



Van Cortlandt Park Conservancy



Annual Report 2010



Van Cortlandt Park Conservancy

Van Cortlandt Park Conservancy's mission is to sustain and enhance the park as a destination for recreation, leisure and the enjoyment of natural landscapes.



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Dear Supporter of Van Cortlandt Park Conservancy,

The Van Cortlandt Park Conservancy is proud to present its first annual report. This was a year of many firsts and the amount we accomplished in that short time with limited staff is impressive. We are exploring exciting new ways to use the park and started raising funds to enhance and help maintain the park. Beginning small, we sponsored several great cultural programs, built a strong and diverse Board of Directors, and connected with key park stakeholders. You can find out about all of our programs and accomplishments inside.

An inherent goal of the Conservancy is to democratize the decision-making process for Van Cortlandt Park. Throughout the year we met with sports leagues, schools and other park user groups and listened to what they had to say about our athletic fields, trails and woods. At our annual Community Council meeting in June, the Conservancy and dozens of park user groups discussed our hopes and dreams for the future, and how to get there.

We could not have made these strides without the individuals and organizations that work towards putting Van Cortlandt Park in its rightful place as one of New York City's best, and so we sincerely thank all of our supporters. Come catch a cricket game in the park, enjoy a walk through the woods, or come to one of our events. Together we will continue to improve our park and our community.

With our thanks,

Tony Perez Cassino, Chair
Margot Perron, President



PROGRAMS



Cultural Series

Barefoot Dancing

Van Cortlandt Park hosted this popular summer series for the third year in 2009. This celebration of cultures from around the world captivated families throughout July. The program combines quality live music with instruction on basic dance steps from the culture represented. This year, the program included dance from the Ivory Coast, American square dance, and East Indian dance.



Children's Performances

City Parks Foundation helped bring children's performances to Van Cortlandt Park's playgrounds once again in the summer of 2009. Audiences saw a wide variety of theater. Performers interacted with children using stories, sing-a-longs, drumming, clowning and mime that were rich in culture and captured youngsters' imaginations. The playground performances were proudly presented by Horace Mann School.



Bird Walks

Starting in April, experts from the Urban Park Rangers and NYC Audubon led weekly bird walks through Van Cortlandt Park. The park, with its large size and mixed terrain, is a unique urban habitat for birds, including species that are difficult to find elsewhere in New York. Each walk has a specific theme having to do with quirky bird behavior or their beautiful anatomy, so participants learn bits of ornithology while they observe. This program was made possible by a generous donation from Ethical Culture Fieldston School.

Seasonal Events

Halloween Fun Run

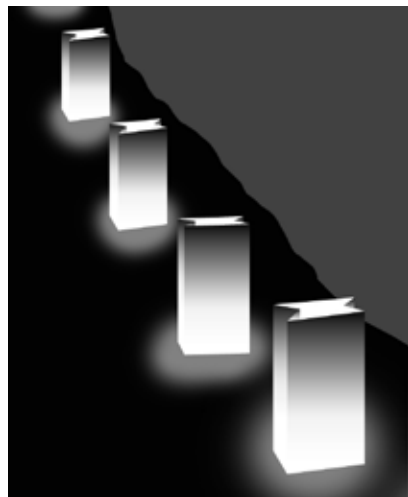
On October 31st, 2009, children and their families arrived at the Van Cortlandt Stadium for Halloween festivities. Participants enjoyed face painting, apple cider press demonstrations and several silly races. There were distance races organized by age starting with two year olds, a sack race, pumpkin-rolling races, and a dress-up race where kids put on different parts of a costume every few yards. The Halloween Fun Run was a new family event that invited the community to celebrate the holiday in a healthy and entertaining way.

Winter Solstice Candles

On the longest night of the year, hardy adventurers gathered by the frigid shores of Van Cortlandt Lake to light candles, sing songs and enjoy hot cider. High school interns from the Friends of Van Cortlandt Park assisted with setting up the event; the Urban Park Rangers led a nighttime walk down the Putnam trail; musicians led sing-alongs; and candles were placed around the southern edge of the lake to light up the night. On the walk with the Rangers, a flock of geese sang back to our carolers in honks!

Dig It!

Timberland and the Parks Department joined forces bringing 250 volunteers to help paint light posts and benches, plant trees, pull weeds and ward off graffiti in the Northeast Forest, Shandler Recreation Area and Indian Field. Volunteers received a hat, t-shirt and lunch for their hard work. Van Cortlandt Park Conservancy board members and the Friends of Van Cortlandt Park assisted in the event.



Donor Events

Wreath Reception

Just before the December holidays, Van Cortlandt Park Conservancy invited guests to the Arsenal in Central Park for an exhibition of non-traditional holiday wreaths created by artists from across the City. The artists, who were enlisted by the Parks Department, included VCPC president Margot Perron and board member Matthew Modine. The reception was an opportunity to thank existing supporters of the Conservancy and cultivate new supporters.



First Fête

VCPC's first fundraising event took place on July 16, 2009. Zarin Mehta, Executive Director of the New York Philharmonic, was the guest of honor at a reception before the Philharmonic's performance on the Parade Ground. Guests enjoyed dinner at Van Cortlandt Golf House's outdoor lakeside terrace.



Golf Tournament

In June, VCPC joined the American-Scottish Foundation and KEA to host the 13th Annual John Muir Golf Tournament, which raises funds for the park's John Muir nature trail. Guests enjoyed a round on the Van Cortlandt Golf Course and a dinner at the awards ceremony. Too bad nobody hit a hole-in-one to win the car!



Special Projects

Community Council

Throughout the year, Van Cortlandt Park Conservancy met with park user groups. These meetings were open discussions about how the park serves its millions of visitors. We discussed maintaining Van Cortlandt Park's fields, trails and other facilities with the groups that use them the most. In June, dozens of user groups met at Horace Mann School for our annual Community Council meeting, where we discussed the past year's and ideas for the future.

Art Installations

To celebrate the New Year, the Conservancy sponsored an artist who draped an enormous doily in the shape of a snowflake over one of the new baseball backstops on the Parade Ground. It was an awesome sight, though a snow storm tore it down the next night.

In September, the park hosted *Our Lady of Detritus*, a portable performance installation to raise awareness about waste management and recycling. The performance used improvisational movement structures and an interactive sound system to engage the public and to get people thinking green.

Public Relations

Van Cortlandt Park Conservancy launched its website, www.vcpark.org. The website includes information about the park's facilities, programs, history and more. Web traffic has been steadily increasing and VCPC started a companion facebook page to continue to expand our internet presence.

VCPC strived to raise the awareness of Van Cortlandt Park through the media. Board chair Tony Perez Cassino and NYC Parks Commissioner Adrian Benepe appeared on *The Brian Lehrer Show* on WNYC in January and talked about why the Conservancy is important for the park. As guest editor of Metro NY newspaper on Earth Day, VCPC board member Matthew Modine highlighted Van Cortlandt Park as one of the great underrated outdoor spaces in the City. The local Riverdale Press printed numerous articles about progress in the park throughout the year.



FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Statement of Support, Revenue & Expenses July 1, 2009 - June 30, 2010

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
SUPPORT & REVENUE:			
Support			
Individuals	\$ 3,795.00	\$ 1,300.00	\$ 5,095.00
Annual Appeal	1,800.00	-	1,800.00
Other	1,995.00	1,300.00	3,295.00
Corporations	-	30,000.00	30,000.00
Riverdale Country School	-	10,000.00	10,000.00
Ethical Culture Fieldston School	-	10,000.00	10,000.00
Horace Mann School	-	10,000.00	10,000.00
Foundations	250.00	-	250.00
Total Support	4,045.00	31,300.00	35,345.00
Revenue			
Special Events	9,450.00	6,000.00	15,450.00
First Fête ⁽¹⁾	5,950.00	-	5,950.00
John Muir Golf Tournament	-	6,000.00	6,000.00
Miracle Worker	3,500.00	-	3,500.00
Other Revenue	2,500.00	-	2,500.00
Named Bench Sponsorship	2,500.00	-	2,500.00
Total Revenue	11,950.00	6,000.00	17,950.00
TOTAL SUPPORT & REVENUE	15,995.00	37,300.00	53,295.00
EXPENSES			
OTPS			
Program Activity	-	9,525.00	9,525.00
Community Programs	-	9,480.00	9,480.00
John Muir Trail	-	45.00	45.00
General & Administrative (2)	6,046.96	-	6,046.96
Fundraising - Events, Flyers, other	5,032.45	650.00	5,682.45
First Fête	1,603.25	-	1,603.25
John Muir Golf Tournament	-	650.00	650.00
Miracle Worker	2,236.50	-	2,236.50
Annual Appeal/Other	1,192.70	-	1,192.70
TOTAL EXPENSES	11,079.41	10,175.00	21,254.41
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	4,915.59	27,125.00	32,040.59
Net Assets July 1, 2009	5,840.68	10,600.00	16,440.68
Net Assets June 14, 2010	\$ 10,756.27	\$ 37,725.00	\$ 48,481.27

⁽¹⁾ \$250 was received prior to July 1, 2009 for the First Fête event.

⁽²⁾ \$787.50 is for graphic design

DONORS

Pioneer Supporters July 1, 2009 - June 30, 2010

\$5,000 - \$10,000

The American Scottish Foundation, Inc.
Ethical Culture Fieldston School
Horace Mann School
Riverdale Country School

\$1,000 - \$4,999

The Community Preservation Corporation
Peter Lehner & Fritz Beshar
Eugene R. McCarthy
Sherida Elizabeth Paulsen & Dr. Steven Margulis

\$500 - \$999

The Bronx Irish Soccer League
Laura & Anthony Cassino
Margot Perron & Michael Feller
Rosalinda & Walter Perron

\$200 - \$499

William D. Abramson
Heather L. Bain
Steve DesNoyer
Naty & Robert Esnard
Camelia & George Ganea, MD
Nina Habib & G. Parke Spencer
Sandra & Jacob Jamron
Laura Last & Martin Torgoff
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NYIT (Dr. Nada Anid)
Janice Page & Steven Balicer
Murray S. Peyton
Robert M. Reich
Riverdale Riding Corp.
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (Matching Gift)
Suzanne Rosenfeld & Henry Pollack
Cori J. Worchel
Violetta & Theodore Zambetti

\$1 - \$199

Hector M. Aponte
Karen Y. Armstrong
Charlotte Glasser & Adrian Benepe
Claudia E. Bonn
Bryant Park Corporation (Daniel A. Biederman)
Dawn Byfield & M.P. Logan
June Cohler
Cricket Zone & Trophy World
Barbara Curran
Kenneth A. Deghetto
Stephanie S. Ehrlich
The F.B. Heron Foundation (Matching Gift)
William A. Gross Construction Associates.
Kathryn Heintz
Macsood Hoosein
Noone & Vahan Janjigian
Sharon Kern-Taub
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Patricia J. Kozu
Lucie Kraus (for Georgette Heinisch)
I.C. Levenberg-Engel
Merrill Lynch & Co. Foundation (Matching Gift)
NY Cricket League
NY Softball Cricket League
Ellen Claire O'Brien
Anne & Robert Obuck
C. Tracy & Jeffrey H. Orleans
Wendy Perron & James E. Siegel
Karen S. Pesce
Robert A. Rooney
Helen Rosen
Nancy R. Savin
Stefan Shanni
Henry J. Stern
Constance Tracey

DONORS

Pioneer Supporters **July 1, 2009 - June 30, 2010**

In-Kind Donations

City Parks Foundation

Horace Mann School

Ibiza Lounge

John's Botany Bay

Lloyd's Carrot Cake

New York City Audubon

New York City Parks & Recreation

Under Armour

