

The social quarters of the Loyal Order of Moose Lodge 1978 in Edison.

Tracking the Moose

Edison lodge shares in celebration

By ELIAS HOLTZMAN News Tribune Staff Writer

NT 3/29/88

The Loyal Order of the Moose has just marked its 100th anniver-

"We're proud!" they proclaim in their announcements.

And they are.

Just ask the members at Edison

Moose Lodge 1978 on Talmadge

Joseph Pinter, by day a back-hoe operator for Edison Township's Water Department, is a Moose trustee, and he wears his Moosedom, if not on his sleeve, then around his neck. He's wearing a string tie, and the clasp is an almost-fist sized, scarlet-eved almost-fist sized, scarlet-eyed Moose.

Being a Moose means a great deal to Joe Pinter: the camaraderie, the spirit. "It's not just a lodge," he says. "We help people."

He talks about the volunteer work

the Moose members do: collecting food, arranging parties for the needy and the handicapped.

He could have been speaking of the various drives the Moose has

held during the year. The Lodge is collecting aluminum cans in a giant bin outside the building.

The cans push at the sides of the bin, and the whole thing looks like a piece of "found art," as it reflects the light. The cans are periodically

sent off to a recycling plant and the proceeds used to fight leukemia.

Pinter smiles as he talks about the time he played Santa Claus at a party for a group of handicapped

"When you really get down to it, it

lightens your heart," he says.
"We're all like brothers here."

They call themselves the "family fraternity," and their membership

drives are keyed to recruiting additional family members.

Their insignia includes the familiar figure of a moose, with the initials P.A.P. between the horns: Purity, Aid and Progress.

Wendell Lightner is 30 and a

carpenter. He has been a member for three years now. The Moose is a family affair for him. His father the late William Lightner — was the first governor of the Edison Lodge when it was chartered 28 years ago. Two brothers, William and David, and brother-in law Alan Peck, are

also members.

Wendell Lightner stops in at the hall perhaps three times a week.

"The lodge," he says, "offers me a little bit more direction, to aim my abilities at..."

He wants to be an officer some

day.

He dropped by the other evening after work, along with his friend and co-worker, Scott Vandermark, also a carpenter. They were dressed in their carpenter clothes, and were seated at the bar, talking quietly and watching a sporting event on televi-

Vandermark, who like Lightner is one of the increasing number of younger members of the Lodge, is 27.

What does he like about the

Moose?
"Oh," he says, "You get to know everybody, and you have a good time...There are a lot of things to

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Administrator Frank Ferguson, left, and charter member James Martel of the Edison lodge.

Moose celebrate 100th

Continued from Page C-1

The current membership of the Edison Lodge is 380 and growing.

Why do people join?

The February issue of Moose magazine — the anniversary issue — comments, in its membership section: "The Lodge is an extension of our home, where members socialize with one another in a fraternal and congenial atmosphere."

And it continues: "The wonderful world of Moosedom is perpetuated by the influx of new members who seek to play a role in the outstanding activities of our fraternity."

And it is a fraternity. You become a member by invitation

only.

The first lodge was founded in Louisville, Ky., 100 years ago by Dr. John Henry Wilson. The Women of the Moose, an auxiliary organization, was founded in 1913. The Moose has a combined membership of more than 1,700,000 and has lodges in the United States, Canada and Great Britain.

An integral part of the Moose program is the maintenance of Mooseheart, just west of Chicago, to provide for the upkeep and education of children of Moose members in need; and Moosehaven, a retirement village in Orange Park, Fla.

The framed charter of the lodge and its initial membership of 155 hangs on the wall at the Edison Lodge's large ballroom. The second name on the charter — after that of William Lightner — is that of Frank Ferguson Jr., a millwright for Delco-Remy Batteries, New Brunswick.

Ferguson, the current administrator, is 56. He helped get the lodge started half a life ago at 28, when he had just moved into the area from Linden. He has been a guiding spirit of the lodge.

The Moose has meant a lot to him.

"Today," he says, "some of the best friends I have are people I met at the lodge.

And his son and son-in-law are

members.

Edison Lodge 1978 is one of 52 lodges in the state, and part of District 5. Its auxiliary, Women of the Moose Chapter 1492, has 100 members. Other lodges in the district are Linden, Perth Amboy,

South River, Rahway, Old Bridge and Bay Shore.

Says Ferguson: "The range of membership includes members of Congress, the State Legislature, public officials, business, white and blue collar and retired members, of which the greatest numbers are blue collar family men."

Some of the beneficiaries of Moose fund-raising activities are the Edison Sheltered Workshop, the YMCA, the Leukemia Foundation and the Arthritis Foundation. Members participate in the YMCA annual food basket for the needy campaign by collecting food and helping deliver the baskets. The lodge has also held in-house raffles for its fund drive. Members pick up aluminum cans on call.

The lodge allows the use of its hall by the Coast Guard Auxiliary of the Perth Amboy Flotilla, and by the Four Wheelers, a club of four-wheel drive enthusiasts.

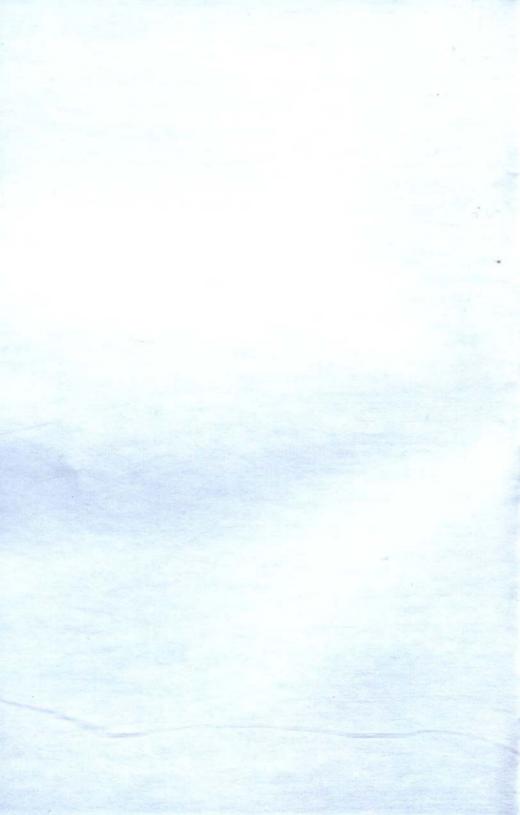
Ferguson points out that Lodge 1978 was the first group to sponsor a community wide Easter-egg hunt, well before it became the practice of the township recreation department.

Edison Organizations

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1999 Annual Report





1999 ANNUAL REPORT

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Introduction

The Edison Wetlands Association (EWA) is a grassroots organization dedicated to protecting environmentally sensitive areas of central New Jersey through education, action and public awareness.

1999 has been a year of change and growth for EWA as the organization positions itself to be an increasingly powerful force for environmental protection and education in New Jersey.

The first four sections of the Annual Report parallel the strategic priorities identified by the EWA Board of Trustees in January 1999:

- Environmental education
- Cleanup and restoration of toxic waste sites
- · Preservation of open space
- Building community awareness and action

The remaining sections summarize activities related to EWA internal operations: funding, administration and financial reports.

Environmental Education

Goal: To increase understanding and appreciation of the importance of wetlands and to foster a sense of environmental responsibility throughout all communities in the Raritan River Estuary.

Education Programs

- Members of the EWA Board of Trustees developed a comprehensive 3-year environmental education program for delivery to every fourth-grade class in Edison. EWA is working with Board of Education Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum Development to fund this program. The program builds on the very successful pilot program EWA delivered to two fourth-grade classes during the 1998-1999 school year.
- As part of the program, EWA presented one day of in-service training to more than 50 fourth-grade teachers in Edison Township in November. The training provided instructions to teachers, teaching materials, and games for incorporation into the standard curriculum. The training received a high rating from the participants.
- The New Brunswick Environmental Commission and the Woodbridge River Watch are modeling their environmental education programs on EWA's pilot program.
- EWA is using its experience in Edison to develop an estuarybased environmental curriculum for delivery to school systems in all municipalities in the Raritan River Estuary.
- Discussions are underway with the Metuchen-Edison YMCA regarding customization of the curriculum for use in weeklong summer camp programs.

Informational Materials

- EWA is updating brochures for its Raritan
 River Project to include facts about animals,
 birds, fish and plants found in the Raritan
 River, as well as information on the history
 of the river, ways people can protect the
 river, and a stream guide of the river.
- EWA is creating a set of informational brochures to educate and inform the relevant communities about the Dismal Swamp, a 1000-acre wetland area in Edison, Metuchen and South Plainfield.



EWA Executive Director Robert Spiegel conducting a field trip in the Dismal Swamp.

Toxic Waste Seminar

On September 4, EWA sponsored a free seminar on toxic waste management. Participants learned the appropriate procedures for dealing with a toxic situation and for addressing an emergency medical situation, including appropriate attire for different projects, such as cleaning up an oil spill or handling hazardous materials. Norman J. Van Houten, Ph.D., a professor at the New Jersey Institute of Technology and technical consultant to EWA, led the seminar with assistance from Robert Spiegel, Executive Director of EWA.

Cleanup and Restoration of Toxic Waste Sites

Goal: To make the Raritan River safe for all commercial fishing and recreational activities. (This requires identifying all of the contaminated sites that impact the Raritan, prioritizing them, and stimulating appropriate remedial action by owners and regulatory agencies.)

More than 200 hazardous waste sites impact the Raritan River and pose a major threat to human health and the environment. EWA reviewed dozens of contaminated sites from the Fieldville Dam in Piscataway to Perth Amboy, and prioritized their cleanup and restoration according to these criteria:

- · Severity of contamination
- Proximity to the river
- Impact on the river
- Rare and endangered species near site
- Contaminants at the site that impact human health and the environment

Based on these criteria, EWA identified the following sites as high priority and is actively working toward their remediation:

- · Chemical Insecticide Superfund Site, Edison
- · Cornell-Dubilier Superfund Site, South Plainfield
- Horseshoe Road Superfund Site, Sayreville
- . Kin-Buc Landfill Superfund Site, Edison
- Akzo Chemical, Edison storage and A A and analysis and
- Rhodia Site, New Brunswick
- Factory Lane, Middlesex Boro
- National Lead, Sayreville
- Raritan Arsenal, Edison

EWA's strategy for addressing contaminated sites focuses on gathering objective data and using this data to stimulate regulatory action by the U.S. Environmental protection Agency (EPA) and/or the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). EWA:

- Samples soil and water for contamination
- Conducts site inspections (jointly with the EPA and DEP where possible) and issues detailed reports
- Petitions state and federal agencies to address contaminated sites
- Makes effective use of the media in publicizing issues and providing information
- Comments on regulatory reports and proposed cleanup plans

Significant Activities

- A Site Inspection Report written by EWA in early 1999 resulted in a removal of toxic waste at the Horseshoe Road Superfund Site in Sayreville by the EPA in May. The EPA also sampled crabs, biota and sediments from adjacent areas of the Raritan River.
- On September 9, EWA discovered a 6-acre PCB capacitor dump in the ecologically sensitive Dismal Swamp in South Plainfield adjacent to the Cornell-Dubilier Superfund Site. EWA wrote two Incident Reports that described the initial findings, conducted a site inspection with the appropriate agencies and followed up with a detailed Site Inspection Report. As a result, the EPA is securing a contractor to clean up the dumping site. The community was notified through newspaper articles initiated by EWA.
- EWA has been working with the EPA and the
 Edison Township municipal government to clean
 up the Mound B area of the Kin-Buc Landfill
 Superfund Site. EWA took water and sediment
 samples and wrote Site Inspection Reports to
 stimulate the necessary additional remediation.
 After restoration is complete, a nature trail will be

created along the Raritan River for public use. EWA organized a public meeting on October 20 to get resident input on the conceptual plan for the nature trail. EWA met with the EPA on October 28 to discuss specific remediation procedures, outline community concerns and offer recommendations.

- EWA is closely monitoring the cleanup of the more than 500 drums of chemicals that washed into the Raritan River as a result of Hurricane Floyd in September. EWA conducted a series of water samples and wrote an Incident Report with detailed recommendations for the parties involved. EWA is currently working towards a public meeting with the U.S. Coast Guard to inform the residents in the area of the status of the cleanup and any risks to human health with respect to contact with the river.
- EWA alerted state agencies to a diesel oil spill in the Raritan Center in Edison on January 27 that resulted in its cleanup. The NJ DEP will continue to provide oversight and on-site inspections of the progress until the area is remediated by Summit Associates, the property owner.
- In January, EWA observed commercial harvesting of crabs from contaminated areas of the Raritan River. EWA requested the NJ DEP to analyze samples of Blue Claw Crabs. EWA is still awaiting results.
- EWA began a project to map all significant sources of contamination entering the lower reaches of the Raritan River. A part-time research assistant from Cook College, Rutgers University, was hired to help with this project.

Edison Township municipal govern



EWA Co-founder John Shersick during
a site inspection at the Factory Lane
Site in Middlesex Boro.



EWA Executive Director Robert Spiegel takes soil samples at the Factory Lane Site in Middlesex Boro.

Ranger River & oper Contervation Committee

on August 10, EWA and the NY/NJ Baykeepers announced Bill Schultz as the first Raritan Riverkeeper. The Riverkeeper Program is nationally recognized and is based on the NY/NJ Baykeepers program in northern New Jersey. The goal of the program is to preserve and restore the river's habitat and advance the Raritan's value as a recreational resource. Mr. Schultz has committed to working closely with EWA to protect and preserve the Raritan River and, in a sense, will act as the eyes and ears of the river.

Preservation of Open Space

Goal: To preserves as much of the remaining wetlands in Edison and the Raritan River Estuary as possible.

Significant Activities

- The EWA Executive Director and several EWA Trustees are leading and active members of the Edison Township Open Space Advisory Committee. This Committee identified and researched every significant parcel of open space in Edison, including over 1,400 acres along the Raritan River. The Final Report issued by the Committee was presented to the Edison Township Council in October, and included a 5-year plan with detailed recommendations for acquisition and conservation of over 2,200 acres of open space.
- The EWA-sponsored Raritan River Project nominated several areas along the Raritan River as critical habitat for acquisition and enhancement through the NY/NJ Harbor Estuary program. EWA is partnering with the NY/NJ Baykeepers to facilitate land preservation activities along the Raritan River.
- The EWA's Raritan River Project Conservation Committee is supporting land acquisitions and nature trails being pursued by New Brunswick and Highland Park.
- EWA is working to protect the Dismal Swamp and other open space in Edison from illegal dumping. Concerned about the large amount of trash discarded in environmentally sensitive areas intended for public enjoyment, EWA successfully lobbied for an ordinance to increase the fines and reward individuals who report illegal dumping.

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protect and preserve the Rarden River and in a seaso, will act as the even and ears of the fiver.

On February 6, EWA organized Edison residents for a "Hands Around the Pond" rally to protest the development of a 13,000-square foot pharmacy on a historic 6.2-acre property in north Edison. The property and small natural spring pond is home to many birds and other types of wildlife. The rally resulted in the municipal government condemning the property to keep it safe from commercial development.



EWA Staff Member Andrea Ace atop a mountain of rubbish collected by volunteers during a cleanup at the Edith Stevens Memorial Wildlife Preserve, Edison.

• EWA conducted four cleanups in the Dismal Swamp and The Edith Stevens Memorial Wildlife Preserve. Our volunteers partnered with groups such as AT&T, the Girl Scouts and the Edison Youth Corps to clean up more than 3 tons of garbage and recyclables. EWA received \$1000.00 for the cleanups done in 1998 through the Clean Communities program in Edison Township.

Building Community Awareness and Action

Goal: To use accurate and timely information on relevant environmental topics to educate and engage residents of central New Jersey.

Resident Engagement

- EWA facilitated the formation of Citizen Advisory
 Committees (CACs) for the Kin-Buc Landfill Superfund
 Site in Edison and the Horseshoe Road Superfund Site in
 Sayreville, as well as continuing the Chemical Insecticide
 Superfund Site CAC. CACs are important vehicles for
 public participation in the decision making process for
 investigations and cleanups of contaminated sites.
- Raritan River Project Stakeholders, a group of residents concerned with the future of the Raritan River, have met several times and are producing a video about the Raritan River that will educate communities along the river. Target date for distribution of the video is the fall of 2000. EWA initiated stakeholder meetings in 1998.
- On April 24, EWA held its first Earthday Expo in Edison. More than 30 students from six elementary schools in Edison participated in a poster and game competition based on the Raritan River Estuary. Local environmental groups distributed information and engaged attendees in environmental activities and games. EWA also awarded five environmental excellence awards, recognizing individuals who have worked to make our community a better place to live.



EWA Executive Director Robert Spiegel (far left) and EWA Trustee Walter Stochel (far right) assist students with a tree-planting during the Earthday Expo.

Awareness Building

- During 1999, EWA held three major events
 designed to extend awareness and support of the
 organization beyond currently targeted segments
 of the population: a barbecue in June, the Second
 Annual Friends of the Raritan River Gala in
 October, and in December, "A Colonial
 Christmas" at the historic Proprietary House in
 Perth Amboy. Environmental excellence awards
 were presented at the Gala.
- EWA has an effective public relations effort which includes:
 - EWA held several press conferences and was quoted in over 50 newspaper articles, television news programs, and radio interviews.
 - ⇒ EWA's major activities, including education program classroom visits, press conferences, eco-tours and cleanups, are videotaped and broadcast by the Edison Cable Television Network on a regular basis.
 - EWA regularly provides technical information on environmental issues to major newspaper and television stations. EWA produced three quarterly newsletters that were distributed through direct mail and made available at several local business locations.
 - EWA has received an increasing number of requests from across New Jersey for advice and guidance on environmental issues. A plan to address these requests more efficiently is under development.

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Funding

In 1999, 91% of EWA funding came from grants totaling \$114,926 from:

- Cape Branch Foundation
- Edison Clean Communities Grant
- Environmental Endowment for New Jersey
- John L. Neu Family Foundation
- Quaker Hill Foundation
- U.S. EPA Technical Assistance Grant

The remaining funding came from contributions from individuals. In 2000, EWA expects to begin raising significant funds from its public events as well.

Administration

Board of Trustees

EWA continued the revitalization and expansion of the Board of Trustees begun in 1998. Two new Board members have been installed, the by-laws revised and updated, and a strategic plan developed.

The members of the Board of Trustees are:

Ian Durand, President
Walter R. Stochel, Jr., Vice-President
Lynne Leitner, Secretary
Robert Filocco, Treasurer
Robert Spiegel, Executive Director
James Clark
April Cormaci
William Lovett
Mary Petti

EWA Office Operation

\$26,700 \$44,197 \$22,921 \$6,646 \$1,286 \$42,374

3721

\$127,643

EWA paid staff now consists of three full-time and two part-time employees, and job responsibilities have been realigned to better meet the needs of residents and the organization.

Accounting procedures have been streamlined and are now facilitated by the implementation of new software, employment policies and job descriptions have been formalized; and a document control system is in place.

Moving working funds to an interest-bearing investment account generates modest income instead of incurring banking fees.

Expanded office space and the purchase of a computer, copying machine, digital camera, and new telephone system, including two new telephone lines, has improved office productivity and efficiency.

Edison Wetlands Association 1999 Operating Budget

Income 15 Pleon and Joern 1971	1999 Actual		
Grants 19	\$114,926		
Cape Branch Foundation			
Environmental Endowment for NJ	in semisoon garrowoo		
EPA Technical Assistance Grant	o now facilitated by die		
John L. Neu Family Foundation	log tannyologia associa		
Quaker Hill Foundation	ne been formatized, an		
Edison Clean Communities			
Fundraising Program	\$12,165		
Education Program	\$1,928		
	p) should suit a so myo		
Community Outreach Program	\$0		
Other Income	\$1,357		
Capital Program			
Triple C Ranch Acquisition	\$1,000		
	convert convert made		
Total income autiquist war owr grabula			
Expenses	Value of		
Tevia Pragram	\$26,700		
Fundraising Program	\$14,107		
Education Program	\$22,921		
Open Space Program	\$6,696		
Community Outreach Program	\$5,786		
Administration	\$42,374		
Other Expenses	\$155		
Capital Expenses	LET UP STILL EN		
Triple C Ranch Acquisition	\$721		
Other Capital Expenses	\$2,183		
Total Expenses	\$121,642		
Net Income	\$9,735		

Edison Wetlands Association <u>Financial History</u>

1997	1998	1999
\$32,2 <i>7</i> 3 J	\$85,981	\$114,926
\$0	\$0	\$1,000
\$2,207	\$12,093	\$15,451
\$34,480	\$98,074	\$131,377
\$0	\$0	\$2,904
\$34,141	\$91,699	\$118,738
\$34,141	\$91,699	\$121,642
\$339	\$6.376	\$9,735
	\$32,273 \$0 \$2,207 \$34,480 \$0 \$34,141 \$34,141	\$32,273 \$85,981 \$0 \$0 \$2,207 \$12,093 \$34,480 \$98,074 \$0 \$0 \$34,141 \$91,699 \$34,141 \$91,699

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Selected Newspaper Articles

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GROUP SEEKS STATE GRANT TO SAVE FARM

By MARCY BEHRMANN STAFF WRITER

The Edison Wetlands Association is applying to the state Green Acres program for a grant so it can preserve the 4.5-acre Triple C Pony Farm near the township's border with South Plainfield.

EDISON

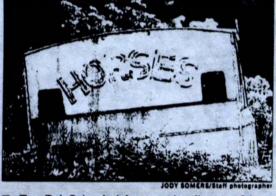
Officials are working on the

\$150,000 grant and hope to submit it in July to the state agency, an arm of the Department of Environmental Protection, said Robert Spiegel, executive director of the wetlands association.

The group is buying the property for \$150,000 because its owners, heirs of Christopher C. Christensen, are committed to preserving the farm. The land would probably be worth closer to \$360,000 on the open market, Spiegel said.

"Because we're buying it at such a bargain-basement price, we are asking (the state) to fund the whole thing "Spiecel said

thing," Spiegel said. Edison Mayor George



■ Top, Bob Spiegel, right, executive director of the Edison Wetlands Association, and John Shersick, EWA board member, clear debris from the Triple C Ranch in Edison on June 12. In front of them, are baby turkeys that roam the property. An old horse trailer, above, is among the many abandoned vehicles that still litter the ranch's landscape.

Spadoro has told Spiegel that he will write a recommendation to the Green Acres program on behalf of the wetlands group. The Township Council last week passed a resolution in support of the grant application.

Arthur Cifelli, the mayor's chief of staff, said the Spadoro administration considered purchasing the property and leasing it to the wetlands association for \$1 for 99 years. However, Spiegel's group refused.

"We declined because we

want to own the farm ourselves." Spiegel said.

The association already has raised \$20,000 from monetary contributions and a car-donation program. Spiegel said. The group has a commitment from Peter Stevens, of the private, grass-roots Quaker Hill Foundation, for a \$15,000 matching grant. Stevens is the son of the late John P. Stevens dr. ammesake of John P. Stevens High School in Edison.

The ranch, one of the last horse farms in Middlesex County, is in the heart of the Dismal Swamp, an environmentally sensitive wetland that extends through parts of Metuchen and South Plainfield.

While there is only one horse living on the farm at this time, Spiegel is negotiating with the township to build a shelter for the horses Edison will be getting from the county's mounted police unit. The horses will live at the Edison Job Corps facility on Stelton Road, but will be

See Farm, Page B2

FARM

■ From Page B1

able to stay overnight at the pony farm when they are needed in north Edison, officials said

The farm also will provide an opportunity for children in urban and suburban areas to experience nature firsthand. To that end. Spiegel and other members of his group are harvesting pumpkins and tomatoes so that school groups can learn how plants grow. In the fall, the wetlands association plans to hold hayrides and pumpkin-carving contests at the farm, where wild sturkeys roam.

The Green Acres program was formed in 1961 to meet New Jersey's growing recreation and conservation needs. More than 80,000 acres have been protected and hundreds of recreation-development projects have been financed through Green Acres grants, officials said.

The state also provides loans to nonprofit organizations to acquire land for public recreation and conservation purposes, and the wetlands association may qualify for a loan as well.

The Star Ledger BETTING ON THE RANCH Sunday May 14.2000 BETTING ON THE RANCH



The Edison Wetlands Association has purchased the abandoned six-acre Triple-C Ranch near Dismal Swamp with plans to turn it into a working farm.



Simone Paolercio, an education coordinator with the Edison Wetlands Association, removes a large piece of plastic from Turtle Pond.

Edison group restores township's last farm

By Liz Leyden STAR-LEDGER STAFF

Past the crumbling barns, a sea of abandoned canoes and rowboats, and thousands of scattered bottles, Edison environmentalist Robert Spiegel dreams of a giant pumpkin patch.

At the long-abandoned Triple-C Ranch - lost in the heart of the sprawling, suburban community -Spiegel sees a chance to transform its tangled landscape into a working farm with a stable full of horses, a nature center and walking trails winding into the Dismal Swamp next

Reviving the six-acre farm is the most ambitious project that Spiegel and the organization he heads, the Edison Wetlands Association, has undertaken in its 10-year history.

After signing a lease-purchase agreement for the farm in February. the group charged ahead with fundraising and a back-breaking cleanup and its members are already sowing pumpkin seeds for the fall har-

The project would rescue the last of Edison's few farms, local historian David Sheehan said

"Edison was never really a farming community like Cranbury, but more of a place with a lot of land and patchy neighborhoods," Sheehan

Open space is in short supply in Edison as development presses more and more against the township's seams, which is exactly why Spiegel says the pony farm is invaluable to residents.

really an incredible PLEASE SEE FARM, PAGE 37

Farm

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 35

Group restores abandoned ranch

habitat," Spiegel said, rattling off lists of birds and animals that call the old farm and nearby Dismal Swamp home. "You can see the stars; the air is cleaner. It feels like what Edison used be: a smaller, more rural community."

The property costs \$150,000, but Spiegel said the reconstruction of the land, a brick house and two barns would require closer to \$500,000. So far, the group has raised about \$35,000 and is preparing an application for a \$75,000 grant from the state Department of Environmental Protection.

The township is also seeking ways to help, said Mayor George Spadoro's chief-of-staff Arthur Cifelli.

"We are currently aggressively investigating what it is we can do to help the Wetlands Association fulfill this goal," Cifelli said, adding that obtaining grants and carving the trail walkways were possibilities. "The mayor envisions people being able to drive to the pony farm, park their cars and walk on trails through the Dismal Swamp all the way to Metuchen. The public good of this is incredible."

The project has attracted enough attention to draw the Wetlands Association into a local land skirmish.

Earlier this spring, developer Jack Morris offered \$50,000 to Edison's open space fund — to be used specifically toward the association's purchase of the pony farm — in exchange for Edison dropping its efforts to seize a 6.2-acre lot at Oak Tree and New Dover roads. Morris has approval to build a strip mall on that site which would include a Walgreens drugstore and a bank.

"We are currently aggressively investigating what it is we can do to help the Wetlands Association fulfill this goal."

- ARTHUR CIFELLI

Spiegel said the association rejected the offer because it doesn't accept contributions from "developers or polluters or anyone who is destroying the environment."

While a fund-raising committee is in the process of forming, Spiegel said the group is pouring its energies into the hands-on renovation in hopes of finishing the cleanup and purchase by year's end.

"We're out there everyday, every weekend, since February," Spiegel said, describing the efforts of about 10 volunteers who've hauled away everything from tires to toilet seats to thousands of glass bottles and cans.

"We go piece by piece, and don't want to use heavy equipment because of what's there. This was a working farm since the 1920s and we've found old tools, axes, rakes and pitchforks."

Not everyone is happy with the

Two men were boarding their horses on the property until the Wetlands Association signed the lease in February, Spiegel said.

February, Spiegel said.

After refusing to pay a monthly boarding fee, Spiegel says the men moved their horses in the middle of the night, along with some old tools and fencing from one barn.

"They claimed it was theirs, and we didn't make a big deal out of it," Spiegel said. Though he declined to identify the men, Spiegel said they remain a presence, often driving by the outskirts of the property.

"We're not out to make friends; we're out to clean up the swamp for the families of Edison," Spiegel said.

On April 30, the group opened the farm to what it hopes will be the first of many visitors. About 50 people gathered to tour the land and take free pony rides. An old tractor was also recently purchased, Spiegel said, with an eye toward Halloween and haunted hayrides.

Staff writer Liz Leyden covers Edison. She can be reached at lleyden@starledger.com or at (732) 634-3607.

An oasis in Edison Star Ledier May 16, 2000

he last farm in Edison will be blooming with plants and animals instead of ticky-tacky houses or a strip mall, thanks to the efforts of a hard-working local group.

The Edison Wetlands Association is moving quickly to turn the five-plus acres of the long-abandoned Triple-C Ranch from a tangled landscape marked by litter and crumbling barns into a working farm with horses, pumpkins, a nature center and walking trails into the nearby Dismal Swamp.

Open space has long been in short supply in Edison and northern Middlesex County, and any respite from the steady march of development is welcome.

What makes this open space initiative particularly praiseworthy is its grassroots foundation. It's not the bureaucracy but ordinary people who are making it happen. Association volunteers signed a lease-purchase deal for the property and have raised \$35,000 toward the \$150,000 price. They also have

spent countless hours on the land, hauling away everything from bottles and cans to tires and toilet seats.

It's an ambitious undertaking. Renovating the land, as well as a brick house and two barns, will cost more than \$500,000.

The association will ask the Department of Environmental Protection for

Ordinary folks are rescuing a farm from development. open space money, and the department should provide it. Edison officials have pledged their support and

may help construct the trails or prepare grant applications. A contribution of township money may be in order as well.

The project is a good investment of money and effort. It's not often we get a chance to maintain even a vestige of our bucolic past in such a densely suburbanized area.

The Star-Ledger

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METUCHEN · EDISON THE REVI and the HIGHLAND PARK HERALD

Friday, December 31, 1999

50 cents

Wetland group has vision for farm Wetland group has

Dismal Swamp is the area's last refuge for open space

By GARY GOVELITZ

STAPF WRITER

EDISON - There is a vision for central New Jersey which sees open spaces and natural settings connected by

paths and greenways.

This vision belongs to the Edison Wetland Association's and it took a giant step forward when it was announced that the group (EWA) was initiating a plan to purchase the Triple C Pony Farm in the center of the Dismal Swamp Wildlife Refuge in Edison.

The four and a half acre farm is the last pony farm in Edison and the EWA is hoping to use a combination of grants, donations and fund-raisers to rustle up enough money to buy

At a press conference at the

Robert Spiegle, Executive Director of the EWA, announced the program.

"The EWA is working to acquire the last pony farm in Edison and reopen it to the public," Spiegle said. "The farm will serve as a living classroom for our highly successful interactive environmental education program. We intend to have a nature center and horse, bicycle and hiking trails for the public to access the swamp.

The EWA's mission is to protect environmentally sensitive areas of central New Jersey through education, action and public awareness. They are a non-profit grass roots organization started in 1989 to fight development in

(Continued on page A-2)



Andrea Ace, left and Lightning the horse, right, listen as Robert Spiegle, center of the Edison Wetter Association announces the association's plans to buy the Triple C horse farm

vision for farm

(Continued from page A-1)

Dismal Swamp. Their motto is "Saving The World One Swamp At A Time."

To achieve their mission. they go into the schools to give lectures, organize cleanups and monitor pollution, particularly as it pertains to the Raritan River.

With Lightning and Sissy; two horses prancing in an open field behind him, Spiegle outlined the EWA's plans to maintain the property as a working horse farm, community garden and nature center

According to Spiegle, the primary way of raising funds towards the property's purchase will be through the donation of cars, truck and other vehicles. Vehicles donated to the EWA will receive the highest possible tax deduction and all funds raised through any means will go into a dedicated account for the acquisi-

tion of the farm.

The EWA also has a program where you can contribute stocks with a large appreciation and receive credit for the current value without paying the capital gains taxes.

The EWA has set aside \$5,000 for this initiative and has started receiving donations from other civic and environmental organizations. Several vehicles have already been donated.

Metuchen artist John Shersick is donating the proceeds from several woodcaryings towards the purchase of the farm.

To donate a car, call the Edison Wetlands Association at (732) 661-9630 or 661-1660 to arrange for the pick up for your car. Visit them at their website at cars4farm@aol.com. All donations are tax deductible, as EWA is a federally recognized 501c3 nonprofit organization.

Open-space drive may not hold ground

Committee waiting for appraisal

By MARCY BEHRMANN STAFF WRITER

Development vs. open space: It's an issue that hits close to home throughout Central New Jersey, in places such as East Brunswick, Franklin, Sayreville, Old Bridge, North Brunswick and South Brunswick. But in Edison, that debate represents a major turnaround.

For much of the 1960s and 170s, Edison sold surplus and to reduce taxes: now it's in a frantic race to raise

money preserve FRISON open space It may be too little, too INSIDE late, given how much Sayreville approves an the remainopen-space

in value.

strong objec-The Open mittee, appointed a year ago by the Township Council, re-cently targeted 2,200 acres — 44 properties in all - for Edison to set aside as open space.
Panel members originally put a \$20 million price tag on sav-ing the vacant land in Edison. Critics called that figure "a joke," saying that much more money would be needed. Now that developers have stepped up their plans for the tracts—driving up their value—it may turn out the committee's

Take a developer's plan to build 24 single-family homes at Talmadge Road and Park Avenue in Edison. It's been put off until January for Planning Board review, giving Ed-ison Mayor George Spadoro and the Township Council more time to pursue their plan to acquire the property by condemnation. But it could prove costly.

The undeveloped Talmadge Road and Park Avenue site — assessed at more than \$1 mil-lion — is owned by Wedco

See Space, Page A2







Edison Wetlands Association will acquire the township's last horse farm. above. Left, one of the two horses that is still housed in the stable, which has no electricity.

Group plans to preserve last pony farm

By MARCY BEHRMANN STAFF WRITER

The Edison Wetlands Association intends to purchase the Triple C Pony Farm on Tyler Road to preserve it as a pony farm and an educational

The farm is at the center of The farm is at the center of the Dismal Swamp Wildlife Refuge and adjacent to the planned Middlesex Greenway, a four-mile walking, biking and jogging trail that would stretch along the former Le-high Valley rail line from Crows Mill Road in Wood-bridge through Edison, past King Georges Post Road, and under the New Jersey Turn-pike to Middlesex Avenue in

""We're going to keep this (pony farm) as a living mu-seum, to show what Edison used to be like," Edison Wetds Association Executive ector Robert Spiegel said.

"Edison used to be a country area, with horse farms all over. Now, this is the very last pony farm in the area."

The farm was run by Christopher C. Christensen, for whom the facility is named. Christensen died three years ago, but his heirs were committed to preserving the 4.5 acres in a way that was consistent with its more than 30 years as a pony farm. Spiegel years as a pony farm, Spiegel said.

The farm was part of 2,200 acres — 44 properties in all --targeted for preservation by

the township's Open Space Committee.

But Spiegel, who served on Township Council-appointed panel, stressed that his organization's efforts to acquire the property are meant as an afront to council, which has said it will attempt to acquire as much of the land targeted by the com-mittee as possible.

"We are saving the tor ship money to buy land in other areas that are in more danger of being developed.' Spiegel said.

The Edison Wetlands Association made an offer on the land yesterday and was waiting for an answer. Spiegel de-clined to reveal the amount of the bid.

SPACE

Technology Inc. of Houston. If the land were developed, the assessment would likely climb to \$9 million, based on an estimate by developer Park Meadow LLC of Woodbridge that the 24 homes planned would sell for about \$350,000 each. Edison's open-space fund has about \$700,000 in it now minus pending state and

Township Council President Charles Tomaro said the council will vote at its meeting Monday to hire an appraiser to find out how ch the 10-acre Talmadgeand-Park property is actufirst step to seeing if the township has enough money to acquire the land.

"The mayor called me tast week, and I said it sounded like a good idea," Tomaro said. "The gun is to our heads to get moving on

Park Meadow LLC was prepared to present its case earlier this week at the Planning Board meeting. However, an attorney for the adjacent Park Gate development objected, stating an error in the notices sent to property owners within feet. Board Attorney Clifford Kuhn suggested the panel postpone the case and Park Meadows send out new notices for the January meeting.

In the meantime, Councilman Peter Barnes III has asked attorney Louis Rainone to research whether the Planning Board could put a hold on the properties tar-geted by the Open Space Committee. That would give

come up with the money to buy the land at its undeveloped price. In the case of the Park Meadow property that could mean a differ ence of \$8 million to Edison taxpayers.

"We're not in the bustness of trying to enrich the developers who are cyni cally trying to exploit the system," Barnes said.

Steven J. Tripp, attorney for Park Meadow, has said in the past that the developers are only trying to use their land as they see fit.

"The township always has the option of acquiring the land," said Tripp, who is with the Woodbridge-based Wilentz, Goldman and Spitzer firm. "But the property is privately owned, and we are only proposing what the ordinance allows, which is single-fam-ily homes. It's no different than any other application."

Barnes said the council would like to pursue a fiveto 10-year plan to acquire the vacant properties, perhaps using the \$680,000 a year collected from the 1-cent open-space tax Edison voters approved in No-vember 1998. Officials also would try to tap into open space grants on the federal and state levels. Barnes

"We can't instantly purchase every piece of prop-erty," Barnes said.

But he also stressed that the Planning Board is appointed by Mayor Spadoro. and the council can only ask the Planning Board to use its discretion and wisdom to help us preserve these areas

If putting a freeze on the properties is not possible, the council will have to work even faster to secure funding to preserve the areas, Barnes said.



Students Lauria Christiani, left, and Hope Aschenbach, center, act as officials of the Army Corps of Engineers, and Matt Venditti, right, portrays an Edison resident, discuss their concerns about Dismal Swamp to a classroom Township Council.

Environmentalists discover new generation to enlighten

By MARCY BEHRMANN

Some people would strain hard to find a link between environmentalism and civics, but environmental science students at Cranford High School didn't have to look very hard to find a connection

The students, all seniors, spent their class period Thursday in a hearing trying to persuade the "Edison Township Council" not to allow houses to be built in the Dismal Swamp, a 700-acre wetlands area that spans parts of Edison. South Plainfield and Metuchen.

Not only did the students recreate a scenario involving one of the hottest topics in the region, but they made the hearing come alive by playing the parts of area activ-ists, professionals and agencies that would be interested in such an

The students had some good

Edison environmentalists Jane Tousman, Walter Stochel Jr. and Robert Spiegel met with the stu-dents earlier this week to prepare them for their roles. Of course the trio had a reason to couch the site dents Each environmentalist was portrayed by one of them being



Stave P. Oliveira, playing a prospective homeowner, uses a map

Stochel, active in preserving green space across Edison, was played by Aislinn Sia. She pointed out that wetlands reduce the damage of severe floods by soaking up excess water

"And it benefits everybody." she anid.

Jared Kosch portrayed environmentalist Bob Fillocco but added a twist: He dressed as Fillocco playing a bog turtle, an endangered species indigenous to the Dismal

You expect the Edison Wetlands Association to protect the bog turtle and the swamps, but normal le can do something to help too." Kosch said.

That point is something Tous-man tried to drive home when she oke with the students. Tousman bills herself as a housewife whose involvement with environmental ssues springboarded into a political career and once a seat on the

Science teacher Amy Biasucci chose the project as a way for the students to see the way development encroaches on natural areas. She also wanted them to get a taste of how difficult it is to preserve land in areas with strong housing markets

Biasucci said the environmentalists' support really added to the students' educational experience. "The information you are providing is incredible, and the students get more and more motivated with each new piece of information they receive," Biasucci wrote the wetlands board.

After doing research in the library and on the Internet - the course doesn't have a textbook most of the students said they could not believe why anyone would want to pave over wetlands and build

That was a reaction Biasucci ex-

pected. "You can't be sure of yourself until you see all the other sides," the Rutgers graduate told

Several students seemed to enjoy the two-week exercise that ended yesterday. Some said the issue of flooding hit home for them, especially in light of the flooding from Hurricane Floyd in the fall.

"It was really the first time I got involved about the real problems of the environment," said Katle Carney, who played Spiegel.

Stochel said he thought it would be good practice for future civic in-

"These kids will have more contact with the environment by appearing before their planning boards than they will rallying for the rain forests or the whales," Stochel said. "It's good training for



Amy Borges and Erin Connally, portray pre-fab home builders, present their case for building in the

dianas-on learning

during class trips to Dismal Swamp

By GARY GOVELITZ

STAFF WRITER

EDISON - It didn't feel like Edison. It didn't feel like New

With cattails growing over a tall man's head and the only sound coming from birds, the Dismal Swamp is a hidden treasure in Central Jersey.

On Nov 17 and 18 the Edison Wetlands Association (EWA) took fourth graders from Menlo Park School on an interactive field trip to

the Dismal Swamp.

Lasting from 9:15 a.m.-12:15 p.m., the trip is one in a series of environmentally oriented lessons offered by the Wetlands Association. Recently members of the EWA went to the Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary School and spoke on the importance of preserving the wetlands.

The mission of the Edison Wetlands Association is to protect environmentally sensitive areas of central New Jersey through education, action and public awareness. To achieve this mission they go into the schools to give lectures, organize cleanups and monitor pollution particularly of the Raritan River.

We are excited that this program has generated such an enthusiastic response from the students, teachers, parents and the communi-ty at large," said Andrea Ace, educational coordinator for the EWA. "We have received such an overwhelming number of requests for our program that we cannot grant them all. We hope to be able to expand our education program of classroom visits and field trips so as to reach the many student sand teachers who want our interactive environmental program."

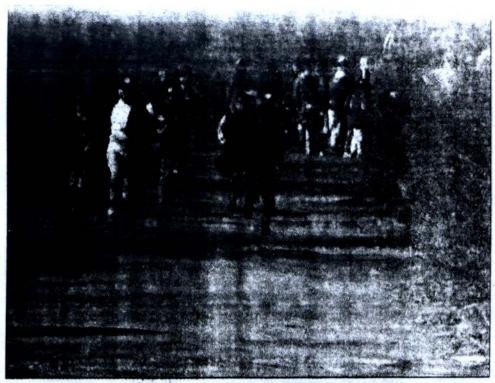
According to Bob Spiegel, executive director of the EWA, "Field trips to the Dismal Swamp give the students a chance to interact directly with their local environment. Most importantly, the kids have an absolute blast."

The Dismal Swamp is 500 acres of wetlands located in Metuchen, Edison and South Plainfield. It is bisected by Talmadge Road in Edison.

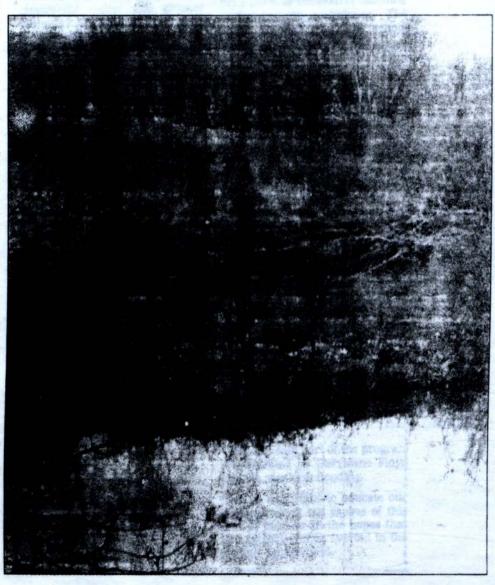
The students worked in four groups - rabbits, squirrels, frogs and turtles. Each group stopped at the four stations in the 500-acre swamp and either tested soil, drew a picture, imitated an animal or tested water

They were also given an ongoing lecture about the wonders of nature.

"We learned that there is fungus on trees and that termites eat the trees, the dead trees are then turned into new soil" said Annie Nawarange, 9. "We saw squirrels and a hawk and deer footprints. Mostly we learned not to litter."



GARY GOVELITZ/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER Students are eager to explore the mysteries and beauty of the Dismal Swamp in Edison.



ENVIRONMENTALIST SEMINAR

Teachers are taught lessons on wetlands

By JOSEPH PICARD STAFF WRITER

About 50 Edison fourth-grade teachers learned to make their classrooms wetter and greener yesterday at an in-service program by the Edison Wetlands Association at Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary School.

"Teachers learned facts about the importance of wetlands and the importance of protecting them that they can incorporate into their classrooms, as well as skills and techniques for passing this knowledge on to the students," said Robert Spiegel, association executive director.

An in-service program is a day long seminar for teachers to introduce them to innovative teaching materials and techniques. The school district made the school available to the environmentalists on Election Day, when there were no classes.

"Every fourth-grade teacher in the district attended," said Andrea Ace, one of two association instructors. "We gave demonstrations and showed their games they could play with students. We showed how wetlands filter pollution and help prevent erosion and flooding."

Ace added that one of the games the teachers learned was called "Disappearing Animals," in which young people learn that changes in the environment can mean the disappearance of certain animal species.

"They learned things and techniques that they could use tomore row," Ace said.

Ace and association member Mary Beth Spitz each taught two two-hour workshops for 25 teach ers.

Spiegel said part of the program concentrated on Hurricane Floyd and the resultant flooding.

"It is important to educate our students about the causes of this type of disaster in the hopes that this tragedy can be averted in the future," Spiegel said.

Cleanup is the name of the game

MLK students take part in Wetlands project

By GARY GOVELITZ

STAFF WRITER

EDISON - Johaan Khan, 9, remembers when she and her classmates went with the Edison Wetlands Association (EWA) and cleaned up the woods next to Martin Luther King Elementary School.

"We picked up foam rubber, lots of beer cans, carpets, bottles, a TV, a refrigerator and parts of a car," she said. "Oh yes, we also saw some snakes. One of them tried to bite Mr. Spiegel."

On Friday the students of Arleen Fink's class were once again working with the EWA as part of an expanded interactive environmental education prothat the Wetlands Association is presenting at Washington and Martin Luther King elementary schools.

The mission of the Edison Wetlands Association is to protect environmentally sensitive areas of central New Jersey through education, action and public awareness. A non-profit grassroots organization started in 1989 to fight development in Dismal Swamp, its motto is "Saving The World One Swamp At A Time.'

To achieve this mission association members go into the schools to give lectures, organize cleanups and monitor pollution, particularly as it pertains to the Raritan River.

According to Robert Spiegel, executive director of the EWA, this is the first of four lessons that the children will be learn-



GARY GOVELITZ/STA

Andrea Ace works with students David Sartre, Matthew McGugay, and Daiel Evasco on the wetlands project

'In the first lesson the children will have an opportunity to learn about the functions of wetlands, their importance and what threatens the wetlands, including environmental pollution," he said.

The class, taught by Andrea Ace and Mary Beth Spitz of the EWA, began with the children learning about what a wetlands is, why it is important and how to protect them. They talked to

the students about the seven important functions of a wetland, of surface water and of the effects that Hurricane Floyd had on the area.

After looking at maps which showed different geographical features, the students were ready for some emergency clean

A container was filled with rocks, soil and some simulated trees (pipe cleaners) and water was poured into it so that the

students could see the concept both ground and surface water Then the miniature wetland was polluted.

Pouring vegetable oil into the "wetlands" the EWA instructor were able to simulate an oil spil Then they gave out a variety "tools" - cotton balls and swar - and told the children to clea: up the oil spill. Soon the sta dents realized the difficulty dealing with pollution along wit the importance of the wetlands

Home News Tribune, March 2, 2000

Environmentalists to sue chemical firm, DEP

By JOSEPH PICARD

A local environmental group intends to sue a Jersey Avenue chemical company, claiming the company is polluting the groundwater and Mile Run Brook.

At a press conference yesterday in front of the Rhodia Chemical Co. at 298 Jersey Ave., members of the Edison Wetlands Association announced the Jan. 31 filing of a notice to sue Rhodia, formerly Rhone Poulenc Chemical, and the state Department of Environmental Protection, seeking enforcement of DEP regulations for cleaning the site.

According to the Environmental Protection Act, citizens have the right to take polluters to court, once the DEP has been notified and given 30 days to address the concern.

NEW BRUNSWICK Rhodia responded that it is not polluting Mile Run Brook.

which runs through Franklin and New Brunswick, and has bee, working cooperatively with the DEP to clean up the site. The DEP concurred that the company is cooperating and that a lawsuit, at this time, is misguided.

But Edison Wetlands members believe too much time already has been wasted.

"There has been a DEP admistrative consent order against this Rhone Poulenc facility since 1987," Robert Spiegel, president of Edison Wetlands, said. "The DEP and the company have had discussions and have studied the site, but in 13 years, no comprehensive plan for cleanup has been developed. It is incredible that DEP has allowed this company to continue to operate."

Spiegel said that not only has DEP found contaminants in soil and groundwater at the site in several tests since 1987, but Edison Wetlands' own tests have identified pollutants such as mercury, lead and PCBs in soil, groundwater and in Mile Run Brook, which snakes through the Rhodia property en route to the Raritan River.

"This stream is the receptor of extensive contamination from the soils and the groundwater," Spiegel said. "On numerous occasions from 1980 up to a DEP site inspection in July of 1999, a visible black sheen of pollutants has been observed on Mile Run Brook."

"We have had no discharges into Mile Run creek and have found no evidence of pollution from our site reaching the Raritan River," said Charley Bruns, manager of communications for Rhodia, adding that the company has spent more than \$5 million since 1990 in environment-related actions.

"I admire citizens who take it upon themselves to combat pollution," said Rob Schmidt, DEP spokesman. "Unfortunately, in this case, a lawsuit probably misses the mark."

Schmidt admitted that the process has been lengthy, but insisted that progress is being made.

"We consider Rhodia a responsible party," Schmidt said. "That means the company, not the tax-payer, is paying for the remediation of its own site. Admittedly, things move a little slower with a responsible party because, when we see a party cooperating, DEP is likely to extend deadlines for the company since something is getting done."

Schmidt said Rhodia is due to present the DEP with a remediation action work plan by March, and once the plan is submitted and approved the actual remediation should move quickly along.

Schmidt said the DEP also has seen the black sheen on Mile Run Brook, but he said DEP is not sure the material originates from the Rhodia property.

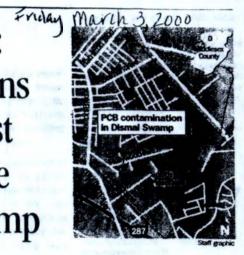
The environmentalists fear further delays, and they said the lawsuit will trigger action.

In late July, two tons of trash were cleared from the Mile Run Brook by about 40 people representing various environmental and community organizations.

The cleanup was organized by the New Jersey Community Water Watch, an AmeriCorps program, to clean polluted rivers across the state. The Mile Run Brook was one of four state bodies of water chosen; others were in Newark, Trenton and the Toms River section of Dover Township.

On July 31, Ami Doshi, 19, a student at Rutgers and part-time AmeriCorps member said, "We chose the Mile Run Brook because it is one of the most polluted tributaries in the area."

Toxins must leave swamp



By JOSEPH PICARD STAFF WRITER

The federal Environmental Protection Agency is pressing for removal of numerous discarded electrical condensers that contain dan gerous levels of polychlorinated biphenyls, or PCBs.

MIDDLESEX COUNTY D i s m a l Swamp, a 700-acre wet lands area rts of South

from the

covering parts of South Plainfield, Edison and Metuchen.

PCBs are one of the most toxic man-made substances in the environment, according to the federal National Centers for Disease Control. They have been shown to cause cancer in laboratory animals and are called "probable carcinogens" by

the EPA.

The contaminated area is located in South Plainfield on property owned by Texas Eastern Transmission, owner of natural gas pipelines in New Jersey. The site was formerly a dump and generally used by businesses and residents until stricter regulations took effect in the 1950s.

"We have designated the site for removal action," EPA spokesman Rich Cahill said yesterday, adding that the agency is now discussing removal plans with Texas Eastern.

Cahill said immediate remediation involves removing the PCB-carrying condensers and installing a

See Toxins, Page A2

TOXINS: EPA pushes for removal

From Page A1

fence around the site to prevent anyone coming in contact with the area. After removal, the EPA will investigate the area for any residual contamination to soil or groundwater as well as try to determine who is responsible for the mess.

Cahill said an agreement on removal is "imminent."

Gretchen Krueger, spokeswoman for Duke Energy, the parent company of Texas Eastern, said the company learned of the contamination three weeks ago.

"We are still resolving who will pay the bill for the removal," Krueger said.

EPA may question the origin of the condensers, but the local environmental group that discovered them doesn't.

"The containers are capacitors used in electrical appliances," said Robert Spiegel, executive director of the Edison Wetlands Association. "They are the same kind of capacitors found at the Cornell-Dubilier site, which is only three-quarters of a mile away. We believe Cornell-Dubilier dumped them here."

Cornell-Dubilier Electronics on Hamilton Boulevard manufactured electrical equipment until it closed in 1962. It has since become a Superfund site, and PCBs have been discovered there.

Spiegel discovered the capacitors while walking the Dismal Swamp with other members of EWA last September. His group counted 22 capacitors, each about the size of an automobile muffler, partially visible above ground. Spiegel suspects there are more completely buried. The EPA estimated the number of capacitors at 20

Cahill yesterday said he

did not have the exact test results available but admitted that PCB levels in the swamp were high.

"Some of the contamination exceeds 500 parts per million," Cahill said, noting that the government is obliged to incinerate PCB contamination above 500 ppm, deeming such levels unsafe for re-disposal.

Spiegel said that according to EPA documents the EWA obtained through the Freedom of Information Act, not only are contamination levels above 500 ppm but significantly above.

Banned since 1977, PCBs are listed by the federal Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry as the sixth most dangerous substance in the environment. Cahill said the danger to humans from PCBs comes from exposure. Direct exposure will be eliminated in the swamp once the removal is complete, he said.

Environment volunteers learn about toxic hazards of cleanups

By ROSA CIRIANNI

STAFF WRITER

NEW BRUNSWICK

- About 20 people including representatives of environmental groups and members of the public gathered yesterday for a six-hour session on identifying and avoiding exposure to hazardous waste.

Among the groups represented at the workshop offered by the Edison Wetlands Association was New Jersey Community Water Watch - an AmeriCorps group. The Hazardous Waste Operations Emergency Response awareness training was held at Cook College Student Center at Rutgers University.

Norman J. Van Houten, a professor at New Jersey Institute of Technology, Newark, led the session. Van Houten volunteers his time to educate and certify volunteer groups, some of which have a paid staff, so they can perform water testing.

The instruction included topics such as how to develop emergency plans and what to do in an emergency medical situation.

"The reason I do this is because I've seen the workers and the kids go clean the streams. It's horrifying to see the kids stick their hands in the stream" without protective clothing, Van Houten said.

Students also learned about the attire they should wear for different projects such as cleaning an oil spill or handling hazardous materials that have been dumped or buried years ago.

Van Houten is planning to give the groups Tyvex suits are white and cover the entire body and advised students always to

wear boots and gloves while cleaning.

"We don't want them to stop cleanups, but we want them to know how to protect themselves and to minimize any risks," Bob Spiegel, executive director for the Edison Wetlands Association. which has about 185 volunteers.

We don't want them to stop cleanups, but we want them to know how to protect themselves and to minimize any risks.

Bob Spiegel EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR THE EDISON WETLANDS ASSOCIATION

For example, he said, direct contact with some forms of asbestos can cause lung cancer, and benzene which targets bone marrow and blood - can cause leukemia.

Van Houten - also the director of health and environmental safety. emergency services and the hazardous-materials response team at NJIT - told volunteers to call state police or the state Department of Environmental Protection immediately if they come in contact with a

For more information, to become a member, to make a donation or to inquire about an environmental health lesson, contact the Edison Wetlands Association at (732) 661-9630 or raritanl@aol.com via e-

To send a message to NJ Water Watch in New Brunswick, call (732) 247-4606 or send to h20watch a aol com via e-mail.





Robert Spiegel, left in photo above. and Norman J. Van Houten. director of health and environmental safety at New Jersey Institute of Technology, show safety gear for the disposal of hazardous waste as workshop attendees listen and take notes.

MARK R SULLIVAN Staff photographer

Working to

restore and

preserve the

Raritan River

The Raritan River Project



Edison Wetlands Association PMB 180, 1115 Inman Avenue Edison, New Jersey 08820-1132

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THE RARITAN RIVER PROJECT

The River

The Raritan River is one of the most important estuaries in the Northeast United States. Few residents of central New Jersey remain untouched by it. They fish, crab, sail, swim, and water ski in its waters. Hundreds of thousands of motorists cross its bridges every day. Rutgers University honors the Raritan River in its alma mater.

The River is also home to many species of aquatic life. And it is a refuge for dozens of species of migratory birds, many of which are endangered, threatened, or declining.

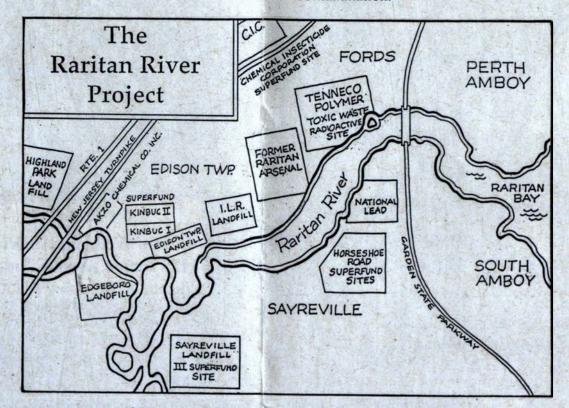
The Problem

More than 200 contaminated sites lie next to or drain directly into the lower Raritan River --abandoned industrial sites, superfund sites, landfills built with toxic waste, dredge dumping areas, and former army arsenals.

Residents are exposed to toxic waste through recreational use of the river and eating contaminated seafood from the river.

The Project

The Project's mission is to develop and implement a plan to clean up, restore and protect the lower reaches of the river by identifying and reducing sources of contamination.



The Timeline (1998-2002)

Phase I - Testing and Monitoring

- * Soil and sediment testing along potential contamination pathways.
- * Water quality monitoring at selected locations along the river and its tributaries for water temperature, turbidity, dissolved oxygen, pH, salinity.
- * Habitat monitoring to inventory wildlife, perform an endangered species survey, and assess habitat contamination.
- * Raritan River Citizen Watch to identify illegal discharge and dumping into the river, and further contamination.

A Science Advisory Board consisting of scientists from the New Jersey Institute of Technology, Cornell University, and Rutgers University will help design the programs and evaluate the results.

Phase II - Cleanup

Develop and implement a work plan for cleanup and containment to prevent further contamination, in collaboration with the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Phase III - Restoration and Preservation

Develop an extended plan for each affected town that will identify land to be set aside for preservation, in collaboration with ecologists and wetlands experts.

The Edison Wetlands Association

believes in the possibility of clean, natural areas where people and wildlife coexist in harmony.

EWA partners with other environmental organizations, sports enthusiasts, concerned residents, government, and businesses to clean up, restore, and preserve wetlands and open space throughout Middlesex County.

EWA works to:

- * Protect human health by cleaning up toxic waste sites to restore an ecological balance.
- * Preserve and enhance water and land resources.
- * Protect open space, and create hiking/biking trails and nature sanctuaries.
- * Provide technical assistance to residents in identifying and addressing environmental issues in their communities.

EWA received the 1996 Environmental Quality Award for outstanding environmental work in New Jersey from the U.S. EPA.

A clean and protected Raritan River and riverbank offer an



improved quality of life for residents of central New Jersey.

Join us in reclaiming the Raritan River!

	\$10	□ \$15	□ \$25	
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ac			teering for t any speci	other al skills you

Make checks payable to: Edison Wetlands Association 1115 Inman Avenue, Suite 180 Edison, New Jersey 08820-1132

EWA was founded in 1989 as a non-profit corporation with 501(c)(3) status.

Cut out and mail

Working for a

cleaner,

greener,

safer

environment.



EDISON WETLANDS ASSOCIATION

4055 Woodbridge Avenue Edison, NJ 08837-3308

Tel: 732-661-1660 Fax: 732-661-9640 raritan1@aol.com

EDISON WETLANDS ASSOCIATION

EWA believes in the possibility of clean, natural areas where people and wildlife coexist in harmony... areas where residents can walk and bicycle along beautiful greenways and people can once again safely eat fish from the Raritan River...places where everyone can discover that central New Jersey is a nature-lover's paradise.

EWA has a small staff and a large number of dedicated volunteers generously donating their time and energy to assure an environmentally sustainable future.



EWA was founded in 1989 in response to proposed development of environmentally sensitive wetlands in north Edison, and is a non-profit corporation with 501(c)(3) status.

EWA works with other environmental



organizations, sports enthusiasts, concerned citizens, and like-minded politicians and companies to clean up, restore, and

preserve wetlands and open space throughout central New Jersey.

The Raritan River Project

EWA is working to clean up, restore and preserve the Raritan River as one of its special projects.

The Raritan River is among the most important estuaries in the Northeast. It supports many species of aquatic life and is a refuge for dozens of species of migratory birds. Many of these are listed as endangered, threatened or declining.

The Raritan River was recently nominated for inclusion in the New American Heritage River Program.

The Raritan River Project offers a unique potential for enriching the lives of all who live in the area.



RECENT EDISON WETLANDS ASSOCIATION ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Participating in the on- and offsite Environmental Protection Agency cleanup and restoration of the Chemical Insecticide Superfund site and the Kin-Buc Superfund site in Edison.
- Providing environmental education program including classroom sessions and field trips in Edison Township public schools.
- Working with Edison Township to clean up the Dismal Swamp and preserve adjoining land for recreational purposes.
- Involved in the purchase of several environmentally sensitive tracts of land throughout north Edison for the sole purpose of preservation, including the Beaver Avenue Crossing and the Smith properties.
- Association received the 1996
 Environmental Quality Award
 for outstanding environmental
 work in New Jersey from the
 United States Environmental
 Protection Agency.

Edison Wetlands Association

enhances the quality of life in our community by working to:

- Protect human health by cleaning up toxic waste sites and restoring an ecological balance.
- Preserve and enhance water and land resources.
- Assist citizen groups to conduct clean-ups of their local communities.
- Protect open space and create biking/hiking trails and nature sanctuaries.
- Provide technical assistance to citizen groups in their efforts to identify and address issues impacting their environment.
- Provide environmental education in the classroom, on field trips, and through Eco-Tours.
- Promote public awareness of environmental issues.

Join us and other responsible citizens as part of the solution!

Your contribution will help support the



preservation and protection of our natural resources and open space that will enrich the lives of all central New Jersey residents. Together,

we can ensure a clean environment for future generations.

Enclosed is my tax-deductible contribution to support EWA in its ongoing efforts to restore and preserve our environment.		
Name		
Street		
City		
State Zip		
Tel. ()		
E-Mail		
Yes! I'm interested in volunteering with EWA. The best time to call me is		
Please make checks payable to:		
Edison Wetlands Association PMB 180, 1115 Inman Avenue Edison, New Jersey 08820-1132		



and

Nature Center

206A Tyler Road Edison, New Jersey 08820

A Project of

Edison Wetlands Association

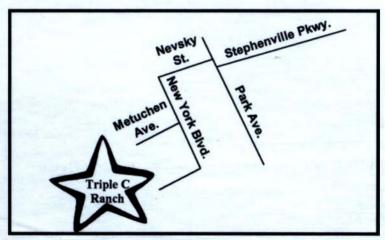
4055 Woodbridge Avenue Edison, New Jersey 08837-3308 Telephone: 732-661-1660 Fax: 732-661-9640

raritan1@aol.com

About the Triple C Ranch...

The 5.27-acre Triple C Ranch is located in the middle of the Dismal Swamp, a 650-acre environmentally sensitive wetland, and is adjacent to 267 acres of protected land owned by Edison Township. It remains one of the last horse farms in Middlesex County, but has fallen into considerable disrepair. In March, 2000, EWA entered into a lease-purchase agreement for the ranch, with a target date for concluding the purchase in March, 2001.

The Dismal Swamp, spanning portions of Edison, Metuchen and South Plainfield, is the largest natural wildlife refuge in northern Middlesex County. As the last viable eco-system within an encroaching urban/suburban environment, the Dismal Swamp provides natural flood control and wildlife habitat, while its forests produce oxygen, and its wetlands clean and purify water. The swamp is also home to an estimated 165 species of birds, as well as 6 amphibian and 8 reptile species.



Edison, New Jersey

Edison Wetlands Association's Vision for the Triple C Ranch and Nature Center...

Restoration of the Triple C Ranch

EWA's vision for the Triple C includes the rehabilitation of the ranch complete with facilities for boarding horses, and the establishment of a Nature Center. EWA envisions opportunities for environmental education, recreational activities and events, and community awareness programs at the new Triple C Nature Center.



Old Barn at the Triple C Ranch

Education

EWA's Environmental Education Program focuses on increasing understanding and appreciation of the importance of wetlands and fostering a sense of environmental responsibility, especially among children. EWA is in its second year of a highly successful environmental education pilot program in the fourth grades of the Edison public school system. Two education programs to be held at the Triple C facilities are in the planning stages: expanding environmental awareness training for elementary schools in surrounding municipalities, and an environmental summer camp run jointly with the Metuchen-Edison YMCA.

EWA leads frequent tours of the Dismal Swamp Wildlife Refuge for school children and the general public that currently start at the Triple C Ranch as it provides a natural access to the Dismal Swamp. EWA plans to enhance the educational value of its tours and offer many other vehicles for learning through the Triple C Nature Center.



EWA Executive Director Robert Spiegel instructs students during a tour of the Dismal Swamp.

Planned Nature Center exhibits include wetlands—their value, their inhabitants, and threats to their existence; the prehistoric use of the area by Native Americans; broader concepts such as the interdependence of species and the delicate balance between humans and their environment; and examples of resident action to preserve the environment.



Stream Running Through Dismal Swamp

Recreation

The location, size, and topography of the Ranch make it ideal for many kinds of environmentally responsible recreation. EWA plans to construct riding, hiking, and biking trails from the Triple C Ranch through the Dismal Swamp.



Horse Grazing in the Field next to the Triple C Ranch

EWA plans to host a wide range of activities at the Triple C Ranch, such as fall hayrides, pumpkin picking, our annual Gala, and summer barbecues.

Community Awareness

The facilities at the Triple C will allow EWA to hold public meetings, press conferences, and other events highlighting environmental issues. EWA's plans also include facilities for holding workshops through which individuals can gain the information, tools, and contacts they need to become active participants in improving the quality of life in their communities.

In addition, the planned Community Meeting Room will be available to other non-profit organizations for meetings and events.

Making the Vision a Reality...

The EWA Five-Year Plan

EWA is in the process of clearing accumulated debris, and stabilizing the existing buildings.

Once the Ranch property has been purchased, EWA will embark on a 5-year plan to: rehabilitate or raze buildings as appropriate; construct an environmental education and nature center including permanent office facilities for EWA; develop a system of riding and nature trails; and construct a new stable, paddock, and indoor riding ring.

While many services and materials will be purchased, a dedicated group of volunteers is being marshaled to work on the construction tasks. Ongoing maintenance of the Triple C Nature Center will be financed by boarding fees for horses and targeted fundraising.

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Lease-Purchase Agreement					
Site Plans/Archit'l Drawings					
Immediate Improvements			-		
Environmental Studies					
Complete Purchase	-				
Walking/Riding Trails					
New Stable					
Paddock					
Nature Center					
Indoor Riding Ring					

Triple C Ranch Capital Campaign

EWA's Capital Campaign Committee has mounted an aggressive, multifaceted approach to raising funds that targets a variety of sources. Initial contributions have come from grants, private donations, and a highly successful Automobile Donation Program.

Once the funds required for purchase have been raised, the capital campaign focus will shift to raising funds for the design and creation of the full range of facilities planned for the Triple C Ranch and Nature Center.

Triple C Ranch Acquisition Budget

Budget
\$80,000
\$35,000
\$30,000
\$22,700
\$167,700

Expenses	
Purchase Price	\$150,000
Lease Fees	\$1,200
Professional Fees	\$9,500
Environmental Testing	\$2,000
Immediate Improvements	\$4,500
Other Expenses	\$500
	\$167,700

Edison Wetlands Association, Inc.

4055 Woodbridge Avenue Edison, New Jersey 08837-3308 Telephone 732-661-1660 FAX 732-661-9640 raritan1@aol.com A 501 (c)(3) Nonprofit Corporation Preserve the best of the past to make way for the best of the future.

The Triple C Ranch Re Nature Center



Edison Wetlands Association 4055 Woodbridge Avenue Edison, New Jersey 08837-3308

Tel: 732-661-1660 Fax: 732-661-9640 raritan1@aol.com

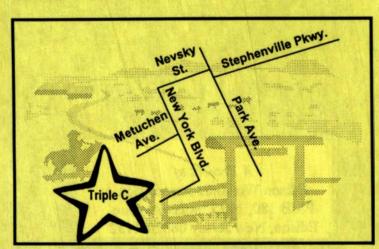
Help create a unique experience for New Jersey!

Edison Wetlands Association (EWA) needs your help in creating the Triple C Ranch & Nature Center for the residents of New Jersey to enjoy.

The Triple C Ranch is located in the middle of the Dismal Swamp, a 1,000-acre, environmentally sensitive wetland that spans Edison, Metuchen, and South Plainfield. The Ranch is adjacent to 200 acres of protected land. One of the last horse farms in Middlesex County, the Triple C covers over 5 acres of woods and fields.

A Place To Play

The location, size, and rolling meadows of the Triple C Ranch make it ideal for many kinds of recreation...



Edison, New Jersey

Riding trails from the Ranch through the Dismal Swamp will offer visitors the opportunity to enjoy their favorite sport in beautiful surroundings. Horse owners can **stable** their mounts at the Ranch.



Lightning and his rider.

Walking and biking trails will offer the same opportunity for hiking and biking enthusiasts as well as birders. The Ranch is conveniently located at the northern end of the Middlesex Greenway currently under construction.



The Dismal Swamp Wildlife
Refuge is home to many diverse
species of wildlife. Visitors to the
Ranch will be delighted and
entertained!

A Place To Learn

EWA leads many walks through the Dismal Swamp each year. Visitors observe wildlife in its natural habitat, have a peek at archaeological excavations, and learn about the delicate balance between humans and their environment.

The Triple C Ranch is a perfect gathering point for tours of the Swamp. EWA will enhance the site by building an environmental education and nature center.

Two programs to be held at the Ranch are already under development:

- Environmental awareness for Edison Township public schools.
- Environmental camp run jointly with the Metuchen-Edison YMCA.

A Place To Gather

Facilities at The Triple C Ranch will be available year-round for community activities.

For **recreation**: A fall hayride...a spooky tour through the swamp on Halloween...a leisurely stroll on a warm spring day...a children's riding party.

For **community events**: Parties, lectures, and other events sponsored by community-oriented non-profit groups.

For environmental education and awareness: For example, for public discussions of environmental issues, training, or press conferences.



EWA's Bob Spiegel guides a tour of the Dismal Swamp.

Partner with EWA to create The Triple C Ranch & Nature Center!

EWA has undertaken a \$500,000 capital campaign to fund the construction of the Triple C Ranch & Nature Center.

We need your help to make it happen!

Make a tax-deductible contribution...



Contribute cash, securities, or real property.



Donate your older car or truck. Receive the highest tax deduction allowed by law. Quick & efficient removal.



Make a gift in memory of a loved one.



Use your company's matching gift program to increase your contribution.

or give us your time and expertise.

EWA was founded in 1989 as a non-profit corporation with 501(c)(3) status. Its mission is to protect environmentally sensitive areas of central New Jersey through education, action and public awareness. EWA is at the forefront of initiatives to preserve our remaining open space for the enjoyment and education of all residents.

Call today

732-661-1660

or use the form below to send your tax-deductible contribution!

Enclosed is my tax-deductible contribution to help EWA create the Triple C Ranch & Nature Center.
Name
Street
City
State Zip
Telephone
E-Mail
I am interested in donating my services. I have experience in these areas:
sertuality submodure awted acrus
Please make checks payable to: Edison Wetlands Association PMB 180, 1115 Inman Avenue Edison, New Jersey 08820-1132



WETLANDS WATCH

THE EDISON WETLANDS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

"Saving the Planet One Swamp at a Time."

Volume 3, Issue 1

Summer 2000

EWA To Purchase Triple C Ranch in Edison

By Robert Spiegel

On March 6, 2000, the Edison Wetlands Association (EWA) entered into a lease-purchase agreement to acquire the Triple C Ranch on Tyler Road in Edison. The 5.27-acre ranch is located in the middle of the Dismal Swamp, and is adjacent to 267 acres of protected land owned by Edison Township. It remains one of the last horse farms in Middlesex County, but has fallen into considerable disrepair.

EWA staff and volunteers have begun cleaning up decades of debris and garbage dumped illegally on the ranch, and stabilizing existing structures. Next spring, EWA will begin implementation of a 5-year plan to create the **Triple C Nature Center**, including: rehabilitating existing buildings; constructing a facility housing exhibit rooms, community meeting rooms, and a permanent office for EWA; developing riding and nature trails throughout the Dismal Swamp; and constructing a new stable, paddock, and indoor riding ring.

The Triple C Nature Center will be a unique resource for central New Jersey... a place to learn about our natural environment and enjoy environmentally responsible recreation. The Triple C Ranch is a perfect starting point for walking tours of the Dismal Swamp, a leisurely horse ride, or a haunted hayride on Halloween. School children will be able to experience wetlands first-hand through eco-tours, experiments, and interactive learning exhibits. Meeting rooms will host environmental educational workshops for the public and future environmental leaders. By this fall, EWA plans to offer a limited number of events at the Triple C, adding more each season until the Center is fully operational.

EWA has mounted an aggressive capital campaign to fund the acquisition and construction of the Triple C

Nature Center. While many of the services and materials needed for the construction of trails and facilities will be purchased, EWA is planning to involve as many residents as possible in this community venture.



Nature Center

EWA has taken the first bold steps to creating an educational and environmentally sound recreation center for the residents of central New Jersey. We need your help to make the Triple C Nature Center a reality. See page 7 to learn how you can help EWA create the Triple C Nature Center.

The Dismal Swamp Isn't Dismal At All...

The 650-acre Dismal Swamp, spanning portions of Edison, Metuchen and South Plainfield, is the largest natural wildlife refuge in northern Middlesex County, and is located at the headwaters of the Bound Brook, a tributary of the Green Brook that drains 21 square miles discharging into the Raritan River¹, and at the terminus of the proposed Middlesex Greenway². As the last viable ecosystem within an encroaching urban/suburban environment, the Dismal Swamp provides natural flood control and wildlife habitat, while its forests produce oxygen, and its wetlands clean and purify water. The Swamp is also home to an estimated 165 species of birds, as well as 6 amphibian and 8 reptile species.

¹Raritan River Basin, Dismal Swamp Reconnaissance Report, US Army Corps of Engineers, February, 1993.

²The Middlesex Greenway, a walking and bicycle path, will extend from the Dismal Swamp in Edison, through Metuchen and Woodbridge. For more information, contact the Edison Greenway Coalition on 732-906-0529.



From the Desk of the Executive Director

Over the last six months, EWA has experienced substantial growth and change.

We are continuing the work you expect of us: environmental education for school children, hosting eco-tours of the Dismal Swamp, sampling and testing water from the Raritan River, stimulating action by government agencies to address toxic waste sites, creating public awareness of environmental issues, and responding to requests for help from residents.

In addition, we have undertaken two major initiatives. In pursuing our commitment to environmental education and environmentally responsible recreation, we are purchasing the Triple C Ranch in Edison. EWA plans to turn this 5-acre property in the middle of the Dismal Swamp into an environmental education and nature center serving central New Jersey. Look for articles in this newsletter about the Triple C and how you can help make this project a success.

In our pursuit of reducing contamination of our air and water, EWA has filed a suit against the Rhodia Chemical Company and their parent company, Rhone Poulenc, for failure to properly remediate their site and the Mile Run Brook, and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection for failing to take appropriate action against the companies. Page 3 contains an article on the details of our suit.

Many opportunities to make a difference in our present and in our children's future await EWA. I invite you to help us take advantage of them by supporting our vision of air that is safe to breathe, water that is safe to drink, and active people who care about what happens to our environment. Volunteer for an EWA project, donate office supplies, contribute funds to help us continue our work. But, most of all, keep abreast of what's going on in your community and exercise your voice on environmental issues.

You'll be hearing a lot about us in the months to come. Let us hear from you.

Bob Spiegel

Annual Gala November 4



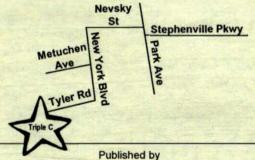
Dig out that zoot suit, flapper fringe, and gangster gear for the Third Annual Friends of the Raritan River Gala!

On the evening of Saturday, November 4, 2000, EWA and The Center for Community Renewal will transport you to a speakeasy circa 1925. You'll have to know the password to get in, but once you do, the fun begins. Sample a little "bathtub gin," followed by dinner and dancing. Remember how to do the Charleston and the Lindy Hop? Win very special door prizes by testing your knowledge of the Roaring 20s--a unique era in American history. Expect a few surprises and some special entertainment. And be prepared to be delighted and intrigued by EWA's annual silent auction, with its usual collection of the unusual.

Watch your mail for more details, or call EWA to reserve your tickets now.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED AT THE TRIPLE C RANCH!

We need volunteers to help with fall activities at the Triple C Ranch. Tend the pumpkin patch...lend a hand with our haunted hayride...help with a clean-up. Whatever your skills, we need YOU. Call 732-661-1660 today!



Edison Wetlands Association, Inc.

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Edison, NJ 08837-3308
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Robert Spiegel Executive Director
Simone Paolercio Program Coordinator
Zak Adams Project Research Technician
April Cormaci Editor
Lynne Leitner Administrative Manager

Edison Wetlands Association is a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation. Your contribution is tax-deductible.

EWA Sues Chemical Company

On July 1, 2000, the Edison Wetlands Association filed suit in Superior Court against the Rhodia Chemical Company for failure to remediate their site at 298 Jersey Avenue in New Brunswick and the Mile Run Brook, and the State of New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) for failing to take appropriate action against Rhodia to enforce the remediation.

EWA became aware of problems at the site after receiving a report from a member of the New Jersey Community Water Watch regarding chemical contamination leaking from the site into the Mile Run Brook and the Raritan River. EWA conducted a site inspection at the facility and confirmed that material was discharging into the brook. Several test samples taken from source areas draining into the brook showed high levels of cancer-causing chemicals.

In February 2000, EWA conducted a series of water and soil tests in the Mile Run Brook, downgradient from the Rhodia Plant. Elevated levels of contaminants were found in the soil and surface water near residential neighborhoods and playgrounds. EWA submitted a petition to the State Health Department and the ATSDR to conduct a health consultation at the site. On July 18, 2000, the agencies agreed and will begin the process of evaluating potential health impacts from this site to the surrounding communities.

The EWA staff has also met with elected representatives and the environmental commissioners from New Brunswick and Franklin Township to discuss the problem and gather support. With EWA leadership, a coalition of groups from various municipalities has been formed to address the contamination problem in the Mile Run Brook.

After additional research, EWA discovered that although Rhodia had been directed by state order in 1987 to clean up the site, very little has been done. EWA attorney Thomas Borden, Esq., believes that Rhodia has violated the law by its failure to remediate, and the NJ DEP has violated the law by not enforcing environmental regulations. Under the Environmental Rights Act, EWA, as an interested third party, can sue Rhodia, Rhodia's parent company, Rhone Poulenc, and the NJ DEP for these violations.





Pirates and British Colonials Help EWA Celebrate 1999



The Second Annual Friends of the Raritan River Gala was held on October 2, 1999, at the "Blue Heron Tavern" (also known as the Raritan River Boat Club, Edison). More than 60 guests attended. Most got into the spirit of the event, dressing as pirates, fair maidens, ship merchants, and wastrels. After a hearty meal, they hoisted their mugs to the rousing pub songs of Maiden Voyage, and danced the night away to the lively tunes of The Road Runners.

Awards were presented to individuals who have made a profound impact on EWA. Executive Director Bob Speigel recognized:

- Cheryl Durand for her commitment to the protection and preservation of the environment through education, and the development of the EWA Environmental Education Program.
- George "Red" Ellis of Edison TV in recognition of his critical role in educating the public on the importance of wetlands and preserving the environment.
- Wendy and John Neu for their commitment to the protection and preservation of the environment through the corporate environmental stewardship of Hugo-Neu Corporation.
- John Shersick as a co-founder of EWA and for his continuing support to increase environmental awareness and education throughout central New Jersey.

On December 11, 1999, EWA joined with The Center for Community Renewal to host "A Colonial Christmas at the Proprietary House." The Proprietary House in Perth Amboy was occupied by the last Royal Governor of New Jersey, William Franklin, and visited by the Governor's illustrious father, Benjamin Franklin. It is recognized as an historical and architectural treasure of national significance and is included on the state and national registers of historic places.

Guests began the evening with wine and cheese in the wine cellar, followed by a delicious dessert buffet in the drawing room against a backdrop of lovely harp music by Mary Lebus. Dancemaster Dick Meyers led colonial dancing in the entrance foyer. And, the dining room was the site of EWA's annual spectacular silent auction!

EWA EDUCATION EXTRA!

Elementary School Students Get Up Close and Personal with Their Environment

During the 1999-2000 school term, fourth grade students at the Martin Luther King, Menlo Park and Washington Elementary Schools, and fifth grade students at the Benjamin Franklin Elementary School in Edison participated in the EWA Environmental Education Program. The program, begun in 1998, brings environmental education to the classroom through hands-on experiments, games and crafts, and field trips.

In the fall, students at Martin Luther King, Washington, and Benjamin Franklin schools were introduced to the importance of wetlands, their inhabitants, and the functions of wetlands ecosystems through games and classroom discussions led by EWA's Andrea Ace and Mary Beth Spitz.

During spring visits, EWA's Simone Paolercio focused on trees, natural resources and their importance to eco-systems and humans. The program ended with a streamside field trip at each school to observe a local eco-system first hand.

In November, students from the Menlo Park Elementary School explored the Dismal Swamp



Bob Spiegel leads a walk through the Dismal Swamp.

during field trips sponsored by the Menlo Park PTA. Students, teachers and parents were led on a nature walk through the Swamp by Ms. Spitz, and EWA Executive Director, Bob Spiegel. They observed hawks, squirrels and traces of other animals, such as deer. Students participated in water quality experiments led by volunteers from New Jersey Community Water Watch, and soil quality experiments, games, and crafts at interactive learning stations led by EWA staff and volunteers.

High School Students Tour Dismal Swamp

On April 6, 2000, students in Dr. Louis
Worden's ecology class at J. P. Stevens High
School, Edison, toured the Triple C Ranch and
Dismal Swamp in Edison. The tour, led by EWA
Executive Director Robert Spiegel, focused on the
history of the ranch and EWA's current efforts to
clean up the site and transform it from an illegal
dumping ground to a Nature Center. (See page 1
for more information on the Triple C Ranch.)

During their walk through the Swamp to the Bound Brook, students tested water for pH, turbidity and dissolved oxygen levels, under the direction of volunteers from New Jersey Community Water Watch. EWA's Simone Paolercio led students through a macroinvertebrate study of the Bound Brook; students learned about the roles and adaptations that these organisms fill in the brook, and the tolerance of individual species to pollution. The group also learned about specific plant and animal species that

make their homes in the grasslands and forests of the Swamp.

While hiking, participants discussed wetland functions, conservation, and the effect of dumping, as well as environmental ethics, abiotic and biotic identifications, and Native American studies at the Dismal Swamp archaeological site. Dr. Worden and the students were enthusiastic about returning to tour the swamp again, and about learning through environmental volunteerism.

EWA Teaches Teachers... More than 50 teachers attended a workshop for fourth grade teachers at the Martin Luther King Elementary School in Edison on November 4, 1999. EWA's Andrea Ace and Mary Beth Spitz introduced various ways of bringing environmental education into the classroom, including hands-on experiments and outdoor activities.

To learn more about EWA's educational and youth programs, call Simone Paolercio at 732-661-1660.

A LITTLE SPRING CLEANING, ANYONE?

April 8 Cleanup Draws 400

The weather was perfect...for picking up garbage. A sunny Saturday found nearly 400 students and adults, identifiable by their bright yellow tee shirts emblazoned with "Clean the Stream," doing just that along the Robinson's branch of the Rahway River in Edison. The targeted 50 acres of wooded area extended from Woodland Grove Park on the east side of Grove Avenue, around and behind John P. Stevens High School, past John Adams Middle School, and across New Dover Road into Tingley Lane Park.

Students from several J. P. Stevens clubs were joined in the cleanup by teachers and parents; students from Bishop Ahr High School in Edison; Edison cub scouts; Linden girl scouts; off-duty Edison police officers; and members of the Center for Community Renewal, the Edison Greenways Group, and EWA.

The Edison Department of Public Works reported that nearly 8 tons of trash and recyclables were collected. In addition, a 30-yard dumpster

donated by Hugo-Neu, Schnitzer, East of Jersey City was filled half way with scrap metal pulled out of the woods and streams; much more scrap remains that was too heavy to haul to the



dumpster. Among the debris reclaimed were a washing machine, refrigerator, mattress, lawn chairs, lawn mower, rusted shopping cart, pieces of wooden and metal fencing, pipes, and tires.

The cleanup was organized by Cathy DiGioia (Co-Curriculum Coordinator for J. P. Stevens), Ian Durand (Executive Director of The Center for Community Renewal and President of EWA's Board of Trustees), Mike Kaplonski (Youth Coordinator for The Center for Community Renewal), and Walter Stochel (EWA trustee and community activist). Stochel also led training on safety, proper clothing, and clean up procedures

The cleanup provided a profound learning experience for students and the opportunity for many groups to collaborate on a community project with significant environmental impact.

that was required for participation.

As an added bonus, the cleanup is expected to result in more than \$5000 in Clean Communities Grants!

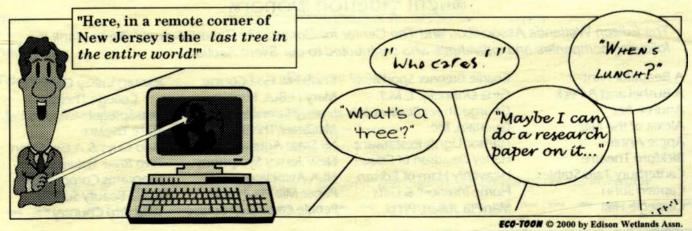
Edison Youth Corps Cleans Up

Hats off to the Edison Youth Corps! Twelve enthusiastic volunteers came out on the morning of July 14 to clean up an area of the Dismal Swamp.

Within three hours they filled several bags with garbage and debris from along the abandoned Conrail tracks which run through the swamp. They also discovered hidden garbage, dodging branches and jumping mud puddles to retrieve every bit. Tires, wood, construction materials, car batteries and bottles are just a few of the things they found.

The volunteers continued on to the Triple C Ranch, where they showed no signs of quitting.

Y3K: Dr. Spiegel's Class Studies the Eighth Wonder of the World





"When you wish upon a ..."



EWA needs:

- Office supplies
- Assistance in developing a website
- Farm equipment and tools
- Boats (preferably without leaks)
- A boat trailer
- An outboard motor.

Please call 732-661-1660 if you can donate any of these items.



Looking for an interesting way to spend a few hours?

Help EWA:

- Research and test contaminated sites
- Distribute/collect donation cans at local businesses
- With mailings (newsletters, event invitations, etc.)
- By becoming part of a letterwriting brigade
- With fundraising events.

Please call 732-661-1660 if you can help.

WHY PAY CAPITAL **GAINS TAXES ON** YOUR CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTIONS?

Giving to charity can often leave you with hefty capital gains on your tax bill if you sell appreciated securities stocks and bonds to make your gifts.

When you contribute appreciated securities to the Edison Wetlands Association Endowment Fund, you receive a tax deduction for their full market value!

The Community Foundation of New Jersey will arrange for the sale of the securities, with the proceeds contributed to EWA on your behalf. This new option provides another way for you to support the Triple C Ranch and our ongoing mission to protect and preserve our environment.

A VERY SPECIALTHANK YOU to all the volunteers who have been helping to clean up the Triple C Ranch!

GRANTS

EWA would like to thank

The Cape Branch Foundation and

The Environmental Endowment for New Jersey

for their recent grants which will enable us to continue our work.

EWA Shares with the Community

Following our 2nd Annual Gala, EWA donated all surplus food from the event to Catholic Charities.

Our New Mailing Address ...



Edison Wetlands Association 4055 Woodbridge Avenue Edison, New Jersey 08837-3308

Special Telephone Number for EWA Special Events ...

For information about and tickets to our upcoming events, call

732-321-0045

Silent Auction Ponors

The Edison Wetlands Association and The Center for Community Renewal would like to thank the following companies and individuals who contributed to our Silent Auction.

A Beautiful Print A Bushel and A Peck Andrea Ace Alexia of the Nile Apple Annie **Bickford Theatre** Canterbury Tails Stables Captain John Carnegie Hall

Charlie Brenner SportShop Gina Donnelly, C.M.T. George Street Playhouse Guerlain, Inc. Harbor Lights Restaurant Harley Davidson of Edison Heavenly Ham of Edison Home Interiors & Gifts

Mariesa Julien, Ph.D.

Knob Hill Golf Course Mary LeBus, Harpist Liberty Science Center McCarter Theatre NJ State Aquarium **New Jersey Symphony NLA Associates** Paper Mill Playhouse Pebble Creek Golf Course

Raritan Valley Comm'ty College Theatre **Bob Spiegel** State Theatre Two Guys & A Girl Salon Two River Theatre Seagrams Corporation Vatra Beauty Supply Wild Bird Country

Help EWA Create the Triple C Nature Center... Your contribution could make all the difference!

Make a cash donation.

(Your cash donation could be worth twice as much if your employer matches charitable contributions.)

- Donate appreciated stocks and securities.
- Donate your used automobile.
 (The fair market value of your donated vehicle is considered a tax-deductible charitable donation.)
- Donate real estate or other real property.
- Direct your workplace United Way donation to the Edison Wetlands Association.
- Donate materials or services.
- · Volunteer your time.

Please call 732-661-1660 for more information or complete and return the form below.

YES, I WANT TO	O HELP CREATE THE TRIPLE C NATURE CENTER!				
☐ My cash donation of	is enclosed.				
I would like to donate stocks and securities through the Edison Wetlands Association Endowment Please call me with additional information.					
I have a used vehicle to donate. Please call me to schedule pick up of my vehicle.					
I would like to direct my United Way donation to EWA. Please call me with additional information					
Please call me to discuss my donation of:					
(please describe real estate, property, materials or services to be donated)					
I would like to volunteer at the Triple C Ranch. Please call me to schedule a date and time.					
Name:					
Address:					
Telephone:	Best time to call:				
Mail completed form to:	Edison Wetlands Association				
	4055 Woodbridge Avenue Edison, New Jersey 08837-3308				
The Edison Wetlands Associ	ciation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation. All donations are tax-deductible.				

EDISON WETLANDS ASSOCIATION 4055 Woodbridge Avenue Edison, NJ 08837-3308



"Saving the Planet One Swamp at a Time."

Mark Your Calendar	EDISON WETLANDS ASSOCIATION CALENDAR OF EVENTS		
Saturday	September 23, 2000	Edison Fall Festival of Fireworks Visit the EWA display table*	
Saturday	October 7, 2000	Metuchen County Fair Visit the EWA display table*	
Saturday	November 4, 2000	3 rd Annual Friends of the Raritan River Gala "The Roaring Twenties"	
Sunday	November 19, 2000	Eco-Tour of the Middlesex Greenway (Call Walter Stochel at 732-906-0529 for time and meeting place.)	

^{*} Please call the EWA Office (732-661-1660) for directions.

* Please call our Events Office (732-321-0045) for tickets and further information.



and

Nature Center

206A Tyler Road Edison, New Jersey 08820

Photo Album

A Project of

Edison Wetlands Association

4055 Woodbridge Avenue Edison, New Jersey 08837-3308 Telephone: 732-661-1660

Fax: 732-661-9640 raritan1@aol.com



Old Barn at the Triple C Ranch



Old Barn and House at the Triple C Ranch



Back of Old Barn at the Triple C Ranch



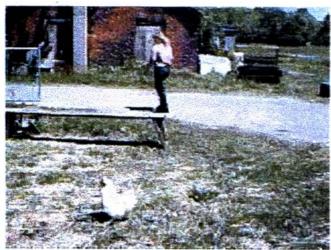
Feeding Chickens at the Triple C Ranch



Horses Grazing in Field next to the Triple C Ranch



Rear of Old House at the Triple C Ranch



Side of Old House at the Triple C Ranch



Chester the Duck at the Triple C Ranch



Horse Grazing in the Field next to the Triple C Ranch



Old Barn at the Triple C Ranch



Stream Running through the Dismal Swamp



Abandoned Railway to be converted to Greenway