



Learn It, Grow It, Eat It

by David Saphire, GrowNYC

Learn It, Grow It, Eat It (LGE) is entering its sixth year of helping teens make the connection between food, health, their community and the environment. We offer hands-on nutrition and horticulture classes on how to grow vegetables, but most importantly, we are growing teenagers – giving them skills and life experiences that they can take with them to college, the job market and beyond. And they walk away proud having given something back to their community and local environment.

We are based in four high schools in the Morrisania section of the Bronx – a neighborhood with some of our city’s highest obesity, diabetes and youth unemployment rates. We have evolved from an in-class program to one that also hosts year-long school-based internships to develop service learning projects centered around the community gardens we work in. We offer our most energetic and enthusiastic students paid internships during the spring and summer breaks. We have also started providing part-time work opportunities to graduates of our summer internship during the year. By continuing to work in the community gardens that we are part of, and running nutrition workshops at other farmers markets, health fairs and school events, these alumni continue to be ambassadors of the good food/good environment movement in their communities.

Background

LGE is a program of GrowNYC, a hands-on nonprofit that has been working with City residents to improve New York City’s environment since 1970. Our four primary program areas are:

- Increasing food access through our Greenmarket farmers markets
- Increasing recycling rates and promoting waste reduction through our Office of Recycling Outreach and Education
- Improving community gardens and play spaces through the Open Space Greening program



- Developing the next generation of environmental stewards through hands-on environmental education.
- The LGE program uses food as a cornerstone for exploring different environmental issues and increasing young people’s appreciation of the natural world.

What does a year with the LGE program look like?

In fall/winter, our in-class students make a bee-line for the community garden before cold weather sets in to learn how plants and their environment work and help harvest our fall vegetables (kale, chard, okra, tomatoes and peppers). Back in the classroom, they use their new-found appreciation of natural foods to take a closer look at their favorite processed foods. They learn to use the information found on food labels and the web-sites of fast food restaurants to examine the amounts of sugar, fat and sodium that they are eating and how to make healthier choices. We end the semester with a look at where our food comes from and the impact of food production on the environment and how to work with nature to grow healthy food. Our fall interns also work in the garden – getting it ready for winter (planting cover crops and garlic, spreading our homemade compost and mulch and saving seeds for the following spring – and on education projects such as our annual calendar : past calendar themes have included pollinators, soil critters and monthly gardening tips.

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EEAC NEWS.....

Steering Committee Meetings

Meetings are held monthly. All are invited to attend. Please refer to Page 3 of this newsletter to see the new meeting schedule for date, time and type of meeting.

Newsletter Deadlines

If you would like to submit an article for the newsletter, please email it as a Microsoft Word attachment to lmiller296@aol.com. The newsletter deadlines are the first Monday in April, July, October and January. We would love your ideas!

Newsletter Committee & Contributors

Kim Estes-Fradis
Michelle Fufaro Beach
Joy Garland
Jane Jackson
Regina McCarthy
Lenore Miller, Newsletter Editor
Betsy Ukeritis



The Environmental Education Advisory Council (EEAC) would like to acknowledge the support of the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) for helping to produce the EEAC newsletter. Visit the DEP website at www.nyc.gov/dep, email educationoffice@dep.nyc.gov or call (718) 595-3506 for information about DEP's education resources for students and teachers.

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

c/o Betsy Ukeritis
NYS DEC
47-40 21 Street
Long Island City, NY 11101
www.eeac-nyc.org

This newsletter is a publication of the Environmental Education Advisory Council (EEAC), a voluntary organization of educators, classroom teachers, administrators and other professionals in active support of quality environmental education.

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Mike Zamm, GrowNYC

* Affiliation for identification purposes only

GET CONNECTED!

The EEAC listserv has migrated to a new home at EEAC-NYC@googlegroups.com
If you are a member of EEAC and would like to join the listserv contact Carol Franken at carolfranken@gmail.com

CHAIR'S MESSAGE

EEAC Meeting Schedule, Some big changes are happening:

We have moved back to MONTHLY meetings The length of the meetings is now an hour, from 5pm to 6pm. The types of meeting will vary each month.

I hope that by going back to the monthly meeting schedule, it will be easier to take care of business. With meetings occurring regularly, we can keep them to one hour, even if we have some short presentations at some of the face-to-face meetings.

Face-to-Face Meetings These meetings are for everyone involved with EEAC: members, steering committee members, prospective members and just interested parties. I will try to have these meetings start with a short (15-minute) presentation and then continue with EEAC business. These face-to-face meetings will be held at **NYU's Pless Building in the 5th floor conference room from 5pm to 6pm.**

Hybrid Meetings Places will be showcased. They will be held on the third Wednesday of that month from **5pm to 7pm** to give time to explore and learn about the location and have about 20-30 minutes dedicated to EEAC business.

A Bit on Conference Calls April, July and December meetings will be conference calls on the third Wednesday of those months BUT the calls happen from **3-4PM**. I will send out call-in information a few weeks prior to those calls. They are predominantly for steering committee members to handle business and there will be no presentations, unless specific to something on the agenda for more information. Reasoning: these are the crazy months of Earth and Arbor days, summer vacations and the Holidays. We always struggle to get SC members together these months. I am hoping the conference calls make this easier -- we don't have to be together, just have access to a phone.

Annual Meeting First, the date. In looking at the calendar, the third Wednesday of November falls the day before Thanksgiving. I am making the executive decision to schedule our **annual meeting for the SECOND Wednesday in November (Nov. 14th).**

Member Events We will try to reschedule the High Line tour as a Members' Event in 2012. We will also be setting up other Member Events that will not fall on meeting days. These are events for our members to enjoy and explore and network without the other meeting issues. So look for these emails.

Thanks! I'm looking forward to a fantastic and engaging new year!—Betsy Ukeritis

EEAC 2012 Meeting Schedule

January 18-Face-to-face
at NYU Pless Hall, 5th floor 5-6pm

February 15-Face-to-face
at NYU Pless Hall, 5th floor 5-6pm

March 21-Hybrid meeting
5-7pm

April 18-Conference call
3-4PM

**May 16-Face-to-face
OR Hybrid meeting**
at NYU Pless Hall, 5th floor 5-6pm

June 20-Hybrid meeting
5-7pm

July 18-Conference call
3-4PM

August- No meeting

September 19-Hybrid meeting
5-7pm

October 17-Face-to-face
at NYU Pless Hall, 5th floor 5-6pm

November 14- ANNUAL MEETING
**NOTE: 2nd Wednesday due to
Thanksgiving

December 19-Conference call
3-4PM

Book Buzz Winter 2012 *Regina McCarthy*

***Swirl by Swirl: Spirals in Nature* by Joyce Sidman, illustrated by Beth Krommes.**

This is a lovely early childhood book. As the title says, it is about finding spirals in nature. The book identifies the many spiral forms in nature from the obvious snail to the not-too-obvious leaping dolphins. The end piece describes, "Spirals: a shape that curls around a center point." It briefly mentions Fibonacci sequence which can be used in math classes with older students. I always hate to pigeonhole books to age groups because teachers can always find multiple uses for different grades. Published 2011, Houghton Mifflin.

***Dark Emperor and Other Poems of Night* by Joyce Sidman and illustrated by Rick Allen.**

This collection of poems is accompanied by illustrations, sidebars explaining the 'science' of the poem. For the student who can be easily bored with "just the facts", the music of poetry and the visual feasts of the illustrations can be a real "hook" to learning more about the night-time world. This is a perfect left brain/ right brain book. I learned a few new things. Did you know that crickets' wings are not for flying, but to make music, called "stridulation", to attract a mate? They do this by rubbing one wing on another. One wing has a "file", the other has a "scraper". Only males do this, although females do make a softer sound. There is a nice glossary at the end of book. Good thing, since it defined the term *ubi sunt* in one of the poems, I was clueless. Published 2010, Houghton Mifflin.

***City Dog, Country Frog* by Mo Willems, with pictures by Jon J. Muth.**

When Jon J. Muth does anything, I take notice. This is a storybook about a special relationship of a city dog and a country frog, two pals playing through the seasons in the outdoors. It is about friends and play of unlikely playmates from different places. The backdrop is the changing of the seasons. Any age could appreciate this book, although it seems best for early elementary school. Like all of Muth's books, there is warmth and the simple lessons of life. It was no surprise that Caroline Kennedy chose him to illustrate her *Family Book of Poems*. There are no earth-shattering ecological lessons here, except change happens and life endures. Other Muth-illustrated books are, *Zen Ties*, *The Three Questions*, *Stone Soup*, *Zen Shorts*, *Zen Ghosts* and *Gerson's Monster: A Story for the Jewish New Year*. Published 2010, Hyperion DBG

Last Child on the Prairie

What do prairie schools have in common with our urban schools? Where are there prairies around here? And who cares?

In an obvious nod to the Richard Louv work, *Last Child in the Woods*, a concerned group of teachers from the American rural heartland tackled the common problem head-on: how to bring this new generation of children OUT into the field to have direct experiences with the natural world.

In this wonderful 16-page booklet, *Last Child on the Prairie: A Directory for Parents and Teachers for Returning Children to the Outdoors*, from The Kansas School Naturalist, the authors, Dr. Richard Schrock and his Emporia State University (Kansas) Department of Biological Sciences staff, first spell out the problem. Even in their wheat-belt, farm state, youngsters are growing up with fewer hands-on nature experiences and as a result, by the time they reach college age, are essentially clueless about the interrelations of the inhabitants of the natural world. Where in the past, rural children were exposed to nature daily as part of their growing up, today's children are surrounded by electronic gadgets and media that remove them from the natural environment. Even in summer, the work kids used to do is computerized and mechanized to such a degree that their feet never even touch the ground.

Now transfer that problem to urban areas like our own where the problem is magnified by cement and asphalt. That is where the work of environmental educators comes in....to fill that void and see to it that this generation of children enjoys as many first-hand field experiences as can be provided by the parks and other facilities in our area. Classroom and testing pressures on teachers add to the lack of opportunity to gain that experience. It is indeed a dilemma, one with far-reaching consequences for developing a stewardship mentality.

The pamphlet provides concrete guidelines, and substitutions for the local venues suggested can be easily remedied. New York City has so many wonderful zoos, botanical gardens, parks, aquaria, etc. where kids can have the hands-on experience, but only if these facilities are utilized for the purpose. It takes will and desire, inspiration and motivation.

You can order your own free copy of *Last Child on the Prairie*, plus many of the other 16-page informative booklets (on single topics, e.g. *Winter Nature Study*, *The Formation of Soil*, *The Fungi in Fact and Fable*, plus more than 200 other titles). Recent issues are free, although there is a \$1 charge for out-of-print issues. Visit their web site: www.emporia.edu/ksn/

I have a large collection of the Kansas School Naturalist booklets and I ordered multiple copies of *Last Child on the Prairie* which I distribute whenever I meet with people who can learn and act on its message. Read it and act on it.

Lenore Miller

EE News & Resources

Multicultural EE Acknowledges the Diversity of Views/Values, Contributes to Solutions of Environment

Based on the literature review, Dr. Marouli argues that worldviews of marginalized people have been underrepresented in EE and that “our understanding of environmental issues and the proposed solutions are culturally limited to and by the perceptions of the dominant group.”

Marouli, C. (2002). Multicultural environmental education: theory and practice. *Canadian Journal of Environmental Education*, 7(1), 26-42.

<http://cjee.lakeheadu.ca/index.php/cjee/article/view/272/162>

Multicultural School Gardens Facilitate Learning about Language, Culture and Environment

Dr. Cutter-Mackenzie has explored learning outcomes of a school gardening program in Melbourne, an Australian city, in 2006-2007. The research program involved 70 students – recent immigrants, 6-12-year-olds – in designing, construction and implementation of a gardening program along with teachers, parents and community volunteers.

Cutter-Mackenzie, A. (2009). Multicultural school gardens: creating engaging garden spaces in learning about language, culture, and environment. *Canadian Journal of Environmental Education*, 14, 122-135.

<http://cjee.lakeheadu.ca/index.php/cjee/article/view/891>

New Classroom Action Guide Asks “What’s On Your Fork?”

Does what you eat really have impact on our planet? Could mealtime choices actually help promote clean drinking water? What’s On Your Fork? is a new, free downloadable action guide and collection of supplementary educational tools from EarthEcho International designed to help educators and students explore the environmental and community impact of daily food choices. This new resource is part of EarthEcho’s Water Planet Challenge, a Web-based interactive program exploring a myriad of topics that engage and empower middle and high school-aged youth to design, create and implement service-learning projects in their communities. Rich in academic connections, the What’s On Your Fork? step-by-step action guide includes stimulating content, student organizers for discussions and planning and examples of youth taking action. <http://www.WaterPlanetChallenge.org>

Virtual Library in Spanish

This Spanish library provides a compilation of documents in Spanish for environmental educators, which include experiences, guidelines, multimedia, educational material and other helpful information.

<http://www.reambi.org/biblioteca-virtual>

EEAC Annual Meeting Looks at School Gardens *by Joy Garland*

The Annual EEAC meeting took place on Wednesday, November 16 in NYU’s Kimball Hall. Old friends and new friends swapped stories over coffee and refreshments. The election committee announced that E. Shig Matsukawa would be joining the EEAC Steering Committee. Betsy Ukeritis, EEAC Chair, asked us all to identify ourselves by name and affiliations, encouraging everyone to become active this year.

EEAC Program Chair, Judith Hutton of the New York Botanical Garden, alert to the Urban Agricultural Movement, selected the theme of URBAN AGRICULTURE – PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE as the subject of the meeting. Her NYBG colleague, Annie Novak, introduced the panelists David Saphire of GrowNYC, who authored the feature article of this issue, and Daniel Bowman Simon, the founder of SNAPgardens. Daniel gave us an illustrated history of the School Garden Movement up to the present time. It was in 1902 that Fannie Parsons began the Children’s School Farm in DeWitt Clinton Park (54th Street and 12th Avenue, Manhattan) and by 1931, there were 302 public schools with children tending the gardens.

In one of the pictured scenes, I recognized the school garden at Public School 19 in Staten Island where I had worked as a third grader! I remarked that I loved tending the vegetables, and Daniel asked if I thought that experience had let to my later commitment to the environment. Over the years, most of the gardens disappeared due to development. The original Children’s School Farm in DeWitt Clinton Park was lost to make room for the West Side Highway.

There has been a resurgence of interest in school gardening, and because not all schools have land available, community gardeners might be asked to create partnerships with schools. I attended a Community Board meeting this month where there was a speaker who said that the City was looking into the use of school roofs that could accommodate a greenhouse or roof garden.

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Enliven Your Science Classroom

Celebrate Special Science Days/Weeks

National Fossil Day- in October

<http://nature.nps.gov/geology/nationalfossilday/>

Earth Science Week- in October

<http://www.earthsciweek.org/index.html>

World Food Day is October 16.

<http://www.worldfooddayusa.org>

Green Horizons: our wonderful, annual EEAC-sponsored Environmental Careers Day for middle schools, 3rd week of October

Feb. 9- the National Weather Service was founded in 1870.

Darwin Day is on his birthday February 12

<http://darwinday.org/>

UN World Water Day March 22, 2012

<http://www.unwater.org/worldwaterday/>

National Environmental Education Week is April 15-21, 2012. The dates vary from year to year.

<http://www.eeweek.org>

NYS and NYC Arbor Day: the last Friday in April

Earth Day (every day is earth day)

April 22, celebration dates vary.

<http://www.earthday.org/>

National Space Day May

<http://www.spaceday.org/>

UN International Day for Biodiversity

May 22, 2012

<http://www.cbd.int/idb/>

World Science Festival

May 30 - June 3, 2012

<http://worldsciencefestival.com/>

<http://worldsciencefestival.com/about>

UN World Environment Day

June 5 every year

<http://www.unep.org/wed/>

World Oceans Day June 8th

<http://worldoceansday.org/wordpress/>

June is Zoo and Aquarium month

Visit the listed web sites to get the dates for 2012 and beyond.

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Daniel has been advising urban gardeners that they can use their food stamps to buy seeds and plants to grow fresh food. He emailed me from Nicaragua to say that he was away this month, volunteering at the agricultural Project Bona Fide on the island of Ometepe, right next to an active volcano! Daniel is expected back after February 4th. He can be contacted at Daniel@SNAPgardens.org. David can be reached at 646-413-1819. or DSAPHIRE@GROWNYC.ORG.

*“Let us be grateful to people who make us happy;
They are the charming gardeners who make our souls blossom.”*

Marcel Proust

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In spring semester, we repeat the process but in reverse. Nutrition education is followed by hands-on gardening – preparing soil, planting seeds and transplants, watering and weeding. A part-time urban farmer works with our students to plan and plant the gardens and teach them about the role of soil animals, cover crops and how to identify the most common urban weeds.

Summer is the height of growing season for our plants and students. Each summer, 15 interns care for fruits, vegetables and herbs at three community gardens, teach gardening to small children, run a Youthmarket featuring NY State and Bronx grown fruits and vegetables and run a nutrition education table. They also conduct food demonstrations and cook for our weekly group lunches. They build picnic tables and other garden structures. We also focus on improving the interns' eco-literacy – getting them to understand the interrelationships between the plants, garden animals and humans. Working in a community garden gives them the added opportunity of working side by side with people from different generations and backgrounds.



As LGE enters its sixth year, we feel confident that we have a winning model for growing teenagers into thoughtful, caring, confident young adults.



SUMMER SCHOLARSHIPS FOR NYC PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS

For: Summer Workshops offered by Brooklyn Botanic Garden, National Audubon Society, The Horticultural Society of New York, and the New York Botanical Garden.

Open to: New York City public school teachers who teach science in the classroom: elementary, middle or high school.

Covers: Tuition, “P” in-service credit fees, materials, room and board where applicable. Note: Teachers will cover their own transportation costs.

More information and application: www.egcscholarships.org. Applications will be available on the site by Feb. 1, 2012. Application deadline is May 6, 2012.

Sponsor: The City Gardens Club (CGC) of New York City, founded in 1918, is a non-profit educational organization dedicated to fostering an appreciation of nature among school children and to encouraging the preservation and improvement of green spaces throughout the five boroughs. It provides these scholarships as part of its mission.



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION 2012

New Member Renewal

Name: _____

Address: _____

Apt. _____ Zip Code _____-____

If Sustaining Organization, Name of Contact Person

Business Phone () _____

Home Phone () _____

Affiliation (for categories other than Sustaining Organization): _____

Title/Position: _____

Address (for categories other than Sustaining Organization):

E-mail address: _____

Mail completed form and check to:

John Pritchard, Treasurer 72-35 Metropolitan Ave. 2C Middle Village, NY 11379

Date: _____

Please check the appropriate calendar year membership category:

- \$ 20 Regular \$ 50 Sustaining Organization
- \$ 200 Individual Life Membership

Please make checks payable to EEAC.

Thank you!

EEAC is a 501-(c)3 organization.

I would like to become involved in a committee.

Please provide me with information about the following committees:

- Communications Programs Membership
- TEEP (Teacher Environmental Education Preparation)



ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

c/o Teresa Ippolito
 Environmental Education Coordinator
 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 2
 290 Broadway, 26th Floor
 New York, NY 10007-1866
www.eeac-nyc.org