



EEAC

SUMMER/FALL 1999

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

EEAC's 25th ANNIVERSARY YEAR

CHAIR'S MESSAGE

One of the goals of EEAC in New York City is to support the development of the next generation of environmental educators who will assume leadership roles in both traditional school settings and informal settings such as museums and parks. This new cadre of environmental educators will confront the challenges of the twenty-first century. In preparation, they will have to acquire skills, attitudes, and knowledge that will enable them to teach about global and local environmental issues that are rapidly changing the world we live in, especially our urban areas.

The importance of this really hit home last spring when I had the privilege of attending the Eighth Carey Conference sponsored by the Institute of Ecosystems Studies in Millbrook, New York. It was attended by over 75 leading scientists and environmental educators from all over the world, including South Africa, Canada, Poland, Israel, and Taiwan.

The theme of the conference, "Understanding Urban Ecosystems: A New Frontier for Science and Education," challenged all of us to think about the complexity of urban ecosystems and ways in which we can bring about a better understanding of cities as ecosystems. A "systems" approach to environmental education necessitates the integration of natural and social systems and promotes teamwork and collaboration among professionals across disciplines and between institutions. This is particularly necessary for understanding urban ecosystems which are "open systems", not self-contained, and do not function independently or in isolation.

Urban ecosystem education must also include social, cultural, and political dimensions. For example, we cannot teach about forest ecology in urban areas without understanding human impact on these habitats. We cannot teach about water quality without understanding how watersheds function, and how one action in one part of the watershed affects people and resources in another part. We cannot teach about gardens without understanding something about the politics of open space or the values of a multicultural society in densely populated urban communities. Furthermore, we can no longer afford single-purpose solutions to narrowly-defined problems and we must think about the interconnectedness of systems within larger systems.

Much of our work over the next decade should focus on developing policies and programs that support environmental education and will insure environmental literacy for all. EEAC is the bridge between the past and the future. Let us impart the lessons we have learned from past experience and explore new ways of supporting and strengthening environmental education in New York City.

On October 1st, EEAC celebrates its first twenty-five years, but the event will also mark the beginning of the next twenty-five years. I hope you will all be there, and I hope you will make a commitment to be a part of EEAC in the year 2000! You are the future of EEAC!

— Mary J. Leou, Ed.D.



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 4-6 p.m. on the third Wednesday of every month (except August). Please arrive promptly at 4 p.m. !

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, Pless Building, 32 Washington Square Park East and Washington Place. Upcoming meetings will be on September 15, October 20, and November 17.

Newsletter Deadlines

THE NEWSLETTER DEADLINES ARE CHANGED TO THE FIRST MONDAY IN APRIL, JULY, OCTOBER AND JANUARY. If possible, please E-mail articles to joygarland@banet.net and send longer articles as an attachment in Microsoft Word or on a floppy disc in MS Word. Typed articles should be sent to the Editor's address below.

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Special THANKS to Con Edison for supporting the publication of this newsletter.

JOIN EEAC!

If you are a member of EEAC and want to be part of the information sharing and discussion on the EEAC

Listserve contact:

Carol_Franken@fcl.nycenet.edu or

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

c/o Brooklyn Center for the Urban Environment
The Tennis House
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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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*Affiliations for identification purposes only.



Fannie Lou Hamer Freedom High School Recycles

By Maarten de Kadt

Directives requiring schools to recycle spawned a recycling program at Fannie Lou Hamer Freedom High School in the East Tremont section of the South Bronx. In addition, our program began under the guidance of a supportive principal and custodian, interested students, sufficient pickups by the Department of Sanitation, adequate supplies (recycling containers, dumpsters, storage space), and knowledgeable individuals willing to take on the activity. Each of these elements contributed to our school's winning "Best Recycling Education Program" in the first "Bronx Race to Recycle!" competition this past spring.

Two years ago I began teaching "Garbage and Public Policy" to juniors and seniors at Fannie Lou. We read articles from the daily press. We read small parts of the now defunct Office of Technology Assessment's *Facing America's Trash*, the US Environmental Protection Agency's electronic "Municipal Solid Waste Fact Book," and Barry Commoner's "Preventing the Trash Crisis" in *Making Peace With the Planet*. We also went on several trips related to garbage. One was to the Fresh Kills Landfill; a second was to a waste transfer station in Hunts Point (not far from the school). Students wrote reflections about each of our activities and used their written work to produce term papers at the end of the semester. The typical focus of these term papers, designed to become part of students' graduation portfolios in social studies, was to wonder "Where will the garbage go after New York City's last remaining landfill closes?"

The field trips proved valuable; students remembered what they saw and included their observations in what they wrote. But the course had its limitations. Students told me "garbage is nasty." They asked, "Why do we have to study it? Why can't we examine a different public policy issue?" Upon my own reflection, I believe a whole semester focused on municipal solid waste is too narrow when directed at educationally bypassed children who have reading, writing, and cognitive difficulties. A more general focus on the environment may be better.

Next fall I will broaden students' focus by presenting them with a course on "Environment and Public Policy." The course will include a municipal solid waste segment. We will replicate the "Bronx Race to Recycle!" contest. Students will evaluate

the school's recycling program. Students will read about municipal solid waste, but they will also examine water quality. The Bronx River is across the street from our school. Students will visit a sewage treatment plant. We are planning a three hour sail on the Hudson River Sloop Clearwater during which we will examine the ecology and history of the Hudson River. Students will study the history of New York City's drinking water supply. They will investigate the air quality of our community. Garbage is an important part of our environment, but it is not the only part. I hope a broader view of the environment will stimulate, rather than force, students' inquiry.

I hope that recycling will become a greater part of our school's culture; the Student Council's involvement in the "Bronx Race to Recycle!" contest was a good beginning.

Fannie Lou Hamer Freedom High School has three unique qualities that render it fertile ground for a successful recycling program and for inculcating the culture of recycling.

First, we have a supportive principal, Mr. Donald Freeman, willing to go beyond the Board of Education mandates that schools recycle. He is an active participant in the quest for additional recycling containers needed in our classrooms. He supports student activities focused on recycling and has been eager to participate in the school's recycling program. Second, our custodial staff, led by Mr. Aris Apergis, is eager to see the program work. They are even helping to set up a leaf storage bin for a leaf composting project we expect to start this fall, in conjunction with The New York Botanical Garden's Bronx Green-Up Compost Project. Of course, leaf composting will be a component of my Environment and Public Policy course.

Third, I have been actively studying and evaluating municipal solid waste programs for more than ten years. As a faculty member, I have used my knowledge to influence the direction of the recycling program at the high school. I have relied on my experience to design learning activities using solid waste management as an example. Most schools will not have staff members with a knowledge of the history and present workings of municipal solid waste management and of recycling programs. However, they will have staff who are concerned about

Continued on page 6

Dates to Remember

August 31-September 3, 1999, **National Urban Forest Conference, "Building Cities of Green,"** in Seattle. Write to American Forests, P.O. Box 2000, Washington, D.C. 20013-2000.

September 18, **Volunteer New York Coastal Cleanup**, sponsored by the New York Chapter of the American Littoral Society, 28 West Road, Broad Channel, New York, NY 11693, (718) 634-6467, or call Barbara Cohen at (718) 471-2166.

Through September 21, "**Our Water: From Watershed to Central Park,**" an exhibit which follows the journey of a single drop of water as it travels to New York from upstate watersheds, is at the Charles Dana Discovery Center inside Central Park at 110th Street and Fifth Avenue. Hours are Tuesday-Sunday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. For information, call (212) 860-1370. This exhibit is made possible by the Central Park Conservancy and the New York City Department of Environmental Protection, and you would have seen it had you attended the EEAC Members' Meeting in May!

September 23-25, "**Reweaving the World,**" 11th Annual International Conference of the Society for Ecological Restoration, in San Francisco. To learn more, write or call the Society for Ecological Restoration, Suite B, 1207 Seminole Highway, Madison, WI 53711, (608) 262-9547.

Through September 26, an exhibition of **tropical plants**, in the Enid A. Haupt Conservatory of the New York Botanical Garden. To learn more, call (718) 817-8700.

Through September 26, "**Gotham Comes of Age: New York Through the Lens of the Byron Company, 1892-1942,**" an exhibition in the Museum of the City of New York, Fifth Avenue at 103rd Street. For more information, call (212) 534-1672.

Through the end of October, "**Family Gardening Adventures,**" on Thursdays in the New York Botanical Garden. See number above.

October 31, deadline for submissions in the **18th Annual Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge Photographic Contest**. Write or call, Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge Photo Contest, Gateway National Recreation Area, Floyd Bennett Field, Building 69, Brooklyn, NY 11234, (718) 318-4340.

November 20, Annual Saturday Science "**The Blaustein Conference,**" of the Elementary School Science Association, in Francis Lewis High School, Flushing, Queens. To learn more, call Marian Sloane, (718) 763-5492.

New York Events

Those interested in the renovation of **Grand Central Terminal** and the area around it have choices of two free tours: On Wednesdays at 12:30 p.m., the Municipal Art Society leads a tour of the Terminal, lasting just over an hour. No reservations are needed. Meet at the information booth. On Fridays at 12:30 p.m., the Grand Central Partnership has a free walking tour of the area, including the Terminal. Meet at the Philip Morris building on the Southwest corner of Park Avenue and 42nd Street.

The American Museum of Natural History has opened the **David S. and Ruth L. Gottesman Hall of Planet Earth**, the first half of the Rose Center for Earth and Space. A new planetarium and hall devoted to cosmology are to open early in 2000. For information about the new facility, call (212) 769-5100.

Con Edison has issued its annual **Environment, Health and Safety Report**. Copies may be obtained by writing or calling Howard J. Somers, Director, Program Management, EH&S, at 4 Irving Place, New York NY 10003, (212) 460-4744.

The 23-mile Bronx River begins near the Kensico Dam in Westchester County and ends in the East River at Hunts Point, connecting 1,800 acres of public parks and recreation areas. To learn more about it, call (212) 360-1357 and select option 6 for a free **Bronx River Map and Guide**. It features photographs, history, points of interest and environmental preservation programs.

Any school is eligible to receive **free spruce and pine seedlings** from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. To learn about how to obtain them, write or call the Saratoga Tree Nursery, 431 Route 50 S, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866 or call (518) 581-1439.

Since April, the New York City Department of Sanitation and the City's four botanical gardens have been distributing **free compost**. Residents may collect up to 60 gallons free of charge with their own containers, or buy a bin for \$20. For information about dates and sites of distribution, call the following numbers: Bronx, (718) 817-8543; Brooklyn, (718) 623-7290; Queens, (718) 539-5296; Staten Island, (718) 273-0629.

You Can Change the World is a new publication of the Council on the Environment of New York City. It provides an interesting and well-illustrated introduction to important environmental issues and offers practical, simple actions, which can be taken to prevent or reduce pollution. For a free copy, write or call the Council, Room 228, 51 Chambers Street, New York, NY 10007, (212) 788-7900.

The New York City Soil and Water Conservation District, part of a nationwide system of 3,000 districts, is the first one in an urban environment. To find out about it, write to 24th floor, 290 Broadway, New York, NY 10007, or call (212) 637-3877.

Young Minds Want to Grow is a publication of GreenThumb of the City of New York Parks and Recreation. In color and well illustrated, it is especially designed for young students. To obtain a copy, write to GreenThumb, Room 1020, 49 Chambers Street, New York, NY 10007.

The Staten Island Unit of the Gateway National Recreation Area is looking for volunteers to help out in the following areas: visitor center operations; natural resource management; recreation programs; tour leaders; historic reenactors, and library assistants. For more information, contact **Volunteers-in-Parks, National Park Service**, 210 New York Avenue, Staten Island, NY 10305, or call (718) 354-4500.

"Together in the City" is a new permanent exhibit in the Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Avenue, at St. Marks Avenue. This multi-media production explores how people play, work and celebrate together throughout the City's ethnically diverse areas. To learn more, call (718) 735-4400.

"Heal the Bay" is a theme of Baykeeper, part of the American Littoral Society. Here the "bay" means several bodies of water: Raritan Bay, Upper New York Bay, Newark Bay, Jamaica Bay, Lower New York Bay, and Sandy Hook Bay. Find out about Baykeeper by writing to the American Littoral Society, Sandy Hook, Highlands, New Jersey 07132 or call (732) 291-0176.



EEAC Members Meeting in June at the Dana Discovery Center in Central Park North



EEAC 25TH ANNIVERSARY EVENT
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 1, 1999

Plan to join together with past, present, and perhaps future members of EEAC, to enjoy one another's company as we celebrate EEAC's 25 years of effort and accomplishment in environmental education.

3:00 PM
BROOKLYN BRIDGE WALK

Meet on the Manhattan side and walk together over the Brooklyn Bridge. Along the way, our own John Muir will share aspects of the built and natural environment and different visions of Manhattan and Brooklyn that the bridge has witnessed over its 116 year history. Bring binoculars to observe the Peregrin Falcons nesting there.

4:30 - 7:00 PM
RECEPTION AT BARGEMUSIC

Light refreshments will be served, music will lift our spirits, and a short, but meaningful ceremony, will give us a chance to reminisce about our past and anticipate our future with many who helped us reach our silver anniversary.

EEAC members, please note that you will receive an invitation with details and a response card in early September.



Kominski Fund Report

By the time you read this, four New York City students will have completed a week in one of the ecology camps operated by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. Once again this year, EEAC was able to obtain scholarships for the students, and their transportation expenses were paid out of the Kominski Fund. Last year, we were able to make arrangements for two students to attend these week-long camps.

In June, we presented Kominski Fund awards to the following six students in each of three high schools that John Kominski was especially close to: Kim Barrons and Cecily Sanders from Boys and Girls High; Ratanawan (Jennifer) Phurchpean and Kuma A.

Ray from Bowne High; and Juan Carlos Quinones and Greta Kirschner from the High School of Environmental Studies. Making the presentations were Andrea Kominski (twice), Ruth Eilenberg, Terry Ippolito, and Kenneth Kowald.

As you will learn elsewhere in this issue, the Kominski Fund award for an outstanding educator is now accepting applications. It is expected that the award will be presented at the Annual Conference of the Science Council of New York City, next Spring. Joy Garland and Kim Estes-Fradis are representing EEAC on the awards committee and Stanley Mandel and Marion Sloane, both past Presidents of the Elementary School Science Association (a member of SCONYC) are representing that organization.

In early May, you should have received a letter from Dr. Mary Leou, Chair of EEAC, and Ruth Eilenberg, Chair of the Kominski Fund Committee, asking for your continuing support of the Fund. As you know, the Fund was launched when EEAC set aside \$1,000 for it, in 1997. As we went to press, the Fund balance was \$1,508 after \$875.95 was used for expenses.

Contributions are welcome at any time and should be made payable to the "Kominski Fund, EEAC", and sent to the EEAC Treasurer, Joanne Dittersdorf, P.O. Box 408, Cooper Station, New York, NY 10276. Contributions are deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Suggestions and comments about the Kominski Fund may be sent to Ruth Eilenberg at 401 East 86th Street, Apt. 4F, New York, NY 10028 or via e-mail: HERE52@aol.com...

GREEN HORIZONS IV

Tuesday, October 5, 1999
Brooklyn Botanic Gardens

Green Horizons, an environmental careers conference for middle school students, is presented by EEAC and New York ReLeaf Region 2 and sponsored by the Magnolia Tree Earth Center, with additional support from the U.S. Forest Service and Con Edison.

For more information, contact Nancy Wolf at jlwolflink@aol.com...

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the environment and who are willing to learn about recycling programs while assisting their implementation.

Good public policy would encourage those individuals to become active in the recycling endeavor of their schools. It would encourage their participation in the coordination of recycling programs and in learning about recycling programs by offering to pay them for their extra work. This must be a long term financial commitment. New York City is facing the prospect of not being sure where its garbage will go after its only remaining landfill closes on January 1, 2002.

Recycling in schools will reduce the volume of waste the city will need to export. It will reinforce recycling in students' homes. Active and effective school recycling programs, supported at every level of the administrative hierarchy and by city government, are long overdue. They offer a real return to the city and to the environment.

EEAC News...

Environmental Links...

Upcoming events...

Visit our website

<http://members.aol.com/wleou/eeac.html>

EEAC AND ESSA ANNOUNCE NEW ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATOR AWARD

The Environmental Education Advisory Council and the Elementary School Science Association would like to recognize an outstanding environmental educator by presenting the John Kominski Memorial Award to a K – 12 teacher.

SELECTION CRITERIA

The John Kominski Memorial Award will be given to a New York City public or private school teacher who has demonstrated leadership in effecting positive change in environmental education and practice with students and/or personnel within the school or the community.

Examples may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Organizing a new environmental project with students and/or staff
- Taking initiative to infuse E.E. across the curriculum
- Creating a new E.E. curriculum unit
- Organizing a student environmental club
- Organizing a school environmental task force to affect and monitor change
- With students and staff, organizing a community environmental event
- Creating an environmental newsletter for educational outreach
- Helping students to identify and solve an environmental problem in the school or community

Individuals may nominate themselves, or school personnel or students may nominate a teacher. The cover letter should include the name, address, phone, or e-mail of the individual, plus the school's address and phone. Indicate the subject and grade(s) taught by the nominee and the number of years the nominee has taught environmental education.

Attach a letter, not exceeding one typed page, with details of the nominee's achievements, including dates, goals, results, and who took part. Please include two letters of support, one from the nominee's principal/supervisor and another from someone who was affected by the nominee's work either in the school or community.

Documentation in the form of photos and press clippings is welcome, but no tapes or videos should be sent. The Selection Committee may request further information. Stamped self-addressed envelopes should accompany any materials you wish to have returned.

The successful candidate will receive a check for \$100 from EEAC and a Certificate of Recognition presented by ESSA at the SCONYC Science Conference in April 2000 and be featured in the EEAC and ESSA Newsletters.

All materials should be sent in one package to Kim Estes-Fradis, NYC Dept. of Environmental Protection, 59-17 Junction Blvd. Corona, NY 11368. Materials must be postmarked no later than January 31, 2000.

Notification will be sent to the winner of the award by March 31, 2000.

YEAR 2000 U.S.EPA ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION GRANTS

The fiscal year 2000 Environmental Education Grants Solicitation Notice will be available on or about the middle of August. Applications will be due mid-November. Projects would have start dates of July 2000 or later.

U.S. EPA provides grants for environmental awards by EPA Regional Offices in amounts of \$5,000 or less. The solicitation notice contains all the information and forms needed by applicants. You can access the solicitation notice and a grant writing tutorial via Internet <<http://www.epa.gov/enviroed/grants.html>>

To receive hard copy of the solicitation notice from EPA Region 2, call (212) 637-3674 and give mailing information to Josephine Lageda. Questions? Call Terry Ippolito, (212) 637-3671 or e-mail: ippolito.teresa@epamail.epa.gov ...

Note: If you were an applicant to Region 2 for an E.E. grant in 1998 or 1999, you will automatically be sent the 2000 solicitation notice.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

New Member

Renewal

Name: _____

Address: _____

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: _____

Please check the appropriate calendar year membership category:

\$ 20 Regular \$ 50 Sustaining Organization \$200 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:

Exhibits Issues Membership Newsletter Programs Youth Technology Kominski Fund

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

Joanne Dittersdorf, EEAC Treasurer, P.O. Box 408, Cooper Station, New York, NY 10276



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