

Demarest Nature News



Demarest Nature Center Association
Box 41, Demarest, N.J., 07627

www.demarestnaturecenter.org
Winter 2025 Vol. 51, No. 1

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It has been another great year at the Demarest Nature Center! We offered many opportunities for the community to get outdoors and enjoy the magnificence of the woods. In February, we had an event to show how maple syrup is made. In March, we had the annual clean-up, to get the community involved in keeping the nature center beautiful. In April, we had the annual Canoe Day, and we thank Veolia for providing the canoes.

The highlight of the year was Oktoberfest at the Duck Pond. On the first Saturday of every month at 10:00 a.m., we had a community walk, featuring a tour of the woods and a discussion about trees, insects, birds, and animals. Twice per year, we partner with the Bergen Audubon Society on a guided birdwatching tour. As we do every year, we underwrote the cost of 11 field trips to take Demarest elementary students into the Closter and Demarest Nature Centers. We continue to serve as the charter organization for Boy Scout Troop 20, which is active and growing. Just this month, we agreed to sponsor Venturing Crew 163, a new scouting organization that will be based in Demarest.



Join us on Saturday, February 8, from 10:00 a.m. to 1 p.m. for our maple syrup demonstration in the woods. We will demonstrate the tapping of maple trees, and how to make maple syrup. The kids can also roast s'mores, drink hot cider, eat donuts, learn how to count rings on a tree, and practice tapping a tree to collect sap. Meet at the Imagination Playground near Wakelee Field.

We are all volunteers, and we use funds to maintain the trails and support programming that benefits the community. Your memberships and generous donations help to support these efforts. We hope you will consider supporting these important initiatives, as we strengthen our community through wholesome activities that everyone enjoys. We hope to see you soon in the Nature Center!

— *Stephen Tillack*, President, Demarest Nature Center



Your membership dollars allow us to continue to give back to the community and preserve and protect DNC's 55 acres of meadows, forests and wetlands.

DEMAREST NATURE CENTER RECAP

NEW PICNIC TABLE

All are invited to have a picnic in the nature center.

Dave Emerson and his crew built this wonderful picnic table, which Andrew Zimmerman and Ray Slaman helped place next to the Skating Pond in June. Dave found plans and modeled this one on those built for the national parks system in the 1920s.



PLEASE VOTE IN THE BOARD ELECTION

Our annual reorganization meeting is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, January 9. This may change, so please check the website for the final date. We will elect trustees to fill seats that are coming open. Everyone who has paid membership dues at any time in the past year is eligible to run for a seat, and to vote in the trustee election.

VOLUNTEER CORNER

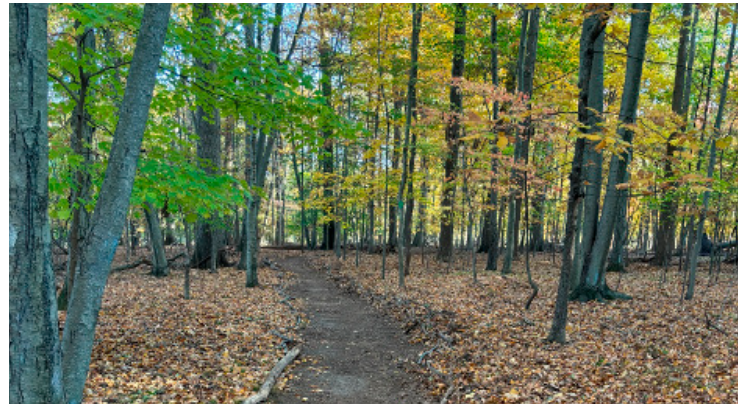
A huge thank you to former trustee Chris Valdes for volunteering his time at the Demarest Nature Center and diligently cleaning up litter over the past several years. His efforts have helped to keep our woods and trails clean and enjoyable for everyone.

OKTOBERFEST!

Thanks for celebrating Oktoberfest with us! People enjoyed German food and beer from Brasserie Memere of Closter, browsed handcrafted goods from local artisans, and participated in nature-based activities including canoeing, s'mores roasting, birdhouse building, owl pellet dissection, and viewing of live animals (turtles, frogs, and snakes). Face painting, live music, and square dancing provided entertainment, while Demarest Boy Scout Troop 20 shared information about their upcoming campouts and other programs. Oktoberfest is an important fundraiser for the Nature Center, so thank you for attending.

DNC AND THE SCOUTS

The Demarest Nature Center is proud to sponsor Boy Scout Troop 20. In addition, over the years we have hosted many Eagle Scout projects in the Nature Center. We are proud of our newest Eagle Scout candidate, Amanda Bramley, who rebuilt a walkway as phase one of her Eagle project. On October 19, Amanda and her crew spent the day removing old boards, installing new weather-resistant boards and non-skid lathe, and clearing the path on the Green trail on the west bank of the Tenakill Creek. This type of maintenance is vital because much of the Nature Center is classified as a wetland. Phase two is where Amada's creativity will really shine. The first girl to take on an Eagle project at the DNC will be installing a whimsical gnome village. This family of gnomes will welcome visitors who are lucky enough to spot these shy creatures. Come look for them this winter.



COMMUNITY TRAIL WALKS

We continue to have our monthly Community Trail Walks, now in their second year. Topics of the most recent hikes included tree identification, bug identification and a scavenger hunt. These hikes continue to bring adults and kids of all ages into the woods to explore all of the amazing things that nature has to offer. We meet the first Saturday of each month at 10 a.m. at the DNC entrance adjacent to the Imagination Playground. Keep an eye out for announcements on social media and on our website.

DEMAREST NATURE CENTER RECAP

VENTURING CREW 163

In December, we became the charter organization of a new Venturing Crew 163, a part of Scouting America. This is a co-ed group between ages 14-21, and they are dedicated to promoting leadership, outdoor skills, and community service. While traditional scout troops typically engage middle schoolers, Venturing focuses on co-ed high school aged young adults through a unique program that empowers older youth to plan their own high adventure trips and service projects. This helps them develop essential life skills such as leadership, organization, communication, and responsibility—all while having fun. Venturing does not compete with other scout groups, as multi-memberships are allowed. They meet the 3rd Wednesday of every month from 7:00-8:30PM in the Demarest train station. Please contact DemarestVenturingCrew163@gmail.com for more information.



SUMMER REC CAMP

In late July, the Demarest Nature Center once again hosted campers from the Summer Rec Camp. Approximately 100 kids participated in nature-themed scavenger hunts and guided trail hikes led by board members Ray Slaman and Jeff Shaari. Together we explored the trails and identified a variety of bugs, birds, trees and plants. The campers had a great time, and we look forward to hosting them again next summer.

TRAIL CLEAN-UP AND MAINTENANCE

This past June, a 60-foot-tall cottonwood tree came down across the Green trail and into the Tenakill Creek. One fine June morning, Jeff Shaari and Ray Slaman cleared the trail and removed a large section from the creek, allowing the water to flow freely once again.



In November, Jeff and Ray cleared two more trees that had fallen after a heavy rain and were obstructing the Green trail and the creek.





DEMAREST NATURE CENTER ASSN.

Borough of Demarest

P.O. Box 41

Demarest, N.J. 07627

www.DemarestNatureCenter.org

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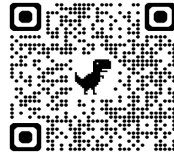


INTRODUCING ECOEXPLORER AT DNC!

Have you ever strolled through the woods and wondered about the trees around you or the stories the landscape holds? Now, there's a way to bring those wonders to life with EcoExplorer, an interactive tool that adds a layer of discovery to your outdoor adventures.

Here's how it works: As you explore the trails, keep an eye out for QR codes posted at these landmarks:

- Tenakill Brook
- Our Cottonwood Stump
- Ash Tree
- The Meadow



Simply use your smartphone camera to scan the QR code and click the link that pops up. Each QR code unlocks fascinating insights that you can read or listen to, designed to enhance your experience in the moment.

While this content is created with kids in mind, it's enjoyable for all ages. Plus, don't forget to scroll to the bottom of each page for bonus features that are sure to delight and inspire.

This is just the beginning! More QR codes and content will be added with the changing seasons, so there will always be something new to discover.

EcoExplorer is the brainchild of Amrita Kumar, whose passion for nature and education brings this project to life. Have an idea for a feature or want to share feedback? We'd love to hear from you!

Next time you visit the Demarest Nature Center, let EcoExplorer guide you to see the trails like never before.

A HUGE THANK YOU TO ALL OUR MEMBERS

Lifetime \$1,000

- Steve Chen
- Patricia Chen
- Steve & Diane Conti
- Jin & David Kupperman
- Dave & Marilyn Robertson

Trail Benefactor \$500

- Mike & Charlotte Clarke

Trail Steward. \$200

- Ronald K. Barr
- Peter Coy
- Demarest Korean PTO
- Susan & Lawrence Frank
- Jane & Richard Fried
- Steve Galli
- Melinda J. Iannuzzi
- Klaus Kretschmer
- Theodore & Marianne Martens
- Chris McDonnell
- Laura & Lewis Nelson
- The Ostlund Family
- Gary S. Schoolis

Trail Ranger. \$100

- Wilson & Gloria Aboudi
- Frank & Donna Borland
- Richard Bower
- Stacey Braff
- Gerald & Edith Escala
- Ruthellen Fried
- Frank Galtieri
- Jutta Greweldinger
- Todd Harrison
- Rosemary Hunt
- Masaaki & Kumiko Ishikura
- Peggy Kabakow

- Deborah King
- Rafael & Jeanne Lopez
- Jeffrey Mangiat
- David & Jamie McLain
- Patrick Merryman
- Linda Nociti
- Larry & Lori Ross
- Maureen Sanz
- Deborah Senese
- Judy & Howie Simon
- Raymond Slaman
- Judith Stavis
- David & Laurin Mayer Sugarman
- Stephen Tillack
- Jasse Tomer
- Mark T. Wright

Trail Hiker \$50

- Jane & William Beucler
- Family Cantatore
- Siu Wai Chan
- Sharon Dali
- Robert and Kathleen Dean
- Jordan & Laura Deflora
- Thomas Birch & Amita Desai
- Roy Eisemann
- Naomi Epstein
- Fred & Donna Giannetti
- Rob Goldstein
- Susan & Hershey Groff
- Marian Hayden
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- Ronald Lawson

- Max & Ellen Leimgruber
- Drew Lombardi-Danielson
- Amy Mazer
- Barbara Miller
- Michael Nemeth
- Sumiko Ohinata
- David & Cheryl Reiner
- Maureen Sanz
- Jeff Shaari
- Jeffrey Shelton
- Elaine Silvia
- David & Margie Singer
- Richard Van Buren
- Charles & Myra Wrubel
- Robert Zenorini
- Andrew Zimmerman

Trail Walker \$25

- Teddy Alevrontas
- Stuart & Rosalind Alpert
- William H. Christian
- Mary Anne Clarke
- Sue DeSimone
- Krishna Kumar
- George & Irini Lilikas
- Glen & Lucila Mills
- Elizabeth & Carlos Molina
- Wilson & Gloria Aboudi
- Peter Naughton
- Marguerite Neena
- Tom & Jennifer Otto
- Alexander Shaari
- Faye Sloan
- Joan Steinel
- Jean Strickholm
- Gozen & Sadettin Tuysuzoglu

--- CHECK US OUT ON SOCIAL MEDIA! ---

- facebook.com/people/Demarest-Nature-Center/100091316019265/
- instagram.com/demarestnaturectr/

www.demarestnaturecenter.org
email: info@demarestnaturecenter.org

Edited by Stacey Braff & Peter Coy

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

- | | |
|--|---------------------|
| Stephen Tillack, <i>President</i> | Peter Coy |
| Marybeth Kunsch, <i>Treasurer</i> | Dave Emerson |
| Laura Nelson, <i>Recording Secretary</i> | Christopher Jones |
| | Krishna Kumar |
| Teddy Alevrontas | Jeff Shaari |
| Stacey Braff | Ray Slaman |
| Steve Chen | Sadettin Tuysuzoglu |
| Patricia Chen | Andrew Zimmerman |

The Demarest Nature Center is proud to be the charter organization for Boy Scout Troop 20.
For more information, please contact them at dnc.troop.20.demarest@gmail.com.

We are a 501(c)3! There is no greater feeling than supporting a worthy organization. The Demarest Nature is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization. This means that your donations are tax deductible. Your donations support all of our educational programs, scholarships, events and the continued preservation of our green space. Consider a gift to the Demarest Nature Center as an investment in the future of our community. Of course, it goes without saying, or with saying in this case, that we are not offering tax advice by the above statement. Contact any of our trustees if you would like more info.