

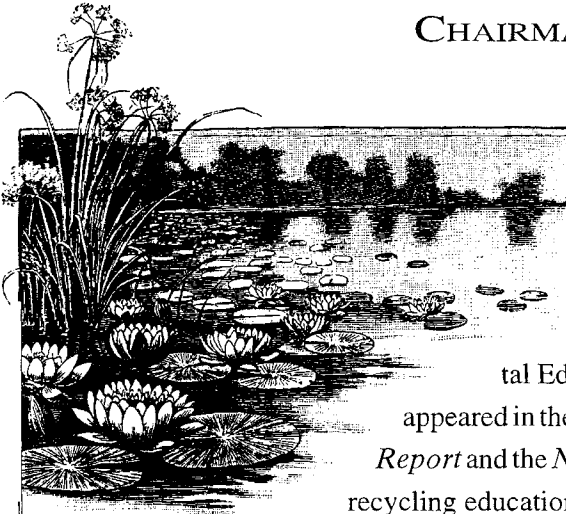


EEAC

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 1997

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE



On Earth Day of this year, the *New York Times* published the most recent of a string of articles that have directly attacked or reported on the supposed widespread criticism of Environmental Education. In the last three years such articles have appeared in the *Wall Street Journal*, *U.S. News and World Report* and the *New York Times Magazine*. The first focused on recycling education, the latter on recycling itself, with recycling education coming in for a secondary bashing. The middle piece was, like the NY Times Earth Day, a summary of a variety of charges leveled at environmental education by individuals and organizations that are, in one way or another, associated with the backlash against environmental protection known as the "wise-use" movement. While proclaiming their fealty to the overall role of environmental protection, "wise use" advocates state that the environmental movement has gone too far and is throttling economic development and the rights of sundry companies and individuals to do business in a free, market-based society. These advocates are based primarily amongst certain interest groups in the West, e.g., ranchers, loggers, mining companies, and in conservative think-tanks.

With respect to environmental education proper, these critics claim that environmental educators, whether in the classroom or in outdoor settings, do not present a balanced view of environmental issues. Children, so the argument goes, are enlisted through the educational process as supporters of a variety of environmental causes and are then motivated to take action to effect change on this or that environmental issue. It is this latter facet which seems to anger the critics the most. Civic responsibility is fine they say, but not when it is motivated by educators who are no better than enviro-ideologies.

Now it must be granted that in every endeavor there are practitioners who are ill-suited and / or poorly trained. This is especially the case in environmental education, where much activity originates in the rural, suburban or urban hustings, far from the most formal educational and administrative structures. Yes, there are some environmental educators who don't properly present issues to students, who may push their point of view at the expense of all others, or who simply don't know how to present controversial issues in a balanced fashion. But these

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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 meeting information:

Steering committee meetings are held at New York University, Press Building, 32 Washington Square Park East in the Anderson Room. Upcoming dates are: September 17, October 15, and November 19.

Newsletter Deadlines

Material should be submitted to the Editor on the first Monday of May, August, November and February. If possible, please submit on a floppy disc in WordPerfect 5.1 or 6.1 format.

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.

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Mary Leou, Vice-Chair for Programs
Millard Clements, Secretary
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Ruth Eilenberg, Treasurer

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*Affiliations for identification purposes only.

EEAC enters CYBERSPACE

by Carol Franken

Being true to EEAC's role as a networking organization for environmental educators, EEAC is taking the word NETWORK to another level! The goal to use technology as a tool for communication is virtually moving ahead in two significant ways.

EEAC Listserve

The purpose of our listserv is to facilitate discussions and keep even more up to date with events. Anyone who is a member of EEAC may join. When you participate in a listserv, a message that you write automatically goes to everyone on the list. This is how a listserv expedites conversations. For this reason it is also important to discriminate between those messages and replies that you want to send to one specific person from those messages and responses that are meant for everyone to read. For personal messages use the person's e-mail address, not the listserv. We are also finding it helpful to have people sign their name at the end of their messages to make it more readily apparent who is speaking. To join the listserv it is easier if you have your own Internet provider, but if you have a modem, Treebranch who is hosting the listserv for us can create an e-mail account for you.

To date, dialogues have been about topics such as pre-service requirements of environmental education for teachers, summer programs, various questions and requests, planning of events and Ken Kowald's even hotter lists of what's happening. The newsletter could even be posted here too.

EEAC on WWW

EEAC now also has its own web page. The homepage explains the purpose of EEAC (below the graphic of our logo of course). Links to other pages for members programs etc. are currently under construction. Included will be an EEAC membership application which can be downloaded by anyone wishing to join the organization. The process of linking to other environmental organizations has been started.

If you would like to join the listserv or want to talk about the web page please contact Carol Franken. She is spearheading the newly formed EEAC technology group. All questions and comments are welcome. Carol can be contacted at carol_franken@ilt.mail.columbia.edu or (212) 828-3511.

Recycling Ink Jet Cartridges

by Joy Garland

At the June steering committee meeting of EEAC, Barbara Reiss of Toner Retrieve Ltd., reported that \$6 billion worth of ink jet cartridges and laser toner cartridges are sold each year in the United States, but that only 30% are retrieved and the remaining 70% (38 million) are land filled. Some manufacturers will provide a free return label for UPS pickup of cartridges, but they only take the one part that is useful to them and melt down the rest. Toners can be re-manufactured and refilled up to 15 times. Ms. Reiss said that her company will pick up used toners and ink jet cartridges from schools when there is a sufficient amount and will then pay back to the school 50 cents to \$2.50 depending on the cartridge. They will also provide support to get the program started. Hunter Elementary students are participating in the drive by getting parents and friends to contribute used cartridges from home and work. They will use the funds they raise to purchase a telescope. Interested educators can contact Ms. Reiss at (212) 831-6351.





Timely

Green Horizons, the highly successful all-day conference for eighth graders, held last October 1 at the Brooklyn Botanical Gardens, is about to become an annual affair. Green Horizons 2 will be held Tuesday, September 30, in Arsenal North (upper Fifth Avenue) and in and around Central Park. Once again, EEAC is co-sponsoring the event with New York ReLeaf Region 2. Our hosts will be the Central Park Conservancy, the Harbor Academy, City of New York/Parks & Recreation and City Parks Foundation. The Consolidated Edison Company is continuing its support and at this writing we are seeking additional funding. And, once again, environmental educators will team up with those presenting the hands-on programs. Those who participated last year should expect calls asking where to do their share again in September. Those interested in helping may call Honorary Member (and former EEAC Chair) Nancy Wolf at (212) 677-1601. Once again, she is serving again as the Coordinator of the event.

"Taking Flight: John James Audubon and the Watercolors for the Birds of America" has 150 of the artist's paintings. It is on view through September 7 in the New York Historical Society, 2 West 77th Street, Manhattan, telephone (212) 873-3499...If you go before August 10, you can also see "Before Central Park: The Life and Death of Seneca Village," about the 19th century community that was razed for the construction of Central Park.

"Endangered! Exploring a World at Risk" is an exhibition which does just that and it is on view through September 1 in the American Museum of Natural History, Central Park West at 79th Street, Manhattan, telephone (212)769-5100.

Various workshops on nature and the environment for teachers of Grades K-12 will be available this July and August at the Bronx Zoo. To learn more, call Ann Robinson, Manager of National Programs, at 1-800-YES-5131.

At the New York Hall of Science, through July 6, you can view "seeing the Unseen: Dr. Harold E. Edgerton and the Wonders of Strobe Alley." And, at any time, using a

touch-tone phone, you can play with the world's first call-in science exhibit by dialing (718) MY WORDS (699-6737). The Hall of Science is at 47-01 111th Street, Flushing Meadows Corona Park 11368, (718) 699-0005.

The American Littoral Society is holding its Annual International Beach Cleanup on Saturday, September 20. Thousands of volunteers in New York State will collect and record the debris that litters our beaches. To learn more, call Barbara Cohen, NYS Coordinator, (718) 471-2166.

Environment '97, a conference presented by Environmental Advocates, will be held from Friday through Sunday, September 19-21, at the Silver Bay Conference Center on Lake George. For more information, call Buffy Turner at Environmental Advocates, (518) 462-5526.

Since March 4, it has been possible to reserve New York State campsites up to 11 months in advance. The number for reservations is 1-800-456-2267.

Dr. Seuss knew a good deal about life and nature and through February 28 you can see the exhibit, "Seuss!" in the Children's Museum of Manhattan, 212 West 43rd Street, telephone (212) 721-1223.





Around Here

Look what you're missing if you don't attend EEAC Steering Committee meetings (which are open to all members and guests; see schedule on Page 2): We heard about the YMCA Earth Service Corps from Sharon Watts-Williams, Regional Resource Director, who will send you a kit of materials about the Corps if you write to her at 333 7th Avenue, 15th floor, New York 10001, or call her at (212) 630-9669... We also heard about Project WET, an interdisciplinary water curriculum program intended to supplement a school's existing curriculum. To learn more, write or call Alan A. Mapes, Chief, Bureau of Education, State Department of Environmental Conservation, 50 Wolf Road, Albany 12233-4500, (518) 457-3720... Our newest Steering Committee member, Robert Zuber, Executive Director of the Center for Environmental Education, told us about his organization. Its publication, "Grapevine" is so full of interesting material that I was going to filch some for this column. But, better than that, why not write or call Bob at 400 Columbus Avenue, Valhalla, New York 10595, (914) 747-8200, and get your own copy. "Grapevine" is published biannually.

"Walking the Hudson, Batt to Bear: From the Battery to Bear Mountain," is by Cyrus A. Adler, who founded the Shorewalkers, an environmental walking organization, in 1982. It is being billed as the first complete guide to walking this stretch of the river. It is available in bookstores, or through the publisher, Green Eagle Press, Box 20329, Cathedral Station, New York 10025. The price is \$12.95..."The Hudson: An Illustrated Guide to the Living River" is available from the Hudson River Foundation, (212) 924-8290, in hardcover and paperback. This reference source covers the creation, evolution and history of the river. Through pictures and maps it shows the wildlife and plants that call the Hudson River home. Royalties will support continued preservation and clean-up efforts.

"Education Resources," published by GreenThumb of the City of New York/Parks & Recreation, offers technical and/or material assistance in educational projects in school yards, community gardens and other outdoor settings. Its categories are Teacher Training & Work-

shops, Field Trips, School Programs, Materials & Technical Assistance and Information, Publications & Periodicals. It is free and may be obtained by writing or calling GreenThumb, Room 1020, 49 Chambers Street, New York 10007, (212) 788-8059.

The New York City Sierra Club Eco Restoration Committee and Solid Waste Committee have published a one-page flyer, "Kitchen Scraps Composting Project." To obtain it, call Rachel Treichler, Eco Restoration Committee, (718) 783-0042, or Julian Willebrand, Solid Waste Committee, (212) 877-5088.

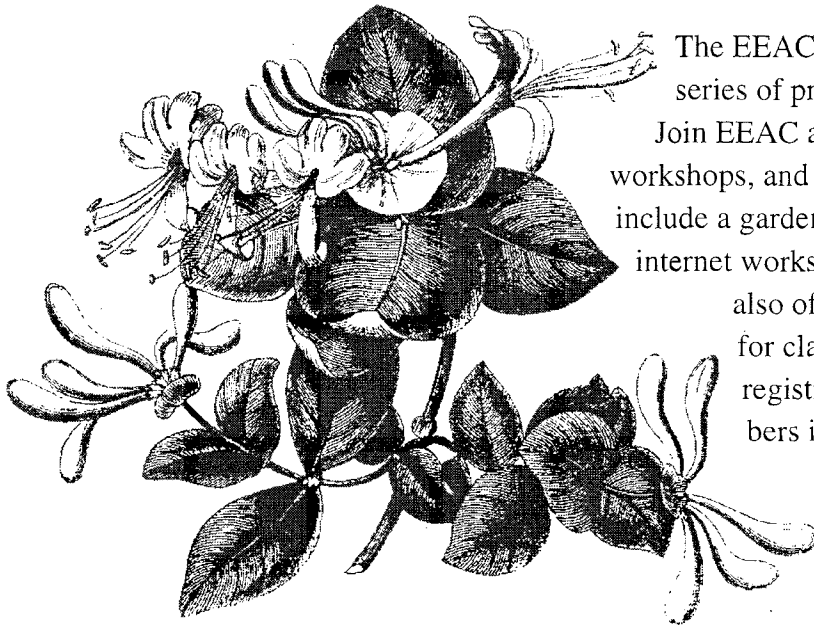
There are times when the three greenhouses of the City of New York/Parks & Recreation may be open to the public by appointment. They are located in the Bronx and Staten Island, with the largest one in Forest Park in Queens. To learn more, call 1-800-201-PARK.

Information about the history of downtown Manhattan is now available at 17 Heritage Trail Site Markers, thanks to Heritage Trails New York, a nonprofit group providing visitor service to Lower Manhattan. Free maps of the trails are available at tourist spots as well as at the Heritage Trails booth in Federal Hall, 26 Wall Street, from which the trails radiate. For information, call (888) 487-2457.

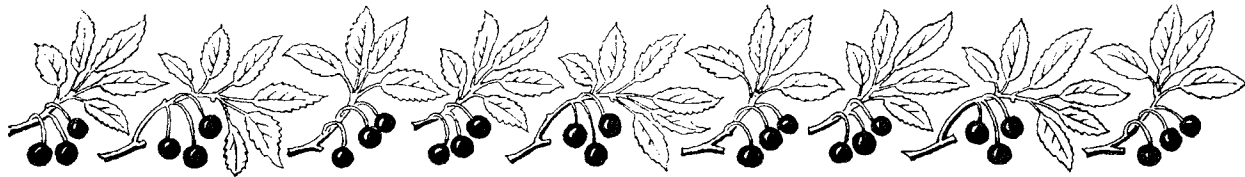
On the move: Neighborhood Open Space Coalition/Friends of Gateway is now in suite 508, 71 West 23rd Street, New York 10010, (212) 352-9330...Trees New York is in Suite 1412A, 51 Chambers Street, New York 10007, (212) 227-1887...The Rudy Bruner Foundation, Inc., is at 130 Prospect Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02129, (617) 492-8404.

Did you know there is an Indoor Gardening Society of America? The New York City Chapter meets monthly at the Horticultural Society of New York, on West 58th Street in Manhattan. For information, call (212) 757-0915.

EEAC Programs Committee Update



The EEAC Programs Committee is developing a series of programs and workshops for next year. Join EEAC and participate in membership tours, workshops, and conferences. Upcoming events will include a garden tour, a visit to a recycling company, an internet workshop, and much more. This year, we will also offer a series of workshops specifically for classroom teachers. Announcements and registration information will be sent to members in early fall. Please send your ideas and suggestions to Mary Leou, Vice-Chair for Programs, at City Parks Foundation, 1234 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10029.



Center for Biodiversity and Conservation

The Center is a multi-departmental facility of the American Museum of Natural History. Drawing on the combined strengths of the Museum's scientific, education, and exhibition departments, the Center strives to develop viable, science-based solutions to biodiversity conservation problems and to disseminate these findings widely.

For more information or to receive a copy of our newsletter, please contact us at:

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American Museum of Natural History
Central Park West at 79th Street
New York, NY 10024-5192
Telephone: (212) 769-5742
Fax: (212) 769-5292
Email: biodiversity@amnh.org
Future website: <http://research.amnh.org/biodiversity/index.html>

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individuals are a small minority of those who practice environmental education. The overwhelming majority of environmental educators are conscientious, well trained persons who work with youngsters, teachers or youth leaders and whose main goal is to enhance their educational development.

Of course all environmental educators want to stimulate in their students a general concern for the environment and expand their knowledge about environmental issues. Most environmental education professionals do this in a balanced, fair manner. They present and involve participants from all sides of an issue. None of this means they have to be totally "objective." Such an educator probably doesn't exist. Certainly the "wise use" "boo-birds" who complain about environmental education, and their colleagues in the reactionary think tanks, aren't able to judge objectively, never having produced an "objective" judgment in their collective lives.

It's reasonable and professional for a teacher to express his / her point of view as long as other relevant positions are presented. Most of us were probably first excited by this or that subject by some teacher or camp counselor, etc., who was hardly objective but who exuded the enthusiasm necessary to push us to self discovery.

The aforementioned anti-environmental education articles not only refer to environmental education practitioners but also to environmental education materials — curriculums, textbooks, articles, etc. — that are used to instruct students. All the articles referred to above express deep concern regarding the inclusion of environmental education into state syllabi and textbooks, especially with respect to controversial eco-issues or the linkage of ecology to citizen action.

The argument made above is relevant here, too: for every poorly done set of environmental education materials, there are five that are done well, that

present the issues accurately and fairly and that connect environment and citizen action in a productive, wholesome manner. These sorts of materials enliven curriculum and textbooks and make for better teaching and learning.

When given an opportunity to respond in the aforementioned articles, environmental educators express concern that the so-called broad-based critique of environmental education is really concentrated in interest groups who are alarmed with the continuing support for environmental protection. This grassroots support is present despite the failure to integrate sound environmental policy into public and private economic decision making. Thus the bashing of environmental education is really an effort to protect certain interests. While in a pluralistic society these voices also need to be heard, we in the environmental education community must continue to strive to incorporate into teaching and learning an environmental education that is sound in theory and practice.

By Mike Zamm



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

_____ New Member _____ Renewal

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: () _____

Affiliation: _____

Title/Position: _____

Address: _____

Phone: () _____ Date: _____

Select one:

- \$ 20 Individual Membership
- \$ 50 Supporting Membership
- \$200 Life Membership.

A membership entitles you to receive EEAC newsletters, program information mailings, and conference announcements.

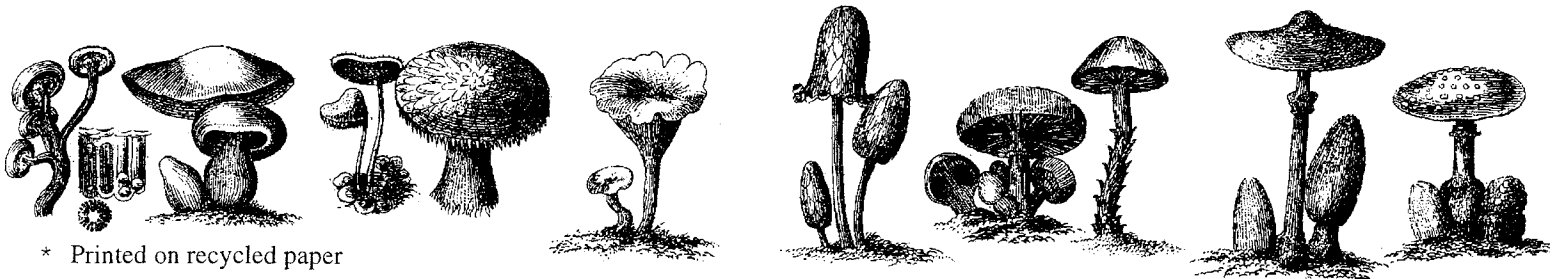
Membership dues are tax deductible. Make all checks payable to EEAC.

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

Ruth Eilenberg
EEAC Treasurer
401 East 86th Street, Apt. 4F
New York, NY 10028



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