



New Jersey Pinelands Commission **PRESS RELEASE**

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20th annual Pinelands Short Course to feature 24 new educational presentations, including first-ever all-day tour of the Pinelands

WHAT: 20th Annual Pinelands Short Course

WHEN: Saturday, March 7, 2009, from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

WHERE: Burlington County College, Route 530, Pemberton Township, NJ.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: Registration brochures can be printed from the Pinelands Commission's Web site at www.nj.gov/pinelands. To receive a brochure by mail or to register by phone, please call (609) 893-1765 or (609) 893-1783.

NEW LISBON, N.J. – The 20th annual Pinelands Short Course will feature a record total of 34 presentations, including 24 new programs that will explore the region's unique history, ecology, culture and music.

“The Pinelands Short Course has been phenomenally successful in educating thousands of people about the Pinelands during the past 20 years,” said John C. Stokes, Executive Director of the Pinelands Commission. “Attendance has soared to new heights in recent years, including last year's record of 622 people. We're thrilled to see such a strong interest in the Pinelands, and we're proud to offer so many informative and entertaining courses this year.”

The Pinelands Short Course is sponsored by the New Jersey Pinelands Commission, the Pinelands Institute for Natural and Environmental Studies and Burlington County College (BCC), which has hosted the event for the past five years. To be held at BCC's Pemberton Township campus on March 7, the program is open to all who are interested in learning about the Pinelands.

This year's event features three live musical performances and three field trips. Among the new courses is the first-ever, all-day bus tour of the Pinelands. The guided tour will take participants to cedar swamps at the Brendan T. Byrne State Forest, as well as other natural gems such as the Franklin Parker Preserve, historic sites such as Batsto Village and the Carranza Memorial, forested areas affected by recent wildfires and dwarf pine forests.

Other new courses include a new documentary film about Emilio Carranza, a famous

(MORE)

Pinelands Press Release

Page 2...

Mexican aviator whose plane crashed in the Pinelands in 1928, as well as courses about the region's botanical treasures, ghost towns, archaeology, ethnic settlements, the history of Double Trouble State Park, tundra swans, vultures and other birds, fungi, a review of the Pinelands' ecological integrity, the lifestyles and culture of native Pinelands residents, the plight of honey bees in the Pinelands and elsewhere, beneficial uses of native plants, how to create a dragonfly/wildlife pond and attract butterflies, a discussion of author John McPhee and a half-day field trip to Whitesbog Village to tour "Holly Haven." Two other new courses are geared specifically for teachers, with one focusing on recently published educational resource materials pertaining to Wharton State Forest and another focusing on a new Pinelands-themed, interactive DVD that can be used to raise awareness and appreciation of the Pinelands.

The event also will feature popular courses from previous years, including presentations about hiking, canoeing, native frogs, toads, fish, hawks, owls and live snakes.

Participants are highly encouraged to register early to help ensure that they receive their first course selections. There will be limited seating (50 people) on the all-day bus tour, so early registration is crucial for those who are interested in that program. An early registration discount of \$5 is in effect until Feb. 2, 2009.

The Pinelands Short Course is registered with the New Jersey Department of Education, and professional development credits are available to New Jersey teachers who attend. Discounted registration fees are offered to senior citizens and students. The Short Course brochure and registration form includes complete, detailed descriptions of every program and presenter.

To request an event brochure/registration form or for more information, please call (609) 893-1765 or (609) 893-1783. The registration form also can be printed from the Pinelands Commission's Web site. The address is: www.nj.gov/pinelands.

***** ATTENTION REPORTERS/EDITORS:** Digital photographs of last year's Pinelands Short Course can be obtained by contacting Paul Leakan at (609) 893-7300, ext. 124.

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