

Youth from Burbank Y visit Harbor Islands



Youth from the Burbank YMCA in Reading set sail for the Boston Harbor Islands with Save the Harbor/Save the Bay last month.

A group from the Burbank YMCA in Reading visited the Boston Harbor Islands National Park in July as part of Save the Harbor/Save the Bay's free All Access Boston Harbor program.

More than 5,000 youth and teens have taken part in the free program so far this summer, which brings area youth groups to Spectacle, Peddocks, and Georges islands for a day of environmental exploration and outdoor activities, including fishing, crabbing, swimming and art on the shore.

All Access Boston Harbor trips begin at the Blue Hills Bank Pavilion, where groups learn the history of Boston Harbor and the Boston Harbor cleanup from Save the Harbor's maritime historian, David Coffin. The groups then walk to the World Trade Center and board the Bay State Cruise Company's Provincetown II for their trip. On the island, they enjoy a picnic lunch and then head off to explore.

"The Boston Harbor Islands are important educational and recreational resources for youth development and community groups from across the city and around the region," said Bruce Berman, who serves as Director of Strategy, Communications and Programs for Save the

Harbor/Save the Bay. "They are also a great place to spend a summer day."

On Spectacle Island, youngsters explore the shore while looking for sea glass and historic artifacts at "Treasure Beach." Save the Harbor's Harbor Educators teach visitors to fish for flounder, skates and the occasional striped bass from the pier. There are miles of walking trails with great views of the city, grassy areas for ball sports and a beach for swimming.

On Peddocks Island, youth and teens can visit the renovated chapel and new visitor center, explore historic Fort Andrews, play Frisbee or soccer, or swim on the sandy beach.

On Georges Island, groups can explore the maze of passageways at Fort Warren, which was used for coastal defense during the Civil War. The parade ground is a great space for sports and games, and the docks on this island are great for fishing.

"At Save the Harbor/Save the Bay we are particularly proud to serve as the Boston Harbor Connection for a generation of young people," said Save the Harbor/Save the Bay President Patricia Foley. "The best way we know to 'save the harbor' is to share it with the public."

Save the Harbor/Save the Bay is a non-profit public-interest Boston Harbor environmental advocacy organization whose mission is to restore and protect Boston Harbor, the Boston Harbor Islands, our region's public beaches and the marine environment and share them with the public for everyone to enjoy.

For more information about Save the Harbor/Save the Bay, visit their website at www.savetheharbor.org, their blog Sea, Sand & Sky at www.blog.savetheharbor.org or follow savetheharbor on Facebook and Twitter.