

Beautifying Riverbank



Last Saturday, DEP joined Groundswell, and the State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation at a dedication ceremony for “Beautifying Riverbank,” a new public mural that engages Riverbank State Park’s diverse visitors in celebration of our local water cycle, from the Catskill Mountains to New York City. This summer, 15 young people participating in Groundswell’s Summer Leadership Institute (SLI) collaborated with artists **Paul Deo** and **Olivia Fu** to research, design,

and fabricate the 260’ wide by 15’ high mural designed for the Riverbank water splashing area that sits on top of the North River Wastewater Treatment Plant. The 28-acre multi-level landscaped recreational facility rises 69 feet above the Hudson River and offers a wide variety of recreational, athletic and arts experiences for all ages, interests and abilities. This year Riverbank State Park is also celebrating its 20th anniversary. [Click here](#) to see more photos from the dedication ceremony.

Spotlight on Safety

Coping with Road Rage

With infrastructure ranging from the Catskills to Staten Island, many DEP employees spend a significant amount of time driving and, therefore, can be subject to the perils of road rage. Aggressive driving, and more importantly our reaction to it, can easily escalate into road rage. In fact, a recent study by the AAA Foundation found that aggressive driving was a factor in 56 percent of fatal crashes. The best way to prevent road rage incidents is to always focus on driving safely, use signals when changing lanes, and refrain from tailgating, cutting off other vehicles, and making gestures to other drivers. If you find yourself the subject of road rage, here are a few important tips to follow:

- Don’t retaliate or engage the angry driver.
- Don’t make eye contact.
- Steer clear and give the other driver lots of room.
- Get help. If you believe the other driver is following you or trying to start a fight, call the police.
- If you cannot call the police, pull into a gas station or convenience store and stay in your vehicle.
- Get the license plate number if possible.

Remember, you cannot control the behavior of other drivers, but you can control your own. Additional resources on road rage and aggressive driving can be found at AAA and DMV.

At DEP, everyone is responsible for safety. If you or anyone on your team is concerned about your working conditions, it's okay to ask your supervisor or your bureau's EHS liaison how they can help. If you've still got questions, you can call the EHS Employee Concerns Hotline. It's DEP's responsibility to acknowledge and fix unsafe situations, procedures, and practices. With your help, we'll not only get the job done, we'll make it safer for ourselves, our coworkers, our families, and our city.

CALL (800) 897-9677 OR SEND A MESSAGE THROUGH PIPELINE. HELP IS ON THE WAY. 🐱

Commissioner's Corner

This week is a busy one for New Yorkers and for DEP employees. First off, Monday marked the return to classes for more than 1 million New York City school students, unofficially ending the summer vacation season. I want to wish all of you with kids in school a safe, productive, and successful school year.

Secondly, today is primary election day. New Yorkers will head to the polls today to choose the Republican and Democratic candidates who will run for important City offices in November’s general election, including our next Mayor, Comptroller, Public Advocate, City Council Members, and Borough Presidents. If you have not done so already, I encourage every DEP employee to head to your polling place and cast a vote. Voting is not just our right—it is our civic responsibility. Polls in all five boroughs are open until 9PM tonight. To find your polling place, call (866) VOTE-NYC or visit www.vote.nyc.ny.us.

Finally, tomorrow we will commemorate the 12th anniversary of the September 11th attacks. That tragic day touched all New Yorkers, including many DEP employees who lost loved ones. While tomorrow is a day to reflect and honor the nearly 3,000 people who lost their lives in the attacks, it is also an appropriate time to remember the countless unsung heroes at DEP who helped in the response, recovery, and rebuilding efforts in Lower Manhattan.

As they do with every large fire, BWSO staff responded to the scene to ensure the Fire Department had adequate water pressure to fight fires. The collapse of the towers severely damaged the water infrastructure in Lower Manhattan and BWSO crews worked around the clock to inspect and make the necessary repairs to provide first responders with fresh water and sanitary sewers. In addition, DERTA’s Hazardous Materials Specialists took samples of asbestos containing materials to be analyzed by our lab and established a comprehensive asbestos monitoring program with nearly 40 stations downtown. They would remain on the scene for months, sometimes working as many as 18 hours a day.



The Bureau of Environmental Compliance also played an important role in the clean-up, methodically cleaning the roofs and facades of more than 1,000 buildings downtown and establishing an 800-number to connect tenants with city, state, and federal assistance programs. In addition to our efforts downtown, the Bureau of Police and Security quickly mobilized to protect our critical infrastructure. DEP officers worked 12 hour shifts, six days a week to protect our upstate reservoirs, bridges, and dams to ensure the water supply remained safe. DEP’s response lasted months and dozens of our employees worked alongside their colleagues in government at the Pier 96 Command Center to assist the families of the victims.

In the years since the attack, DEP has played a vital role in rebuilding Lower Manhattan. Since 2001, we have invested more than \$70 million to reconstruct the water and sewer systems downtown, installing nearly 4 miles of sewer infrastructure and close to 20 miles of new water mains. Our commitment to rebuild the damaged infrastructure downtown will be demonstrated later this year when we finish connection work and for the first time, City Water Tunnel No. 3 begins serving Lower Manhattan.

While these are a few examples of our department’s heroic efforts in the aftermath of the September 11th attacks, I hope you all take pride in the professionalism and dedication DEP demonstrated during the most difficult period in our city’s history. Feel free to share your September 11 memories at newsletter@dep.nyc.gov.

Focus on the Field



Protecting the environment and public health in New York City is a large undertaking—and ensuring that DEP’s nearly 6,000 employees are properly compensated is a behind the scenes, yet essential task. Timekeeper **Quanetra Caple** is quiet, friendly, organized, and persistent, all traits that help her keep employees up to date and accurate with their timekeeping.

Caple was born and raised, along with her two sisters, in Jamaica, Queens. In 1993, while attending Andrew Jackson High School, she began working part-time at DEP as a Coop student in the predecessor to the Office of Information and Technology. Upon her graduation, Caple left the department and began working in the philanthropic world while she took courses at Katharine Gibbs Business School.

Caple returned to DEP in 2001 as a Clerical Associate where she assisted with major accounts, such as Co-op City, for the Bureau of Customer Service (BCS). The following year she began handling billing and general customer service issues both on the phone and over the counter at DEP’s walk-in office in Queens. In 2007, she added timekeeping to her duties and helped to ensure that her BCS

colleagues properly logged their work hours. This job changed drastically with the introduction of CityTime in 2008.

“CityTime is more efficient and accurate than the old system, but the transition required training employees on how to properly enter their work time, and training supervisors on how to review and approve the time sheets,” said Caple.

In 2009, Caple joined the Bureau of Engineering, Design and Construction as a full-time Time Keeper where she assisted more than 100 employees. After a reorganization in 2011, Caple and some of her colleagues were transferred to Human Resources, and she now handles timekeeping duties for the Commissioner’s Office and the Bureau of Public Affairs, among others.

“I’ve worked in many different parts of DEP over the years and the one thing that remains consistent is the family-like atmosphere,” said Caple. “We spend so much of our time in the office with our colleagues and I am so thankful for the support I’ve received, and friendships I’ve developed here.”

“Quanetra’s experience with BCS has translated well to timekeeping; she is always patient and remains focused on achieving a positive outcome,” said Director of Payroll **Bob McHale**. “She also has a great sense of humor, which helps foster camaraderie and a positive atmosphere in the office.”

Caple still resides in Queens and spends much of her time outside of the office with her eight year old son. She is also an active member of her church and enjoys catching the latest movies.

DEP Fall Blood Drive

Four million Americans each year benefit from life-saving blood transfusions. In fact, one of every three people will need a life-saving transfusion sometime during their lifetime. Please help by donating at the below locations and times:

Lefrak Headquarters: 3rd Floor Cafeteria, 9/11 and 9/12, 7:45 am

to 1:30 pm; **Downsville Region:** Downsville Fire Hall, 9/11, 9:00 am to 2:00 pm; **Kensico / Highland / Sutton Park Region:** Sutton Park - 2nd Floor, 9/12, 8:30 am to 2:30 pm; **Kingston / Catskill Region:** 51 Albany Avenue, 9/16, 1:00 pm to 6:00 pm; **Grahamsville Region:** DEP Grahamsville parking lot, 9/25, 10:00 am to 3:00 pm.

First of its Kind Blue Green Roof



Last Wednesday, DEP and the nonprofit Osborne Association announced the installation of one of the nation’s first integrated blue and green rooftop systems atop Osborne’s facility located at 809 Westchester Avenue in the South Bronx. The blue and green roof will manage more than 100,000 gallons of stormwater a year that falls on the rooftop of the facility and thereby improve water quality in the East River. The project was funded through a \$288,000 DEP Green Infrastructure Grant and a significant contribution from Osborne. [Click here](#) to see NY1’s coverage of the event.

Welcome Aboard



Yesterday, 20 new employees attended orientation and received an overview of the department from Chief Financial Officer **Steve Lawitts**. We hope everyone will join us in welcoming them to DEP!

Annah Boxill, Michael Cooper, Wayne Dixon, Mark Gabriel, Cathy Law-Davenport, Samuel Sloan, and Keenan Williams with BWSO; **Johnathan Don, Yue Yue Guo, Timothy Murphy, Craig Smalls, and Jaime Spataro** with BWT; **Jessica L. Garigliano and Jesse Noren** with BWS; **David Thurman and Miki Urisaka** with BEPA; **Patricia Abbott** with BPS; **Belina Anderson** with BLA; **Rebecca Bowen** with Fleet; and **Jason Eaves** with BCS.

We welcome your feedback! To submit an announcement or suggestion, please email us at: newsletter@dep.nyc.gov.