



Christie's Killing of ARC Tunnel Puts Brakes on Wetlands Restoration

Governor's decree stalls Kane Tract work in mid-stream.

By Hugh M. Carola

In the wake of Governor Christie's cancelling of the Access to the Region's Core (ARC) tunnel project, the media has been full of stories about lost jobs, wasted time and opportunities lost. One story that has been missing amid the bluff, bluster and recriminations is the fact that a 250-acre wetlands restoration project in the Meadowlands has been stalled as a result of the political machinations between Trenton and Washington.

Known as the Richard Kane Natural Area, the 587-acre tract of natural habitat in Carlstadt, NJ was the focus of the last major battle between environmentalists and developers in the Meadowlands. Known as the Empire Tract for many years, the property was the proposed site of *Meadowlands Mills*—a 2.5 million square-foot megamall—until Hackensack Riverkeeper and the member organizations of the Hackensack Meadowlands Preservation Alliance secured the land's preservation in 2001. Since 2005 it has been owned by the Meadowlands Conservation Trust (MCT), the

quasi-governmental agency chaired by Captain Bill Sheehan and overseen by Executive Director Tina Schvejda.

"Part of the preservation deal that we negotiated was the creation of a unique wetlands mitigation bank to fund the tract's restoration," recalled Capt. Bill. "Only transportation projects located in the Meadowlands District are eli-

gible to buy its mitigation credits."

The Kane Tract Mitigation Bank was created to offset damage to other wetlands caused by transportation projects in the Meadowlands region, including the ARC tunnel and related projects. Rather than secure, permit and engage in their own individual mitigation projects, agencies like NJ Transit,

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Our Very Own Seeger Session

By Hugh M. Carola

One thing missing from Bruce Springsteen's 2006 album *The Seeger Sessions* was the talent and amazing energy of legendary folk singer Pete Seeger. That was certainly not the case on November 20, 2010 at the William Carlos Williams Center for the Performing Arts in Rutherford, NJ when Pete Seeger and Friends took to the stage for the first-ever Pete



Captain Bill with Pete Seeger

and Toshi Seeger Wetlands Preservation Concert. The sold-out show featured Pete along with Hudson Valley-based folk/blue

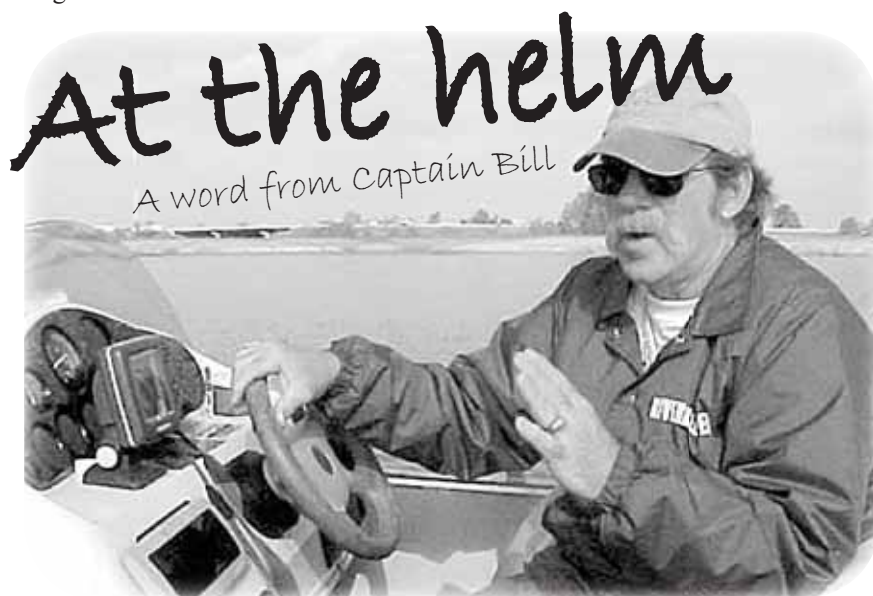
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photo by Anthony Ungaro-
courtesy of JMH Dull Productions

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Looking Forward

Dear Friends,

As this year slips away and 2011 is about to begin, let me thank you for helping to sustain Hackensack Riverkeeper through some pretty rough times. At this time last year things were looking grim, revenues were down, and I was worrying about steps we might have to take unless things improved. Fortunately my staff recognized the need to tighten our belts so we cut expenses and slowly but surely turned things around. By springtime the worst was behind us. Even nature pitched in and provided sunny skies and calm waters. As a result, our 2010 Eco-Program season had the least amount of weather-related cancellations ever.

Other forces helped to keep us on the job as well. As you *Tidelines* readers will recall, diligent enforcement action by the New Jersey Division of Criminal Justice on the "Crown Plaza Affair" provided us with both a much-needed financial windfall and validation from New Jersey's top law enforcement official. Attorney General Paula Dow commended

us for the work we did to bring that polluter to justice and stated that the reward we received be used to maintain our environmental watchdog programs. I assure her – and you – that it is.

But although things are looking up for our organization, serious threats are looming ahead. Even before taking office, I knew the Christie administration was going to increase our workload. For example, the administration (led by a governor who actually questions the reality of global warming) constantly talks about regulatory "streamlining" and in November DEP Commissioner Martin told an audience at the NJ League of Municipalities Convention, "You are our customers and it's our job to get you the permits you need." Of course we're concerned that what the administration *really* means to do is roll back environmental protections under the guise of economic recovery. We cannot – and *will not* – sit idly by and allow that to happen. All of us must resolve to remain vigilant

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Killing of ARC Tunnel

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NJ Department of Transportation and others purchase mitigation credits from the operator of the mitigation bank: North Carolina-based EarthMark Mitigation Services. As part of their lease agreement with MRC, EarthMark designed the restoration plan and is slated to pay a total of \$6 million over five years to the MRC. In addition, the company is supposed to spend an additional \$25 million to finish the 254-acre job.

Earthmark began work in fall 2009 when helicopters sprayed herbicide on the site to kill dense stands of *Phragmites* reeds that had grown thick over the wetlands in the absence of a strong, healthy tidal flow. While we're not big fans of chemicals being sprayed in our watershed, it is the only way to effectively deal with long established stands of invasive reeds.

This past spring, earth-moving machines went to work excavating the dead *Phragmites* roots and digging new channels to allow the Hackensack River's 5-7 foot tides to flow freely onto and into the wetlands, thus restoring their

functionality and benefit to wildlife. At first the work resulted in a lot of frantic phone calls to our office from people thinking they were seeing wetlands *destruction*. Needless to say, all are happy to be proven wrong.

If allowed to finish, this *first phase* EarthMark project would generate seventy mitigation credits; the largest block of which (~25) were to have been purchased by NJ Transit. Selling for between \$600,000 and \$800,000 each, the credits would have raised as much as \$56 million. At least that was the plan before Christie cancelled the tunnel.

"I've worked with governors from both parties over the years but I'm sad to say that I am very concerned about *this* governor," said Capt. Bill. "I'm afraid that by stopping the ARC project, Governor Christie will get more than he bargained for—and so will we."

When the word came up from Trenton that the ARC might be cancelled, EarthMark was in the middle of planting hundreds of thousands of plugs of Saltmarsh Cordgrass (*Spartina alterniflora*) plants that were raised from seeds

gathered in the Meadowlands. By mid-September, the planting work was stopped and the subcontractor doing the planting work was forced to lay off thirty employees.

"This is something you don't hear about very often – thirty union members doing important environmental restoration work being laid off," said Capt. Bill.

Continued on page 8



New berms will both channel water into wetlands and protect nearby property from flooding.



This daylighted creek will once again flow with tidal waters.

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Seeger Session

Continued from page 1

grass/roots performers Kim & Reggie Harris, Spook Handy and the RJ Storm Project. Local musician, folk impresario and concert producer John Dull and his group the Dull Music Band also performed, as did Briar Patch, a roots/rock band fronted by John's son Martin Dull.

How the evening all came about is a story in itself...

In mid-September John Dull came to our Hackensack office with a proposition. He told us that he'd recently spoken with Pete Seeger. During their conversation, Pete talked about traveling between his home in Fishkill, NY and concert venues in the metro area – travels that almost always took him through or past the Meadowlands. He'd always been intrigued by them and wanted to know more: Were they protected? Endangered? Was there any way to celebrate them with a concert? John replied that he knew some people who might be interested in sponsoring just such an event.

"From there things took on an amazing life of their own," recalled Capt. Bill. "Right after John proposed his Wetlands Preservation Concert idea with Hughie and me, things began falling into place and it became real clear real quick that we had a show to do."

Speaking of... After his welcoming remarks and a short opening set, John Dull introduced the show's headliner. As the nearly 700 attendees rose to their feet and applauded wildly, the 91-year old Seeger took center stage and announced, "This is for the 5-year old named Susannah I just met here this evening" and proceeded to deftly pick out "Oh Susannah"



Jamming on "Midnight Special" (L to R) Spook Handy, Kim and Reggie Harns, the RJ Storm Project, Pete Seeger.



Captain Bill accepting his award while Pete Seeger (L) and Gil Hawkins (R) look on.

on the banjo. With the tone thus set and the audience encouraged to sing along ("That was fine, but more harmony next time!"), everyone settled in to a very enjoyable evening in the company of a most remarkable man and his music – both old and new.

After Pete's set, the other performers took their turns; each with the welcome addition of Mr. Seeger and his banjo – still emblazoned with the words: "This Machine Surrounds Hate and Forces It to Surrender" – a peaceful counterpoint to the late Woody Guthrie, whose guitar boasted: "This Machine Kills

Fascists." Among the many musical highlights of the evening were Pete singing "If I had a Hammer", "Turn, Turn, Turn"; and Pete and friends jamming on "Midnight Special" and Pete's just-written "God's Counting on Me, God's Counting on You."

During the intermission, Captain Bill, Congressman Steve Rothman, Rutherford Mayor John Hipp and I were escorted backstage to meet the man himself. Capt. Bill presented Pete with a Hackensack Riverkeeper cap and both he and I thanked Pete for his music and for all he's done over the years on behalf of the environ-

ment, human rights, and peace. It was a real honor to shake his hand and tell him so.

We were then called to the stage for a special awards presentation. Rep. Rothman spoke to the audience about the long road that led to Meadowlands preservation. He also waxed eloquent about Pete and his contributions to American history. One could not help but appreciate the irony of a US Congressman in 2010 extolling a man who was subpoenaed by the House Un-American Activities Committee in 1955 (where he heroically refused to name names or plead the Fifth Amendment).

After Rothman's tribute, Jamie Winters, editor of *The South Bergenite*, presented Pete with an award for his work; and officially naming the concert after him and Toshi Ota Seeger, his wife of 67 years. Ms. Winters then introduced our good friend Robert Ceberio, executive director of the

NJ Meadowlands Commission who presented Captain Bill with an award similar to Pete's but reading:

"For outstanding efforts and accomplishments in wetlands preservation, this award is given to the Hackensack Riverkeeper in recognition for your shining example of leadership and valiant work. You lead the way and we pledge to follow in return. A big THANK YOU!"

Once all the photos were taken, congratulations given and the polite applause over, Briar Patch took to the stage for the final set of the evening. Soon after, drummer Alex Zetelski graciously turned his throne over to guest drummer Captain Bill Sheehan. Although many in the audience already knew about Hackensack Riverkeeper, few of them were aware of Bill's "pre-Riverkeeper" history. After returning control of the drum kit back to Alex, Capt.

Bill stepped up to the percussion kit and helped Briar Patch close the show.

"I only had a week's notice so I only had a week to practice and get back in shape," said the captain. "It wasn't exactly like riding a bike but it was close enough for rock and roll."

We at Hackensack Riverkeeper extend major kudos to John Dull for making this incredible event happen. We also recognize co-producer Daphne Williams Fox. Ms. Fox, granddaughter of the late physician and poet William Carlos Williams and chairperson of the Williams Center's board of trustees, worked tirelessly to ensure the evening's success.

For information about the Williams Center including upcoming shows, call 201-939-6969 or visit www.williamscenter.org.

John Dull can be reached via his Website: www.dullmusic.com.

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See you there!

What a Time it Was!

2010 Eco-program season is one for the history books

By Hugh M. Carola

Whenever anyone asks us how long our Eco-program season lasts, the answer we give is, “From Earth Day through Halloween.” Well this past year, we pretty much did just that.

Between April 7th and October 29th we put in six solid months of Eco-Cruises, River Cleanups, Guided Paddles, canoe/kayak rentals, and Bird-Walks. In fact, 2010 was a record-breaking season by all accounts with nearly 5,500 people participating in our environmental education and active conservation programs.

ECO-CRUISES

Weather is always a factor in determining how successful a season is going to be but 2010 was amazing for the amount of fair weather we enjoyed throughout. Only eleven trips were cancelled due to bad weather and seven more were called off due to other reasons. This past season was by far the most successful ever.

Captain Bill and I conducted 248 Eco-Cruises aboard the Keeper vessels *Edward Abbey* and (the newly-rebuilt) *Robert H. Boyle* for 3,720 people – the most the program has ever served. Each of our three Open Eco-Cruise itineraries (Meadowlands Discovery, Boating Thru Bergen and Excursion around the Bay) proved to be equally popular with both new participants and returning Eco-Cruisers alike – 761 of them to be exact.

We provided Eco-Cruises for longstanding events like the 7th annual Meadowlands Festival of Bird-

ing, Ridgefield Park Earth Day celebration and the Urban Watershed Education Program. Hackensack Riverkeeper also continued its collaboration with the City of Newark, providing Passaic River Eco-Cruises for nearly 400 Newark residents. The overwhelming majority of participants however – 2,229 – took part in Charter Eco-Cruises and Combination Programs. Nature clubs, Women’s clubs, students, Scout groups, and families on outings explored the river with us in 2010.

New for next year: We’re going to add more of our popular Excursion around the Bay trips; and schedule some Eco-Cruises for photographers.

PADDLING CENTER

The departure of former Paddling Center manager Nick Vos-Wein in July certainly left a gap but his excellent training of Assistant Managers Ryan Martin and John Sailer proved to be just the thing needed to close that gap. That plus the generally favorable weather brought over 700 people to the river in canoes and kayaks in 2010. Twenty-one scheduled Guided Paddles – including full trips on Earth Day and during the Birding Festival – were conducted with only six cancelled on account of weather or other reasons. Charter paddles were conducted for both adults and youth groups.

Interestingly, in past years at least half of all our paddlers participated in Guided Paddles; but 2010 marked a dramatic shift. The number of people renting boats was *more than double* the number of those who took guided tours. And that’s a great thing.



Captain Bill pilots the Edward Abbey during one of the first Eco-Cruises of 2010.



United Water NJ vice-president Rich Henning addressing paddlers at our 2nd Annual Reservoir Challenge.

Without question, paddling continues to grow in popularity throughout our region and beyond. If you're one of those looking get started, we're happy to help.

New for next year: We're exploring options for holding a paddling event at Bergen County's Overpeck County Park, and for conducting point-to-point trips up and down the river.

RIVER CLEANUPS

Another 2010 record-breaker was the sheer number of cleanups we conducted this season: *twenty-one!* Eleven were sponsored through our Corporate River Stewardship program and ten more were public cleanups (including two pre-season events, one in January (!) and another in March. From January 16 through October 24, a total of 970 dedicated volunteers removed an amazing *forty tons* of trash and debris from the river and its banks. For those keeping score at home, that translates into 80,000 pounds of pollution taken out of the water in 2010!

Our heartfelt thanks go out to all our volunteers and to our corporate partners for jobs very well done: Fairleigh Dickinson University, Panasonic, Goldman Sachs, Unilever, Becton Dickinson, Wallenius Wilhelmsen, Samsung and the New York Football Giants – yes, *those* Giants.

New this year was a cleanup we conducted in Newark on the Passaic River in conjunction with a festival held on the grounds of the Rio Rodizio Restaurant. It was just one more way Hackensack Riverkeeper is helping folks in lower Passaic River communities exercise their rights and responsibilities as good watershed citizens.

New for next year: Operations Director Lisa Ryan is already scouting out potential new cleanup locations in and around our watershed. Keep those “mud clothes” ready!

BIRD-WALKS

This year we visited an old friend – the Celery Farm Natural Area in Allendale – and (thanks to Hackensack Riverkeeper Trustee Virginia Korteweg) discovered a “new” gem right in our watershed – the Sapienza Gardens and adjacent Wood Dale County Park in Hillsdale. Forty people in three groups came out with us to enjoy nature and observe birds & other wildlife. We haven't scheduled open Bird-Walks for a few years now but that may change in 2011.

New for next year: We're planning to schedule some early spring walks at Sapienza Gardens for migrant warblers, etc.; as well as a couple of fall and winter walks for waterfowl and raptors.

Those dates and the complete 2011 Eco-Program schedule will be posted on our Website by mid-February and published in the next issue of Tidelines. See you at the river!

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BETTER KNOW A COLLEAGUE

The New Jersey Audubon Society

One of our oldest friends

Part four of our 37-part series

By Hugh M. Carola

Our relationship with the New Jersey Audubon Society (NJAS) goes back to before the founding of Hackensack Riverkeeper. From 1994 through 1996, Captain Bill Sheehan assisted NJAS Conservation VP Richard Kane and his colleague David Githens with research for their Hackensack River Migratory Bird Report. The report – which provided critical evidence as to the value of our watershed as avian habitat – was published in 1997; the same year Capt. Bill started our organization.

By then NJ Audubon was already one hundred years old;

having been founded literally at the dawn of the modern American conservation movement. Then, as now, NJ Audubon fosters environmental awareness and conservation ethics; protects New Jersey's wildlife and plants – especially endangered and threatened species – and promotes preservation of New Jersey's valuable natural habitats. NJAS is a privately supported 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization.

NJAS maintains thirteen staffed nature centers located throughout New Jersey; including Lorrimer Sanctuary in Franklin Lakes, Weis Ecology Center in Ringwood and

the Essex County Environmental Center in Roseland. The organization also oversees five nature preserves, including the 1-acre Montclair Hawk Watch in Montclair (small yes but oh, so impressive). Over the years NJ Audubon has introduced untold thousands of people to birding and nature study; and has helped mentor countless teachers, activists, scientists and others dedicated to nature

Today top NJ Audubon staffers like Pete Dunne, Pete Bacinski and Eric Stiles carry on the organization's mission – as does everybody else in their shop! For info on all NJAS programs, activities, field trips and more, go to www.njaudubon.org, email hq@njaudubon.org, or call 908-204-8998. Tell 'em Riverkeeper sent you...

Killing of ARC Tunnel

Continued from page 3

“It's easy to focus on the big money issues of the day and forget the fact that there are real people doing real work who feel like they've been screwed by the guy most of them probably voted for.”

Despite all the negatives, there is some hope that EarthMark's project will be completed and that at least enough mitigation credits will be purchased to enable the project to break even. Proposed work at Teterboro Airport, replacement of the 80-year-old Whitpenn Bridge over the Hackensack River between Kearny and Jersey City, and on the New Jersey Turnpike between Exits 16W & 18W may all require mitigation credits.

One new feature on the site

that *has* been completed: a new earthen berm has been built to separate the newly-restored tidal areas from the as-yet-to-be-restored areas. The berm will also help reduce flooding on nearby industrial properties along Washington Avenue and Commerce St. in Carlstadt; all of which, incidentally, were built on wetlands.

Postscript: EarthMark employees were startled on October 22 to see a Jeep come hurtling through an open gate onto their jobsite. According to published reports, Antonio Mogavero and a friend drove a quarter-mile into the Kane tract before getting stuck in a deep mudhole. With no one to help them and everyone very angry at them, there was nothing they could do but wait for police to arrive and charge them with defiant



Illegal off-roading proves to be a problem for the joy riders as well as the refurbished mitigation land.

trespass. Their court date is set for mid-December in Moonachie Municipal Court.

“Illegal off-roading isn't uncommon in the Meadowlands but fortunately it is becoming increasingly rare as a result of ongoing restoration efforts like Earthmark's” said Captain Bill.

Paramus Enchantment Project Update

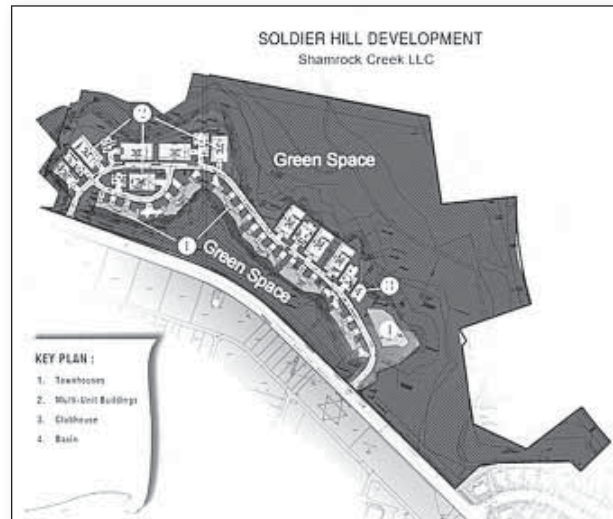
By Chris Len

The Paramus Enchantment project is on hold after the developer, Shamrock Creek LLC, abruptly informed the borough's Board of Adjustment that it preferred to revise and resubmit its proposal than face a final round of public verbal commentary.

The evocatively-named project proposes to construct 36 townhouses and 104 garden apartments in 15 buildings on a wooded tract in Paramus. The property straddles Soldier Hill Brook, a Category 1 tributary of the Oradell Reservoir and an important ecological and recreational resource. The site had long been thought preserved, but thanks to a clerical error and creative lawyering, development seems distressingly possible.

Among its many hurdles, Shamrock Creek needs a zoning variance from the Paramus Board of Adjustment. To that end, it had presented expert testimony over several weeks to make its case. Hackensack Riverkeeper staff attended and participated in many of these hearings.

Shortly before the final planning meeting, scheduled for October 28th, the Enchantment developer abruptly pulled its plan. We speculate that Shamrock Creek realized its plan would not be approved and decided to reassess its proposal rather than receive an official rejection. However the board ruled, the devel-



There is actually much less developable land than this developer's rendition would have us believe.

opment is almost certain to invite litigation, so perhaps Enchantment felt that the administrative record as it stood was not a good basis for a legal challenge.

Whatever their thinking, the developer will now have to submit its new plan before it can receive a decision from the planning board.

Contact Ed Onorato and Mark Distler at www.saveparamuswetlands.com for updates.

Our outdoor season may be over but Hackensack Riverkeeper is still on the job!

Come see us at the following events happening early next year:

Garden State Outdoor Sportsmen's Show

Taking place at the NJ Convention and Exposition Center at Raritan Center in Edison, NJ January 13-16, 2011, this is our first foray to this four-day fishing, hunting and everything outdoors extravaganza. Tickets are \$9 online; \$12 at the door per adult per day; FREE for children under 15 when accompanied by an adult. For tickets and more information, visit www.gsoos.com.

NY National Boat Show

This major event is happening at the Jacob Javits Convention Center in NYC January 19-23, 2011. Tickets cost \$12 for those 16 and up; FREE for those 15 and younger when accompanied by an adult. For tickets and more information visit www.nyboatshow.com. One great way to visit the show (and the city, too) is to take NY Waterway ferries from Port Imperial/Weehawken to Manhattan Midtown / W 39th St.

Paddlesport

The East Coast's premier paddling expo takes place March 25-27, 2011 at the Garden State Exhibit Center in Somerset, NJ. Produced by The Jersey Paddler, admission is only \$10 and FREE for children under 14. If you're looking to purchase a canoe or kayak for the 2011 season (or just thinking about it), you owe it to yourself to check out this event. Tickets are available at the door; for more information, visit www.jersey-paddler.com.

A Clean Water Act Primer

Understanding one of the country's most powerful and effective environmental laws.

By Chris Len

After Ohio's Cuyahoga River caught fire for the 13th time in 1969, the United States Congress passed the Clean Water Act (then called the Water Pollution Prevention and Control Act in 1973) to restore and maintain "the chemical, physical and biological integrity of the Nation's Waters." As opposed to the piecemeal laws that preceded it, the Clean Water Act shifted the nation's attention to the technology used by dischargers to limit pollutants in their effluent. Under the Clean Water Act, any discharge from a point source (a pipe, but also many other discreet sources) without a permit into a water of the United States would be illegal. The permits required dischargers to meet Technology Based Effluent Limitations (TBEL) set by the best technology available at the time the permit was written. Each permit was to last five years, at the end of which time it would be reissued with a newer, better TBEL based on the best advances in water quality technology discovered since the last time the permit was issued.

At its most basic, this is how the Clean Water Act works – you can't discharge pollution into water without a permit, and permits were to improve to the best technology available every five years.

The goal of the clean water act was to achieve water clean enough for human swimmers and to support all manner of aquatic life everywhere by 1983, and to end all discharges to water by 1985. While achievement of these goals still remains frustratingly distant, it is fair to say that the Clean Water Act is the, or one of the, most successful environmental laws ever passed.

For example, long term residents will remember New York Harbor 40 years ago as a foam-covered stinky brown mess. The harbor served as an open sewer, and going near the Hudson River, let alone swimming in it, was unthinkable. According to data collected over the past 40 years by the New York City DEP, vast improvements in water quality have been achieved.

Dissolved oxygen is a common marker for aquatic ecosystem health, as it is quickly degraded by a number of pollutants and is necessary to fish life; Enterococci and Fecal Coliform are typical markers for pathogen pollution. Since the Clean Water Act was passed, dissolved oxygen is markedly up and pathogens are markedly down. Water quality has im-



photo credit James Thomas, Cleveland Press Collection

Petrochemicals aflame on the Cuyahoga River.

proved to the point where there is a yearly marathon swim around Manhattan Island.

As the Clean Water Act has neared full implementation, the standard process of permit acquisition and renewal has yielded decreasing returns. Non-point source pollution, poor permit enforcement and inadequate TBELs allow unacceptable water pollution to persist in the Hackensack and throughout the Harbor. The Clean Water Act's second branch, a focus on in-stream water quality, is becoming more important to achieving the fishable swimmable standard.

The Act requires a parallel process to the TBEL procedure that focuses on in-stream water quality. Each state must enact water quality standards and criteria, and then write permits that do not contribute to the violation of those standards. For waters that do not meet water quality standards, the states must determine a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) for each pollutant for which standards are not met. The TMDL includes all sources of pollution – point source or otherwise, and requires that all those sources, when added together, not exceed a daily limit. Once the TMDL is set, all permits must include a waste load allocation that is sufficient to meet the water quality standard.

As I have written previously in these pages, the EPA, New York State DEC and New Jersey DEP are working together to set a TMDL throughout the harbor for pathogens, dissolved oxygen and toxics. Once in effect, and if conscientiously enforced, the TMDL has the potential to finally achieve true fishable and swimmable standards throughout the estuary. One day.



WMA 5 Ambassador Update Meet the New Ambassador



Hi, I'm Jillian Agnello and I am the AmeriCorps Watershed Ambassador for Watershed Management Area 5 (WMA-5) which includes the Hackensack and Hudson River watersheds.

I am honored to be stationed at Hackensack Riverkeeper and am available as a resource to the municipalities within WMA-5 to discuss clean water issues like non-point source pollution, and the best ways to keep our watershed healthy. It is a great pleasure to help educate our youth and serve the people of Bergen and Hudson counties.

I graduated from the University of Delaware with a B.S. in Environmental Science in May 2010.

Being an Environmental Science major allowed me to learn about all the different physical sciences in order to understand how the environment works. I have a passion for community service and was a member of Rotary International District 7490 during my college career. I taught high school students from Passaic, Bergen, and Hudson counties how to become "servant leaders" and make a difference in their communities. I held leadership positions within my sorority (ΑΔΠ) on campus and organized philanthropic events in surrounding communities. These leadership experiences, along with my passion for the environment, sparked my motivation to

continue educating about environmental issues while serving my community.

I am excited to bring that motivation back to New Jersey and do what I can to help protect this watershed we call home. I am honored to serve as your Watershed Ambassador this year. Please understand that I am a free resource to the community and am available to give presentations to your organization, school, company, etc. about ways we can easily combat water pollution. I am also available to train volunteers how to monitor waterways, lead a variety of interactive activities, and much more. I look forward to my service here in WMA-5, and I hope to reach as many people as possible about watershed management in New Jersey. Please do not hesitate to contact me at ambassador@hackensackriverkeeper.org or 201-968-0808 x105.

Nature Program Cooperative

Hackensack Riverkeeper is a founder of the Nature Program Cooperative (NPC), a network of environmental education providers in northeast New Jersey.

The NPC provides opportunities for people to experience and enjoy our region's natural side.

Members/supporters and nonmembers are welcome at all NPC events. For more info click on www.natureprogram.org.

Owl Prowl

Hosted by Tenafly Nature Center

Presented TNC & NJAS Weis Ecology Center

Thursday, January 6, 7-8:30 PM

New Jersey teems with night life and one of its biggest stars is the owl. Join educators from Tenafly Nature Center and Weis Ecology Center for a PowerPoint introduction and to meet live owls from both nature centers. The group will then venture outside in search of wild owls. This program is intended for adults and families with children ages 5 and older. It's rain or shine and pre-registration required.

Members \$5 / Non-members \$10

Maple Sugaring Festival

Hosted/presented by NJAS Weis Ecology Center

Sunday, February 20, Noon - 4:00 PM

One-hour sugaring tours leave the visitor center every 20 minutes. Experience the maple sugaring process from tree to tabletop, learn how REAL maple syrup is made, and taste maple products available for purchase at a Maple Bake Sale. Before or after tours, visitors can head into Norvin Green State Forest for a midwinter ramble, watch the winter bird activity from our observation deck, visit the Red-tailed Hawk and Screech Owl in the aviary, or browse Weis' Nature Store. Dress for the weather. It's a tree-tapping good time! No pre-registration is necessary; purchase tour tickets the day of the festival (first-come, first-served). Cost: \$6 per person, \$18 per family (parent/child). A real sweet deal: free Admission for individuals who join or renew with a NJ Audubon individual membership or families who join or renew with a NJ Audubon family membership.

For more info call Weis at 973-835-2160.

HACKENSACK WATERSHED FIELD NOTES

Edited by Hugh M. Carola

I'm starting this issue with an announcement: I'm looking for catch-and-release fishing reports to make this column a little less bird-heavy. So if you're fishing anywhere in our watershed – reservoirs, upper watershed, Meadowlands, Newark Bay, etc. – I'd love to know anything noteworthy. Big fish, lots of fish, unusual fish, whatever; just call our office or send an e-mail to hugh@hackensackriverkeeper.org. I promise to keep all specific locations secret. We begin this issue with four great Americans and our national symbol:

American Avocet – What better way to begin this shorebird-heavy report than with a beautiful bird like this? On 8/21 a single Avocet – very rare in northern NJ – was seen in the Kingsland Impoundment at Richard W. DeKorte Park in Lyndhurst. To the delight of many watchers, the bird was seen there through the end of August.

American Bittern – one of the best-camouflaged birds in the world until flushed from cover; an adult was seen taking flight from a thick stand of reeds in Mill Creek Marsh in Secaucus, NJ on 8/21. Another was noted there on 10/26.

American Golden Plover – Several of these uncommon shorebirds were seen over several weeks from mid-September to late October at the Anderson Creek Marsh in Secaucus. (They also allowed your Field Notes editor to reach #300 on his Life List!)

American Kestrel – North America's smallest falcon, a Kestrel was seen with prey (a small

songbird) at Laurel Hill County Park in Secaucus on 10/18. It was observed earlier that day hunting over the brushy areas at the park.

Bald Eagle – This fall's first sighting was unexpectedly seen during an Eco-Cruise on 9/14. On 9-24, a group of Eco-Cruisers watched another eagle attempt to steal a fish from an Osprey. The Osprey won the tussle. A half-dozen more eagles were seen during Eco-Cruises in October.

Black Skimmer – groups of 2-3 birds were observed along the river in the Meadowlands beginning in mid-July through early September.

Blue-Gray Gnatcatcher – Gene Dunton writes: *On Sunday afternoon, October 3rd, a Gnatcatcher came out to play as I walked through the woods to Van Saun Park. It displayed and called for about fifteen minutes. The next day I heard one in the bushes as I walked north along Elm Street. Bet there will be none today! They come and go quickly.*

Blue-winged Teal – The first fall migrant in our watershed was seen on 9/6 at DeKorte.

Bobolink – Always a great find, a pair of these grassland birds was flushed from a tussock of *Spartina* grass at Mill Creek Marsh on 8/2.

Brown-headed Cowbird – A large flock was observed in Maywood, NJ on 8/12 making its way from lawn to lawn in search of grubs and other insects.

Caspian Tern – A pair of these large terns was seen flying over the river near Trolley Park in Secaucus during the evening of 8/19. In addition to BirdFest,

Caspians were also noted during Eco-Cruises on 9-24 and 10/10.

Common Nighthawk – An early migrating flock was observed over the Metropolitan campus of Fairleigh Dickinson University in Teaneck on 8/13. Later flocks were reported from throughout our watershed in September.

Connecticut Warbler – Perhaps the warbler least seen in New Jersey, a single bird was noted at Liberty State Park on 9/20.

Dickcissel – One of these west-of-the-Appalachian breeding birds was discovered near the entrance to Overpeck Preserve on 9/15. Sparrow-sized and often found in the company of House Sparrows, some Dickcissels range as far as the Atlantic Coast during migration.

Forster's Tern – By mid-July, large flocks were being observed in various Meadowlands locations from the Sawmill WMA to Mill Creek Point.

Green-winged Teal – The first teal of fall 2010 were seen at Mill Creek Marsh on 8/24. On 10/2, a HUGE flock of nearly a thousand ducks was observed at the mouth of Berry's Creek.

Grasshopper Sparrow – A serious rarity, one was found at Laurel Hill Park in Secaucus on 10/23.

Laughing Gull – Always common along the Jersey Shore, a dozen post-breeding dispersal birds were seen this year in our area on 8/6 in the Saw Mill Creek WMA. Afterwards, groups were seen in the company of other gulls in various locations through late October.

Least Bittern – Our smallest heron, a single bird was seen at DeKorte on 8/6 along the Kingsland Impoundment near the Environment Center.

Little Blue Heron – Quite rare in the Meadowlands (despite the wealth of other heron species), an adult was observed along Mill Creek in Secaucus during an Eco-Cruise on 8/21.

Northern Shoveler – This fall's first shovelers were listed at Mill Creek Marsh on 8/24.

Pectoral Sandpiper – Not always easy to distinguish among the flocks of the more common Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, a single "Pec" was identified on 8/6 at the tiny Clay Ave Marsh in Lyndhurst.

Red-breasted Nuthatch – On 8/29 one of these diminutive birds was heard calling and observed foraging in a white pine tree in Maywood, NJ.

Semipalmated Sandpiper – One of our more numerous migratory shorebirds, a flock conservatively estimated at over 2,400 birds was found settling in for the night on the newly-built docks at the soon-to-be-opened River Barge Park in Carlstadt, NJ on 8/20.

Short-billed Dowitcher – A small flock was observed at DeKorte on 7/10; much earlier than usual.

Sora – Two of these secretive rails were seen along the Marsh Discovery Trail at DeKorte on 9/1. Two more (the same?) were observed in the Kingsland Impoundment there on 9/8.

Sparrows (spp.) – fall migration always brings rare and uncommon sparrows to our watershed. On 10/20, birders at Overpeck Preserve reported a Clay-colored Sparrow, a Lincoln's

Sparrow and a pair of Vesper Sparrows. That same day at Liberty State Park, a Vesper, three Lincolns and nine White-crowned Sparrows were observed.

Striped bass – Although many undersized bass were caught and released from late summer through mid-fall, the first large catch of the season was a 31-inch fish taken from Newark Bay at Gregg Park in Bayonne on 10/2.

Swainson's Thrush – A group of three were seen (and enjoyed) in a River Edge backyard on the morning of 10/19.

Wild Turkey – A sizable flock of these large gamebirds established itself in Closter during the past breeding season. There are also near-daily sightings of turkeys at Tenafly Nature Center and Greenbrook Sanctuary in Alpine.

Wilson's Warbler – On 9/5 a single Wilson's (a small yellow bird not much larger than a Chickadee) was observed at Overpeck Preserve in Leonia, NJ among the cottonwood trees.

Veery – One of these brown-colored thrushes was seen at Schmidt's Woods in Secaucus during the evening of 9/9.

Yellow-breasted Chat – Our least-observed warbler (despite its brash call, bright color and the fact that it's North America's largest), one was nonetheless observed at Overpeck Preserve on 9/26. Fourteen additional warbler species – including Nashville and Cape May Warblers) were tallied there the same day.

Yellow-crowned Night-heron – Our only colonial-nesting heron in the Meadowlands, both groups produced young in 2010: two nests at Schmidt's Woods produced 6 fledglings; while six nests at Harmon Cove produced a total of 15 young.



Short-billed Dowitcher

© Douglas Goodell



Sora

© Douglas Goodell



Yellow-crowned Night Heron

© Douglas Goodell

Thanks to all our spotters and as always, a tip o' the naturalist's hat (from A to Z) to: Joe Augeri, Jay Auslander, Pete Bacinski, Scott Barnes, Kevin Bolton, Gerry and Harry Byrne, Beth Cronk, Ray Duffy, Gene Dunton, Rich Dwyer, Gil Hawkins, Sophie Heymann, Lynn Kramer, Mike Newhouse, Joseph Labriola, Jorge Monteagudo, George Reskakis, Lisa Ryan, Bill Sheehan, Don Torino and Jim Wright.

Meadowlands Festival of Birding: September 11-12

7th annual event sees dip in attendance but excellent bird sightings

Despite a big loss in sponsorship from the NJ Meadowlands Commission, our annual birding partnership (NJMC, Hackensack Riverkeeper & NJ Audubon) was nonetheless a great success. Although prevented from providing grant money, the NJMC lent personnel, support and the Festival's main venue: Richard W. DeKorte Park and environs in Lyndhurst. Over 175 people participated in the two-day event which included numerous birding walks, bird-banding demonstrations, indoor presentations and the ever-popular Birding-by-Boat excursions. Novices, longtime birders and



Whimbrel (Numenius Phaeopus)

everyone in between enjoyed the great weather and good times.

Festival-goers were also treated to an amazing keynote presentation by noted naturalist and author of *The Shorebird Guide* Richard Crossley, a transplanted Yorkshireman who now

calls Cape May home. Among the great stories and beautiful images he shared with us, one of the more important points Mr. Crossley stressed was the fact that due to advances in digital photography, birders now have the ability to assist ornithologists more than ever before because birders can now prove what they see.

And plenty of great birds were seen – and heard – during the 2010 Festival, as you can plainly see on the list below. Mark your calendars now for next year. The 2011 NJ Meadowlands Festival of Birding takes place September 10 & 11, 2011.

This list includes all birds seen at DeKorte, Harrier Meadow, Mill Creek, Celery Farm, Liberty State Park, Stateline Lookout Hawk Watch, and all birding-by-boat reports.

WATERFOWL

- SWAN, Mute
- GOOSE, Canada
- DUCK, Wood
 - Blue-winged Teal
 - Green-winged Teal
 - Gadwall
 - Mallard
 - Northern Shoveler

LOONS - HERONS

- LOON, Common
- COROMANT, Double-crested
- HERON, Great Blue
 - American Bittern
 - Black-crowned Night-
 - Yellow-crowned Night-
 - Great Egret
 - Snowy Egret

VULTURES, HAWKS, EAGLES

- VULTURE, Turkey
- OSPREY
- EAGLE, Bald
- HARRIER, Northern
- HAWK, Cooper's
 - Red-tailed
 - Sharp-shinned
- FALCON, Peregrine
 - American Kestrel
 - Merlin

RAILS AND SHOREBIRDS

- RAIL, Clapper
 - Sora
- PLOVER, Black-bellied
 - American Golden
 - Semipalmated
 - Killdeer
- SANDPIPER, Spotted
 - Whimbrel*
 - Solitary
 - Semipalmated
 - Least
 - White-rumped
 - Stilt
 - Short-billed Dowitcher
 - Greater Yellowlegs
 - Lesser Yellowlegs

GULLS AND TERNS

- GULL, Laughing
 - Ring-billed Gull
 - Herring Gull
 - Great Black-backed Gull
- TERN, Caspian
 - Common Tern
 - Forster's Tern

DOVES - WOODPECKERS

- DOVE, Mourning
- PIGEON, Rock
- SWIFT, Chimney

- HUMMINGBIRD, Ruby-throated
- KINGFISHER, Belted
- WOODPECKER, Red-bellied
 - Downy
 - Hairy
 - Northern Flicker (Yellow-shafted)

PERCHING BIRDS

- FLYCATCHER, Least
 - Easter Wood-Pewee
 - Yellow-bellied
 - Willow
- VIREO, White-eyed
 - Warbling
- SWALLOW, Tree
 - Barn
- CROW, American
- JAY, Blue
- RAVEN, Common
- NUTHATCH, White-breasted
- WREN, Carolina
 - House
 - Marsh
- GNATCATCHER, Blue-gray
- ROBIN, American
- CATBIRD, Gray
- MOCKINGBIRD, Northern
- THRASHER, Brown
- STARLING, European
- WARBLER, Nashville

- Northern Parula
- Yellow
- Chestnut-sided
- Magnolia
- Black-throated Green
- Palm
- Palm (Western)
- Prairie
- Blackpoll
- Black-and-white
- Common Yellowthroat
- American Redstart
- Northern Waterthrush
- TANAGER, Scarlet
- SPARROW, House
 - Savannah
 - Song
- CARDINAL, Northern
- GROSBEAK, Blue
 - Rose-breasted
- BOBOLINK
- BLACKBIRD, Red-winged
- GRACKLE, Common
- FINCH, House
 - Purple
- GOLDFINCH, American

106 Total

*Best bird of the Festival, hadn't been seen in the Meadowlands in over 15 years.

Birds of the Hackensack: Cedar Waxwing

By Ivan Kossak

In my early days of birding, the Cedar Waxwing *Bombycilla cedrorum* was the first bird that really made me say “Wow!” With its swept-back crest and black mask across the eyes, the Cedar Waxwing’s fierce appearance seems to be at odds with its soft, high-pitched trill that hardly passes for a song. The Cedar Waxwing’s habits also help me to imagine the bird as rather gentle. Cedar Waxwings are very sociable, typically accumulating in large flocks except when they pair off to mate and raise young. Groups of Cedar Waxwings have also been observed passing a berry along from bird to bird so that the individual farthest from the food source also has an opportunity to feed. They can be so quiet that someone can easily pass a tree where Waxwings are hiding in the foliage and be completely oblivious to birds’ presence. Then, one bird will flush followed by another and another until dozens can be seen.

The Latin name *Bombycilla* translates roughly to silk tail which suggests a softness of its plumage. The name also reminds us of the bird’s close relationship to another family of birds known as Silky-flycatchers. The Cedar Waxwing is a soft brown (often described as fawn-colored) below and slightly darker



Cedar Waxwings (Bombycilla cedrorum)

brown on the back. The bird’s rump is pearly gray blending into black on the tail which ends in a broad yellow tip. Waxwings have earned their English name by sporting bright red on the tips of their wings that suggests their wings were dipped in sealing wax. Young lack the red wingtips and mask and are streaky underneath. Waxwings are 7¼ inches long, which makes them only a half-inch longer than the White-throated Sparrow.

In breeding season Cedar Waxwings can be found in North America from coast to coast - from North Carolina, west to Northernmost California and north through the southern half of Canada. In winter they retreat from the Canadian portion of their range and extend throughout the United States and into Mexico and Central America. Waxwings can be found throughout New Jersey in all seasons but are more easily seen in the southern part of our state in Winter. Their diet consists primarily of fruits, supplemented by insects. In fact, an old colloquial name for this bird is Cherry Bird. However, I have observed groups of Waxwings engaged in catching insects on the wing very similar to the feeding behavior of swallows. Waxwings are among the last birds in our area to breed, nesting in June and frequently even into the Summer. They prefer to nest in open areas; building a nest primarily made up of twigs and grasses that is five inches across and three inches high. Waxwings typically lay three to five eggs of a light purplish-gray with dark spots and blotches. Once they disperse from their breeding grounds, Waxwings congregate in highly nomadic flocks. Therefore, it is difficult to pinpoint any specific location where they can be expected to be found but can show up almost anywhere in our watershed. If you do come across them, I am confident you will be pleased that you did.

Beautiful Birds and Wildlife PhotoArt



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Reflections and Revelations on 10 Years of River Cleanups

Discovering the global connection.

By Lisa Ryan

Ten years ago, having recently moved back to this area after a 15-year absence, I took my dog, Thelma, down to the river to go swimming. We'd been doing this for years in New Brunswick, and when we arrived at Overpeck Park in Leonia, I was astonished to discover thick layers of putrid trash lining the banks of the waterway. Thelma went home that day without her swim. Shortly after that, I happened upon these Hackensack Riverkeeper folks and told them I was interested in doing river cleanups with them. They promptly invited me to start a cleanup program, and so I did, as a volunteer for 4 years and then as full time staff person for the past 6.

My reason for writing this now may be surprising, but I've recently had an epiphany of sorts: for the first time in 10 years, after mobilizing close to 7,000 people to attend approximately 150 river cleanups that removed nearly 300 tons of trash out of the Hackensack River and tributaries, I'm just beginning to believe that these cleanups make a real difference! Many of you who have participated in cleanups will relate to the sometimes discouraging realities we face. We never cover as much ground as we would like – even 150 people can only clean a mile or so of riverbank in 3 hours, and that's if we ignore all the teeny pieces of plastic and Styrofoam that we inevitably encounter. We return to a specific location a month after a cleanup only to find it once again full of trash. We fill multiple dumpsters with trash that



Up to 10,000 Laysan Albatross chicks die each year on Midway Island from ingesting plastic debris.

Photo courtesy of Chris Jordan

we pull out of the river, and then wonder which section of planet it will scar next. We wonder what kind of person carelessly tosses their refuse aside, and lament the future of a planet in such hands. We sometimes feel that pulling out cans and bottles and toilets and refrigerators is a sort of superficial cleaning – that we're not tackling the real pollution that keeps our river from being swimmable and fishable.

The argument I have used with myself is that the cleanups are a valuable tool in community outreach – that volunteers who attend cleanups become connected to the river. They get their hands dirty and become invested in our work and the fight for clean water. They become citizen stewards of the

river and talk to other people, and the word spreads. The cleanups improve the appearance of public open spaces, and we believe that people take better care of them as a result. But I still lacked the conviction that the cleanups were actually improving our environment.

That is, until a friend posted a link to some photos by photographer Chris Jordan (www.chrisjordan.com), who did an exhaustive photographic study on Midway Island in the Pacific, where tens of thousands of Laysan Albatross chicks die every year because their parents are feeding them a steady diet of plastic from the ocean.

There are large gyres in the Atlantic, Pacific and Indian oceans;

these large systems of rotating currents draw in and trap marine debris, creating “garbage islands.” The most notorious of these is the Great Pacific Garbage Patch, which is estimated to be at least the size of Texas. The makeup of the oceanic garbage patches is a combination of larger items, such as the “unrecyclable” plastic bottle caps and lighters that are found in every dead Albatross chick on Midway, and millions of infinitesimal bits of plastic. Traditional plastics do not biodegrade, but photodegrade, becoming smaller and smaller all the way down to the molecular level. For example, six-pack holders, which are known to strangle wildlife when left in one piece, are now designed to photodegrade within 90 days.

The response so far to these garbage patches feels dismissive; the consensus has been that the pieces are simply too small to collect, and the patches too large to manage. A few independent groups are working on possible cleanup methods, and the U.S. Coast Guard occasionally takes a trip to the gyre to fill a few containers with plastic. It makes me wonder how quickly we could clean up all the world’s garbage patches if we focused all our military intelligence, technology and resourcefulness on the problem for a year or so. Then our only challenge would be prevention!

It is estimated that 80% of marine debris originates on land. For example, a bottle cap on the sidewalk in your town gets washed into a storm drain during a rain event. It then enters the river, whose currents carry the cap out to sea, where it comes to rest in a

garbage patch. This all brings me to my second Aha! Moment: You may recall the severe rainstorms we had this spring, including the March 13 nor’easter during which we held a cleanup! Well, I noticed that many sections of the river seemed cleaner this summer than ever before, and I realized that much of the debris that is usually trapped in coves and branches had been carried away in the spring floodwaters. This made the Hackensack River look wonderfully pristine, but the realization that our trash had likely ended up in one of these garbage patches was very distressing.

This is not to say that I value the health of the ocean over our river, but it did make me realize that wildlife is most certainly affected by our plastic pollution – here and in the oceans, and therefore must also be affected by its removal. I had a sudden image of cleanup crews like ours lining every tributary, every river, every shoreline, doing what we do, and the sheer magnitude of the effort actually having a substantial combined effect!

Our Clean Streets=Clean Water campaign strives to stop the pollution from entering the waterways in the first place through education and awareness. New biodegradable plastics are a

good step in the right directions, though there is still concern about carbon emissions, AND they only biodegrade in landfill conditions, not in the middle of the river or the ocean! Most importantly, it is vital for each of us to recognize that our individual actions do indeed have an impact, whether it be picking up a bag full of trash as we walk the dog or at a cleanup, or eliminating plastic from our lives to the greatest extent possible. Just say no to plastic water bottles; use instead a reusable BPA free bottle filled with tap water. Train yourself to remember your reusable shopping bags (hopefully lead-free – ugh!) when going to the supermarket, the pharmacy, the convenience store. Don’t buy coffee that comes in Styrofoam cups. Avoid individually or over-packaged items. Recycle everything you possibly can (visit www.terracycle.com to learn about all the kinds of packaging that can now be recycled!). Realize that every single piece of plastic that you keep out of the waste stream may very well save a wild animal’s life. Still not convinced? Simply Google “Midway Island Albatrosses” or go to Netflix and SAVE the movie *Bag It* – it will likely change your life forever.

**See you at the next
River Cleanup!**

Billboard from the Clean Streets=Clean Water Campaign resulted in many calls to report incidents of street littering. Less debris in the storm drains/sewers means less garbage being washed out to sea and into the birds bellies.



Volunteer Corner

by Lisa Ryan

It was an incredible cleanup season, with a total of 21 cleanups, 9 of which were "charters" that provided us with much needed funds to replenish our stock of bags, gloves, pickup sticks and waders. These partners are featured on this page... Please forgive the photographer, who sometimes forgets to take pictures, she said sheepishly. If you're interested in participating in last-minute, nice-weather-winter cleanups, make sure you're on our email volunteer list, and friend us on facebook if you'd like to see more pics!!

Goldman Sachs, Overpeck Park, Leonia, 6/25

Church of God, Overpeck Park, Pal. Park, 8/1



Wallenius Wilhelmsen, Woodcliff Lake, 10/6



New York Giants & Leonia High School Environmental Club, Overpeck Park, Leonia, 10/19



A very respectable haul...

The kind of fun you can only have in waders!

Giants Matt Dodge & Duke Calhoun!



Unilever, Laurel Hill Park, Secaucus, 7/30

Becton Dickinson, Foschini Park, Hack, 8/31

Samsung, Overpeck Park, Ridgefield Park, 10/24



Unloading very large tires off the pontoon boat Yup, that's a bumper!



The ever-present shopping cart...



Laurel Hill Park, Secaucus, 6/19



Johnson Park, Hackensack, 8/14



Mill Creek Point Park, Secaucus, 10/9 (cont.)



Hackensack River County Park, Hackensack, 9/26



Staib Park, Hackensack, 7/3



Mill Creek Point Park, Secaucus, 10/9



Hackensack Riverkeeper Celebrates at our Annual Awards Dinner and Sustainable Seafood Fest!

By **Diane Saccoccia**

On October 14th Hackensack Riverkeeper honored some special people at our Annual Awards Dinner and Sustainable Seafood Fest. The event was held at the Holiday Inn in Hasbrouck Heights, NJ. This years honorees were:

David Grant - former President and CEO of the Morristown-based Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation. Under his leadership, the foundation greatly increased the size and scope of its support of environmental projects and initiatives throughout New Jersey.

Margaret Utzinger – founding Trustee of Hackensack Riverkeeper and longtime Board President. Ms. Utzinger’s unflagging support of Hackensack Riverkeeper has been instrumental to the organization’s growth since its founding in 1997.

Gil Hawkins - Executive Director of the Overpeck Preserve, Leonia, NJ. Mr. Hawkins, a former volunteer firefighter and current Leonia borough councilman, created Overpeck Preserve Inc. to protect and enhance wildlife habitat within Overpeck County Park.

“Over the years, and in each person’s own way, our 2010 awardees provided inestimable support to Hackensack Riverkeeper during its formative years,” said Captain Bill Sheehan. “And each of them continues to share their time, talents and wealth of knowledge to help make our organization stronger and more effective.”

In addition to the awards celebration, those attending the event were treated to a cocktail reception featuring sustainable seafood



Gil Hawkins, Margaret Utzinger, and David Grant were this year’s Hackensack Riverkeeper honorees.



Hackensack Riverkeeper Trustees: Board President Ivan Kossak, Beth Ravit and Mike Parish

appetizers provided by Whole Foods Market (Ridgewood, Paramus and Edgewater) and sustainable seafood dinner featuring a duet plate of Pacific Halibut and Ahi Tuna. Whole Foods Market Marketing Team Leader Ellie Spray commented “Whole Foods Market and Hackensack

Riverkeeper have partnered for many years to promote greater environmental awareness and to educate the public on important issues including the importance of sustainable seafood. It’s gratifying that people are becoming more aware of the dangers of overfishing, by-catch and habitat damage

that can occur if sustainable fishing practices are not followed.”

Delectable after-dinner treats were provided by Elegant Desserts. A special highlight of the evening was a brief preview of a documentary-in-progress about the Meadowlands by filmmaker Scott Morris. A silent auction and tricky tray featuring items for every interest was also held. At the end of the evening, Bergen County Sheriff Leo McGuire drew the winning tickets for our Super 50/50. The lucky winners were Bill Cahill, Kristi Izzo and Keith Jensen.

As always, our event sponsors helped to make the evening a success – we’d like to extend our sincere thanks to the following partners for their support:

- Commodore Sponsor** – Xchange at Secaucus Junction
- Commander Sponsors** – Bergen County Utilities Authority and Whole Foods Market
- Quartermaster Sponsor** – River Terminal Development
- Crew Sponsors** – CH2M HILL, Kearny Federal Savings, Panasonic Corporation of North America, and Shop Rite of Hackensack/Inserra Supermarkets, Inc.



Photo courtesy of Hackensack Chronicle—Joe Camporeale

Bergen County Freeholders Bernedette McPherson and John Hogan presenting Captain Bill with Citations for this year’s honorees.

- Cadet Sponsor** – Jet Aviation
- Media Sponsor** – Hackensack Chronicle
- Dessert Sponsor** – Elegant Desserts
- “Swag” Sponsors** – Equal Exchange Chocolates and Rockland Electric

We also extend our thanks to the Holiday Inn Hasbrouck Heights staff for going all-out to help make our night special. And finally, thank

you to everyone who supported the event - whether it was a ticket purchase, event journal ad purchase, donation to our auction/tricky tray or Super 50/50 ticket purchase, your gift will help us to continue our mission to preserve, protect and restore the Hackensack River and it’s watershed.

If you couldn’t join us this year—we hope to see you next year!



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New Project Manager for HRI

Looking forward to completing some special projects.

After interviewing several worthy candidates, Hackensack Riverkeeper chose their newest staff member. Jodi Jamieson started with us in the end of September as our new project manager, taking over from Nick Vos-Wein. She will take on some special projects that have been on the back burner for a while.

“I’m delighted to be here at Hackensack Riverkeeper. This is a dream job for me. It combines my love of the outdoors, being on the

water, and my passion for a clean environment.” says Ms. Jamieson.

Jodi is one of the founding board members of the Coalition to Preserve the Palisades Cliffs (an organization that’s fighting the destruction of the Palisades Cliffs along River Road in Hudson and Bergen Counties), and is also a Sierra Club volunteer. In addition to her advocacy work, Jodi has several years’ experience as a project manager in educational science publishing.

“Two major projects that I am excited to be working on are the 22 mile-long Hackensack River Paddle Trail and a fish ladder at the Oradell Dam. Creating places for people to recreate along the river; creating an opportunity for fish to return to their historic migration path—these are things that will add value, interest and delight to the Hackensack River. It’s all part of a process to bring these urban areas back to being places of wonder. That’s something I find exciting and am proud to be a part of,” said Jodi.

Hackensack Riverkeeper Development Director Elected President of EarthShare New Jersey

At their June 23rd meeting in Assunpink, the members of EarthShare New Jersey (ESNJ) elected Hackensack Riverkeeper Development Director Diane Saccoccia as their Board President for the 2010/2011 term. “I am excited to work with so many outstanding environmental groups to help promote the work of ESNJ and our individual organizations” said Diane. “It’s truly an honor to be elected, and I look forward to working with ESNJ staff and members in the coming year.”

ESNJ is a coalition of leading environmental organizations working in New Jersey and around the world to protect and enhance the environment, preserve natural resources, and educate the public. Some of ESNJ’s member groups are Pinelands Preservation Alliance, NJ Audubon, Flat Rock Brook

Nature Center, Wetlands Institute, Surfrider Foundation, Clean Ocean Action, Clean Water Fund and American Littoral Society. A core element of ESNJ’s work is to work with corporate partners and implement workplace contribution campaigns, offering employees the benefit of payroll contributions to their choice of environmental charities. Over the years, ESNJ has raised over *three million dollars* statewide that has been given to members as critical unrestricted funding.

After the election ESNJ Executive Director Paula Aldarelli commented “Hackensack Riverkeeper has been an active EarthShare New Jersey board member since 2005. Diane has been a member of the Executive



Paula Aldarelli, ESNJ Executive Director and Diane Saccoccia, ESNJ Board President

Committee for the past 3 years and is ideally suited to take on the challenges of Board President. She brings an understanding of environmental stewardship, team building and dedication that has long served as a model for others in the organization. Her leadership, experience and vision are exactly what is needed to steer the organization at this time and we are fortunate to have her talents.”

Visit www.earthsharenj.org for more information on EarthShare and workplace giving!

At the helm

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to attacks on the environment.

Each year I meet and talk to thousands of people aboard our vessels, at our special events; and at scores of cleanups, conferences, Earth Day events and trade shows – folks just like you. And each one of you continually inspires me to keep fighting. I am humbled and amazed when I encounter someone who says, “The Hacky has never looked this good, keep up the good work”. Those simple words of encouragement are what keep us going and enable us to meet the inevitable challenges as they present themselves.

The backbone of our organization is and has always been people like you. You contribute to the cause of clean water and a healthy



environment. You make our work sustainable. You roll up your sleeves and answer the call for volunteers. And it is you who can take pride in every single success that we achieve together.

You can also help ensure a healthy future for the river by making a year-end donation to

Hackensack Riverkeeper. With your support, we can continue to advocate for the river and fight attempts to weaken environmental laws. I’ve always maintained that a healthy economy and a healthy environment are intertwined. Do you agree? If so, Hackensack Riverkeeper needs your help so that we hammer that message home to Trenton. Any support you can give will help keep our programs intact and help us to continue to fight for the river – *your* river. Thank you for your support and friendship. And Happy Holidays to you all!

Yours in conservation,

Captain Bill Sheehan

UNBLOCK US!

If you’ve signed up for our email list, be sure to add us to your list of safe email addresses:

info@hackensackriverkeeper.org.

this is especially important if you are avolunteer, as we send out important announcements, directions, etc. about cleanups and other events!

Report Suspected Pollution Sources or Litter to the Watershed Watch Hotline

**1-877-CPT-BILL
(1-877-278-2455)**

If from a vehicle—record the date, time, location, and type of trash. Also record the color, make, model and license plate number of vehicle.

Be a Friend of Hackensack Riverkeeper tides310

Your help is urgently needed. Hackensack Riverkeeper® operates with assistance and contributions from concerned citizens such as yourself. Please show your support for environmental health and conservation within the Hackensack River Watershed by making a donation today.

***HRI is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.
Your donation is tax deductible.***

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*Hackensack Riverkeeper, 231 Main Street, Hackensack, NJ 07601
or visit www.hackensackriverkeeper.org/donate.html to donate online*

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