



Environmental
Education
Advisory
Council of
New York City

EEAC

Fall/Winter 2015/16

Building Wonder with ScrapKins

by Brian Yanish

Let's face it. Kids can spot the lesson a mile away. The Recycling Bin with a smiley face, the light bulb with a cloyingly cute alliterative name, the anthropomorphizing of any object from factories to backpacks to natural resources.

Unless you've got a savvy designer or an engaging story, they usually fall flat. And that's a shame. I believe that much of the lack of interest in learning about environmental issues among kids comes from poor design. I'm not saying Earth Day has to be sexy but to grab the attention of kids whose time is already split between digital content, social media and ubiquitous advertising, you need to think outside the box, re-design the box, throw away the box or use the box in a new way.

In 1979, I was a five year old kid who loved to draw. Day after day with a fist full of crayons, I created monsters. Big, small, many-eyed, teeth chomping, tail swinging; it was what I loved to do. A few years later, I spent that same energy building things from wood and other junk in my father's small workshop. I was obsessed with making cards and gifts and during the holiday season, I spent hours creating humorous carved ornaments and other objects for my extended family. As an adult, I received a gift back; my mom, unbeknownst to me, had saved a portfolio of those monster drawings I

created as a kid!

Still enchanted by the joy in those childhood drawings, I cast six of my favorites as the creatures who became *The ScrapKins*, the creative tribe who live in a recycling center and build their world out of the things we throw away. Already experienced in the world of kids' design from time with Jim Henson Productions and building educational CD-Roms, I was ready to create something big. So in 2007, *The ScrapKins* were hatched with the mission of fostering creativity and resourcefulness in kids across the globe.



Through school visits, festivals and workshops, *The ScrapKins* teach kids to turn milk cartons into pirate ships, cardboard tubes into custom creatures and other amazing toys. We have created programs for Sesame Street, Whole Foods Markets, The American Museum of Natural History, Maryland Science Center, Tribeca Family Festival, Seventh Generation, Cli-Bar, Speakaboos.com, World Science Festival, Maker Faire and Scholastic Afterschool. In November 2012, we had an amazing opportunity to go international and were invited to host

three days of Recycled Art Workshops in Doha, Qatar in the Middle East.

But let's get back to our quest: just how do we create engaging experiences with kids to tackle the issues of recycling and sustainability? We get them making amazing things: a boat that floats, a parachute that soars, a car that races. If you can get children to be proud of something they've personally

(Continued on page 7)

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 deadline is the first Monday of Feb., May, and September. We would love your ideas!

Newsletter Committee

Lynn Cole

Kim Estes-Fradis

Joy Garland

Lenore Miller, Newsletter Editor

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The Environmental Education Advisory Council of New York City, EEAC-NYC, is the only nonprofit organization with the sole purpose of promoting and supporting outstanding environmental education in New York City Schools and other centers for learning.

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

Judith Hutton

The New York Botanical Garden

Teacher Training

2900 Southern Boulevard

Bronx, NY 10458

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.

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STAY IN TOUCH!

Members, keep up with the latest EEAC news on EEAC-NYC@googlegroups.com

If you would like to join the listserv contact

Carol Franken at carolfranken@gmail.com



EEAC NYC



@eeacnyc



CHAIR'S MESSAGE

The long days of summer have begun to fade as we launch into the dynamic change of another autumn. Whether actively teaching or supporting the work of an environmental organization, we can all benefit by taking a few moments to slow down to enjoy nature.

EEAC kicked off the fall calendar with a Resume and Networking event at the Horticultural Society of New York followed by a nocturnal tour of Central Park with Gabriel Willow. EEAC is a cosponsor for the Environmental Education Expo to be held at New York University on Monday, October 19th between 4:30-6:30pm. The Environmental Education Expo is free for attendees and a wonderful opportunity to learn more about the valuable work of EE in NYC.

Our Annual Meeting (see p.8) is scheduled for Tuesday, November 10th between 5:30-7:30pm at New York University. Our featured speaker, Chris Payne, will speak about his book, *North Brother Island: The Last Unknown Place in New York City*. Tickets are available for our programs through Eventbrite. Please visit goo.gl/WBxWVE to reserve your spot.

We are also excited to offer the option of renewing both individual and organizational memberships through the Annual Meeting web link above! Your membership dollars help us support networking events, educational programs and the EEAC website. Please consider donating today.

A special thank you is due to our fantastic newsletter committee. In particular I would like to recognize Lenore Miller, our editor, for years of volunteer service to support this publication. Because of her dedication and hard work, the EEAC newsletter continues to be an informative contribution to the larger EE community in New York City. Thank you so much for your commitment of time and energy to this important project!

I look forward to seeing everyone at one of our programs this fall!

Judith Hutton

CLICK HERE
TO REGISTER

Eventbrite

**NYU Kimball Hall
246 Greene Street
New York, NY**

Talk by author, Chris Payne

Networking with friends old and new

Light refreshments


Questions? info@eeac-nyc.org

www.eeac-nyc.org



Environmental Education Advisory
Council of New York City

When & Where



NYU Kimball Hall
246 Greene Street
New York, NY

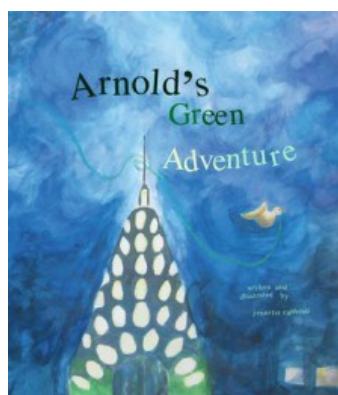
Tuesday, November 10, 2015 from 5:30 PM to 7:30 PM (EST)

Add to my calendar

- Outlook Calendar
- Google Calendar
- Yahoo! Calendar
- iCal Calendar

Book Buzz

Review by
Regina
McCarthy



Arnold's Green Adventure by
NYC author, *Jennifer Cantelmi*

I tend to be a purist about scientific identification in children's books, but am willing to stretch when it comes to fantasy and a good story. Since the main character of the book, is Arnold, a bird who lives in NYC, it really was a stretch. He's a yellow bird. Yellow birds are not common in NYC. We do have goldfinches, but they are rare sightings even for the most seasoned bird watcher. The story, however, is so sweet and relates to our urban Manhattan landscape, I gave it a pass. I did communicate with the illustrator/author who was aware of the actual paucity of yellow birds; she had made an artistic decision. Watercolors are light, so a yellow bird with some brown on its wings filled the role of the main character.

Here's the drama woven into the story: it's spring and there is a shortage of green leaves for Arnold to build his nest. He finds a florist's truck and it is like finding gold. Unfortunately, the truck's door closes with Arnold inside and he is transported to a new neighborhood. The neighborhood is the High Line. Eureka! He did find gold.

It would be interesting to survey the High Line and see how many birds' nests are actually there. I doubt if there are many since it is too busy. After 11 a.m., gardeners and volunteers really have a hard time because of crowds. It does offer lots of green leaves which is his quest. He calls his whole family and they all come to this new resource for nest building. Chelsea has always been green, so there is no problem in finding older trees to build nests far from the tourists on the High Line. The area also provides good pickings for raptors and I've seen young Peregrines on fire escapes near the High Line. Pigeons, which are their main fare, still exist in spite of efforts by the High Line to keep them away. Or at least I think it's their efforts, I just don't see them under the rail trestle that the High Line is built on any more.

This is a sweet, lovely book. The appropriate age group is pre-school to third grade. I recommend it, but to teach the true names of urban birds, use **Urban Roosts** by Barbara Bash.



OXFORD, Ohio (Sept. 30, 2015) – Miami University's Project Dragonfly is accepting applications for 2016 Earth Expeditions graduate courses that offer extraordinary experiences in 15 countries throughout the world. New in 2016 are courses in Galápagos and Paraguay. http://EarthExpeditions.MiamiOH.edu/15-16_news

Earth Expeditions can build toward the Global Field Program (GFP), a master's degree that combines summer field courses worldwide with web learning communities so that students can complete the GFP master's part-time from anywhere in the United States or abroad. http://GFP.MiamiOH.edu/15-16_news

Project Dragonfly also offers graduate courses and the Advanced Inquiry Program (AIP) master's degree co-delivered by premier learning institutions in Cincinnati, Chicago, Cleveland, Denver, New York, Phoenix, San Diego and Seattle. The AIP master's takes place on-site and near AIP Master Institutions and through web-based learning communities. http://AIP.MiamiOH.edu/15-16_news

Graduate tuition for all programs is greatly reduced because of support from Miami University.

GREEN DESIGN FOR STUDENTS MANUAL NOW AVAILABLE



GrowNYC is proud to announce the publication of *Green Design for Students*, a manual of all of the major environmental and infrastructure issues that impact our daily lives, such as energy consumption, water treatment, agriculture, waste management, and sustainable construction, written specifically for Grades 7-12.

Green Design for Students was created and overseen by GrowNYC's Environmental Education Program which has over 40 years of experience in NYC schools designing and teaching topics related to the environment and sustainability. The manual is designed to augment the common core curriculum and provide exposure to critical real-world issues that are frequently overlooked in a standard lesson plan.

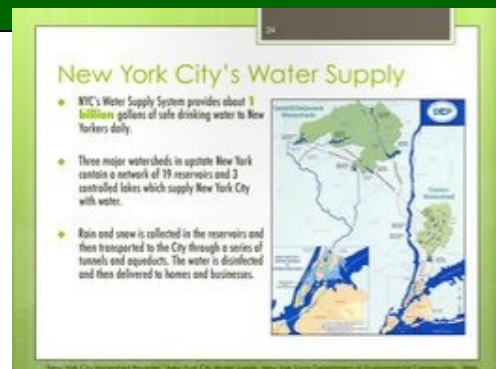
We encourage teachers to use and share the Green Design manual and help educate future generations about these pressing issues. To access the manual, go to <http://www.grownyc.org/blog/grownyc-releases-green-design-students-manual>

Michael Zamm, Director of Environmental Education Programs, GrowNYC

www.grownyc.org

mzamm@grownyc.org

212- 788-7900



New York City Outdoors!

An Environmental Education Expo

Monday, October 19th, 2015
NYU Kimmel Center
Rosenthal Pavilion
4:30PM to 6:30PM

**Light Refreshments and
raffle prizes too!**



**Please RSVP
to Tania at
tg1045@nyu.edu
or call 212-998-5464**

**Learn about in-class
programs and field
trips!**

*Composting
Growing oysters
Overnight field trips
Fishing and seining
Gardening
Using the City's parks as
a classroom
Harvesting solar power
Citizen science programs
Professional development
And much, much, more!*



THE RIVER PROJECT



NEW YORK CITY
SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT



RECYCLE RELAY

*Created by NYSDEC
Recycling Program*



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 (battery, 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”

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

Procedure

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.

Find an outdoor area or large indoor space where you can hold a relay race.

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.

At the other end of the space, place the “Recycling Center” and “Landfill” bins or signs.

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.

The teams will play until all of their items are sorted, and whomever finishes first wins.

After the race is over, go through the bins and discuss with the students whether each item is in the correct place.

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. When you are going through the bins at the end, first ask who sorted the item, then decide with the class whether it is in the right place. That way you will know if one team made too many incorrect choices.



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?

(Continued from page 1)

created and then give them the opportunity to play with it, then you've automatically raised their interest level. You've created an opening to ask questions. What is that boat made from? Do you have materials at home you can use, something you'd toss out? What if everyone re-used things like *The ScrapKins* do?

Challenge your students to create something. How would they envision a solution to recycling apathy or a practical improvement to existing infrastructure? Does it teach a new behavior to fellow students? Imagine your students re-designing their own recycling bin for their school. Rectangular? Boring. How would it grab attention? Put the creation in their hands. Kids of any age have tremendously inventive imaginations if they are given a challenge and the freedom to provide their own solution. Often, when children reach a certain age, they are fed the answers and this immediately crushes innovative thinking. With issues like the environment or recycling or consumption, the most inventive ideas may be the best solutions precisely because as adults we've "boxed in" our own thinking.

Wouldn't you rather be introduced to recycling through the story of a monster who has a taste for old toasters than a chart? I would. By instilling confidence in creating art and the wonder that can be created by making an actual toy, then you've got them inspired to engage. We don't just think outside the box. We look at the box itself, an object that people see everyday and ask what we can make from it. The digital world is an amazing place to explore but the simple act of DIY, hands-on creation, is what kids need. It leads to creative thinking, problem solving and empowers the maker. And who knows what that maker will build in the future.



The author with his pal, Murray



The ScrapKins latest book, "Junk Re-Think" an 80 page activity book and Recycled Art guide will be released Earth Day, 2016 from Henry Holt/Macmillan.



Environmental Education Advisory Council of New York City

Annual Meeting

November 10th, 5:30-7:30pm @ New York University



Talk by author, Chris Payne



Networking with friends old and new



Light refreshments

Register, join or renew
your membership or
make a donation at:

Eventbrite

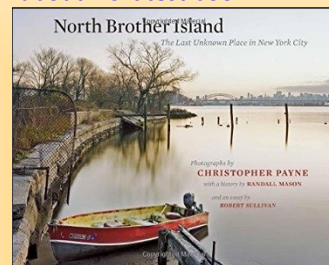
goo.gl/WBxWVE

Questions?
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www.eeac-nyc.org

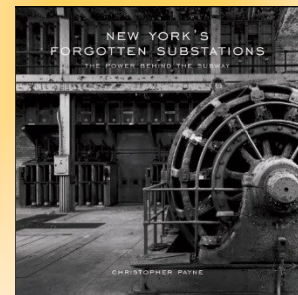
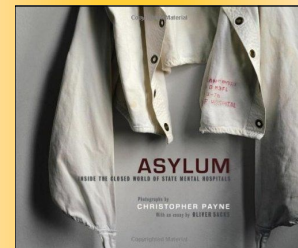


Location
NYU Kimball Hall
246 Greene Street
New York, NY

Mr. Payne will speak
about his latest book



Also by Chris Payne



The Environmental Education Advisory Council of New York City, EEAC-NYC, is the only nonprofit organization with the sole purpose of promoting and supporting outstanding environmental education in New York City Schools and other centers for learning.

EEAC After Dark

birds, bats and a very large group of raccoons welcomed us on our two-hour stroll

The view of the city looking south from Central Park

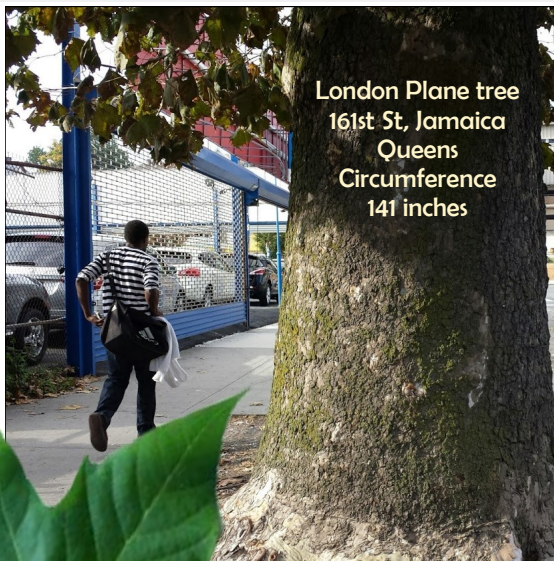
Just two decades ago embarking on a nocturnal tour of Central Park may not have been high on anyone's list of naturalist experiences in New York City. However, a recent tour led by Gabriel Willow, provided a small and adventurous group an exciting (and mostly lit) tour of a small portion of Central Park's 843 acres. Wildlife, including birds, bats and a very large group of raccoons welcomed us on our two-hour stroll through a surprisingly rich habitat for a variety of flora and fauna. There were moments when it was easy to forget that we were in the middle of the most densely populated urban areas in the United States. Our evening ended at Loeb Boathouse with a nightcap and discussion about future tours!

If you are interested in attending programs sponsored by EEAC, check the EEAC NYC website for the most up to date information. You can also sign up for our Google Group, "like" our Facebook page or follow the organization on Twitter to keep up with environmental education news, jobs and events!

TreesCount! 2015

A volunteer's species list

- 55 Callery Pear
- 43 Honeylocust var. inermis
- 35 Black Locust
- 34 Sophora
- 33 London Planetree
- 27 Pin Oak
- 22 Ginkgo
- 22 Norway Maple
- 21 Little-Leaf Linden
- 11 American Linden
- 5 Purple Leaf Plum
- 5 Green Ash
- 5 Swamp White Oak
- 4 Common Hackberry
- 4 Crimson King Maple
- 4 Japanese Zelkova
- 4 Red Maple
- 3 Chinese Elm
- 3 American Elm
- 3 Schumard Oak
- 3 Silver Maple
- 3 Willow Oak
- 2 Cherry



London Plane tree
161st St, Jamaica
Queens
Circumference
141 inches

Completion as
of mid October

NYC conducts a census of the street trees all over the city every 10 years. The Parks Department staff and "voluntreers" have been identifying, measuring and recording data about



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION



☐ New member ☐ Renewal Date _____

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY

☐ \$30 Individual ☐ \$75 Organization

☐ \$250 Individual Life Membership

Please make checks payable to "EEAC."

Mail completed form and check to:

Attn: Judith Hutton
The New York Botanical Garden
Teacher Training
2900 Southern Boulevard
Bronx, NY 10458

Members are welcome at EEAC Steering Committee meetings, held every 3rd Wednesday of the month. Check our website for these and other events.

www.eeac-nyc.org

EEAC is a 501-(c)3 organization.

Name _____

Title _____

Organizational Affiliation _____

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City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Organization Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home phone _____

Business phone _____

Email _____



ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

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