



EEAC

SUMMER 2013

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

GLOBE NY Metro



Help fight “Nature Deficiency Syndrome” and take your students **Into the Woods**. That’s the challenge in the four-year, \$1.2 million Environmental Literacy grant award, GLOBE NY Metro at Queens College received from NOAA last year.

The program entitled Into the Woods is led by GLOBE NY Metro partnered with the Wallerstein Collaborative at NYU, the Bronx River Alliance, Urban Rangers and CEI-PEA (Center for Educational Innovation-Public Education Association) Children First Network. The project aims to improve environmental literacy among New York City elementary students by improving the environmental literacy of their teachers. Peter Schmidt, Associate Director of GLOBE NY Metro and lead author of the proposal, plans on doing that by actually getting the teachers into the woods and natural areas around their schools. After running dozens of professional development workshops and teacher training programs about working outdoors with students, he was struck by how teacher

certification programs across the country failed to give elementary classroom teachers any training in working outdoors with students or any background on how they might use the natural environment as a resource in their teaching.

With **Into the Woods**, the teachers sign on for three years. During the first year, 11 days, usually weekends, are devoted to field trips to different natural areas around the city for teachers, immersing them in activities and exposing them to content background so that they are comfortable in these environments. Many of the activities are related to subjects and topics they have to cover in class, but the major focus is on getting field experience.

In year two, the program starts to link outdoor experiences to the teachers’ required scope and sequence as they begin to develop lessons and units using outdoor experiences to replace more traditional sit-and-read classroom-bound

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EEAC NEWS.....

Steering Committee Meetings

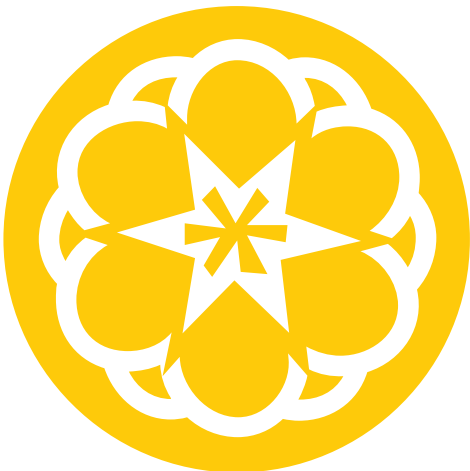
Please visit the EEAC website at www.eeac-nyc.org for meeting locations or contact an EEAC Steering Committee member. All steering committee meetings are open to anyone interested in learning about environmental education in New York City and sharing information about special programs and projects.

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
Joy Garland
Jane Jackson
Regina McCarthy
Lenore Miller, Newsletter Editor



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

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The New York Botanical Garden
Teacher Training
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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.

EEAC Officers

Judith Hutton, Acting Chairperson
E. Shig Matsukawa, Secretary
John Pritchard, Treasurer

Steering Committee *

Lynn Cole, Queens Borough Public Library
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Kim Estes-Fradis, NYC Dept. of Environmental Protection
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E. Shig Matsukawa, Food Waste Recycler
John Pritchard, Grover Cleveland High School
Betsy Ukeritis, NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation
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

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Chair's Message

Let's hear it for warm weather! Spring and summer are exciting times of year in New York; plants are healthy and vibrant, animals are plentiful and active, while environmental educators all over the tri-state area are busy delivering wonderful and engaging programs.

As always, EEAC has coordinated fantastic networking and educational events this spring. EEAC recently hosted a tour of Brooklyn Grange at its flagship Long Island City location. Our host was City Growers, a non-profit educational organization that connects urban communities with agriculture, food and environment through farm education. It was an opportunity to see the rooftop farm as well as learn about how environmental education connects children to food in an urban environment.

This is just a taste of what is on the horizon! Please come to our meetings, network and connect with folks in the field of Environmental Education. Join our listserv or check out our new EEAC-NYC Facebook page to keep up with what our organization has to offer.

EEAC is also undergoing another transition. As many of you may know, Betsy Ukeritis recently stepped down as Chair of EEAC because of a move into a new professional position outside of New York City. I will be acting Chair of EEAC until the elections in the fall.

We are actively seeking members who are interested in becoming more involved in EEAC. If you're interested in sharing ideas or would like to communicate your views on current environmental education-related topics, please come to a meeting or program!

Continue doing wonderful work this spring and summer. I look forward to working with you all!

Judith Hutton

N.Y.C. Nature

A New and Wonderful Column in the Sunday NYTimes

Be sure to check out Page 4 of The Metro Section of the Sunday New York Times. Dave Taft, Coordinator at Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge of Gateway National Recreation Area has been writing these weekly columns about nature in the city. Dave is not only a terrific writer, he is also a top-notch birder, fisherman, general naturalist and fine artist [Ed. Note: he did the illustrations for the 2nd edition of my own book, *Using the Outdoors to Enrich Learning*]. Past columns were about tree frogs, bloodroot, glass eels, and pink lady slippers. Read the columns in the paper edition or on-line at:

<http://cityroom.blogs.nytimes.com/2013>

Book Buzz

Nature Wars: The Incredible Story of How Wildlife Comebacks Turned Backyards into Battlegrounds

In early April, I attended an author's presentation and book signing at the Staten Island Museum. The invited guest was Jim Sterba, an award-winning journalist and novelist. This time around, Mr. Sterba has taken a long look at how Americans are interacting with and coping (or NOT coping) with the "wild" animals who have been returning with greater frequency to suburbia. Not all the interactions are pretty and their increases are resulting in emotional clashes between those who've encouraged that return...by feeding, by protective laws, by staging protests....with efforts to stem the nuisances created by these interactions.

Goose droppings on the golf course may be one manifestation, but when those same Canada geese are sucked into the jet engines of planes, causing those planes to crash...or in the case of lucky Flight 1549, a landing in the Hudson River that resulted in no lives lost....no one took the side of the geese and their sanctuaries were quickly destroyed.

Yet, people think they are doing wildlife a favor by putting out food for feral cats, or letting their domestic cats outside without taking into account the huge populations of songbirds that are killed every year by those cute furry creatures....annual estimates of their deaths-by-cats have been extrapolated to the BILLIONS!

Here on Staten Island, we now have wild turkeys proliferating as they grow comfortable around people, plus sightings of foxes, skunks and many deer...no shooting allowed. Never mind the deer ticks causing lyme-disease, I am waiting for the inevitable deer/auto crash that will result in serious human injury or fatality as deer travel our roads.

Mr. Sterba has thoroughly researched the topic as a serious journalist, yet tells the story with the skills of a novelist. I heartily recommend this fascinating well-told book...it was an eye-opener for me.

Lenore Miller

Pat Lockhart Makes the News AGAIN!

Teacher Patricia Lockhart of P.S. 57 Staten Island, who was featured in the Fall 2012 issue of EEAC News, has made EE news once more. This time her achievement of 2nd Place in the 2013 New York State Green Ribbon Schools program for building a solar-powered tricycle for kids with disabilities was written up in American Teacher, the AFT magazine.

To read the entire article and see a photo of kids using the trike, go to the UFT newsletter WebSite, click on newsletter, and enter title of article in the Search box:
www.aft.org/emags/at/at_mayjun13/pubData/SEO/Page_16.html - 8k - 2013-05-01

And if that wasn't enough, she and her classes won a \$25,000 grant from the DOE as they were granted a Green Flag award from National Wildlife Federation's Eco-Schools USA, the organization's highest sustainability award, one of only 10 schools nationwide to be so recognized.

To read that entire article and view the accompanying photos, go to: the UFT website, locate their newsletter. Type the following title in the Search box: **PS 57, Staten Island, wins Green Flag environmental award**

Congratulations, Pat...we need more teachers like you!

EEAC Tour of Brooklyn Grange *By Shig Matsukawa*



On May 7, 2013, a tour of Brooklyn Grange, an urban rooftop farm business located in Long Island City (37-18 Northern Blvd, Queens) was organized for EEAC members and friends. Our host was City Growers, the non-profit educational arm of the Brooklyn Grange operations. Staff member, Cara Chard, of City Growers was our tour guide. Nineteen people attended the tour of the 1-acre rooftop farm

The rooftop farm as originally planned was to have been located in Brooklyn, but that plan fell through. Instead, the farm was built on top of a large 6-story building in Queens that was constructed back in 1919 for a car parts manufacturer. The structure, including the roof, is therefore, more than strong enough to hold the weight of the farm (soil and equipments).

Since the name Brooklyn Grange had become well known through their media campaign, they decided to keep the name even though the farm was eventually opened in Queens (in 2010). They now have a second farm in the former Brooklyn Navy Yard (rooftop of Building No. 3), and an apiary (bee farm)--the Brooklyn Grange Bees (BGBees)--with over 30 hives also within the Brooklyn Navy Yard. Honey is a huge part of the farm's business. They have 3 hives at the Queens rooftop.

The farm practices organic farming, but is not certified organic due to cost and because they can't guarantee the source of their compost. Their compost consists of food waste from all over Queens with drop-offs that include subway stations. They also get their food waste from a cafe that's in their building. Their compost is processed in an aerated static pile (ASP) with a solar powered air pump.

Their soil consists of 50% rock (which breaks down over time, releasing minerals) and 50% compost. Beneath the soil, is a three-piece layer/liner; the bottom layer is a plastic tray that looks like the bottom half of an egg carton. Some of their water needs are collected in this tray from the rain. They also have water lines running through each row for irrigation (on a timer 4 times a day) and only spray with a hose on hot days.

They have a small greenhouse to grow their seedlings. Seeds are either bought (organic Heirloom) or gotten from other farmers, and their own seeds are those that are basically easy to collect. Since their soil depth is only 12 inches, it is not deep enough to grow some crops such as potatoes, or corn which gets too tall. More than half of their harvest goes to restaurants and only NYC restaurants, some goes to farmers/green markets and CSA's. Any leftovers goes to a program for young former inmates.

The farm depends on volunteers and is open to anyone, Saturdays 11 am to 3 pm. City Growers provides educational opportunities for schools and can get up to 90 kids a day visiting the farm.

To learn more, visit brooklyngrangefarm.com and citygrowers.org.





Teacher Environmental Education Preparation (TEEP): A Review and Progress Report

Begun in December 1999, Teacher Environmental Education Preparation (TEEP) is the effort by EEAC, NYU's Wallerstein Collaborative for Urban Environmental Education and GrowNYC to foster more EE in teacher preparation programs in New York State. Teacher preparation is meant to include pre-service teacher training and in-service training for those working to complete their Masters or related professional degrees.

TEEP organized six symposia throughout the State to bring together environmental educators, State Education Department (SED) staff, representatives of NYS DEC, NYC DEP, US EPA-Region II and other government entities, administrators and teachers from colleges that have teacher training programs, and staff from formal and non-formal environmental organizations, to discuss ways to expand EE in teacher preparation programs throughout the State.

TEEP produced a White Paper on EE in NYS that has been reprinted in the newsletter of the NYS Outdoor Education Association (NYSOEA) and other venues. Motivated by a TEEP workshop, The College of New Rochelle initiated but has not yet completed the process of establishing a cognate- 6-9 credits in environmental science or studies that would be accepted by the SED as part of overall credit requirements for teacher certification in biology, chemistry, physics, Earth science and social studies. Keuka College implemented Project Learning Tree training with its teacher education candidates after participating in the TEEP symposium in Rochester, NY. A number of colleges that already had teacher preparation programs in EE, received the support and assistance necessary to strengthen their EE offerings after becoming involved in TEEP. TEEP members reviewed the Environmental Literacy Plan developed by NYSOEA and inserted changes that improved the EE in teacher preparation component.

While these developments are encouraging, TEEP has not been able to stimulate systemic change across the 110 teacher training colleges in the State. We estimate that only between ten and twenty percent have significant EE preparation programs. Given this situation, TEEP members have joined with the Environmental Literacy Plan (ELP) Committee of NYSOEA (NYSOEA committee co-chairs Mary Leou of NYU and Beth Klein of SUNY Cortland are founding members of TEEP) to work on strategies to foster adoption of that plan with its strong teacher prep section.

The NYSOEA committee is giving its support to legislative initiatives that would call for NYS to adopt an environmental literacy plan. The committee is also considering approaching members of the New York State Board of Regents to garner their support for a statewide environmental literacy plan with a strong teacher preparation component. We will keep the EEAC community informed about TEEP's progress as we move forward.

Michael Zamm
Director, Environmental Education
GrowNYC

Co-Chair (with Mary Leou)
EEAC TEEP Committee



activities. All of the partners are in agreement that none of the strategies and ideas being introduced and advocated will be adopted unless they rigorously address student performance and relate directly to the required curriculum. The project is not looking to add new requirements to the teachers' day but to replace some traditional activities with more effective ways to communicate, motivate and teach students a broad variety of subjects. Ideally, at the end of the program, teachers will see the outdoors as an extension of the classroom.

As teachers begin to move their students outdoors, they will work with representatives of the Wallerstein Collaborative to develop service learning projects linked to the natural environments around the school. Also, there will be staff available from GLOBE NY Metro and the Bronx River Alliance to accompany teachers on field trips with their students and to help in classrooms as the participating teachers begin to introduce the new concepts and activities into their teaching.

A key component of every workshop is introducing teachers to individuals and organizations in their local areas which offer resources that will help them integrate outdoor activities into meaningful experiences and lessons for their students so that they will be supported in their efforts after the grant ends.

Currently completing the first Cohort (series of sessions), the recruitment for Cohort 2 is now underway. Ideally, we would like to have more than one teacher, 2nd through 5th grade, from the same school. Also, we are particularly interested in teachers who are not currently comfortable working outdoors. If you are interested, please contact Peter Schmidt at: peter.schmidt@qc.cuny.edu.





MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION 2013

☐ 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, EEAC, 72-35 Metropolitan Avenue, Apt. 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!

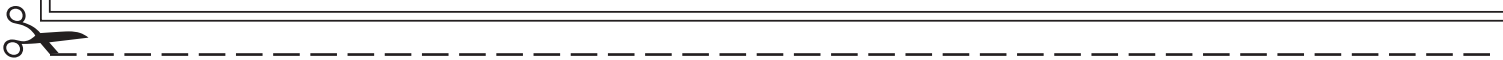
EEAC is a 501-(c)3 organization.

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)



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