a member of Earth Share New York, an alliance of leading nonprofit environmental organizations. For more information about workplace giving to Parks & Trails New York and Earth Share, check out www.earthshareny.org.

