



Cumberland County Cultural & Heritage Commission August 2011 Chronicle

Letter from the Commission Principal Planner

By **Matthew E. Pisarski**

As the Cultural & Heritage Commission progresses with new programming and initiatives, I thought I would take this opportunity to relay some of the Commission's recent accomplishments.

Each year the Commission and its County staff pursue grant funds for its re-grant programs and for special projects. With the difficult budgetary issues faced at all levels of government recently, we were concerned that the Commission's ability to provide programming opportunities would diminish. I am happy to report that the Commission and its staff have met these challenges and moved beyond them.

Significant grant received from state

The Commission received the 5th largest grant of any county in New Jersey this year from the State Council on the Arts for re-granting and general operating support. This means the Commission will be able to offer nearly \$100,000 in re-grant funds to arts projects throughout the County in 2012. Non-profit orga-

Generous funding received for 2012 projects

Recent projects celebrating history, arts



Clockwise, from top left: Ballet group at a Vineland Regional Dance Company performance; visitors aboard the A.J. Meerwald for Bayshore Discovery's "Bay Day"; a painting depicting Millville's involvement in World War II, at the Millville Army Airfield Museum; and a participant in the "plein air" competition.

nizations may apply for re-grant funds to conduct arts-related programming in Cumberland County by completing an application available on the Commission's website at www.ccculturalheritage.org. A re-grant workshop will be scheduled shortly to assist in the application process, and the deadline for submission this year is **Friday, October 14, 2011**.

Funding was also secured from the

New Jersey Historical Commission for the Commission's history re-grant program. The Commission has established new history re-grant guidelines to encourage participation in this program, and the guidelines and application are also available on the Commission's website.

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www.ccculturalheritage.org



Cultural & Heritage Commission is dedicated to advancing culture in Cumberland County

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Historic sites to be highlighted

The Commission also received several special project grants this year. The New Jersey Council for the Humanities awarded the Commission \$12,500 for its “West Jersey Time Traveler” project, which will produce audio podcasts of fifteen historic sites throughout Cumberland County. As well, the Commission received a generous grant of \$18,000 from the N.J. Historical Commission for a program to improve the organizational capacity of several history non-profit organizations in the county. In total, so far this year, the Commission has received over \$150,000 in grant funds to support artistic and historic endeavors within the county.

Of course, this financial support would not be possible without the dedication shown by the Commission’s non-profit and governmental partners. Organizations like Bayshore Discovery Project, Landis Theater, Gallery 50, and Millville Army Air Field Museum conduct much of the programming that makes Cumberland County an attractive venue for grant funds. These grant dollars are spent carefully and produce truly stellar programs and activities for residents and visitors to Cumberland County. Special thanks to all our partners and to the funding agencies which support our efforts.

As the Commission expands its outreach and grows as an organization, it is always searching for ways to better

serve the community. One recent effort to promote transparency in its governance was the placement of its minutes and agendas on its website. Although not perfect yet (a few gaps exist until archived minutes can be digitized), this effort shows the commitment the Commission holds to public discourse.

The Cumberland County Artists’ Directory, launched earlier this year, now contains information on over 50 in-county artists. Anyone residing in Cumberland County who identifies as an artist, whether professionally or simply at heart, may submit information for inclusion in the directory. The submission form is available on the Commission’s website. The Commission is also committed to promoting all artistic professions as well, so architects, landscape architects, interior designers and many other artistic specialties are encouraged to register on the directory.

The Commission and its staff are here to help to promote art, culture and history in Cumberland County. With the strong and vigorous support of the Board of Chosen Freeholders, we hope to support the effort to make living and working in Cumberland County both fulfilling and fun.

If you have suggestions for new or existing programs, ideas for expression, or just want to learn more about what Cumberland County has to offer, visit www.ccculturalheritage.org and feel free to reach out to me — I’d love to hear from you.

‘Riverfest’ offers kayak, bike, bus tours, food and fun Saturday, Aug. 27

Whether you’re a computer programmer who loves to kayak or a sometime couch potato with a taste for the scenic outdoors, the Cohansey RiverFest has something for you, as kayak, bus, and bike tours are all part of the scene in and around Bridgeton and Cumberland

County on Saturday, Aug. 27.

Awaiting 15 mid-level kayakers is a 3.5-mile trip from Bridgeton to Fairton along the unspoiled Cohansey watershed, thanks to the American Littoral Society and the Natural Lands Trust.

“Bring your own kayak for \$15,” tour leader Matt Blake of the Littoral Society says, “or borrow Al & Sam’s for \$35.” Both fares include a return shuttle back to the Bridgeton Boat Ramp.

Randy’s Bike Shop in Bridgeton is sponsoring a morning guided bike tour of Bridgeton’s 1000-acre City Park. The tour starts at 10:30 a.m. with a short loop through the western section of Bridgeton’s Historic District

and takes bikers snaking around the Cohansey headwaters at Mary Elmer and Sunset Lakes and Piney Point.

Bikers arrive back at the Riverfront just in time for lunch, headquartered at the Crabfest and Beer Garden at the Commerce Street Bridge in the heart of downtown Bridgeton.

For information/reservations for both the kayak trip and bus tour, call (856) 825-2174 or e-mail jessica@littoralsociety.org. The bike tour leaves Randy’s Bike Shop on East Commerce Street; call (856) 455-8309.

For detailed information on all activities, visit www.cohanseyriverfest.org.

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