The rear view mirror is filled with the faces of over 245 AmeriCorps Cape Cod Alumni. Is it possible that ten years has already passed by? Looking back floods our minds and hearts with gratitude and so many fond memories. Together we served, and the legacy and spirit of that service is passed on from the Alumni to each new member of the program.

I often flash back on the faces of the first AmeriCorps Cape Cod members and staff. “Unforgettable” was the song played during the slide show at graduation filled with memories of the year and bringing tears to every eye. Looking at the eager faces of twenty six of the best and brightest and telling them “You are the pioneers…and this program will not be easy.” They were the pioneers and their year was not easy but they persevered. Each year, twenty six new AmeriCorps members persevere and continue to dedicate one year of their lives to service here on Cape Cod. With each face and each slide show at graduation we collectively remember each corps year with tears in our eyes…still.

One of the members wrote this below a photo she gave me in year three and it goes like this “Many small people who in many small places do many small things can alter the face of the world”—African proverb painted on the Berlin Wall, 1990.

This year I hope you can join us as we honor the alumni and staff of our program and celebrate ten years of AmeriCorps Cape Cod service during AmeriCorps Week (May 9th through May 17th). Together we served and made a difference. We are where we are and who we are because of the contributions of each one of you. I hope to see you in May, even though your spirit and service has always been right here and is truly “Unforgettable.” Big, Fat Hugs!

Maria Downs (Bourne), Jaclyn Hochreiter (Bourne), and Ashleigh McCord (Bourne)
**Kids Go Green**

*by Maria Downs (Bourne)*

Once a week, several AmeriCorps members take part in what is termed COD day (community outreach and development day). On this day, much of the time is spent coordinating events, recruiting volunteers, writing articles for the Waypoint, performing various service projects, and maybe even putting on a puppet show for local elementary students.

For six weeks in late fall, however, the Wednesday COD day group was busy planning and teaching lessons for an afterschool program called “Kids Go Green” at Lawrence MacArthur Elementary in the Dennis/Yarmouth district.

Throughout the six weeks, we prepared lessons on topics ranging from Cape Cod wildlife to the importance of buying locally grown foods. Each lesson provided the students with information while getting them involved by playing games and performing various activities. A couple of the highlights included making and decorating recycled paper that would later be decorated and hung in a local shelter, having a cranberry tasting extravaganza, and playing shellfish bingo!

Throughout the six week program, we learned a lot about each individual student and really enjoyed the opportunity to teach them about our precious environment and how easy it is for them to help protect. Our hope is that the students now know what it means to Go Green!

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**A Family of Strangers: The Mid-Year Retreat**

*By Lisa Buchs (Wellfleet)*

Five months ago, twenty-six new AmeriCorps Cape Cod members hauled sleeping bags and backpacks into the NEED Building at Coast Guard Beach. During that first retreat, we were strangers sleeping on plastic mattresses and squeaky bunk beds. We were nervously trying to make friends, trying to understand why we were here and what we were doing, trying to adjust to this new way of life.

At the mid-year retreat, the backdrop was the same. Sleeping bags, backpacks, plastic mattresses on squeaky bunk beds. The difference is that we are no longer strangers. We’re a family. We can finish each other’s sentences, have enough inside jokes to fill volumes and have learned to be ourselves with one another.

The mid-year retreat was centered on the concept of citizenship and understanding our roles as citizens. As we discussed different levels of civic engagement, we evaluated our own involvement and the ways in which we could find support inside and outside of this community.

The retreat was also an opportunity for team-building and reflection on our experiences thus far. Activities such as AmeriCorps Member Jeopardy and AmeriCorps Member Trivia confirmed that we do know absolutely everything about one another. A talent show on the first night of the retreat confirmed that we may actually know a little too much. The talent show also revealed that the four men in Wellfleet (living in a house full of women) still have the talent of “being men.”

When we all began this year, we were told over and over again that this would become our family. I’m not sure any of us understood just how true that was. And now, as life after AmeriCorps Cape Cod looms ahead, we are beginning to realize how much we have already learned from this experience – and from each other.
1. In what city was last year’s Superbowl played? Bonus: Which two teams were playing?

2. The first name of children’s book detective Encyclopedia Brown is which of the following?
   A. Theodore
   B. Josh
   C. Leroy
   D. Oliver

3. Describe at least two animals that performed as part of Show-Biz’s animatronic band, Rock-Afire Explosion.

4. An octopus has how many hearts?

5. American Beachgrass should be planted while dormant. What day is usually considered the last day acceptable for the planting of Beachgrass in New England?
   A. Valentine’s Day
   B. St. Patrick’s Day
   C. The First Day of Spring
   D. The last day of April

6. Name the two current Senators of Massachusetts. Bonus: Name the Congressman that represents our district.

7. Pink’s breakup with her husband,____, inspired this single that rose to #1 in 2008: ______.

8. The Kyto Protocol is an international agreement that seeks to do what?

9. The light brown foam that forms at the top of a shot of espresso is called what?

10. The 1990s song “Blue (Da Ba Dee)” was a one-hit wonder by what band?

   ANSWERS on page 12

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**Comic**

*By Megan Horbin (Bourne)*
Okay, so... Priscilla doesn’t want me to use her mug (“If you pour coffee in it, that’s my coffee”), Meredith is allergic to a plethora of things (really allergic), and Wellfleet has secretly been training in dodgeball for the last 5 years (seriously, though). These are just a few of the important lessons I have learned during my time in AmeriCorps Cape Cod thus far.

I have to admit that my only true concern moving down here was joining this group of people that have had the past 5 months to bond and get to know each other. I could handle the fact that I would be an underpaid, overworked volunteer. In fact, during my first day of beach grass planting, there was a moment I stood up, took a deep breath of the cold Cape air, and thought, ‘This is genuinely how I want to be spending my time.’ I couldn’t feel my feet and I’m 85% sure I had snot frozen all down my face, but alas, I was engaging in meaningful work.

There was legit panic growing within me about meeting these people as I mounted the brick stairs leading into the AmeriCorps office on my first day. As luck would have it, I was promptly greeted by Davis, my fellow Bourne housemate (and soon to be fellow Cash Cab follower). As if he could sense my nerves, he greeted me with some words of wisdom. “Well, I have to admit, you’re a very brave person stepping into this program right now.” Encouraging. Thanks, Davis.

Seriously though, these past five weeks have chalked up to be a rather easy transition. Every person involved in the program has been more than welcoming and very quick to help me out with whatever questions I have. So far I’ve stuck hay in sand, taught kids about an aquifer (which I affectionately kept calling an aqua-fi-er... it’s really a learning process for me), and found out that holding up a puppet even just for 15 minutes makes me feel like I have been doing one armed pull ups for the past 4 hours.

All in all I am thoroughly enjoying being here. I feel lucky to have been introduced to such an interesting, friendly, and kind group of people. I sincerely look forward to getting to know everyone even better and making memories that we’ll share for the rest of our lives. Oh, and also, a Bourne-Wellfleet dodgeball rematch. Just saying.

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Melany Levesque is the newest member of the Year 10 Corps. She serves at the Cape and Islands Chapter of the American Red Cross.

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Poetry Corner

Members share poetic thoughts
Here you’ll find haikus!

Beach grass is planted
Cutting deep through frozen ground
New life in the snow
-Lisa Buchs (Wellfleet)

I want more snow soon.
A blizzard would be real nice.
Not from Dairy Queen.
Phil Burt (Outreach Resource Development Officer)

House dinner looms near
We wait for hours, hungry
Salad and jello.
Megan Horbin (Bourne)

Bourne team’s white delight
Just ignore check engine light
Sweet Amerivan
Harry Johnson (Bourne)

Chainsaw symphony
Ouch, my arms are sore.
Ashleigh McCord (Bourne)

SmartWool and waders
Glowing lights when I come home
Me and this army
Amanda Baranowski (Bourne)

Ice and snow and wind
Will not stop us—not Year 10 Service here we come.
Nicole Frame (Bourne)

We have a new friend
He is Clark the flying squirrel
Mom, can we keep him?
Maria Downs (Bourne)

Hot morning breakfast
Oatmeal is in my belly
Not community?
Christin Marshall (Bourne)

We have a new friend
He is Clark the flying squirrel
Mom, can we keep him?
Maria Downs (Bourne)

SmartWool and waders
Glowing lights when I come home
Me and this army
Amanda Baranowski (Bourne)

Ice and snow and wind
Will not stop us—not Year 10 Service here we come.
Nicole Frame (Bourne)

We have a new friend
He is Clark the flying squirrel
Mom, can we keep him?
Maria Downs (Bourne)

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Jenny Burkhardt and Maria Downs help with fuel assistance in Dennis.  LIFT THAT LOG!!!!

Phil Wegert inspects the construction of a shellfish cage top while serving in Mashpee.

Look at the cohesion and adhesion as Amie Vos encases Amanda Baranowski in a bubble at a WET Festival.

Meg Letts clears trees to make open space for bird habitat in the Bank Street Bogs in Harwich. Fighting the frigid temperatures and high winds, she trudges onward.

Greg Rompala and Amanda Howe save the dunes at Menahaunt beach in Falmouth by planting beach grass.

Monica Farmer (right) tests out her brush cutter before she begins helping with wildlife management in Eastham.

Sawyer Korinda Walls limbs a tree in the Bourne House yard after a storm passed through.

Actor Brian Dinizio connects with students during the WET Festival play production.

Sam Miller and Lisa Buchs create a gingerbread Wellfleet house that looks tasty…

Amanda Baranowski cuts the stumps of a Japanese Tree of Heaven (don’t worry, its an invasive species).

Pictures taken by AmeriCorps Cape Cod year 10 members
Compiled by Davis Brush (Bourne)
Taking the Plunge

By Brian Dinizio (Wellfleet)

Polar Plunge – n. the act of willingly charging into a near freezing body of water and retreating immediately thereafter to dry land.

Polar Plunge – v. to take the Polar Plunge

Every once in a while during the cold winter months you can open up the local paper to an article about a group of people participating in a “polar plunge”. You may first think to yourself, “Wow. What a bunch of idiots”, but then eventually will find that it was for some good cause, thus changing your opinion to a more favorable one. Well on January 12, 2009, we were those idiots and we had no good cause. A handful of us young and bold AmeriCorps members shed our weather appropriate clothing for bathing suits, shorts and t-shirts, or in my case, some boxer briefs. It was a beautiful day for service. The air was brisk, but the sun was shining. The wind was noticeable, but we worked in pairs, using each other as windbreaks. We served with the Falmouth Beach Department, planting beach grass on Menauhant Beach. The department had constructed two dunes to protect the parking lot from constantly advancing sand that may have eventually created 40 new feet of beach but with no parking. There was also a large flat area just to the right of the parking lot which needed to be planted as well. We had our hands full for the day, everyone pulled their weight, and much was accomplished.

As the day was coming to an end, the sun sinking, the air cooling, and the wind picking up, there was something dawning inside that handful of us. It was the realization that the service day was over and the time to submerge our 98.6 degree bodies into that 40 degree water had arrived. I got into my van, backed it up as close as I could to the beach, and turned the heat on full blast to prepare for my return from the icy shallows. There were already a few members waiting on the beach in their extremely insufficient garb, huddling in a tight circle like penguins all the while being laughed at by those smart enough to remain clothed. Not wanting to miss out on what looked to be so much fun, I hurriedly removed my outer layers and joined the group in my boxers and boxers alone. This previous action was a big mistake. Not everyone else was ready so I stood out there for nearly ten minutes, trying to keep warm by running, jumping, and doing push ups.

Finally the stragglers arrived and we stood around for maybe 30 seconds until we all made a dash for the water. We may have all had second thoughts during that 5 seconds of sprinting but nobody stopped short and retreated. The next thing I remember is resurfacing, looking for the sand, and using all of my body and mind to 1. Get myself out of that water and 2. Make sure my underwear didn’t do a plunge of their own down to my ankles. The run back to my van was perhaps the longest run I have ever made. Frozen sand, snow, and ice are not the most accommodating surfaces for quick movements. My mini-van doors had a golden glow all around them—much like I imagine the Gates of Heaven. I hopped into my front seat, directly in front of the vents and vigorously rubbed my frozen feet.

The shock of the recently transpired events took minutes to wear off and I noticed my van was full of people that had found the closest possible vehicle to fight off hypothermia in. Eventually I felt coherent enough and physically able to put my car into drive and head home. Back at Le Hac in Wellfleet, we joked and laughed about what had occurred about an hour before. We looked at pictures and watched the videos the folks from dry land had taken. I was surprised to see in those pictures and videos that people were smiling and laughing while returning from the water. That I still can not comprehend, because as soon as I hit the water my survival instincts kicked in. Regardless of the feelings felt directly after the polar plunge we can all reflect on it now with smiles, laughter, and a dash of confusion.

AmeriCorps members sprint back to their heated cars after taking the plunge.
World Travel Spotlight: Exclusive Interview with Becca Wolfson

Interview by Amanda Baranowski (Bourne)

For those of you who don’t know, our ACC staff member Becca Wolfson recently traveled to Israel, thanks to a gift called Birthright Israel*. Her specific trip, entitled “Israel Quest”, coordinated by the trip organizer Israel Outdoors, took a group of 39 young adults from the U.S. for a whirlwind hands-on tour of the country over a 10 day period. Here, Becca shares with us some of her experiences of her travels.

Q. So Becca, tell us about your trip. Where did you go? What was your tour group like?
A. I spent 10 days in Israel and saw pretty much the whole country. We started in Tel Aviv in the middle of the country, drove east and visited Jerusalem, traveled south through the Negev Desert to Eilat, north to Upper Galilee and the Golan Heights, and then back to Tel Aviv. To give you an idea, Israel is only about one and a half times the size of Massachusetts! There were 39 of us from the U.S. plus 2 North American peer staff, 5 unarmed Israeli soldiers, and 2 armed guards. It was really interesting getting to talk with the soldiers. Military service is mandatory for Israeli citizens, who enter the army after they graduate high school. Women serve for two years and men serve for three.

Q. What was your favorite destination?
A. I’d say…hiking up Mount Masada. We woke up at 4am, started hiking by 4:30, and made it to the top of the mountain before sunrise. We followed a snaking path (cleverly named the “Snake Path”) up one face, so it wasn’t too steep, but definitely rigorous enough. As the sun came up, we did yoga and then had tour of the ancient ruins, including King Herod’s fortress and sauna!

Q. What is one fact you’d like to share about Israel?
A. Well how about some language instead? One of the Israeli soldiers taught us the Hebrew saying “Atah totach” to say to our tour guide, which translates as “You’re a big shot” (Don’t forget the sarcasm.). Another handy phrase was “Cu lam po,” which means “All here!” (Making sure we hadn’t lost anyone, haha). We also gave the word “reset” a new meaning – we would always chuckle when our tour guide would urge us to “reset”, or use the rest rooms before loading onto our tour bus for hours of driving, so we wouldn’t have to make bathroom breaks off the highway as frequently – which we still had to do, anyways!

Q. What did you take away from your experience?
A. I’m so glad that I went. It was really cool to see this country where there is such strong patriotism. People have such passion, and there’s this incredible history and culture. We went from the mountains to the luscious green countrysides to the desert – it was other-worldly. After learning about the past and present of Israel, I think it’s impossible not to care about the future.

Q. How was it being in Israel as the fighting resumed between Israel and Palestine?
A. It definitely heightened my curiosity to try and understand the conflict. Everyone that we met was very welcoming to us and Birthright trips in general. Much of the country’s economy depends on tourism, similar to the Cape, and people were grateful that we were brave enough to come. The present conflict also made learning the history that much more important. So many people were willing to talk about it and it made me think, “this is a piece of that puzzle.”

Q. Are you planning to return to Israel for another visit?
A. I do want to go back to travel. The trip is very regimented for logistical and security purposes, but I’d say that my interest was definitely piqued, and I’d like to go and travel more fully. I’ve also heard about some Habitat for Humanity projects there which sound pretty cool as well.

*Taglit-Birthright Israel provides the gift of first time, peer group, educational trips to Israel for Jewish young adults ages 18 to 26, with the idea that all Jewish people have the right to visit the homeland. The trips are funded by private donors, organizations, and the government of Israel.
AmeriCrossword!
By Ashleigh McCord (Bourne)

For Answers see page 12
Family Dinner
by Erin Der-McLeod (Wellfleet)

Do you ever experience the sheer joy of reaching into a pocket of clothing you have not worn for a while and finding money in it? An AmeriCorps equivalent to this often occurs for me on Wednesday afternoons. Imagine driving back from your IP after a long day of service and pondering what you have in the fridge to make for dinner? When you walk through the door, you see two of your housemates working away in the kitchen, preparing enough food to feed an army. Suddenly, you realize with excitement you don’t need to make dinner because it’s House Dinner Night!

Every Wednesday, all Corps members gather at our respective houses for what has affectionately become known as “family dinner.” It is the one night a week that members are required to eat together. Working on a rotating basis, two members are assigned each week to prepare the night’s dinner. Meals can be as simple as pasta and salad, as innovative as breakfast for dinner, as homely as stew, as exotic as falafel with tahini sauce, as unusual as egg lemon soup, or as traditional as pot roast. We’ve had regional samplings like members from the South cooking fried chicken with mashed potatoes, and themed dinners like gyros and Greek salad for Greek Night. There is only one rule regarding house dinner—you must be there.

Coming into the program, some might feel apprehensive about having to give up other engagements every Wednesday night to sit through dinner and a meeting with fourteen people. But, the benefits generally outweigh the costs. Most Wednesdays, you get to take break from cooking, try foods you’ve never had before, and share in inside jokes and laughter with your housemates. If you’re one of the cooks, you get to know your housemates better and to hone your culinary skills. All in all, it’s a pretty good deal.

Recipe for having your own AmeriCorps-style Family Dinner

You will need:
- 14 plates
- 14 sets of silverware
- 14 cups
- Enough food to feed 14 people
- 2 Shaws Giftcards
- 14 chairs/benches/stools
- At least 6 condiment options
- hungry from a long day of service

Invite 13 of your closest friends over for dinner. If in Wellfleet, ring the dinner bell when the meal is ready. Cram in around the table, share a delicious dinner, and if conversation lags (unlikely), try out this joke Davis shared with us at dinner last week:

What do you get when you drop a piano down a mine shaft?
A-flat minor!
MLK Day 2009
by Tim Dugan (Wellfleet) and Megan Horbin (Bourne)

On January 19, 2009, AmeriCorps Cape Cod celebrated Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. by hosting its seventh annual volunteer event as part of a national AmeriCorps initiative to make MLK Day “a day on, not a day off.” AmeriCorps programs nationwide use the day to organize a volunteer event that addresses a major need in the local community and which encourages a communal devotion to service. AmeriCorps Cape Cod dedicated its seventh year of Martin Luther King Jr. Day service to the renovation of the Village of Cataumet, a transitional housing shelter in Bourne operated by HAC.

Thanks to a generous grant from the Massachusetts Service Alliance, match funding from Barnstable County and donations from the community such as paint and supplies by The Valle Group, AmeriCorps members were able to dream big and restore all 17 rooms and the common areas at the shelter.

The event kicked off as Executive Director and Founder of the Housing Assistance Corporation, Rick Presbrey, and former resident of the shelter, Jude, spoke to an audience of nearly 200 volunteers who anxiously waited to begin their day of service.

Volunteers from all over Cape Cod and off Cape braved the chilly January morning to serve with AmeriCorps in remembrance of Dr Martin Luther King Jr. Holes were patched with spackle, walls were washed, and warm tones of yellow and green were painted in each room. Mildew resistant shower curtains were purchased and hung in the freshly painted bathrooms, and shelves were installed on the walls for additional storage space. Newly bought lamps lit up their improved homes and resilient pothos plants were potted and placed in rooms to welcome home its residents.

More volunteers appeared at the United Methodist Church of Cataumet with a sea of sewing machines and a mountain of fabric. There they spent the day sewing vibrant curtains for all of the windows in each unit at the shelter. Another crowd of eager volunteers buzzed beneath a heated tent, constructing four sturdy, mobile benches out of recycled plastic for outdoor seating. The benches were set in the backyard, overlooking a recently restored lawn and a beautiful community center which was built less than a year ago.
AmeriCorps set up a satellite project with the Mashpee Boys and Girls Club to accommodate the large motivation to serve from youth and youth group volunteers. A handful of high school students from the Boys and Girls Club were driven to Cataumet to serve while four AmeriCorps members presented a lesson on the life of Martin Luther King Jr and the importance of community service to twenty-five elementary school students. Afterwards, the young students contributed to a canvas mural depicting Martin Luther King’s message and their dreams for the future. The mural was presented as a gift to the Village of Cataumet where it now hangs in their community room to remind the residents that anyone can reach their dreams.

Throughout the day volunteers were energized with food donated by Cape Cod Bagel, Mashpee Starbucks, Trader Joes, Prime-time House of Pizza and Nick’s House of Pizza as well as other goodies which AmeriCorps was able to provide to its volunteers with the grant from the Massachusetts Service Alliance. Volunteers also left their day of service with a red AmeriCorps Cape Cod MLK Day ’09 bracelet and a t-shirt designed by AmeriCorps members, commemorating the day of service at the Village of Cataumet.

At the end of the day, the volunteers finished all 17 rooms and every project on the Village of Cataumet’s wish list, and collected clothing, bedding, furniture and electronics donations. 215 volunteers joined AmeriCorps for the day, logging a total of 1,175 hours and making the day AmeriCorps Cape Cod’s largest Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day event to date and a memorable day for all.
Celebrate Recycling with a Puppet Show and Hip-Hop

by Greg Rompala (Wellfleet)

Ask an AmeriCorps Cape Cod volunteer to get a real job and you may not draw much of a reaction. Ask that same volunteer to recycle and before you know it, you’ll be caught up in a deluge of papers and plastics. This past fall, the H.T. Wing Elementary School in Sandwich, MA kicked off their recycling program by engaging AmeriCorps Cape Cod volunteers to educate and excite over 400 students about their eco-friendly endeavor. We accepted the call, collaborating with faculty and “Green Mom” volunteers to plan and present a Recyclefest event on November 18th.

In the morning, K-4 students were treated to the Jimmy Buffet-funded “Green Ribbon” Puppet Show. Corps members performed the puppetry to a professionally recorded song-laden script that stresses the importance of recycling and reducing pollution on Cape Cod. In spite of some initial chaos, spurred by a malfunctioning sound system, the show recovered and, in the end, the forgiving youngsters provided us with ample applause.

To build excitement about recycling among grades 5-8, we introduced a recycled art contest with community-donated prizes for the winners. Corps members then engaged their creative genius to demonstrate one form of recycled art with an original hip-hop performance, titled “Recycle Michael.” The skit plays out as a dialog to the beat of a popular rap instrumental, with Recycle Michael and Soda Pop Pam teaching Landfill Lenny about the benefits of recycling. For example, when Landfill Lenny carelessly guides a paper plane in Recycle Michael’s direction, Michael quips, “Yo Landfill Lenny, spare me your trash, I have a better place for your plane to crash,” referring to a recycling bin.

Corps member Jessica Regan, a hip-hop novice, skilled only with an English degree and an affinity for poetics, was a big part of writing some of the more tongue-twisting lyrics. “(We) used a medium that they were familiar with to show them something they weren’t familiar with, so we met them half way,” says Regan. “Plus it was fun and I think the lyrics stuck with them.” Indeed, Corps members hope that the skit’s hypnotic chorus “Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Go Michael” will replay for H.T. Wing School students in both mind and behavior. Or at least for anyone named Michael.

On a cold morning in the middle of January, seven AmeriCorps members, Jenny, Amanda, Maria, Harry, Phil, Davis, and Jaclyn, braved the snowy elements to spend a day doing shellfish propagation with Rick York in the town of Mashpee. Shellfish propagation is a term used to describe the process of raising shellfish and then spreading them out in a natural environment and/or harvesting them. These AmeriCorps members knew they had a difficult task ahead, opening endless spat bags (bags of shell that had oyster seed growing on them). Indeed, there were still 700 bags waiting their turn to be opened when the members arrived. So the members set a goal of 100 bags. They set to work with the infamous AmeriCorps assembly line in place. Two members retrieved spat bags from their original cages in the Mashpee River and brought them to the edge of the marsh. There, five members took the bags, sliced them open and pulled out all of the oysters that had grown into the bag. Unfortunately, a few were sacrificed in the process, but hundreds survived to be taken back into the river and spread out on newly constructed trays built by two members.

Along the way the members ran into a few roadblocks. While pulling open bags of oysters, mud and shell pieces flew everywhere, including into the eyes of two of the members. All productivity came to a standstill as muddy fingers were used to try and clean out whatever was in their eyes. A quick donation of sunglasses soon fixed the problem and they continued on. As mud flew everywhere, the members soon realized that it was time to put on their orange "mud" gear, and soon there was no orange to be seen. The afternoon continued on with games such as “movie bomb” as our radio (also known as Jaclyn) played requests. As the day was coming to a close and the sun was beginning to set, the members looked to the empty pile of bags eagerly awaiting the final count. After seven hours, four pairs of destroyed work gloves, a pair of leaky waders, and seven very tired AmeriCorps members completely covered in mud the results were in...101!!! The members had surpassed their goal by opening 101 bags. What a feeling of accomplishment...now only 599 more bags to go!!

The Story of 101 Oyster Bags
By Jenny Burkhardt (Bourne)

A Valentine’s Poem!
By Jaclyn Hochreiter (Bourne) and Ashleigh McCord (Bourne)

Your dazzling beauty, world renowned,
Every day brings new wonders to be found.
From dawn to dusk, sunrise to sunset,
Each colorful day leaves no regret.
Your shapely figure sets my heart afire
Old and gray, with you I’ll retire.
I admire you in a midnight glow,
My heart won’t grow cold, not even in snow!
To things that bring me joy, you have found the key,

And oh! What fine cuisine you have shared with me
Cranberries, oysters, lobsters, and chips.
I’ll protect you from shoulder to fingertip.
When we’re apart, my heart breaks in two,
A feeling of home when reunited with you.
We’ll shout it loud to the skies above,
Here’s to Cape Cod, the land that I love!
**Bourne House Mascot**

*By Phil Wegert (Bourne)*

11:03 PM
While watching TV in the basement, I hear some loud scratching from behind the fireplace. My first thought is a large mouse or worse - a rat - but I really am not sure. As a man, I don’t scare easily but I go upstairs to ask Nicole to go ahead and check it out anyways. Low and behold it is a tiny squirrel that will soon reveal itself as a “flying squirrel”.

11:15 PM
Nicole and I devise a plan to capture the animal by placing a container (bucket) on one side while boxing it in on the other and throwing a blanket over the container. It is a good AmeriCorps try, but “Thor” a.k.a. “Clark” has other ideas…

11:20 PM
Leaping out towards Nicole and I, Thor escapes from the fireplace and now finds a new spot on the couch where he just sits, watching us in amusement.

11:23 PM
Ashleigh and Amanda come down to “help” us in our efforts to trap and secure Thor.

11:25 PM
Thor now makes a move toward the heaters and I think at this point we are in trouble. Our efforts to capture him are again insufficient because he runs past us another time and lands on the couch. Clark makes some more bold moves back into the fireplace and around the heaters before finally ending up behind the big wooden cabinet.

1:45 AM
We give up at this point. We enclose his exit and entrance and will try and capture him sometime the next morning.

**The Next Day...**

**AM**
Thor has escaped from behind the cabinet. Reports of Thor sightings later in the day have him chilling in the basement, happy as a clam. Apparently, he also cuddles with Melany’s friend sometime during the night.

**The Next Few Days...**
Thor has been loose in the house now for a couple of days. Christin purchases a cage. Lo and behold, Thor, with his incredible name and vigor, outsmarts all of us, takes the food, and runs. We do not give up, however. Nicole continues to make tasty snacks for Thor and sometime later, Megan hears rustling in the cage and it is a captured Thor! Nicole takes Thor into the “wild” and sets him free.

**I dedicate this piece to Mighty Thor our house mascot. If we get another flying squirrel, I was thinking of the name Natasha for a female or Axle like Van Halen...**

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**My Favorite Foods**

*By Thor*

**Ingredients:**
Recalled peanut butter crackers
Peanut butter
Chocolate Chips

**Directions:**
Top recalled crackers with peanut butter and three chocolate chips...no more...no less. Place inside trap that is not advanced enough to catch me...SUCKERS!!!

---

*The Bourne House flying squirrel (called Thor by some, Clark by others) captured at last.*
AmeriCorps Cape Cod and Army Corps of Engineers present:

**2009 Canal Clean Up!**

A Zero-Waste Event Earth Day Weekend

**Saturday April 25, 2009**

*Join us to clean up the entrance of Cape Cod.*

Registration: 8:30 a.m.

**Meet us** at the Herring Run Recreation Area.

830 Scenic Highway  Bourne, MA

Registration in advance encouraged!

**FEATURING:**

- FREE Breakfast & Lunch!
- educational booths about sustainability issues
- an opportunity to learn about an alternative year of service after graduation

* Trash bags and gloves provided. Wear work clothes! **Rain Date:** Sunday April 26.*

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**CAPE COD CANAL**

For further info., to register, or to run a booth, contact the AmeriCorps Office:

call 508-375-6975  or  email: CanalCleanup@barnstablecounty.org
MAY 11-17: AMERICORPS WEEK FOLLOWED BY A YEAR 10 CELEBRATION!

SAVE THE DATE! Join us for AmeriCorps Week at Taylor Bray Farm in Yarmouthport from May 11-15! Volunteers will remove invasives, help build bird boxes for habitat creation, construct raised garden beds for handicap access, and assist with the construction of a 180-foot boardwalk. Friday will end in a celebration of the week’s service and of 10 years of AmeriCorps Cape Cod, followed by additional weekend activities for our alumni reunion. Contact the AmeriCorps office for more information!

CHECK US OUT ONLINE!
http://www.rdoac.org/americorps/