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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Enjoy Free Summer Fun on the Neponset

Boston Natural Areas Network presents 33 free events throughout the summer

BOSTON, MA – June 17, 2009 – When you are wondering what to do this summer, think about a refreshing canoe trip down the Neponset River, or pulling up your folding chair to watch an outdoor movie. How about a morning of African drumming and dance with the kids, or a kite festival with family and friends? These events and more are all free and part of the annual, summer-long Neponset River Greenway Festival.

Hosted by Boston Natural Areas Network and the MA Department of Conservation & Recreation for the 15th year, the Festival offers 33 free events with new activities and locations added to perennial favorites starting with the first of five canoe trips on June 28th. This year, there is a focus on kite flying with four events including a stunt kite demo, a kite festival and collaboration with the Lower Mills Branch Library to highlight books on the subject. Other events include outdoor movies, children's performances, a 10-mile bike ride, photography workshop and more.

The *Neponset River Greenway Festival* events will be held on both weekend and weekday dates at parks in Dorchester, Mattapan, Hyde Park and Milton. All events are free and open to the public. *The complete calendar of festival events includes:*

Thursday Morning “Especially for Children” Performances

All children's performances will take place at Ryan Playground, River Street, Mattapan on Thursday mornings in July from 10:30 – 11:30 a.m.

July 2 – Meet the creatures of the *Rainforest Reptile Show*. Professional handlers will educate the crowd about reptiles and participants will be able to view and handle the exotic creatures.

July 9 – *Valerie Stephens* offers interactive stories, songs and games from West Africa, the Americas and Caribbean with lessons and fun for all to enjoy.

July 16 – *Cornell “Sugarfoot” Coley* will entertain with his Latin-style drumming. Participants will get to experience first hand what it’s like to play various hand drums and learn traditional dances.

July 23 – *Bonaparte the Magician* will amaze the crowds with his tricks and keep everyone laughing with his zany antics.

Tuesday & Thursday Night Family Movie Series

Tuesday night movies will be shown at Martini Shell, Truman Parkway in Hyde Park and Thursday night movies will be shown at Pope John Paul II Park, Gallivan Boulevard, Dorchester. All movies will start **at sunset** (roughly 8:00 p.m. in July and 7:00 p.m. in August). Visit the BNAN website at www.bostonnatural.org to find out clues to what’s playing.

Tuesdays in Hyde Park:

July 7, 14, 21, 28

August 4, 11, 18, 25

Thursdays in Dorchester:

July 9*, 16, 23, 30

August 6, 13, 20, 27**

***Kites, Reels & Wheels: Activities for Families to Kick-off the Summer Movie Series**

Thursday, July 9, 5:30 – 7:30 p.m., Pope John Paul II Park, Gallivan Boulevard, Dorchester – A special pre-movie celebration will launch the Festival’s eight week Family Movie Series. Fly kites, ride bikes, learn fishing fundamentals, enjoy face painting and more – all before the Thursday, July 9 movie begins at sunset.

****Stunt Kite Demonstration**

Thursday, August 20, 6:30 p.m., Pope John Paul II Park, Gallivan Boulevard, Dorchester – Whet your appetite for the August 22 Kite Festival with a special demonstration by local stunt kite flyers before the Thursday, August 20 movie.

Kites on the River

Saturday, August 22, 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m., Pope John Paul II Park, Gallivan Boulevard, Dorchester – A kite festival for all on the Neponset Riverfront. Be wowed by expert stunt kite flyers, take in a choreographed kite ballet set to music, or gaze up at the gigantic and colorful show kites that will be in the air. Kids can participate in bol races where kite parachutes fly behind them as they run. Bring your own kite. Event will occur throughout the entire park.

Fly Away with Kites in Books

August 10 – August 28, Lower Mills Branch Library, 27 Richmond Street, Dorchester – Children’s fiction and other books about kites from the library collection will be on display and available for checkout.

Canoe Trips

Advance registration is required for all canoe trips to ensure there are enough canoes for all participants. Please call BNAN at 617-542-7696 or visit www.bostonnatural.org.

Sunday, June 28, 10:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m. AND 12:00 p.m. – Beginners Paddle at Mother Brook Mill Pond, Knight Street, Hyde Park. Curious about canoeing? The Mother Brook Mill Pond is a perfect spot to learn basic paddling skills. Beginners only please.

Friday, July 17, 5:30 p.m. – Evening Estuary Paddle, Milton Landing, Wharf Street, Milton. Enjoy this evening interpretive tour of historic Lower Mills and the estuary with MA DCR Lower Neponset Reservation and BNAN staff. Paddling experience required.

Saturday, July 25, 1:00 p.m. – Afternoon Estuary Paddle, Neponset Landing, Hilltop Street, Dorchester. Enjoy an afternoon canoe trip upstream into the estuary, highlighting local history along the way. Paddling experience required.

Saturday, August 8, 11:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. – Canoe Trips at Dorchester Beaches Festival, Malibu Beach, Morrissey Boulevard, Dorchester. Explore the mouth of the Neponset during short canoe rides in this sheltered area of Dorchester Bay as part of the Dorchester Beaches Festival. Walk-up registration day of event.

Friday, August 14, 5:30 p.m. – Lower Mills Evening Paddle, Milton landing, Wharf Street, Milton. Paddle up to the falls at the old Baker Chocolate mills and out into the salt marshes. Paddling experience required. Co-sponsored by Mattapan Food & Fitness Coalition.

Special Programs

Advance registration is required for some special programs, as noted. Please call BNAN at 617-542-7696 or visit www.bostonnatural.org for more information.

Wednesday, July 15, 6:00 p.m. – Discover the New Neponset River Greenway by Bike, Field House, 7 Brush Hill Road, Milton

See where the newest section of Greenway is being built this summer and learn about the vision of the entire Neponset River Greenway. This 10-mile ride will start at the intersection of Truman Parkway and Fairmont Ave. Led by Doug Mink, Greenway Council member and Cycling enthusiast. Co-sponsored by MassBike. Helmets required.

Wednesday, July 22, 5:30 p.m. – Neponset Watercolor, City Natives, 30 Edgewater Drive, Mattapan
Led by artist Cathy Garnett of MA Department of Conservation & Recreation. Participants will receive supplies and basic instruction in watercolor technique at BNAN's nursery on the banks of the Neponset. Registration is required.

Monday, July 27, 5:30 p.m. – Nature Sketching with Colored Pencil, Milton Landing, Wharf Street, Milton

Talented nature artist Anne Schmalz will introduce participants to sketching the natural world at this peaceful spot in Lower Mills. Supplies provided. Bring your own folding chair. Registration required.

Sunday, August 2, 4:00 p.m. – Fowl Meadow Photography Workshop, Paul’s Bridge, Neponset Valley Parkway and Brush Hill Road, Hyde Park/Milton

Join Readville resident and photographer Martha McDonough to learn the art of photo composition while exploring the flora, fauna and vistas of Fowl Meadow. Bring your own camera. Registration is required. Raindate August 3.

Sponsors of the Neponset River Greenway Festival include BNAN, MA Department of Conservation & Recreation, the Neponset River Greenway Council, Mattapan Community Development Corporation, People Making a Difference, Mass Cultural Council, Alice Willard Dorr Foundation, Boston Cultural Council, Merck Family Fund, and the First Parish Church in Lincoln.

Boston Natural Areas Network is a non-profit organization dedicated to bringing together local residents, partner organizations, public officials and foundations to preserve, expand, and enhance urban open space, including community gardens, greenways, and urban wilds. For more information about the organization, becoming a member or the calendar of events, visit www.bostonnatural.org or call 617-542-7696.

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EDITORS:

The following links bring you to Neponset River Greenway Festival photos you can download to accompany this press release.

- Reptile Show: <http://www.box.net/shared/static/0agermi8sk.JPG>
- Kites, Reels & Wheels: <http://www.box.net/shared/static/nnyyvul8gw.jpg>
- Outdoor Movie: <http://www.box.net/shared/static/g5263c1s0g.jpg>
- Canoeing: <http://www.box.net/shared/static/dc7ymbyo84.jpg>
- Watercolor: <http://www.box.net/shared/static/ucno9sm4g0.jpg>
- Nature Walk: <http://www.box.net/shared/static/j0pjchegco.jpg>