

# The Green Oasis

*The Official Newsletter of  
Liberty State Park*

*The Green Oasis is published  
by Liberty State Park.*

*We encourage and welcome  
your comments and sugges-  
tions. If you have any ideas for  
articles for upcoming issues,  
please contact us at  
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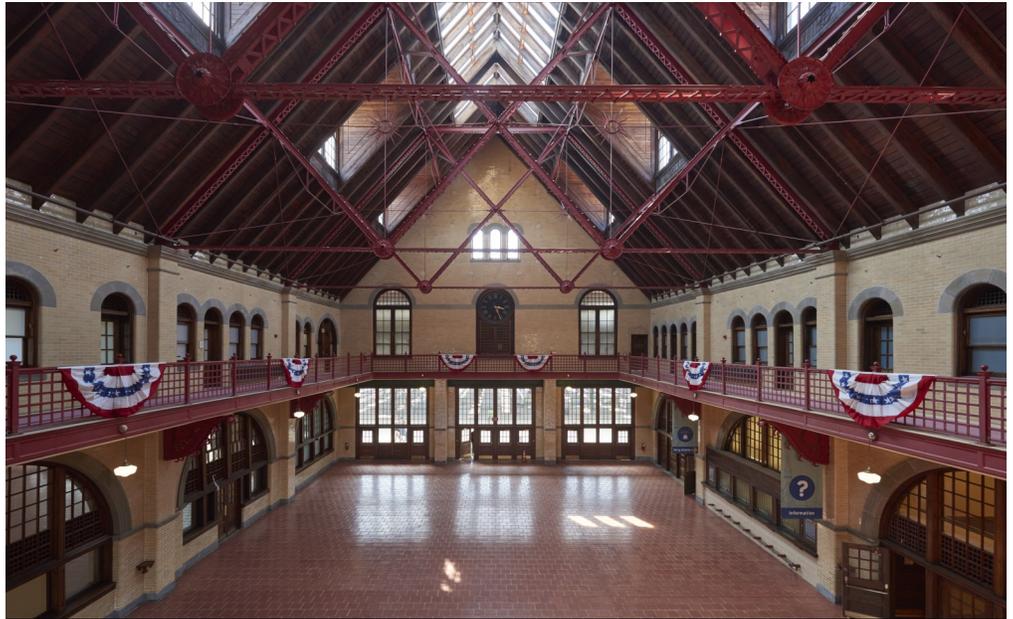
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New Jersey Department of  
Environmental Protection  
Division of Parks and Forestry  
State Park Service  
Chris Christie, Governor  
Kim Guadagno, Lt. Governor  
Bob Martin, Commissioner



## Message from the Superintendent



**The restored CRRNJ Terminal Waiting Room**

It has been another eventful summer season at Liberty State Park. To commemorate the Park's 40th anniversary this past June, the "50 Flags of the United States" are once again on display to greet park visitors. The parade of flags now fly along the north end of Freedom Way. This project was funded through the Liberty State Park License Plate Fund, as well as generous donations from the Friends of Liberty State Park and Tough Mudder, Inc. A ribbon cutting ceremony is scheduled for Saturday, November 12, 2016 from noon to 1pm. They are truly a spectacular sight, not to be missed.

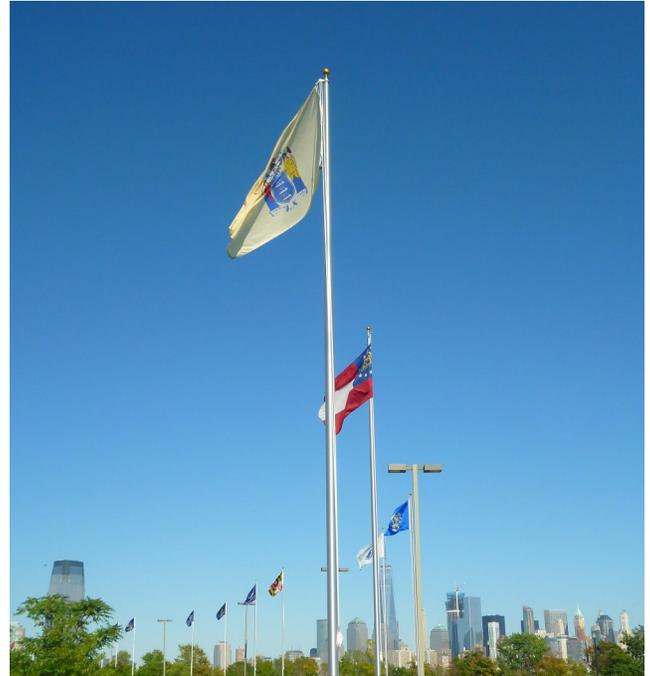
Also this past June, the CRRNJ officially re-opened after a 3 1/2 year and nearly \$20 million restoration following the devastating wrath of Superstorm Sandy. More than 100 invited guests were in attendance to mark the occasion. Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner, Bob Martin remarked on the "momentous" occasion in his keynote address, "The efforts that went into restoring this landmark are nothing short of miraculous and are a testimony to our state's resolve to rebuild from Superstorm Sandy".

*(continued from Page 1)*

Park Superintendent Jonathan Luk provided a historical overview and the cast from “Liberty: The Monumental Musical” was on hand to perform. Guests enjoyed refreshments generously donated by Liberty House Restaurant and terminal interpretive staff offered tours of the historic structure.

The 3rd Annual Jersey City Freedom & Fireworks Festival returned to Liberty State Park on July 4th, 2016 with live music, carnival rides, food and its signature spectacular fireworks display. Attendance was estimated at upwards of 80,000!

Summerfest 2016, Jersey City’s Free Summer Concert Series, also returned to Liberty State Park with another amazing season of diverse artists. Hundreds of local residents enjoyed the Tuesday and Sunday evening performances which ran from July through September.



**New State flags line Freedom Way**

As we look ahead to the fall, the final phase of storm recovery will begin with the Nature Interpretive Center. Roof repair is underway and scheduled to be complete by winter and interior renovations are being planned for Spring 2017. Nature programming has continued throughout and will be available for the duration.

Fall is a great time to visit Liberty State Park. Come learn about bird migration at one of our Fall Bird Walks

or explore the beauty of autumn at our Fall Colors Walk. Discover the rich history of the CRRNJ Terminal at our new Historic Trilogy Tour this October or for train enthusiasts, we’ll be highlighting transportation and the CRRNJ in November. Be sure to check out our full list of Nature and History Programs as well as our Calendar of Events to see all that’s going on this upcoming season.

We hope to see you soon!



**Come visit Liberty State Park this fall!**

**Photo by Gail Zavian**

## Birders Notebook 2016

By Pat Hilliard

If you open any bird guide for the eastern United States, you will see hundreds of birds listed. Surprisingly, many of those birds can be seen in Liberty State Park at one time or another. In addition to offering a variety of habitats, Liberty State Park sits along the Atlantic Flyway, a major bird migration route.

Our highlights for early 2016 included a number of exciting birds. A few, like black skimmers, peregrine falcons, Northern harriers and pied-billed grebes are listed on NJ Fish and Wildlife's endangered species list. Black-crowned night herons, yellow-crowned night herons and savannah sparrow are listed on the NJ threatened species list. The open water,

and woodlands of Liberty State Park are providing critical habitat for these struggling species. Other species hit hard by West Nile disease a few years ago, blue jays and American crows, are making a come-back.

Some of the most fascinating birds of the year (Cornell University's Ebird.org database) were ruby-throated hummingbird, yellow-billed cuckoo, blackpoll warbler, snow bunting, Lapland longspur and great horned owl. As for rare birds, those that are not usually seen in New Jersey, a lark bunting was reported in the spring of 2016. This bird must have blown in from its native Wyoming or the Dakotas.

Starting in September, birders will be looking for warblers, hawks and waterfowl. You can expect to see Connecticut, Tennessee, Canada, hooded and blackburnian warblers heading south for the winter. In October, watch for Eastern meadowlark, golden plovers or Virginia rails. November would be a good time to look for Lapland longspurs, pine siskin, and all the migratory ducks— wigeons, buffleheads, mergansers, ruddy, brant, scoters and scaup. Last December, a great horned owl and a wild turkey were reported in the park.

If you are a beginner, Liberty State Park offers a variety of guided bird walks to help get you started. Even experienced birders are likely to spot something new and interesting during fall migration. For information on our guided bird walks, please contact the Nature Interpretive Center at [lspic@verizon.net](mailto:lspic@verizon.net) or (201) 915-3400 ext 109.

### **Sources:**

- *Endangered and Threatened Birds:* <http://www.state.nj.us/dep/fgw/tandespp.htm>
- *Bird report for Liberty State Park generated from Audubon and Cornell Lab of Ornithology, ebird.org*
- *2015 Christmas Bird Count on Liberty State Park by Claus Holzepfel, Rutgers University.*



**A foraging Black Skimmer**

**Photo by John Dunstan**

## Take a Walking Tour of the CRRNJ Terminal!



**Come tour the CRRNJ Terminal**

**Photo by Brian LaPolla**

Now that the Central Railroad of NJ (CRRNJ) terminal has officially reopened, we are excited to announce the launching of our new History Walking Tours. Come explore the rich history of the CRRNJ, located just at the northern most end of Liberty State Park. Listed on the State and National Registers of Historic places, the complex includes the Bush-style train shed, the concourse, the terminal and the ferry docks. Using period photographs and some imagination, interpretive staff will help you envision the commuters, day trippers, and other passengers as they made their ways from the trains, through the terminal and ferry house, to the docks and boarded a ferry to their destination in lower Manhattan.

You will learn about the CRRNJ and the many train lines that ushered travelers up and down the east coast and to Pennsylvania. The reproduction banners invite us to step back in time, when a train named “The Blue Comet” took passengers to Atlantic City, and “The Crusader” to Philadelphia and “The Royal Blue” to Washington DC.

The tour continues into the terminal building also known as the “head house”. The ticket windows, luggage rack, decorative metal work, wooden ceiling and thick glazed tiles are original to the 1889 construction. Your guide will discuss the “stairs to nowhere”, second and third floor occupancy and point out the beautiful clock that surely helped passengers get to their train or ferry on time. On a sunny day, the interior is completely lit with rays of sunshine pouring through the sky lights, illuminating the open three story space.

We will proceed outside to where the terminal faces the waterfront. Here the use of photographs is crucial in understanding the size, placement and function of the wooden ferry house that connected the terminal to the docks. Still standing today, are the wooden trusses that support the docks. Built over 100 years ago, they survived Superstorm Sandy! The architectural features of the building and façade will be examined, with special attention to the magnificent clock.

As the tour culminates, the terminal’s role in immigration history will be discussed and you will understand why it was called “The Gateway to America” and stands as part of the Historic Trilogy- The Statue of Liberty, Ellis Island and CRRNJ Terminal!

Located at 1 Audrey Zapp Drive, the terminal is open daily between 7:30 AM and 4:30 PM. Tours are available throughout the day on Tuesday – Thursday, depending on staff availability.

Please call [201-915-0615](tel:201-915-0615) for further information.

## 2016 Kayak Report

2016 marked the seventh consecutive season for Liberty State Park's kayak eco-tours. The popular program continued to offer participants basic paddling instruction and the opportunity to explore the beauty of the Hudson River Estuary by kayak. Park naturalists conducted a total of twenty-five scheduled tours and three private group kayak tours, giving 250 participants a chance to experience all the Hudson River has to offer.

Visitors were able to discover the diversity of the estuary, both from their kayaks and while exploring Caven Point beach. Common bird sightings on the water included black skimmers, great egrets, snowy egrets, great blue herons, double crested cormorants

and osprey. Beachcombing turned up horseshoe crabs, mud snails, oysters, clams, and mussels. A rare sight this summer was several pairs of visiting shorebirds known as American oystercatchers. One pair nested and raised a clutch of young on the beach!

If you are interested in attending a kayak eco-tour at Liberty State Park or would like more information about the program, please contact the Nature Interpretive Center at 201-915-3400, extension 109, or email [LSPIC@verizon.net](mailto:LSPIC@verizon.net), to be added to the park's mailing list. A schedule of dates for the 2017 season will be available in May.



Kayaking in the Hudson River Photo by Bill Gent

## New Program Explores LSP's Transportation Heritage



An aerial view of the CRRNJ Terminal

Did you know that the land now occupied by Liberty State Park was once the largest railroad facility in the region? Home to the passenger, freight and marine terminals of the Central Railroad of New Jersey, this once busy hub was a critical link for travelers and shipping alike. It was also where 8 million immigrants began their American journey.

We will be presenting the transportation history of this site, including a showing of "**The Big Little Railroad**", an eye-opening 1947 film documenting the amazing network of facilities. A guided tour of the historic CRRNJ Terminal will follow.

"**The Big Little Railroad**" and **CRRNJ Terminal** will take place Wednesdays from 1pm-2:30pm and Saturdays 10am-11:30am in November in the CRRNJ Terminal's Blue Comet Auditorium. There will be no programs on November 23 and 26. Hope to see you there! For more information, please call the CRRNJ at (201) 915-0615.

## Horseshoe Crabs at Liberty State Park

Liberty State Park is host to one of the most significant wildlife migrations in all of North America. Once a year, from May to June, the Atlantic Horseshoe Crab (*Limulus polyphemus*) migrates from the Atlantic Ocean to the shores of the eastern United States. The migration spans from the tip of the Maine coast all the way down to the Gulf of Mexico.



**Caven Point Beach during peak horseshoe crab season**

Liberty State Park is home to the Hudson River Estuary, which marks the end of the Hudson River and the beginning of the Atlantic Ocean that is just beyond the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge. The Atlantic horseshoe crabs arrive on the shores of Caven Point Beach at Liberty State Park to mate and spawn the next generation.

Horseshoe Crabs are living fossils. These prehistoric invertebrates arrived on the evolutionary scene about 250-350 million years ago. These animals predate the infamous and

wildly popularized terrestrial reptilian prehistoric animals (dinosaurs). There are currently four remaining extant species of horseshoe crabs on earth. Three of these extant species reside on the Eastern Hemisphere along the easternmost coastline of Asia. One of these four resides on the western hemisphere; *Limulus polyphemus*.

Horseshoe crabs are marine invertebrates that reproduce on land via external fertilization; thus, reproduction occurs outside of their body. Male horseshoe crabs tend to arrive at the shoreline of a given spawning site where they lie in wait for the females to arrive. Upon arrival, females release a pheromone to attract males and communicate as to what their location is. Once a spawning pair is ready, the male climbs onto the female then latch onto her lower abdomen with their “clasp”-like appendage.



**Pairs of mating horseshoe crabs**

The females dig small holes into the sand to lay their eggs while the male fertilizes them. A single spawning pair can produce about 4,000 of these beautiful teal colored eggs per clutch; laying 4-5 clutches per high tide. Approximately 20 egg clusters are laid per spawning season. Peak spawning occurs during evening high tides during the full and new moon cycles. These eggs are precious, not only to the Atlantic horseshoe crab population, but also to natural predators (i.e.: shorebirds, finfish,). Many of these predators heavily rely on this food source to supply their bodies with the energy necessary to complete extensive migrations, as is the case for nearly a dozen shorebirds in the United States.

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Caven Point Beach is prime habitat for the Atlantic horseshoe crabs during their spawning season. They do not have to venture too far from home. There is plenty of prey items to forage on (i.e.: worms, clams, other micro invertebrates) and there is more than enough space to accommodate them by the thousands. Above all, the habitat is protected from the human foot print during this time of year. For these reasons, Liberty State Park is playing a significant role in sustaining the Atlantic horseshoe crab population in the midst of decline due to over-harvesting and habitat loss. Scientists and researchers are working diligently to uncover the facts surrounding the status of the crab's population. In the meantime wildlife and natural resource agencies nationwide are working to do their part in ensuring the protection and conservation of the species. As a part of the NJDEP's State Park Service, Liberty State Park's Interpretive Center staff conducts seasonal Horseshoe crab survey counts in an effort to collect as much information on these animals as possible.

These magnificent animals can be observed at Caven Point Beach during mating season by attending one of our guided Nature Interpretive programs. During the spring and summer months we offer Horseshoe Crab Beach Walk, Estuary Explorers, Low-Tide Beach Walk and Kayak Eco-Tour. For any questions and additional information, please contact the Liberty State Park Interpretive Center at [lspic@verizon.net](mailto:lspic@verizon.net) or give us a call at 201-915-3400 ext. 109.

## Greetings from the Garden

The gardening crew continues to beautify Liberty State Park with the help of numerous volunteers willing to donate their time and effort. We would like to thank those dedicated groups for their commitment to the park.

With cooler weather coming along, we are looking forward to planting our seasonal mums and bulbs in many of our formal garden beds. Come out and join us as we plant our fall bulbs so that they can flower the next spring. Our volunteer gardeners meet every Saturday morning from 9 am-12pm. For more information, please send an e-mail to Maria at [lspgardening@verizon.net](mailto:lspgardening@verizon.net) or call the park at (201) 915-3418.



**Volunteers from Verisk Analytics**



**Volunteers from Bank of America**

## Monarch Magic!

The monarch butterfly is a captivating insect. Known for its fascinating life cycle and migration journey, this black and orange butterfly is a familiar visitor to Liberty State Park during the summer and autumn months. Monarchs rely heavily on milkweed, a common native plant named for its milky sap. Adults frequent the flowers for nectar and lay their eggs on the broad, green leaves, which larvae feed on after hatching.

Due to a recent decrease in native milkweed plants and suitable habitat, the monarch butterfly has seen a drastic reduction in its numbers. Monarchs, especially in their larval stage, are also vulnerable to parasitization by several other species of insects. The monarch butterfly and other pollinators such as bees and moths are crucial species for fertilization in native plants.



**Adult monarch released back into the park**

The nature staff at Liberty State Park worked this summer to help the monarch population rebound by collecting eggs and larvae from milkweed plants, and then raising them in enclosures to be sure they were protected from parasites and had enough milkweed to sustain them during their life cycle. Over the summer months, the staff raised about sixty butterflies and released them back into the wild.

To help teach the general public about this amazing insect, the nature staff also offered several sessions of a free program called, "Monarch Magic!" which invited participants to get up close and personal with the monarch butterfly. If you would like more information about the Nature Center programs, please contact the staff at 201-915-3400, extension 109, or email [LSPIC@verizon.net](mailto:LSPIC@verizon.net).

## Help Support Liberty State Park With Dedicated License Plate



With the purchase of Liberty State Park license plates, you will be supporting the continued improvement of New Jersey's premier urban state park. Your dollars help to maintain and restore historic structures like the CRRNJ Terminal, provide for upgrades to the Nature Interpretive Center, create wildlife habitat, increase recreational opportunities, and so much more.

Please consider becoming part of our community of supporters. For more information or to order your plates today, please visit your nearest NJ Motor Vehicle Agency or visit on line at <http://www.state.nj.us/mvc/Vehicle/Liberty.htm>, or by phone at (888) 486-3339. Thank you for your support!

# 2016 Fall & Winter Nature Programs

While the Nature Interpretive Center remains closed due to storm damage, our Nature Programming continues. A full list of our programs for the fall and winter is below. If you would like to register for any of our programs, please call (201) 915-3400, ext. 109 or email us at [lspic@verizon.net](mailto:lspic@verizon.net). All children must be accompanied by an adult. We look forward to seeing you soon.

## Fall Bird Walk

**Saturday, October 29 & Saturday, November 5, 2016 10am ~ Noon**

Located along the Atlantic Flyway, Liberty State Park is home to over 250 different species of birds. Join us as we explore varied habitats and learn to identify some of our resident and migratory birdlife. *Dress to be outside and bring binoculars if you have them. We have a limited number that can be borrowed. Adults, Families, children age 5 and up.*

**Pre-Registration Required ADA Accessible**



## Fall Colors Walk

**Saturday, November 19, 2016 10am-11:30am**

As the weather starts to cool and the leaves begin to change, it's a perfect time to come explore the beauty of fall at Liberty State Park. Join our Park Naturalist on this guided walk and learn how to identify some of our trees by their fall colors. *Adults, Families. Pre-registration Required ADA Accessible*

## Winter Waterfowl Walk

**Saturday, December 3 & Sunday December 18 2016 10am ~ Noon**

**Saturday January 7, Sunday January 29 & Saturday February 25, 2017 10am ~ Noon**

Liberty State Park is a key destination for migrating winter waterfowl. Join us for a guided walk along the river to learn about some of these winter visitors. *Dress to be outdoors. Bring binoculars if you have them. We have a limited number that can be borrowed. Adults, Families, children age 5 and up.*

**Pre-Registration Required ADA Accessible**



## Winter Evergreen Trees

**Saturday, December 10, 2016 10am ~ 11:30am**

Come on out to Liberty State Park and join us for an evergreen investigation. We will learn how to identify different types of evergreens and about the valuable role these trees play in nature. Pre-Registration Required. *Adults, Families, children age 5 and up.*

**Pre-Registration Required ADA Accessible**



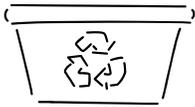
## Recycled Crafts

**Saturday January 21, 2017 10am ~ Noon**

Think twice before throwing away that egg carton or toilet paper tube. Join us in this fun, hands-on workshop and learn how to re-purpose common household items into unique crafts.

*Adults, Families, children age 5 and up. Pre-Registration Required ADA Accessible*





## **Recycled Papermaking**

**Saturday, February 4, 2017 10am ~ Noon**

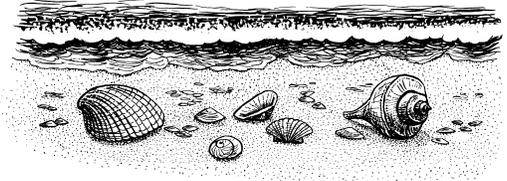
Come create your own, unique, hand-made recycled art from used paper and other natural materials. *Adults, Families, children age 5 and up. Pre-Registration Required*  
**ADA Accessible**

## **Low Tide Beach Walk**

**Saturday, March 18, 2017 10am ~ 11:30am**

Join us for a stroll along the beach to see what the tide has brought ashore. Dress to be outdoors. Wear old shoes that can get wet and muddy. *You will need your own vehicle to get to the study site.*

*Adults, Families. Pre-registration Required*



## **Volunteer Nature Path Planting**

**Saturday March 25, 2017 10am ~ Noon**

Come on out and help create vital wildlife habitat! We will be planting native shrubs in the Richard J. Sullivan State Natural Area. Wear sturdy shoes and bring work gloves if you have them. *Adults, Groups, Families, children age 6 and up. Pre-Registration Required*

# **CRRNJ Terminal History Programs**

*All Programs meet at the CRRNJ Information Desk, located inside the Terminal Waiting Room. No registration required. For More Information, please call 201-915-0615 or email [LSPIC@verizon.net](mailto:LSPIC@verizon.net)*

## **CRRNJ Terminal History Walking Tour**

**October 2016 to April 2017**

**Tuesdays ~ Thursdays 7:45am, 8:45am, 10am, 11am, 1pm, 2pm, 3pm, 4:15pm**

*Additional tours available on request depending on staff availability*

Join us for a short 15 minute walking tour the CRRNJ Terminal and learn about its rich history and unique architecture. **ADA Accessible**

## **Historic Trilogy Program**

**October 6, 13, 20 & 27, 2016 1pm~2pm**

The CRRNJ Terminal, the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island stand together as the Historic Trilogy. Come follow the trail of the immigrant experience in the New World. This program will include a short video and tour of the CRRNJ with views of Ellis Island and the Statue of Liberty. **ADA Accessible**

## **“The Big Little Railroad” and the CRRNJ Terminal**

**November 2, 9, 16, & 30 from 1~2:30pm & November 5, 12 & 19 from 10am ~ 11:30am**

Explore the transportation history of the CRRNJ ~ Featuring the historic Jersey Central Railroad film, “The Big Little Railroad” followed by a guided walking tour of the restored terminal. **ADA Accessible**



# Liberty State Park Calendar of Events

Saturday, October 22, 2016

Walk to Cure Diabetes

Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation

[www.jdrf.org](http://www.jdrf.org)

Saturday, October 29, 2016

Glow Walk/Run

Epilepsy Foundation of New Jersey

[www.efnj.com/](http://www.efnj.com/)

Saturday, October 29, 2016

Terminal of Terror 2016

RDG Restaurant Group & ChicpeaJC

[www.chicpeajc.com/event/tot2016/](http://www.chicpeajc.com/event/tot2016/)

Saturday, November 12, 2016

Ribbon Cutting – Freedom Way  
Flags

Liberty State Park

[www.LibertyStatePark.nj.gov](http://www.LibertyStatePark.nj.gov)

Wednesday, December 14, 2016

Wreath Laying Ceremony

Wreaths Across America

[www.wreathscrossamerica.org/](http://www.wreathscrossamerica.org/)

Saturday, April 8, 2017

Salt Marsh Clean-up

Friends of Liberty State Park

[www.folsp.org](http://www.folsp.org)

Saturday, April 22, 2017

Earth Day 5k and Fair

Hudson County Improvement Authority

[www.hcia.org](http://www.hcia.org)

Saturday, April 29, 2017

Walk MS

National Multiple Sclerosis Society

[www.nationalmssociety.org](http://www.nationalmssociety.org)

Sunday, April 30, 2017

March for Babies

March of Dimes

[www.marchofdimes.org](http://www.marchofdimes.org)