

# Somerset County Park Commission



# Group Volunteer Opportunities

# STRIVE

**The Somerset County Park Commission  
is committed to excellence  
in promoting stewardship of land  
and resources, providing outstanding  
recreation opportunities and leisure services,  
and fostering an environment which is  
service-oriented and responsive to public needs.**

# S E R V E

## SOMERSET COUNTY PARK COMMISSION

**S**omerset County Park Commission was established in 1956 as a resource management agency designated to provide specialized park areas and facilities that supplement municipal efforts. Fifty years later, the mission of the park system has a more defined focus, accompanied by key components which outline the role to which the park system has been entrusted—to improve the quality of life for Somerset County residents and the business community.

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The park system is home to 10,000 acres of open space, and halfway to achieving its goal of creating a 20,500 acre network of park and open space facilities. As identified in the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan, the park system has embarked upon an aggressive program of land acquisition to provide more parks, a wider variety of recreation activities, and an increased responsibility to

protect the county's critical environmental resources and wildlife.

To help meet these challenges the Park Commission offers a variety of volunteer opportunities. Many citizens and local business leaders loyally serve in this capacity, as individuals committed to offering their time and expertise to enhance the quality of life of Somerset County.

Some of the volunteer opportunities, however, are projects which cannot be achieved without the concerted efforts a group can provide. These include conservation efforts, land management projects, park beautification, and assistance at special events. Group volunteer efforts benefit the Park Commission, and just as importantly, benefit the corporate group. There is a comradery experienced when viewing the efforts of a successful day's work, and a heightened sense of teamwork, knowing that the project was fulfilled due to the achievements of you and your co-workers.

Listed inside are eleven projects which can only be achieved by the continued time and talent offered by the local business and corporate communities. We invite you to examine them.

## *The Turkey Trot*

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Lace up your sneakers to make things run (pardon the pun) more smoothly on the day of this annual 5K and 1-mile fun run, held in Colonial Park in Franklin Township. Volunteers can assist with runner registration, water stops, and with race-route marshalling. Join us for some fun and fitness in the park.

- 10-20 sure-footed adults needed
- A Saturday morning in November

*Staff Contact*  
*Recreation Department*  
 908.722.1200 ext. 226

## *The Horsey Set*

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The benefits are great for both the volunteer and participant in the T.R.A.I.L.S. therapeutic horseback riding program. Help guide children and adults with developmental disabilities through the paces in both beginner and advanced classes. Volunteers will function as lead and sidewalkers, as well as assistants to riders when mounting and dismounting a horse. Equestrian experience is not necessary.

- 15-20 pace setting adults needed per evening
- Two hours on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings for ten weeks
- Fall and spring seasons

*Staff Contact*  
*Therapeutic Recreation*  
 908.722.1200 ext. 233

## Come Horse around with Us

Put on your faded blue jeans, roll up your sleeves, and help us give a face lift to the many buildings, fences, and rails at Lord Stirling Stable. Volunteers can choose from a wide variety of painting jobs. With lessons, clinics, horse shows, and other special events occurring year round, improvements will always be noticed and appreciated!

- 10-20 adult painters needed
- Spring, summer or fall

*Staff Contact*  
*Lord Stirling Stable*  
 908.766.5955 ext. 23

## Out in Green Pastures

Our equestrian trails have a lot of hooves traverse them during the course of a year. Therefore, they may need a little more TLC than our maintenance staff can provide. Trimming bushes and branches, removing rocks and stones from the pastures and trails, repainting the identification numbers on remounting blocks, and cleaning branches and logs out of the streams are some of the tasks that may be needed to keep them “the Cadillac of horse trails.” Bring your clippers and enjoy the great outdoors!

- 10-20 adult or teenage children
- Spring, summer or fall

*Staff Contact*  
*Lord Stirling Stable*  
 908.766.5955 ext. 23

# P R E S E R V E

MAINTENANCE & CONSERVATION

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## *Bluebirds of Happiness*

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The eastern bluebird, a threatened species in New Jersey, can be seen in any of our parks year round. The parks provide the proper habitat, giving park visitors a chance to view the bluebird in its natural setting. Volunteers can work together to keep the bluebirds in the parks by building boxes at both Washington Valley Park and Sourland Mountain Preserve. Help the eastern bluebird's chances of being taken off the state's threatened list!

- 5-10 nestbuilders; adults and children ages ten and older
- Fall or winter

*Staff Contact*  
*Park Rangers*  
908.385.7798

## *The 3 B's*

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Boardwalk, bridges, and benches are needed in natural areas in various Somerset County Parks. We will provide the tools and supervision, while you provide the labor and materials. These projects may be as small or as large as you would like. Schedule a meeting with us to discuss the possibilities!

- 10-25 adult nature lovers needed
- Spring and summer; daily 9am-3pm

*Staff Contact*  
*Environmental Education Center*  
908.766.2489 ext. 324

# PROTECT

MAINTENANCE & CONSERVATION

TRAIL DEVELOPMENT

## *Happy Trails*

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Thousands of people enjoy the many trails located within the parks system's 10,000+ acres. Since our trails are "multi-use," hikers, mountain bikers, and horseback riders explore them together, especially in the Sourland Mountain Preserve (Hillsborough and Montgomery) and Washington Valley Park (Bridgewater). Increased usage has caused the soil on trails to be compacted, exposing tree roots and increasing trail erosion. To help reduce these concerns, trails may need to be closed, rerouted, or erosion controlled. Bridges and boardwalks may also need to be built. Volunteers are needed to ensure the beauty of one of New Jersey's great trail systems.

- 10-30 building conservationists needed; adults and teenage children
- Spring, summer, and fall

*Staff Contact*  
*Park Rangers*  
908.385.7798

## *Be Kind to Your Web-Footed Friends*

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How do you save a river? Deposit your time and energy on its banks! Erosion control and cleanup projects along the mile-and-a-half of the upper Passaic River bordering Lord Stirling Park are good springtime projects. Work groups will be divided into canoe-based clearing teams and land-based support squadrons. Pull up your shirt sleeves for this wet and muddy task and join us where only webbed feet have gone before. We provide the canoes, tools, equipment, and safety instruction.

- 10-25 adult nature lovers needed
- Spring and summer, daily 9am-3pm

*Staff Contact*  
*Environmental Education Center*  
908.766.2489 ext. 324

## *The Road Less Traveled*

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From the radiant colors in the fall and the snow capped branches in the winter, to spring's first lady slipper and summer's chorus of night sounds, the change in the seasons at Lord Stirling Park brings people from around the state and beyond to witness the magic of nature's transformations. While many come to hike the 450 acre preserve, so do enthusiasts of another sort. Volunteers work side by side with Park Commission Naturalists to manicure overgrown trails, repair damaged boardwalks, and help to keep the trail system safe and pleasant for each park visitor.

- 10-25 adult nature lovers needed
- Spring and summer; daily 9am-3pm

*Staff Contact*  
*Environmental Education Center*  
 908.766.2489 ext. 324

## *Wildlife & Native Gardens for the New Millennium*

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The Environmental Education Center special use gardens and building grounds are being overhauled. We are gradually converting high maintenance annual and non-native plant areas to low maintenance, wildlife attractive, native species gardens. Join us to chop, weed, plant, build, and mulch the grounds. Bring gloves, hand tools, and energy!

- 5-20 adult greenthumbs needed
- Fall and spring; daily 9am-3pm

*Staff Contact*  
*Environmental Education Center*  
 908.766.2489 ext. 324

## GARDENING

### *Garden Gladiators*

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Join the Leonard J. Buck Garden staff for a rewarding hands-on garden project. Volunteers assist Park Commission Gardeners amending soil, weeding, planting, watering, and mulching. Wear work clothes, sturdy shoes, and work gloves. We will provide the materials, tools, and instruction. Help us to nurture plantings within this enchanting rock garden gem.

- 8-12 adult garden assistants needed
- Late spring or summer, 10am-3pm

#### *Staff Contact*

*Leonard J. Buck Garden*  
908.234.2677 ext. 22

# GUIDE

## EVENT CONTACTS

### **Jim Avens**

#### ***Superintendent of***

#### ***Leonard J. Buck Garden***

11 Layton Road  
Far Hills NJ 07931  
908.234.2677 ext. 22

### **Dave Dendler**

#### ***Park Ranger Administrator***

Somerset County  
Park Commission  
Post Office Box 5327  
North Branch NJ 08876  
908.385.7798

### **Karren Newman**

#### ***Manager of Recreation***

Somerset County  
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Post Office Box 5327  
North Branch NJ 08876  
908.722.1200 ext. 226

### **Cathy Schrein**

#### ***Manager of Environmental Science***

Environmental Education Center  
190 Lord Stirling Road  
Basking Ridge NJ 07920  
908.766.2489 ext. 324

### **Lee Shahay**

#### ***Therapeutic Recreation***

#### ***Senior Program Coordinator***

Somerset County Park Commission  
Post Office Box 5327  
North Branch, NJ 08876  
908.722.1200 ext. 233

### **Nancy J. Williams**

#### ***Manager of Lord Stirling Stable***

256 South Maple Avenue  
Basking Ridge NJ 07920  
908.766.5955 ext. 23





*Somerset County  
Park Commission*

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