



# EEAC

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

WINTER 1993/94

## Education in Central Park



*I*t's eleven AM on a weekday and there is a group of school aged children fishing at the Harlem Meer. No they are not skipping school, their teacher brought them to the new Charles A. Dana Discovery Center to learn about the Park's environment. This is just one of many ways that teachers and their classes can use Central Park as an extension of the classroom. The Discovery Center located at 110th Street between Fifth and Lenox Avenues, is The Central Park Conservancy's new education and visitor center. It sits on the shore of the Harlem Meer, in a beautifully restored landscape and serves as the gateway to the northern park. It is also the home to many exciting educational programs for teachers and students.

The Central Park Conservancy is committed to excellent education in outdoor environments and provides a rich diversity of programs throughout the Park. Programs are focused on the built and natural environment and group dynamics through adventure based learning. A staff of skilled field educators engage students in observation, analysis, and critical thinking through science, social studies, and design arts. Through collaborations with schools and cultural institutions the Conservancy develops courses, curricula, and thematic units which are available to all schools for use in urban park settings. A recent collaboration with the New York City Outward Bound Center has enabled them to increase the adventure based education programs available for students throughout the City. Other collaborations underway will yield curriculum in water body monitoring and research, urban woodland ecology and environmental impact analysis, as well as landscape design and visual literacy.

Teacher enrichment is an integral part of the Conservancy's programming and they offer workshops, lecture series, and summer institutes for teachers who are interested in using outdoor environments as extensions of their classroom. Teachers can learn to lead a tour for their class on the ABC's of Central Park (Arches, Birds, Choices), or attend a 20 hour course on developing curriculum around the use of urban parks. A collaboration with City Parks Foundation, Urban Forest & Education Program will result in a series of workshops, starting this February, on the use of urban woodland environments as learning laboratories. (See page 7 for more details.)

School programs are free to New York City Public Schools and there is a slight fee to private and non-city schools. Teacher workshops and courses carry a nominal fee and some offer new teacher credits. For further information on programs available to teachers and classes call (212) 860-1311 and ask for a school program brochure.

*by Cheryl Best*

*EEAC is a voluntary organization in support of Environmental Education for New York*

## UPCOMING EEAC EVENTS.....

### Steering Committee Meetings

EEAC Steering Committee meetings are held from 4-6pm on the third Wednesday of every month. Please arrive promptly at 4pm!

All EEAC members are invited to attend and participate in the discussion. For information on the location of the meetings, contact Millard Clements at (212) 998-5495.

### Upcoming dates are:

January 19, February 16, and March 16.

### Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of EEAC was held on Wednesday, November 17 at New York University from 4-6pm.

### Membership Meetings

On Sunday, November 21, 1993, EEAC held a membership meeting at The American Museum of Natural History. Education representatives from the Environmental Protection Agency, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and New York City Departments of Environmental Protection and Parks & Recreation shared environmental education resources with those present. The meeting was well attended. Stay tuned for upcoming meeting schedules.

### Newsletter Deadlines

Material should be submitted to the Editor on the first Monday of February, May, August and November.

### Newsletter Committee

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## ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

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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 environmental education. It is available free upon request.

### EEAC OFFICERS

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Dorothy Siminski, Vice-Chair for Programs  
Millard Clements, Secretary  
Kim Estes-Fradis, Membership Secretary  
Ruth Eilenberg, Treasurer

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Dorothy Siminski, NYC Urban Park Rangers  
Talbert Spence, American Museum of Natural History  
Barry Weinbrom, Brooklyn Center for the Urban Environment  
Nancy A. Wolf, Environmental Action Coalition  
Michael Zamm, Council on the Environment of NYC

\*Affiliations for identification purposes only.

## Chairman's Message

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times." At the risk of being overly dramatic, the ups and downs of the Chancellor's and Governor's Task Forces on Environmental Education are aptly described by the famous beginning to Dickens' novel. We are indeed fortunate that both task forces have been established (although it is unclear whether the Chancellor's Force still exists except in the minds of some of its members). The Governor's group had reached the brink from which there was no return as the participants feuded over what to do about the lack of support given by the Governor's Office and by the participating state agencies. However, some nifty work by the steering committee led by Ed Zero has rescued the situation to the point that a fine preliminary report was produced and submitted to the Governor's Office. Lo' and behold the Governor's people are taking it seriously and have asked for a more detailed explanation of each of the report's recommendations with an eye towards producing a state master plan for environmental education.

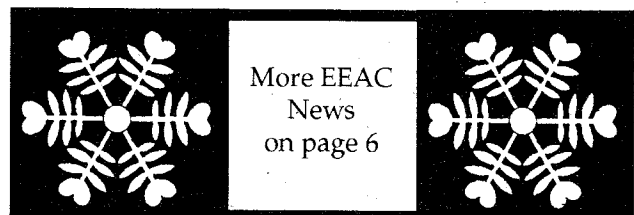
The preliminary report's recommendations include serious statements about pre-service and in-service teacher training, curriculum, and cooperation between state agencies that have environmental education responsibilities. Ed Zero is collecting Task Force member responses to the aforementioned call for more specificity and will submit a response to Albany shortly. There are several potential pitfalls in this process not the least of which is the possibility that the Task Force will become bogged down in developing the details of a master plan and lose sight of the key priorities. In my humble opinion these priorities should be required pre-service teacher training in environmental education and stimulating more integration of environmental concepts into syllabi and curricula throughout the state by including the environment in all school and student evaluation techniques. However, when all is said and done the prospects for the Task Force are hopeful.

The Chancellor's Task Force completed and submitted a final report with a very comprehensive set of recommendations some time ago. The report was accepted by then Chancellor Fernandez's staff and ostensibly by the Board of Education. The staff was supposed to work with representatives of the Task Force to develop an imple-

mentation plan but instead Task Force members received a letter from then Acting Chancellor Harvey Garner politely thanking them for their work and implicitly suggesting that they sail off into the sunset. What remains of the Task Force recently met to discuss the situation and made a decision to write a letter to new Chancellor Cortines asking for an update on a plan to implement the report's recommendations. It does appear that some of the recommendations related to the practice of environmental preservation in school buildings—recycling, gardening, energy conservation, etc., and in-service teacher training are at least being considered with initial action started in some situations. It isn't clear what, if any, commitment there is to following through on these latter areas or if there is any focus on the report's other recommendations including the appointment of a citywide coordinator of environmental education. There is some feeling that the Task Force should become a committee of EEAC but this would have to be approved by a vote of the Task Force and EEAC's Steering Committee. It isn't clear whether this would be recognized by Board of Education staff or whether it needs to be. Stay tuned for more reports on this issue.

One final comment in tribute to career public servant Robert F. Wagner, Jr. It was Wagner, who at DEP's NYC Environmental Education Conference a few years ago, first recommended that an Environmental Education Task Force be established. He followed through to the extent of convincing Chancellor Fernandez to accept the formation of such a body. While the Task Force has never had the support provided to other task forces, its creation was in itself an important step forward. Wagner wasn't able to focus much on the Task Force, especially after he left the Board of Education, but he did show a sensitivity to environmental education rare in policy makers of his stature. He was a person with an extraordinary breadth of

*Continued on page 7*



# Environmental Resources

by Kenneth Kowald

## Places/Events



An education center of excellence undergoing change is the **New York Hall of Science** in Flushing Meadows Corona Park, which, through January 21, is showing the first major hands-on exhibition on AIDS and the HIV virus. This is taking place while the Hall is in the process of constructing a new entrance with a glass rotunda, a 300-seat auditorium, a dining pavilion, an expanded gift shop and improved landscaping. The Hall of Science is located at 47-01 111th Street, Flushing Meadows Corona Park, Corona, New York, 11368, or call (718) 699-0005.

The **Lefferts Homestead Children's Historic House Museum** is in an 18-century manor house next to the newly re-opened Prospect Park Zoo. It features a variety of items which should intrigue children. It's located at the Ocean and Flatbush Avenues entrance. Call (718) 965-6505 for more information.

Even though you may be a bit late to enter this year—and let's hope this is a project which will be repeated—you will want to find out about the **"Earthkeeping Take-A-Step Contest,"** being presented by the WGBH Educational Foundation. This new four-part PBS series will begin to air on Wednesday, April 21. To learn more, write to Educational Print and Outreach, WGBH, 125 Western Avenue, Boston 02134.

## Things to Do



You can learn a lot by making telephone calls. The Federal Environmental Protection Agency has set up a series of **"Hotlines."** For asbestos (800) 368-5888; for Superfund (800) 424-9346; for drinking water (800) 426-4791; for pesticides (800) 858-7378; for emergency planning and community right-to-know, including toxic chemicals (800) 535-0202; for wetlands (800) 832-7278; for indoor air (800) 438-4318; for CFCs (800) 296-1996; for acid rain (617) 674-7377.

Did you know that you could become a **Water Quality Steward** by adopting at least 10 recommended, environmentally sound practices for combating nonpoint pollution of coastal waters? To find out more, write or call Robert Kent of New York Sea Grant, 39 Sound Avenue, Riverhead 11901-1098, (516) 727-3910.

## Things to Get



**"Greenways to the Arthur Kill"** is a small but fascinating brochure, from the other (New Jersey) side of that waterway and it is packed with good information. For more information, call or write the New Jersey Conservation Foundation, 300 Mendham Road, Morristown 07960, (201) 539-7540.

**New York Unearthed** is the only museum dedicated to New York's archaeological heritage, "where remains of the past tell the story of New York's history." It is located at 17 State Street at Battery Park, in the courtyard on Pearl Street, between Whitehall and State Streets. For more information, write to New York Unearthed, South Street Seaport Museum, 207 Front Street, New York 10038, or call (212) 363-9372. Admission is free.

**"Watershed Update"** is a publication for the Hudson Riverkeeper Fund. You may obtain a copy by writing to Hudson Riverkeeper, Castle Rock Field Station, Route 9D, PO Box 130, Garrison, New York 10524, or call (914) 424-4149.

During the 1992-1993 school year, P.S. 84 in Manhattan and the Dual Language Middle School were partners with the Environmental Action Coalition in a year-long waste prevention project, funded by a grant to EAC from the Federal Environmental Protection Administration. One of the results is an educational video, **"Pay Attention to Waste Prevention,"** conceived and filmed by students at P.S. 84. To find out more about the program and the video, call or write EAC, 625 Broadway, New York 10012, (212) 677-1601.

While some community gardens may be in danger, Operation GreenThumb of the New York City Department of General Services does a fine job of helping those in need. One of the ways it does the work is by making information available. One of its outstanding publications is a four-page bulletin "**Additional Resources for Operation GreenThumb Gardeners**" (but, don't be fooled—anyone can use it). Now in its 6th edition, it covers "Horticultural Assistance," "Public Gardens," "Getting Organized—Assistance," "Educational Program Assistance," "Pest Control," "Garden Building and Cleaning Help," "Abandoned Car Removal," "Local Beautification Assistance," "City-Wide Compost Project" and "Sidewalk and Roadway Complaints." Quite a list! For a copy, write or call Operation GreenThumb, Room 1020, 49 Chambers Street, New York 10007, (212) 788-8059.

**Co-op America's National Green Pages** list 1,000 U.S. companies—from ad agencies to work processors—that operate in "a socially and environmentally responsible way." To order, send \$4.95 plus a \$1 shipping and handling charge to Co-op America, 1850 M Street NW, Suite 700 Washington, D.C. 20036, or call (800) 424-2667.

The Natural Resources Group of the City's Department of Parks and Recreation has come up with another wonderful publication, "**Native Species Planting Guide for New York City and Vicinity**," the work of Danielle Luttenberg, Deborah Lev and Michael Feller. The NRG is dedicated to the preservation, restoration and protection of natural areas throughout the City. To learn more about NRG and to obtain a copy of the new Guide, write to Marc Matsil, Director, Arsenal North, 1234 Fifth Avenue, New York 10029.

Last, But....

There is an early 1994 deadline for the **NYNEX Science and Technology Awards Program**, which aims to interest teams of two to four students in projects to help solve community problems. To find out more, call NYNEX at 1-800-9X-TEAMS.

## Recycling Help in All Boroughs



One of our new Steering Committee members, Karen Gleeson, is listed as being a Recycling Organizer with the Manhattan Borough

President's Office. Perhaps EEAC members are unaware that recycling help is available in all the boroughs. Each Borough President's Office has received funds from the Sanitation Department to support a group of community organizers concerned with recycling, who are available to help explain the City's recycling program to community residents. The organizers may be reached at:

Bronx	718-590-6124
Brooklyn	718-802-3973
Manhattan	212-699-2968
Queens	718-286-2908
Staten Island	718-390-5180



## DEP Kicks off Eighth Annual Water Conservation Art & Poetry Contest

For the past seven years fifth and sixth graders from all over New York City have been participating in the New York City Department of Environmental Protection's Water Conservation Art & Poetry Contest. Participants have been learning about New York City's water supply system and water conservation and creatively expressing that knowledge. Some of their works have been used in creating educational materials for other NYC students. If you think your students will find this a fun learning experience, don't hesitate...participate.

The DEP will officially kick off the contest early in January of 1994. We believe that this is a terrific experience for students, in learning about the water supply system all New Yorkers depend upon, and in expressing themselves creatively. The contest is open to all New York City fifth and sixth grade students. For complete contest guidelines and answers to any questions you have, call Rebecca Gratz, Environmental Educator, at the Department of Environmental Protection, (718) 595-3523.

EEAC is proud to welcome two new Steering Committee Members: **Gary Beneson and Karen Gleeson.**

### Karen Gleeson

A long-time environmental activist and educator, Karen Gleeson is currently being paid for what has long been a volunteer job; talking to people about recycling. Ms. Gleeson, a graduate of Bank Street College in Museum Education/Elementary Education, says that degree combines well with her earlier B.A. in Anthropology to help her as a Recycling Organizer for the Manhattan Borough President's Office. After getting her Bank Street degree, she worked in a variety of museums in the boroughs of Staten Island, Manhattan and Brooklyn. She first made EEAC's acquaintance while the Director of

Public Programs at Prospect Park Environmental Center (now the Brooklyn Center for the Urban Environment), where she created and administered trips to all corners of Brooklyn, and edited the newsletter *CityGreen*. Since leaving BCUE, she has worked at EAC in their Apartment House Recycling Program, as Coordinator of the Green Apple Coalition in 1991, and a variety of community positions. In her free time, she used her experience as an environmentalist and lifelong "dumpster diver" to help found a volunteer recycling program in Prospect Heights, Brooklyn. She is also active with her local food coop, and is an active member of her Community Board, having recently been named co-chair of (what else?) the Sanitation Committee.

## Welcome New Members

It is with great pleasure that we welcome the following individuals and organizations to the Environmental Education Advisory Council. These memberships were received by November 22, 1993.

Clare Beckhardt  
Dolores Cocco  
Friends of Blue Heron Park  
Laurie Aileen Galluzzi  
Olya Godlevskaya  
Judy Karlinsky  
Mel and Mollie Kurs  
Gail Pasternak  
Stephanie Rose  
Lawrence Scoones  
Leslie Serling  
Karina Sweeney  
Joseph Varon

We look forward to seeing you at EEAC Steering Committee meetings and membership events. If you have any questions about memberships, please call Kim Estes-Fradis at (718) 595-3506.



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## Notes from Regina McCarthy

*Coordinator  
Gateway Environmental Study Center*

This has been an unusual year for all of us in education. Ruth Eilenberg, my predecessor, tells me that there is no year that does not begin with some glitch. Floyd Bennett Field's phone and electric lines predate WWII, flashlights are kept on hand not just for camping. All of this, coupled with the crisis of '93, fondly referred to as the "A" word, has this new coordinator thinking, "Is this what I've dreamed of for so many years?"

In spite of all of this, the center has begun the year with several new programs, old traditions and some exciting new visions for the future. Educators for Gateway and several other environmental and education groups sponsored "Birds, plus.." the first week in October. Field walks were led by NY Audubon volunteers and were followed up with instructional uses of birding in the classroom by EFG teachers. Operation Explore, now in its eighteenth year, has begun with a full complement of 65 classes pooled from the 34 school districts throughout the city. Camping Techniques for Teachers, which has been traditionally given for 8 weeks after school will be offered in a new format during the school day over three days. This course and two other options, Orienteering and Nature Journal Writing, will be part of the Science Technical Assistance Center (STAC) training menu. This means that schools will receive funding for substitute teachers through Dwight D. Eisenhower (Title II) funds. In addition, both the Queens and Brooklyn STACs are offering environmental education courses, and the response from the field has been very encouraging.

On a personal reflective note, I can say it brings a smile to my face that the future of environmental education seems to be on the upswing. Gateway Environmental Study Center, with its cooperating agency, the National Park Service at Gateway National Recreation Area, are looking forward to supporting this challenge.

## Urban Woodland Ecology Workshops for Educators

The Urban Forest & Education Program of City Parks Foundation along with the Central Park Conservancy will offer a series of hands-on environmental science workshops for educators. Using the north woods of Central Park as a site, professional environmental educators will present workshops demonstrating the use of woodland areas as outdoor laboratories to enrich and extend classroom curriculum. Material is adaptable to all grades but most appropriate for grades 6 through 12. Approved for NYC Board of Education new teacher credit.

February 12	Parks in Your Curriculum
March 19	Geology: Reading the Rocks
April 23	Migrant Birds in City Woods
May 14	Woodland Trees and Flowers
June 4	Forest Ecosystem Encounters

Individual Workshop Fee: \$10.00 Entire Series: \$40.00  
All workshops will take place at the new Charles A. Dana Discovery Center in Central Park, 10:00 am to 12:00 pm.

Advance registration and payment required. For more information, please call: Cheryl Best (212) 860-1311 or Mary Leou (212)360-2745.

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### *Message from the Chairman con't*

knowledge and interests. He held more key appointed positions than anyone I can remember (even more than Robert Moses)—Deputy Mayor, President of the Board of Education, Chairman of the City Planning Commission, Chairman of the Commission on the Year 2000, a member of the board of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority—in addition to serving as an elected Councilman at large in his younger days. He was a positive member of the City's brain trust and perhaps someone who could have been called on again to support environmental education in future positions. He will be missed.

*Mike Zamm*

**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

\_\_\_\_\_ New Member      \_\_\_\_\_ Renewal

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (      ) \_\_\_\_\_

Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

Title/Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (      ) \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Select either a \$15 dues payment to cover the cost of membership in EEAC for a calendar year, OR, a \$150 Life Membership. A membership entitles you to receive EEAC newsletters, program information mailings, and conference announcements.

Membership dues are tax deductible. Make all checks payable to EEAC.

Please complete the application and mail it, with your payment, to:

Ruth Eilenberg  
196-32 53rd Avenue  
Flushing, New York 11365

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