



EEAC

SPRING/SUMMER 2008

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL NEWSLETTER



The New York City Waterfalls

By Rochelle Steiner and Abigail B. Clark

Public Art Fund, a non-profit art organization working in New York since 1977, has commissioned a major new work of public art by internationally acclaimed Danish artist Olafur Eliasson. Presented in collaboration with the City, The New York City Waterfalls comprises four constructed Waterfalls temporarily installed in the New York harbor along the shorelines of Lower Manhattan, Brooklyn and Governors Island. These Waterfalls will range from 90 to 120 feet tall and will be on view from late June through mid-October. They will operate seven days a week, from 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., and will be lit after sunset.

The New York City Waterfalls will serve as an excellent means of exposing visitors to contemporary art, New York's history and its natural environment. This monumental project will draw attention to the City's natural environment alongside its industrial and commercial landscape. New York's harbor has served as the gateway to America for the last four centuries and a point of origin for the City's growth, and this work of art will insert nature into the urban cityscape, adding a striking element to New York City's iconic skyline. In addition, the Waterfalls have been designed to be sensitive to the environment. The structures will not only protect fish, aquatic life, the river and the shoreline, but will also run on "green power", electricity generated from renewable resources, for its operations.

In preparing for this huge undertaking, Public Art Fund is joining with government agencies and environmental organizations to develop educational resources for young people and adults to enjoy the Waterfalls. Partners include New York City's Department of Education, the Department of Environmental Protection and U.S. National Park Service, and environmental groups including Riverkeeper, Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), Metropolitan Waterfront

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UPCOMING EEAC EVENTS.....

Steering Committee Meetings

EEAC Steering Committee members meet on the third Wednesday of every month (except August). Upcoming EEAC Steering Committee meetings are May 21, June 18, and July 15.

Steering Committee meetings are usually held at New York University, Pless Building, 32 Washington Square Park East and Washington Place in the 5th floor Conference Room. Steering Committee meetings are open to anyone interested in learning about environmental education in New York City and sharing information about special programs and projects.

Meetings are also occasionally held at New York City sites associated with our members. Please be sure to contact an EEAC Steering Committee member or visit the EEAC website at www.eeac-nyc.org to confirm meeting location and schedule.

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

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ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

c/o Teresa Ippolito
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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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GET CONNECTED!

If you are a member of EEAC and want to be part of information sharing and on-line discussion on the EEAC listserv, contact:

Cfranken@schools.nyc.gov

April 2008 EEAC Chair message

Welcome to another super issue of the Environmental Education Advisory Council newsletter. We have had a very busy programming season! An event of note was **Cool It NYC!**, a panel discussion featuring organizations and initiatives helping to make NYC more sustainable by reducing the ecological footprint of daily activities. A special thanks to Pam Ito and her colleagues at the Horticultural Society of New York for generously hosting this event.

The moderator was Ken Gale of Eco-Logic, WBAI. Panelists included Bram Gunther (NYC Parks Forestry and Horticulture) who gave us an overview of the Million Trees NYC initiative, Chris Neidl (Solar One) who spoke about the I Heart PV (photovoltaic) project and Annette Williams (Sustainable South Bronx) who introduced us to the Bronx Environmental Stewardship Training Program that connects community members with environmental justice education and “green collar” job training.

Our panel also included Sam Schwartz (a.k.a. “Gridlock” Sam) with a discussion of Congestion Pricing (CP). Mr. Schwartz did an excellent job explaining the benefits of such a system and, as you can imagine, many of the attendees were not only supporters of CP but already aware of its details and benefits. Sam further explained that CP would have to be voted on and passed in Albany in the days following for NYC to be eligible for \$354 million in transit improvement funds.

The following week, I was sorry to see that CP did not even come to a vote, and NYC missed out on this opportunity to have federal help with its transportation woes. If we are “all” for it, why did this happen?

I only need to look at my own block for a clue. Equally split between cyclists and drivers, we are culturally and financially diverse, but generally a friendly and communicative bunch. However, in the morning when I buckle my bike helmet, they rev their cars, and I know for the day there is a rift between us. Some oppose CP because they “don’t have enough information,” are worried they “won’t be able to get [their] kids around,” think of it as “a tax on their small business” or “emigrated to the U.S. to have free will” and cringe at the idea of government controls. I can’t blame them for some of these concerns, but their responses illustrate that the reach of education on congestion pricing and the other initiatives covered in the Cool It NYC! panel is short on this block.

What can I do?

I can keep talking to my neighbors about their street trees, health and safety of their children, needed public transit improvements and seeking training in green construction, and most of all – I can keep riding my bike.

What can we do?

Environmental educators need to push even further outside “the job” and demonstrate to our friends and neighbors the seriousness of environmental issues through our daily actions, and invite them to join us for activities and events related to these initiatives. Let’s do our best to support Million Trees NYC, I Heart PV, “green collar” job training, and congestion pricing.

What is EEAC doing?

Besides ramping up our programming efforts to make sure you are well versed and up-to-date on NYC’s environmental issues and initiatives, we will be giving all members the opportunity to receive the EEAC newsletter via electronic means. This is very exciting because it will reduce the ecological footprint of production and distribution, save space on your desk since news can be archived on your computer, and last, keeps it out of the waste stream. If you would like to choose the electronic newsletter option please contact Betsy Ukeritis, EEAC Secretary and Communications Coordinator, at baukerit@gw.dec.state.ny.us.

Thanks to our members for a strong first quarter – I am looking for three more in 2008! Have a great summer; I look forward to seeing you at our meetings and events!

Very best, Jill Weiss

P.S. Our new website has been launched! Visit www.eeac-nyc.org. Tell a friend! A special thanks to Rochelle Gandour and Roland Rogers for their efforts.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

We enthusiastically welcome the following new members to EEAC:

I.C. Levenberg (Life) Chris Merton (Life) Marlene Bombara Kerry Dawson Ann Donzella Owens



Book Buzz

Louisa May

and

Mr. Thoreau's Flute

By Julie Dunlap and Marybeth Lorbiecki

Illustrations by Mary Azarian

By Regina McCarthy

I recently finished a book called *Eden's Outcasts*, by John Matteson, about the Alcotts: Louisa May, author of the classic, *Little Women* and her father, Amos Bronson Alcott. It brought to my mind a wonderful children's book called *Louisa May and Mr. Thoreau's Flute*.

What a wonderful time it must have been to have lived in Concord, Massachusetts with the likes of the Alcotts, Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau!! Louisa May's father was a progressive educator of his day and was very concerned about what he deemed a "good education" for his child. Louisa, on the other hand, did *not* seem to fit the mold he had in mind.

In this fictionalized account, Louisa May accompanies Thoreau as he takes children with him on outings in the woods. On these summer outings, they learn much about nature and the outdoors as they listen to Henry spin wonderful stories and play his flute. As the story unfolds, when winter comes, and Louisa remains indoors, she learns to "play her own music" through her writing as she finds her own voice.

Although not part of the story, it is noted in the Afterword that when Thoreau died of tuberculosis at a young age, Louisa wrote a poem, "Thoreau's Flute", in his memory.

I would recommend this book for audiences of ages seven through 12.



Environmental Education Resources

By John Lancos

Project Webfoot, a partnership between Project WET and Ducks Unlimited, is a wetlands education program for classroom and non-formal educators that seeks to promote responsible wetlands stewardship through effective education. The materials used in the program are based on "The Wonder of Wetlands" (WOW) Educators Guide, as well as other printed and electronic resources for a wide variety of grades. Teacher training workshops are offered, but not required. For further information on the program, training and materials, go to <http://www.ducks.org/projectWebfoot>.

The Network of Conservation Educators and Practitioners (NCEP) is a collaborative project of the American Museum of Natural History's Center for Biodiversity and Conservation and a number of institutions and individuals around the world. NCEP seeks to improve the practice of biodiversity conservation by improving training in this field of knowledge. The inaugural issue of their official journal, *Lessons in Conservation*, is available electronically at <http://ncep.amnh.org/linc>. It includes a Teachers' Site with valuable teaching modules for the classroom.

Finally, the **North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE)**, in preparation for their 2008 Annual Conference in Wichita, Kansas, has announced their 2008 Photography Contest. Submitted images can reflect anything that connects to the environment. Cash prizes or ribbons are given for both advanced and amateur level winning entries. To learn more about the competition go to <http://www.naaee.org/conference/2008-photography-contest>.



Recycle Relay

Adapted by NYSDEC Staff

Objective: Students will participate in a physical activity to learn how to sort waste into recyclable items and garbage.

Materials:

- Recyclable items (aluminum can, cardboard box, glass bottle, glass jar, greeting card, homework paper, juice box, junk mail, magazine, milk carton or jug, newspaper, plastic bottle, soft-cover book, aluminum foil, scissors, stapler, etc.)
- Garbage items (plastic toy, potato chip bag, disposable cup, gum or candy wrapper, light bulb, paper towel, Styrofoam container, tissue, yogurt container, paper napkin, etc.)
- Signs or bins that are labeled “Recycling Center” and “Landfill”
- Copies of the NYC Recycling Guide

Procedure:

1. Collect the recyclable and garbage items. You can ask the students to bring some in from home. You can also use pictures instead of the items themselves.
2. Find an outdoor area or large indoor space where you can hold a relay race.
3. Divide the students into teams. At one end of the area, have the teams line up. Put a pile of waste items in front of each team. Make sure the piles have the same number of items and that each pile is a mix of recyclables and garbage.
4. At the other end of the space, place the “Recycling Center” and “Landfill” bins or signs.
5. Tell the students that they will be competing in a relay race. Each team will send one person at a time to pick up an item from their pile, get as quickly as they can to the other end, and decide whether it belongs in the recycling center or the landfill. When they get back to their team, they go to the end of the line and the next member can take his or her turn.
6. The teams will play until all of their items are sorted, and whoever finishes first wins.
7. After the race is over, go through the bins and discuss with the students whether each item is in the correct place. They may refer to the NYC Recycling Guides provided.
8. You can play again, but this time let the students know that their team will lose (even if they are the fastest) if they have more than three items in the wrong place.

Wrap Up:

Ask the students if they recycle at home. Can they think of anything else that you did not use in the game that can be recycled? They can take the Recycling Guides home.

Student Highlight

The Green School, located in East Williamsburg, Brooklyn, is a new high school whose theme is sustainability. Twice a year, each grade holds “Green Week,” of activities, projects and field studies focused around a topic related to sustainability. This spring, The Green School’s 9th grade had a Green Week that focused on waste and environmental justice. Below is an essay from a student who did a study on the school’s community and Park Slope.

Waste in our City: East Williamsburg vs. Park Slope

By Treasure Allen

This week my ninth grade class is focusing on Waste in our Community during our Green Week. My group decided to do a study on waste and environmental justice. We chose two Brooklyn neighborhoods to study and compare: East Williamsburg (which is the neighborhood where our school is located) and Park Slope.

Our group started our research in East Williamsburg. We decided to go out and make observations of the neighborhood. While observing the area of East Williamsburg, I noticed things that I had not really paid attention to before. For example, trash was found in vacant lots, in streets and in subways. Who could be so careless to treat their neighborhood that way? When people litter, they do so without a care or a second thought. I know people think, “Hey, it’s not my responsibility.” But whose responsibility is it?

After observing a little while longer, we noticed a few more things. We saw a lot of loud, dirty trucks driving through the neighborhood; there was a whole lot of construction going on and there weren’t a lot of garbage cans around. If they were there, they were hardly being used. We didn’t like what we saw.

With that said, our group members hopped on the G train headed towards Park Slope. I was very curious as to what I would find during our investigation. I didn’t know much about this neighborhood before I went into it. I thought that it would be exactly the same as East Williamsburg. When we arrived, what we saw was something totally different. There was no garbage carelessly thrown around; there were garbage cans on every street corner, and, unlike Williamsburg, there was no McDonald’s!!! In addition to this revelation, the streets were cleaner, houses were in better condition and there was no graffiti. As a matter

of fact, everything was in better condition. I was amazed and confused at the same time. I asked myself, “Why couldn’t every neighborhood be like this?”

Before we could finish our observations, the group stopped to take a break and find something to eat. Since there wasn’t a McDonald’s, we had to settle for sandwiches. We noticed while searching for food that the businesses were thriving, and were obviously in better condition than others that we encountered in East Williamsburg. I decided to get a ham and cheese sandwich. I assumed that the price would be the same as it was in East Williamsburg or where I lived. Instead, I discovered that the price was higher than I thought it would be.

I then realized something else about this neighborhood: the income level of the residents has a lot to do with the level of cleanliness. The people who live in Park Slope, with its thriving businesses and companies, are financially better off than those who live in East Williamsburg, where struggling residents just try to make ends meet. Park Slope is then able to have a stronger voice in deciding how their garbage is handled. Also, having money enables them to have more of a fighting chance to prevent their neighborhood from turning into “Toxic City” whereas East Williamsburg is not able to fight.

So what comes next for East Williamsburg? We need to be able to fight for our community! Our resources may be limited, however, they are not non-existent. We must develop a more sustainable community. As a result of this project, my group members and I no longer want trash in our community. We want clean streets and homes, like the ones we saw in Park Slope. In order to do this, we, the young people, must come together and keep our community safe for future generations.



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Alliance (MWA), New York Restoration Project (NYRP), as well as Urban Assembly's New York Harbor School, a public school that engages students through the study of the marine culture, history and environment of New York City and its surrounding waters. Printed material and programs will include activities that examine the waterfront through the topics of art, history, culture, environmental responsibility, aquatic life, ecology, water conservation and other related topics. Interactive art and science lessons based on the Waterfalls will be designed to complement field trips to experience the Waterfalls during the summer and fall for camp, school and other youth groups.

There will be a number of opportunities for the public to view the Waterfalls at designated vantage points along the Brooklyn, Manhattan and Governors Island waterfronts. Bike routes will be marked throughout these areas, and dedicated boat tours by Circle Line Downtown will be available. Additionally, supplemental materials including brochures with access information, maps for biking and walking the Waterfalls and a podcast are being developed. These resources will be available to download from www.nycwaterfalls.org in June. For more information, please contact Public Art Fund at (212) 980-4575.

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Celebrates its 100th Year!

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of the Environmental Education
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**How can we keep it alive in today's
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**Join the ANSS Vision Meeting at PEEC
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On July 18-19, 2008

**Contact Flo Mauro at
fmauro@ptd.net for details.**

**If you can't attend in person, join a
conference call.**



MAKE EARTH DAY EVERYDAY

By Michelle Fufaro

How to invest in our environment

As a whole, we are moving toward an environmentally aware and responsible society. Often, we are flooded with media attention on the latest eco-friendly products, innovative sustainable designs or the hottest trends in "going green." One topic that doesn't get as much attention is Investing Green or Socially Responsible Investing. The United States' economy is a major player in how successful this "green movement" is going to be.

What are the criteria we should use in selecting where we invest our money? Do we look for a company that use resources wisely? Employs local labor at a living wage? Provides workers with a safe working environment? Does not pollute the air or water? Uses the cleanest available form of energy? The auto maker whose car uses the least gasoline?

If you wish the names of specific companies that have been researched by a respected business publication, see "*25 Stocks to Invest in a Cleaner World*", as reported in a Kiplinger report in October 2007.

These companies may not be the ideal investment for you and I am NOT telling you to invest in them. However, they are each beginning a new trend in green investing, and more companies will follow their lead. For the full list of 25 companies, please go to www.kiplinger.com.



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION 2008

New Member Renewal

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If Sustaining Organization, Name of Contact Person

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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:

Jay Holmes, Treasurer, EEAC, American Museum of Natural History, 79th Street and Central Park West, New York, N.Y. 10024

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)



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