



SALT SPREADER ADJUSTS TO FIT PARK PATHS

This winter, ice and snow have created treacherous conditions in parks across the city, keeping Park workers busy with shovels, ice, and sand. In Staten Island, the borough has one salt spreader that is attached to a dump truck. The spreader, designed to spread salt on parking lots, throws salt across a 35-foot radius. Although the large spreader works well on parking lots, its throwing radius is too wide for interior paths in parks.

The first day it snowed this year, Staten Island Deputy Chief of Operations Larry “Inwood” Scoones asked Larry Brown, a Blacksmith, if he could solve the salt throwing problem so the dump truck and spreader could be used on smaller paths. Because the storm was heavy, Scoones needed the spreader to be ready by the end of the day.

Brown designed and constructed a four-sided salt gate out of materials he had in his shop. The four “gates” funnel salt as it comes out of the truck bed. With the gates lowered, the spreader throws salt across a 10-foot width, just the right size for the major interior paths in Staten Island’s large parks. Any of the gates can be lifted to increase the salt spreader’s capacity; with all four sides lifted, the spreader throws salt across 25 feet.

According to Scoones, the gate allows the borough to take advantage of the dump truck’s large salt capacity without scattering salt outside of the paths. With the dump truck and gate attachment, Staten Island can salt the major paths in its large parks in approximately four hours. *For additional information, contact Larry Scoones at (718) 390-8013. Written by Emily Willits.*



Salt spreader and gate attachment in Staten Island.

NATURAL HERBICIDES THWART INVASIVE WEEDS

Building upon the success of Parks’ Pre-Emergent Herbicide Program, the borough forestry crews and the First Deputy Commissioner’s office are piloting a post-emergent natural herbicide program that would supplement the existing pre-emergent spraying. Although several boroughs already use the post-emergent herbicide *Round-Up*, Parks is beginning to test natural herbicides on a citywide basis. Ecoval U.S.A. Inc., a Canadian

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GRAFFITI ON GAME TABLES? CHECKMATE.

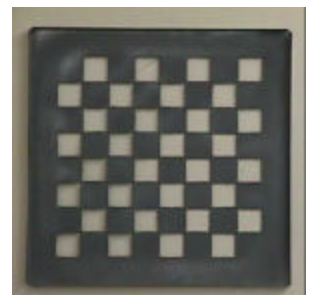
It could be the recent dethroning of chess champion Garry Kasparov. Or, perhaps, the contemplative stillness of winter turns attention to games of mental jousting. Whatever the cause, Parks’ concrete game tabletops, inlaid with colored terrazzo chess and checker boards, have become the focus of a flurry of ideas about how to protect them from graffiti.

Currently, new chess and checkers tables are installed with an anti-graffiti coating. Older tables did not have such coatings, making graffiti removal difficult. James Eckert, a Provisional APSW in Queens District 2, discovered that coating the tables with four layers of polyurethane facilitates graffiti removal. Eckert applies each layer of polyurethane only after the prior one has completely dried. He recommends using a sponge paint brush rather than a standard brush so that bristles will not get trapped in the coating. The coating of polyurethane makes it easier to remove graffiti from the tables. After graffiti is removed, at least one new coat of polyurethane should be applied.



Some old chess and checker tables have been painted over due to heavy graffiti. PIP Inspectors recently began noting these tables under the play equipment feature in inspection reports. The borough shops are experimenting with stencils that can be used as a mask when painting over the tables so they can still be used to play chess and checkers.

On Staten Island, Deputy Chief of Operations Larry “Inwood” Scoones and SPMO Mary Ellen Burtner introduced the stencil as a way to bring paint-covered tables back into service. Working with SOM Bennett Agnello, Tinsmith Fred Asbrock cut the stencil out of 26-gauge galvanized sheet metal. Park workers in Staten Island paint the tables one color and then, after placing the template on the table, paint the checkerboard pattern in a second color. Graffiti removal is preferable to any kind of painting, and PIP Inspectors will note tables as being painted over even if there is a checkerboard pattern. Such tables will not, however, detract from the play equipment rating. *For additional information, contact Marc Dember at (212) 360-8278. Written by Marc Dember.*



On the left, Staten Island Tinsmith Fred Asbrock and SOM Bennett Agnello display their chess & checker stencil. The full stencil is on the right.

— *Herbicide, Continued from Page 1* —

manufacturer of natural herbicides and fertilizers, has agreed to donate an amount of *Nature's Glory Weed and Grass Killer* equal to ten percent of the agency's usual post-emergent order.

Nature's Glory Weed and Grass Killer is made from vinegar and lemon juice components. The herbicide is a fast-acting organic formula for nonselective spot treatment of individual weeds. Visible effects occur after treatment, and actively susceptible weeds are controlled within 2-3 hours. *Nature's Glory* is recommended for control of herbaceous broadleaf and grassy weeds in gardens, patios, sidewalks, driveways, fences, trees, shrubs, gravel and mulch.



Parks will pilot post-emergent treatment with Nature's Glory.

In addition to spraying 100% of ratable sites with a pre-emergent herbicide, Parks Forestry Crews will target specific sites that were rated unacceptable for weeds in 1999 and 2000 and treat them with either *Natures' Glory*, *Round-Up*, or a mixture of the two products. This post-emergent weed control is designed not only to improve PIP ratings but also to provide a control group in which Parks can compare the effectiveness of the two products.

Once the sites are sprayed with pre-emergents in March and April, and with post-emergents after weeds appear, they will be informally inspected for the weeds feature rating. Also, in order to strengthen the validity of the test, Forestry Crews will apply *Natures' Glory* in several parks that did not fail. *Nature's Glory* will also be used on properties that are not rated by PIP inspectors. Forestry Directors will provide feedback on how well the natural post-emergent worked at each non-ratable site. **For more information on weed control, contact Jason "Oquaga" Stanevich at (212) 360-1328. Written by Jason Stanevich.**

WINDOWS TO THE PAST SAFE FOR THE FUTURE

New York City's parks are home to 16 historic house museums. The historic houses are maintained by the Historic House Trust, a non-profit organization which works closely with Parks to maintain and restore the homes. Protecting the historic houses in the Parks system is an ongoing challenge. Unlike collections housed in modern museums, immovable outdoor cultural relics such as house museums are susceptible to damage from exposure to the elements, vandalism, and theft.

Windows, especially in an old house, are vulnerable entry points for thieves and vandals. In addition, windows allow UV rays from the sun to infiltrate the interiors of the houses, causing irreversible damage to the collections and architectural finishes inside. At sites where this is a problem, the Historic House Trust is advocating the installation of protective Lexan window panels on the exterior of select window frames. Lexan is a clear, UV and abrasion resistant product made by Dupont. Because it is a polymer-based material, Lexan will not shatter when hit with rocks. Sold in sheets of

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SHOPS' LABOR SHARING HELPS REDUCE WORK ORDER BACKLOG

Parks' skilled trade shops have begun sharing tradespeople to eliminate work order backlogs. The sharing of tradespeople between shops is part of an effort launched by First Deputy Commissioner Moss to improve the efficiency and productivity of the shops.

Under the sharing arrangement, tradespeople are temporarily detailed to a shop in another borough for a two-week "focus period" to help the shop catch up on work orders. For a given trade focus period, boroughs are eligible to receive additional tradespeople based on information from the Work Order Tracking System (WOTS). OMP and the Technical Services division work together to produce detailed trade-by-trade analyses of outstanding work using WOTS.

This effort to reduce the work backlog in Parks' shops has proven initially successful. From January 15-26, the Brooklyn Shops received assistance from five additional electricians — a total of 168 hours of help. As a result, Brooklyn was able to reduce its electrician work order backlog by 30%. According to Chief Nancy Barthold of Brooklyn, "It was a huge help and made a significant dent in our backlog."

Sharing tradesmen for two-week focus periods has now become standard procedure. Since January, Plumbers and Blacksmiths have been dispatched to Manhattan and Carpenters to Queens. In addition to sharing labor, Parks' shops are combining redundant work orders, rejecting work orders that are better suited to maintenance workers, and working to standardize data entry procedures. **For additional information about Parks' shops, contact Jeremy "Snowball" Peterson at (212) 360-8234. Written by James "Stroker" Sattler.**

— *Historic Windows, Continued from Column 1* —
various thickness, Lexan can be cut to any size.

Lexan panels ¼" thick will be placed on Historic Houses in aluminum frames the same color as the window frames. The panels will be fastened with security screws into six lead anchors spaced around the inside lip of the exterior window frame. The lead anchors are reversible, and will provide a way for security screws to be taken in and out for cleaning the windows without causing damage to the historic window frames. The Lexan panels will not form a tight seal around the window, but will "hover" over the frame by ¼" in order to allow for air flow. The circulation of air behind the panel discourages condensation, which can cause wood to rot. **To learn more about the use of Lexan Window Panels, contact the Historic House Trust at (212) 360-8282. Written by Dawn Melbourne Gonick.**

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