

# Whispers *in the Wind*

Community Newsletter Designed for Residents

## Batavia Park District Spins a Web of Beauty with New Web Site

After nearly two years of planning, research, and development, the Batavia Park District has launched its powerful, new, interactive Web site:

[www.bataviaparks.org](http://www.bataviaparks.org)

When you visit the new site you can take virtual tours or get driving directions to any one of Batavia's park or facility sites; plan family outings with the events calendar; apply online for employment; use a smart search feature to locate programs that you want to register for online; tap into a large pool of community resources and links to organizations within the community; and even enter for a chance to win prizes by simply completing a Web site survey located in the Interactive Zone. The latest addition to the site is a photo gallery, which will be stocked daily after special events and programs.

"The Batavia Park District faced the unique challenge of translating Batavia's small hometown feel, old-fashioned values, and rich windmill heritage into a Web site that users can call 'Batavia's cyber home away from home,'" said Allison Pellegrino, Director of Marketing and Public Relations for the Batavia Park District. With the Internet becoming a media powerhouse, she feels that it is important to bring the human touch and values into the realm of the World Wide Web. "Municipal sites tend to be informational in nature but should also portray a unique web presence, one that is dynamic and attractive for Batavia Park District residents, potential residents, and visitors," said Pellegrino.

The Web site's enormous transformation serves multiple purposes such as: acting as a credible resource for people to make decisions about their leisure activities; providing comprehensive information about the events, facilities and services available through the Park District; offering convenience for people to register for programs and services online; communicating the long-range planning and vision of the district; and attracting local organizations, corporate sponsors and potential volunteers. The design and navigation is intended to provide a seamless customer service experience with the convenience of being able to conduct business in your own time and not just during park district hours.



For the technically savvy, the site offers multiple dynamic flash interactions, database driven content, games, an interactive calendar and an updated search engine to help you locate the wealth of content accurately and quickly. "The cutting edge technology allows users of the park district's Web site to enjoy a more interactive experience," stated Executive Director Mike Clark. The site was designed so that even the not so technically savvy will enjoy their experience. "It is important to have a customer focused, user-friendly Web site using intuitive navigation controls that make it easy for visitors to locate the information they are seeking," said Clark.

The park district rolled out the innovative site in April, under the guidance and expertise of Weblinx, Inc., an Oswego based web development and graphic design firm. According to Andy Clements, CEO of Weblinx, Inc., "The Batavia Park District Web site offers the most interactive park district web experience in the state of Illinois, setting a new standard for park districts throughout the state."

Check out the site at [www.bataviaparks.org](http://www.bataviaparks.org) and let the park district know what you think!

## Spotlight on Park District Employees

### Donna Taylor, Recreation Secretary

No one at the Batavia Park District accuses Donna Taylor of being “vanilla”. Co-workers describe Taylor as a creative, ambitious, and highly intelligent free spirit. Taylor finds herself falling into unique phases or trends (that are off the mainstream path) and revisiting them periodically throughout her life. One of those phases is a keen intrigue she has with ancient Egyptian civilization.

To the average person, Taylor’s license plate might look like a series of letters and numbers. The plate reads “AKHNA10” which is abbreviated for the Egyptian name of King Tut’s father, Akhenaten. Taylor has even studied hieroglyphics, which is a system of writing used by Egyptians in which pictorial symbols are used to represent meanings or sounds. It’s no surprise that her favorite place to visit is the Field Museum. When she visited the King Tut exhibit, she says she was emotionally charged. “I was blown away and found myself just soaking everything in for hours on end,” she said. She found a 4,000 year-old vase that was in perfect condition and became fixated on it. “I admired the detail and intricacy of it and probably stood there for at least fifteen minutes taking it all in,” she added.

Taylor has been fearless and eager to learn new skills since her childhood. Once when she was home sick from school, she observed her grandmother crocheting. Soon thereafter, she taught herself how to crochet and began making blankets for friends. She learned how to French braid hair on a childhood troll doll. She says that her eagerness to try new things has rubbed off on her three girls, Sinead, Erika and Sadie Rose. “Each of my girls are very distinct people,” she said. “I could not ask for better children.”

After twelve years breadth of work experience for the Batavia Park District ranging from a child care attendant, camp director, teen supervisor, building supervisor and part-time secretary; Taylor received a promotion in January 2006 that led her into a full-time position as a Recreation Secretary. “Our patrons, preschool teachers and program instructors at the Eastside Community Center, love Donna’s creative, free spirit,” said Office Manager Tiffany Green. Taylor’s creative skills have elevated the Eastside Community Center’s office to a new level of service such as putting together slide shows for the preschool program or designing stylish name tags for the senior club program.

A perfectionist at heart, Taylor is often very hard on herself. “I always try to do things on my own in the most efficient way,” she said. In an effort to curb her meticulous care for perfection in everything she does, she reminds herself of how Eastern Indians spend hours hand weaving rugs to sell in the marketplace and intentionally put a mistake in the design of every rug. “After all, no human or situation is perfect,” she said reassuringly.



### According to Donna...

*She can't resist... Pearl Jam in concert (she traveled to 7 destinations in the past 3 years to see them).*

*One reality TV show she would have loved to appear on... was the first "Survivor" series.*

*She tries not to... read gossip about celebrities because she doesn't get star struck or caught up in their lives.*

*Every day after high school she would... get together with friends and watch "Batman", while compiling a fun list of Bat-isms (sayings).*

*If given the opportunity to go back... to school it would be to become an archeologist.*

Taylor’s personal motto fits her well. “Act well your part, there all the honor lies.”

### Nick Giandonato, Parks Technician II

Take one glance at Nick Giandonato and you might think you’ve been graced by the presence of a celebrity. Giandonato’s tall, dark and handsome looks mirror the likes of John Travolta. He also emulates Travolta by working out with cardio a minimum of six times a week to maintain his physique. Whether taking on a challenge personally or professionally, Giandonato takes the same approach to both. “When you work hard and stay on track, you usually get what you want,” he said.

Giandonato credits his incredible work ethic to his mother; a single mother, who worked three jobs to get through the financial hardships of raising three young boys on her own. A self-proclaimed workaholic, Giandonato began his own business at the age of 15 detailing cars after school. In the summertime, Giandonato would spend countless hours at hotels his grandfather had invested in, which Giandonato had the luxury of staying at when visiting. “I used to follow the hotel maintenance guys around and watched how they would build and repair things,” recalled Giandonato. “I was so inspired, that’s probably why I ended up in a similar maintenance job at the park district.”

As a Parks Technician II, Giandonato has been able to use his creativity and carpentry strengths by refurbishing the Batavia Teen Center’s game room area at the Eastside Community Center, creating a chalkboard for the Kids Watch child care program and installing a fence at the Civic Center. “I like the variety of my job. I’ve learned that hard work can get me everything that I want out of life,” he said. His co-workers agree that he is a hard worker

*(Continued on page 3)*

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## According to Nick...

*On a typical day...he does not drink carbonated beverages or eat at fast food restaurants.*

*A song that represents his life is... "California Dreaming" by the Beach Boys.*

*One summer...he rode his mountain bike 2,000 miles to Colorado, traveling through five states.*

*Favorite TV show...is "The Family Guy".*

*One place he'd love to go...is to Maine to try fresh lobster.*

*(Continued from page 2)*

and an intuitive problem solver. "Nick's greatest feature is that he's fast on his feet when he runs into difficult situations. He loves a challenge where he can creatively brainstorm two or three solutions to a problem and get it done," said Facility Trades Supervisor Gary Motycka. Giandonato's perfect attendance record speaks volumes to his job satisfaction. "I'll probably never retire, I have to do something," he said.

What does the future hold for Giandonato? "I'm very excited where this district is going," he said. "This is a great time to be in Batavia." A 28 year-old bachelor with John Travolta looks, and a good natured personality, Giandonato has every reason in the world to smile and feel good about what the future holds for him.

## Mark Your Calendar

**August 26**

**Poochpalooza**

10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.  
Hall Quarry Beach  
(Refer to page 7 in the Fun Guide)

**September 16**

**Batavia Teen Center  
10 Year Anniversary  
Celebration**

1:00 - 5:00 p.m.  
Eastside Community Center  
(Refer to page 6 in the Fun Guide)

**September 16**

**Adult Co-ed Kickball  
Tournament**

Throughout the afternoon  
Batavia High School  
(Refer to page 9 in the Fun Guide)

For more information,  
please call 630-879-5235  
or visit us online at:  
[www.bataviaparks.org](http://www.bataviaparks.org)

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SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 30TH, 9 - 4  
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**MARKLUND SEPTEMBER FEST**  
2006

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Saturday, September 9, 2006  
Marklund at Mill Creek  
1 South 450 Wyatt Drive, Geneva, IL  
from noon until 10:00 p.m.  
NEXT TO THE RED MILL CREEK BARN ON BATAVIA'S MAIN STREET

**ATTRACTIONS**

- Carnival Rides
- Face Painters
- Jumpers
- Balloon and Sand Art
- Fireworks
- Auction
- Kids' Crafts
- Craft Show
- Marklund Store
- Wine Demonstration
- Food and Drinks from Local Vendors
- Raffle
- Beer Tasting
- On-Stage Music All Day
- Games and Prizes
- T-shirt
- Spin Art
- Holiday Downtown Bike Display
- 101.5 WFLD THE MAX Prize Wheel
- Daily Herald Booth and Free Refills

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FOR INFORMATION CALL 630-593-5500

# Batavia's 2006 Fall Photo Gallery



## Corken Appointed to Batavia Park Board Seat

The Batavia Park Board selected Nicole Corken to finish the term of former Commissioner Scott Burkitt. Corken was formally appointed at the July 18 board meeting. She will fulfill Burkitt's term until next April, when she can run for election at that point. Burkitt, a Batavia police officer, resigned after citing family obligations and pursuit of a degree.



## Chuck the Duck Meets Lt. Governor Quinn

The mascot for the Hall Quarry Beach, Chuck the Duck, took an adventure to the Thompson Center in May for Illinois MainStreet Day at the Capitol. Chuck had the opportunity to meet Lieutenant Governor Pat Quinn and had time for a quick photo shoot.



Julie Thiem, Batavia,  
Winner of an MP3  
Player (value \$150)

## Kudos to the Winners of our Web Site Survey!

John Skogsbakken, Batavia,  
Winner of an MP3 Player  
(value \$150)



The Batavia Park District values your feedback. Complete our web site survey and you can enter for a chance to win cash or prizes from local retailers! Winners are selected at random. Enter the "Interactive Zone" and complete the on-line survey for a chance to win. Check back at the end of each month for new winners.



Scott Schaffer, Aurora,  
Winner of a \$20 Best  
Buy Gift Certificate



Kathy Mueller, Batavia,  
Winner of a \$20 Best Buy  
Gift Certificate

**Art in Your Eye Festival on the Riverwalk**  
August 12 & 13  
2006

Featuring:

- Outdoor Fine Art Show with national & international award-winning artists
- City Hall Art Exhibit
- Special Exhibit at Depot Museum
- Fantastic Children's Art Activities
- Outstanding Musical Entertainment
- Aerial Dance performances, Food & More!

**Batavia School of Art**  
July 17 - August 9  
featuring regionally-respected art instructors teaching a variety of media

Visit our Website for full details:  
**artinyoureye.com**