

FARNHAM PARK DEVELOPMENT PROJECT



Repaired erosion conditions, part of the improved stormwater management infrastructure.



Multi-use trail connection to the Camden GreenWay trail network, with stormwater infiltration trenches.



Upgraded park amenities included a refurbished spray pool.



Join Mayor Dana L. Redd
in celebration of the
GRAND REOPENING
of
Farnham Park

Park improvements include new amenities,
stormwater management upgrades, and a
connection to the Camden GreenWay trail network

Wednesday July 20th, 2011
11:00 AM

Park Blvd. & Kaighns Ave.
Camden, NJ



Join the pre-event
River to River Ride to Farnham Park
Find more info at www.coopersferry.com

For more information please contact Merigan Mulhern at (856) 757-9154.



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Anonymous bidder
pays \$1.6 million for
Cherry Hill site.
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Man charged after shootout with troopers

By **GEORGE MAST**
Courier-Post Staff

CAMDEN

A Camden man is facing five counts of attempted murder after allegedly exchanging gunfire with a team of state troopers near Admiral Wilson Boulevard on Wednesday afternoon.

No one was injured in the incident shortly before noon near Golden Pearl Chinese Restaurant.

State police spokesman Sgt. Ste-

phen Jones said the incident began when five troopers assigned to work in the city were traveling in a van along Admiral Wilson Boulevard and saw a man being robbed alongside the road.

The officers quickly pulled over at the site where they saw 20-year-old Joshua Polanco, of Federal Street, holding a gun to the head of a man kneeling down near the road.

Jones said Polanco then shot multiple times at the officers after they jumped out of the van to stop the rob-

bery. An unspecified number of the officers then returned fire at Polanco, who managed to run from the scene.

About 10 minutes later, Polanco was arrested two blocks away by two state troopers and Camden police, Jones said.

Polanco discarded the handgun — which was found to have been stolen — after running from the scene but police were later able to find it, Jones said.

See **SHOOTOUT**, Page 4C



Police investigate a robbery and exchange of gunfire near the Golden Pearl Chinese Restaurant on Admiral Wilson Boulevard in Camden.

DENISE HENHOEFFER
Courier-Post



John Evans, 12, a member of the Team Camden bike team, tests out the new swings at Farnham Park in Camden.

AL SCHELL/Courier-Post

Farnham Park undergoes transformation

By **LUCAS K. MURRAY**
Courier-Post Staff

CAMDEN

Ollie Williams remembers the good days in Farnham Park — and the bad ones.

The 40-year resident of Camden can now look out her front door and imagine good times to come in Parkside with the overhaul of the largest public outdoor space in the beleaguered city.

“They used to have concerts in the park — different bands would come and play during the summer,” Williams recalled of the 71-acre park, which had its grand reopening Wednesday.

“Many, many years ago, they wanted to put an ice skating rink in, but the people didn’t want it.”

What they did want was a pool. There was a time when a massive swimming pool attracted thousands of swimmers during the hot summer months. The pool is long gone, replaced with cooling towers shooting water into the sky.



Vicki Morales runs through a spray pool at the grand reopening of Farnham Park. The \$1 million overhaul of the 71-acre park includes picnic tables, outdoor grills, benches and new playground equipment. Funding came from federal, state and county grants.

AL SCHELL/Courier-Post

See **CAMDEN**, Page 4C



Jeremy Rosen

Homeless cleanup drains resources

This week’s heat wave helped state and local officials realize it’s time to dispose of mounds of trash along homeless encampments in Camden.

But officials must have gotten burned out quickly, because they say they’re still going to allow homeless living off Admiral Wilson Boulevard to remain free on public land, meaning public employees will keep cleaning up after them.

Around 8 a.m. Wednesday, lemon-lime big rigs loaded and hauled debris near the 7th Street ramp and I-676 approach to the Ben Franklin Bridge. Minutes into the job, state Department of Transportation operators hit some spikes in the road — literally.

DOT workers quickly called the Camden County Health Department for a hazmat inspector to remove and dispose of what turned out to be 500 hypodermic needles.

Since winter, it’s been a struggle to ensure safety at the “Backwoods Community” encampment off the westbound side of Admiral Wilson Boulevard. In a clearing through a busted fence, mountains of debris, rotting clothing and human excrement from about 20 homeless people accumulate. After an April 17 column about Backwoods, homeless outreach workers and a few area residents have periodically helped Backwoods get cleaned up.

Police Chief Scott Thom-

See **HOMELESS**, Page 4C

Camden/Overhauled Farnham Park has grand reopening

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"I used to bring my children out here with a blanket and we'd sit on the lawn and have a picnic," Williams recalled.

"I wouldn't dare do that today."

Picnic tables, outdoor grills, benches and new playground equipment are all included in the \$1 million overhaul of the park.

The funding came through the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection programs and the Camden County Open Space Trust.

It was less than a year ago the park was a shell of

its former self. Sidewalks were cracked, split apart by intrusive grass and tree roots. Roads and paths within the park contributed to flooding issues along the adjoining Cooper River.

"All of these different roadways when the storm water would hit the asphalt, it would run into ruts and literally eroded the path leading down to the river," said Anthony Perno, CEO of Cooper's Ferry Development Association, one of the project management groups for the Farnham effort.

"They were literally 20 feet wide and 15 to 18 feet deep. Picnic tables were

swallowed by these ravines."

The lay of the land — combined with roadway runoff — sent large amounts of water into the river. Much of the lower level of the park, including a baseball diamond and the home of Parkside Little League and the infamous "house in the river" — a former park pavilion that now sits partially submerged — were lost when a county-owned dam broke decades ago.

Perno said the storm water management aspect was part of the largest undertaking in the project.

The ravines were repacked and refilled, graded

and replanted. Bike pathways that had fallen into disrepair were rebuilt with large stone berms next to them. The stones are part of a trenching system that allows water to flow back into the ground below the surface, instead of downhill and into the river.

A rain garden behind a nearly 100-year-old statue of Christopher Columbus at the entrance to the park is another method of water management being implemented at Farnham and other parks around the city.

"It slows the rainwater's access to the storm water system here in Camden as well as to the river,

which mitigates flooding," Perno explained.

It's these very inexpensive methods that provide relief from flooding.

The bike paths that wind their way through the park are part of a regional trail network that will eventually link to the 128 miles of the Camden GreenWay. The path will link Camden, its surrounding suburbs and Philadelphia.

Mayor Dana Redd said workers from Camden's Special Services District will work with Department of Public Works employees to maintain the park. SSD workers pulled 36 bags of trash from the park

Wednesday morning.

"In this era where we have shrinking resources, it's important to foster private-public partnerships in order to get things done like this project, where we're opening one of Camden's jewels," the mayor said.

Wednesday was also the final community project for the Camden Clean Campaign. The effort hit neighborhoods in every part of the city and included mural paintings, trash removal and tree plantings.

Reach Lucas K. Murray at (856) 486-2476 or lkemurray@gannett.com

Homeless/No end in sight for cleanup

Continued from Page 1C

son and homeless advocates feared summer's high temperatures and the public health hazards that would result from festering waste and drug debris there.

But there's been no law enforcement, and a team of outreach workers from various city nonprofits continues its quest to shelter the destitute and provide them with life-changing services.

Mayor Dana Redd's administration takes no responsibility for the welfare of the city's 2,000 homeless, hundreds of whom litter city streets and woodlands or live in city-owned abandoned buildings they turn into drug houses or prostitution sites. Her administration also doesn't protect nonhomeless residents surrounded by or affected by the homeless.

And the administration has no plan for public safety regarding homelessness. Redd spokesman Robert Corrales said city public works

crews sometimes assist to collect trash left on the curb or street.

Isn't that always their responsibility?

The state wouldn't say what prompted Wednesday's cleanup, how often similar efforts will occur or if Camden's homeless will be banned from state land. County officials also made no commitments for regular cleanup.

DOT spokesman Tim

Greeley said his agency will make the best use of limited resources and clean problem areas as necessary.

If that's the case, they should be there every day. Or at least until they get so sick of it, they fence off the rest of the clearings along Admiral Wilson.

Reach Jeremy Rosen's column appears Thursdays and Sundays. Reach him at (856) 486-2456 or jrosen@gannett.com



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ENGAGEMENTS



Natalie Jean Jacobs Michael Alan Marquis

Michael and Debra Hillman of Westville NJ are pleased to announce the engagement of their daughter, Natalie Jean Jacobs, to Michael Alan Marquis, son of Alan and Klara Marquis of Wenham, MA. Natalie is also the daughter of the late William P Jacobs of Stone Harbor NJ.

Natalie received a B.A. from Emerson College and currently works in Media Relations for amfAR, The Foundation for AIDS Research in New York City NY. Mike attended Northeastern University in Boston MA, and currently represents musicians as a booking agent with the Paradigm Agency in New York City NY.

A September 2011 wedding is planned in Montauk NY.

CP-0010445246

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Shootout/Chase began with robbery

Continued from Page 1C

As is customary, the state Attorney General's Shooting Response Team is reviewing the incident.

Investigators remained at the scene of the shooting until late Wednesday afternoon. At least 12 shell casing markers could be seen throughout a small parking lot alongside the Chinese restaurant.

Aside from the attempted murder counts, Polanco was also charged with possession of stolen property, robbery, resisting arrest by flight and weapons charges, Jones said.

Polanco was being held at the state police barracks in Bellmawr late Wednesday evening.

Two fired after boy, 4, left on bus

Associated Press JERSEY CITY