

News From the Top of the Hill

Sadly the beginning of 2005 saw us saying good-bye to Jinnee DeMarco, our Finance Director. Jinnee had been with the Watershed Association since Fall 2003 and worked very closely with our Treasurer Linda Wilson to continue the improvements to our financial reportings begun by previous Finance Director Cheryl Amatelli.



Jinnee was a joy to work with and we will miss the visits from her three small children. She moves on to teaching at the Pernel School in Bedminster, a private school with a strong commitment to environmental education. Thank you and good luck, Jinnee!

Taking over for Jinnee is Lee Goyeneche. Lee joined the staff in January. She takes over the financial and budgeting needs and acts as staff liaison to the Board of Trustees. Lee worked for many years with Ernst & Young as the Manager of Finance & Administration and several years with a smaller CPA firm. Recently she worked with a law firm as a Certified Paralegal handling clients and escrow accounts. She holds an MBA and a B.S. in Finance & Marketing from FDU in Madison, NJ. She lives in Randolph with her husband Bob and has three children in high school and college. Welcome, Lee!



Great Swamp Watershed Association Member Issues “Challenge” To Raise Money To Restore Boardwalks in the Conservation Area

GSWA member Steven Gruber has issued a “challenge grant” to help GSWA raise the funds necessary to complete restoration of 450 feet of boardwalk at our Great Swamp Conservation Area in Harding Township. We need to improve, stabilize and widen the existing boardwalks across the marshy areas of the Conservation Area to make the trails accessible to more people for a longer part of the year. Steve will donate \$2,500 towards the boardwalk improvements if the GSWA membership can raise an additional \$2,500. We’re challenging you to contribute towards the boardwalk improvements and help us to reach our goal. Go to www.greatswamp.org to contribute online or send us a check designated for the “Boardwalk Fund.” We’ll let you know how we do in reaching our goal!

Contact us at 973.538.3500 or visit our web site at www.greatswamp.org

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Great Swamp Watershed Association
Post Office Box 300
New Vernon, NJ 07976

Non-Profit Organization
Permit #2
New Vernon, NJ 07976

Watershed Association Partners With Chatham To Preserve the Kirby Estate

The Great Swamp Watershed Association, Morris Land Conservancy, Morris County Park Commission, Morris County Open Space Fund and Chatham Township have combined to preserve the 72-acre Kirby Estate, prominently located at the corner of Shunpike and Loantaka Way.

The price was \$7.5 million, with GSWA coming up with \$500,000 in Green Acres money.

“By bringing many partners to the table, we've been able to fashion a creative and sophisticated solution to protect a piece of property that is an icon to the area,” said Julia Somers, Executive Director of the Watershed Association.



The Kirby property is one of the hallmark open land areas remaining in the western portion of Chatham Township. Because of its corner location thousands of people from Chatham, Harding and Madison regularly pass by this land every day. Down the road and across the street is the parking area and trail head for Loantaka Brook Reservation, a popular starting spot for walkers, joggers and cyclists, as well as cross-country skiers in winter.

Whole Foods Markets Promotion of Earth Day Was A Springtime Success!

The Great Swamp Watershed Association, Earth Share of New Jersey and Whole Foods celebrated Earth Day throughout the month of April with a special promotional event!

By visiting Whole Foods Markets during the month of April, customers were able to make a donation to Earth Share of New Jersey right at the registers. Donations to Earth Share of New Jersey are distributed to more than 50 local and national environmental non-profit organizations, including the Great Swamp Watershed Association.



Whole Foods markets in Connecticut, New Jersey, and New York all participated in this event. The New Jersey store locations include Madison, Millburn, Montclair, Edgewater, and Ridgewood.

The Watershed Association and Earth Share of New Jersey thank Whole Foods management and staff for their help and cooperation in this event.



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St Huberts Expansion Plans Present Storm Water Worries

St. Hubert's animal shelter has an application before the Planning Board for a use variance and variance for rear yard setback and impervious cover on its 16-acre property on Woodland Road. The footprint for the expansion of buildings and parking area would occupy an additional 3.6 acres more than the current footprint. This would amount to impervious surface coverage of well over 25% in a residential zone that is limited to 15%, despite their proposal to have substantially less parking lot area than a business that size would require under township ordinance.

Stormwater management proposals include a large detention basin, a large infiltration bed for roof runoff, and two stormceptors near the property entrance. Stormwater will drain into the county park. The NJ Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) gave St. Hubert's a transition area waiver/averaging plan for just under half an acre. The DEP also required a conservation easement on a portion of the property.

Missing from the developer's Environmental Impact Statement are aquifer recharge data and the facts that the property is a known wood turtle habitat and has an isolated wetland that appears to be a vernal pool.

Sunset Lake

Morris County gave preliminary approval to contribute some of the funds necessary for a new stormwater filtration system for Sunset Lake. Sunset Lake is near the corner of Shunpike and Southern Boulevard, behind Charlie Brown's restaurant.

Much of the water that feeds the lake enters through open, unfiltered storm sewer pipes. The cost of the new filtration system is \$100,000 to \$130,000.

The Sunset Lake Association, a group of 30 homeowners who live around the lake and use it for fishing and swimming, has been concerned in recent years that storm sewers carry silt, animal waste, petrochemicals, fertilizers, pesticides and other pollutants into the lake. The upstream storm sewers are owned by Chatham, Madison and Morris County. Chatham Township has committed \$75,000 to the remediation project.

Chatham Township is requesting that Madison municipal officials foot some of the bill as well.

To remove existing contamination, the lake would have to be dredged. The costs are estimated at \$900,000, most of which would be used to dispose of the contaminated soil.

One element of the existing problems – algae overgrowth – is being taken care of inexpensively. The Lake Association obtained 15 carp through the NJ state “adopt a carp” program. The carp eat the algae and may be able to restore nutrient balance. The algae overgrowth is caused by phosphorus from fertilizer runoff from suburban lawns upstream.

Ormont Road

The Planning Board gave permission for Ronald Gunn to subdivide into two lots the very steep property at 51 Ormont Road. Gunn agreed to a conservation easement on a 50 foot wide strip at the rear of the property. More development may occur, since the subdivision approval included an allowance for an underground sewer pipe to cross the easement to service the two currently vacant lots behind the Gunn property.

Kathy Abbott

Harding Township

Ridge at Sand Spring

Hearings are underway on a proposal to subdivide the former Lyall property on Sand Spring Road into five lots. This is proposed to be the first use of the Township's new Lot Size Averaging ordinance. The property is approximately 26 acres with beautiful, mature forest at its highest elevation, some very steep slopes in the center, and broad hay meadow closer to the road. The property is considered to be an important “viewshed” in the Township.

Dickson's Mill Road bridge

This bridge is to be replaced and widened by Morris County. Local residents, the Watershed Association and others in the Township are working to ensure that there is minimal impact on Great Brook and on the Silver Lake historic district from this replacement. This includes working to keep the widening to a minimum and retain the s-bend in the road as it crosses the bridge. The current proposed design widens the bridge enough to mandate a straightening of the curves, raising the probability of increased traffic speed crossing the bridge. Ironically, the narrow old bridge has no history of traffic accidents suggesting that its current design is successful from a safety standpoint. Alternative designs are being considered.

Julia Somers

7, *Night Birding the Great Swamp*. 8:00pm-12:00am: Last year we heard and saw woodcock and Great Horned Owl, and heard Virginia Rail, Sora, and Screech and Barred Owls, among others. Great prep for the World Series of Birding! Meet at the Somerset County E.E.C. Cost: \$10 members, \$15 non-members. Somerset County Park Commission Environmental Education Center. (908) 766-2489.

8, *Wonders of Water*. 1:30pm-3pm: Challenge yourself to breach the surface and explore the depths of a pond! What are some of the less obvious creatures living under water and why are they important to us? Come dip netting and see what you can find! \$9 per adult/\$7.50 per student/senior. Somerset County Park Commission Environmental Education Center. (908) 766-2489.

8, *Second Sunday... with Friends*. 2:00pm-4:00pm: Kick off International Migratory Bird Week. Activities include a showing of excerpts from "Winged Migration", learning to use binoculars, activities for kids highlighting frogs. Friends of Great Swamp. (973) 425-9510.

8-14, *Great Swamp Celebrates...International Migratory Bird Week*. 7:15pm-dusk: Evening walks into the management area. Join us for one night-or more-as we look for migrating birds and listen for spring frogs. Friends of Great Swamp. (973)425-9510.

9, *Toddler Trek: Colors of Spring*. 10am: Toddlers ages 2 & 3 learn about nature through a walk and story. Cost: \$5. Registration required. Great Swamp Outdoor Education Center. (973) 635-6629.

9, *Animals From All Over: Oceans*. 10:30am-11:30am (ages 3-5), 3:30pm-5:00pm (ages 6-8): You probably already know about New Jersey's wildlife, but how much do you know about animals from around the globe? Explore foreign wildlife through pictures, stories, games, crafts, and imaginary hikes. Course Code: 51091. \$8 per pair/\$5 per additional child. Somerset County Park Commission Environmental Education Center. (908) 766-2489.

13, *Darling Dragons and Dainty Damsels!* 3:30pm-5:00pm: Have you ever wondered what was swimming with the fishes and spying on the frogs? Join (ages 5-6 with parent) a Naturalist to get to the bottom of this often asked question and find out how fun it is to play in swamp water. Not for the faint of heart! Just kidding. Program includes a story and outdoor exploration. \$6 per child. Somerset County Park Commission Environmental Education Center. (908) 766-2489.

14, *Scherman-Hoffman and Great Swamp Century Run*. 7am: Last year our Sanctuary Century Run with NJAS Board member Randy Little and Associate Naturalist Neil Collins set a Sanctuary best of 102 species seen, the result of an incredible amount of scouting by Randy and Neil. With a special use permit, we will have access to the off limits management area of the refuge. Registration required. New Jersey Audubon Society (908) 766-5787

15, *Nature Walks at Great Swamp*. 8:00am-10:00am: See detail under May 1.

21, *Forest Nightlife Walk*. 8pm: Prowl the evening woods with a naturalist and discover the nighttime creatures of the woods! Time: 8 p.m. Cost: \$3. Registration required. Great Swamp Outdoor Education Center. (973) 635-6629.

21, *Beginning Birding Field Trips*. 9:00am -1:00pm: All trips start at the Scherman Hoffman Bookstore window overlooking the bird feeding station. We'll review the regular birds at the feeders, see what's about at Hoffman, and then will migrate (caravan) to the Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge. The cost is \$8 for members and \$15 for nonmembers. New Jersey Audubon Society (908) 766-5787

21, *Raising Moths and Butterflies for Families*. 1:00pm-2:30pm: Kids! Would you like to raise a moth or a butterfly at home? Have you found a caterpillar and didn't know what to feed it? What kind of cage is best for

raising caterpillars and hatching adults? Bring your parents to Scherman-Hoffman for this hands-on workshop with live specimens. The cost is \$8 per family for members and \$15 per family for nonmembers. NJAS's Scherman-Hoffman Wildlife Sanctuary. (908) 766-5787.

22, *Predators and Prey Are Coming This Way!* 12pm-1:30pm: For ages 10-13 Carnivores, omnivores, and herbivores, oh my! Creatures of all levels of the food chain surround us. But what does it FEEL like to be hunted by a hungry predator? How hard is it to FIND your own food? Come to the Environmental Education Center and discover the ULTIMATE game of tag! \$8 per person. Somerset County Park Commission Environmental Education Center. (908) 766-2489.

23, *Slippery Salamanders*. 10:30am-11:30am: Come with us (ages 3-5 with parent) on a swamp search for some secretive, slimy salamanders. We will learn about these hidden critters and perhaps even meet one along the trail. The cost is \$4 per child. Somerset County Park Commission Environmental Education Center. (908) 766-2489.

23, *Preschool Walk: See How They Grow*. 10am: Kids ages 4 to 5 take a walk through the woods and make a fun nature craft! Cost: \$10. Registration required. Great Swamp Outdoor Education Center. (973) 635-6629.

26, *Mud Minnows and Pumpkinseeds*. 1:00pm-2:00pm: The rivers, streams, and ponds of Lord Stirling Park are home to many species of fish. Come (ages 3-5 with parent) see what fish we can find in Branta Pond. Do not feel 'gill'ty-we will return them when we are 'fin'ished. \$4 per child. Course Code: 51087. Somerset County Park Commission Environmental Education Center. (908) 766-2489.

26, *Spring Wildflower Walk*. 1pm: Stroll along the trails and learn about the variety of wildflowers found along the way. Cost: \$3. Registration required. Great Swamp Outdoor Education Center. (973) 635-6629.

28, *Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge Field Trip*. 7:00am-12pm: Breeding birds (amphibians and reptiles) of the refuge. We'll get an early start and have a special use permit to visit some of the restricted areas. The cost is \$15 for members and \$20 for nonmembers. New Jersey Audubon Society. (908) 766-5787

June

4, *Take-Me-Fishing*. 10:00am—1:00pm: As they say in the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, "fishing is my middle name"! Join us at this fishing event for kids under 16. Poles will be available or you can bring your own. Meet at Southard Park, Basking Ridge. Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge. (973) 425-1222.

5, *Digi-scoping Workshop*. 1:00pm-4:00pm: Digi-scoping isn't in the dictionary. It is the art and science of taking pictures with a digital camera through a spotting scope. The workshop instructor is Clay Taylor, Swarovski Optic's Naturalist Market Manager. Bring your camera and scope to find out what your options are or come learn what the options are before you buy a scope or camera. We'll spend about an hour inside going over the latest changes in hardware and technology and spend the rest of the day taking pictures in the field. The cost is \$15 for nonmembers. New Jersey Audubon Society (908) 766-5787

5, *Wildflower Wandering*. 1pm: Stroll along the trails and learn about wildflowers found at the swamp! Cost: \$3. Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge. (973) 425-1222.

6, *Toddler Trek: Shapes in Nature*. 10 am: Toddlers ages 2 & 3 learn about nature through a walk and story. Cost: \$5. Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge. (973) 425-1222.

12, *Second Sunday... with Friends*. 2:00pm-4:00pm. Insects and other pollinators. Talk and slide show followed by guided walk into the management area of the Refuge. Discovery Den activities will feature insects. Friends of Great Swamp. (973)425-9510.

Event Calendar

What's Happening In the Great Swamp Watershed

Following is a highly selective listing of events and activities offered to the public by private and county agencies that have facilities within and near the Great Swamp watershed. Many of these organizations offer far more activities than those listed, including day and weekend trips to other areas. Call for complete information.

In addition to programs and activities, many of the agencies are also staffed by naturalists and maintain extensive hiking trails, nature-center displays and exhibits, and book sales. For many listings, advance registration is required; for all, it is advised. To register, to receive additional information, or for directions, call the telephone numbers given below.

Ongoing

Fridays and Saturdays, Free Nature Walks. 8:00am-9:00am: Meet at the Hoffman Parking Lot. These walks are just plain fun and informative and include info on trees, tracks, winter weeds, and of course birds. Our free walks are a great way to introduce friends and family to NJAS – bring a companion along! NJAS's Scherman-Hoffman Wildlife Sanctuary. (908) 766-5787.

Thursdays, May 12 thru June 16, Nature's Little Explorers: Spring Session 2. 9:45am – 10:30am. Cost: \$50. Toddlers ages 2 & 3 discover the seasonal wonders of the woods. Great Swamp Outdoor Education Center. (973) 635-6629.

Tuesdays, Baby and Me Hike. 9:30am: Free hike for parents and babies starting at various locations in the area. Call for dates and locations. Great Swamp Outdoor Education Center. (973) 635-6629.

Wednesdays, Wednesday Wanderings. 10am: An adult hiking series at various Morris County Parks. Cost: \$5. Call for dates and locations. Great Swamp Outdoor Education Center. (973) 635-6629.

April

23, Spring Homestead Cleanup. 8:30am-12pm: Help clean up old homesites in parts of the Refuge which are normally closed to the public. Lunch will follow for all volunteers. Wear boots and gloves. Meet at the Friends Bookstore & Gift Shop. Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge. (973)425-9510.

24, EARTH DAY Celebration: Do the Swamp Thing. 12:00pm-4:00pm: Annual festival with presenters, games, children's crafts, guided walks and more! Open to all! Cost: \$2. Great Swamp Outdoor Education Center. (973) 635-6629.

27, Woodcock Watch and Night Hike. 7:00pm-10:00pm: We'll see and hear woodcock courtship display, along with several species of frogs and owls. Rubber boots and whispering required. Meet at the Somerset County Env. Ed. Center in Basking Ridge. Cost: \$8 members, \$15 non-members. Somerset County Parks Commission Environmental Education Center, Bernards Township. (908) 722-1200.

27, Project WILD: Teacher Training Program. 9:00am-3:00pm: A free educator workshop introducing hands-on activities, information and methods for teaching about wildlife. Great for formal educators, scout leaders and home school teachers! Lunch and materials included. Great Swamp Outdoor Education Center. (973) 635-6629.

28, Songs of Spring Walk. 1:00pm: Singing birds, croaking frogs... Listen and learn about the spring wildlife! Great Swamp Outdoor Education Center. (973) 635-6629.

30, and May 1, 25th Annual Wildlife Art & Carving Show and Sale. 10:00 am-5:00pm: Celebrate 25 years of one of the finest Wildlife Art and Carving shows in the Northeast. Over fifty artists will be exhibiting their wildlife art at this unique show. Realistic woodcarvings, decoys, paintings, sculptures, photographs, and drawings are featured, as well as individual interpretations of animals and plants from around the world. Artists will demonstrate their techniques and discuss their subject matter with viewers. Discover something special for your collection at this spectacular show. Purchase some of the fine pieces of art or bid on a donated work by one of your favorite artists at our silent auction. Join us for a special celebration of our 25th Annual show! Suggested donation: \$4.00. Somerset County Parks Commission. (908) 722-1200.

May

Friday evenings all month, Rookery Heron Watch. 5:00pm-dusk: The great blue herons are back! At the Heron Rookery Overlook, there is an unobstructed view of this amazing sight—dozens of herons in their huge treetop nests, raising their young. Meet at the Overlook on Pleasant Plains Road (past Refuge Headquarters). New Jersey Audubon Society. (908) 766-5787.

1, Warbler Walk. 7am: Look for these small songbirds upon their return to the Swamp! Cost: \$3. Registration required. Great Swamp Outdoor Education Center. (973) 635-6629.

3, Wonder Walks. 1:00pm-3:00pm: Family oriented walks will focus on the sixth sense (the sense of wonder) as we walk along the Sanctuary trails. Kids required, no strollers please. Cost: \$5 per family. Registration required. Cost: \$5. Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge. (973) 425-1222.

1, Nature Walks at Great Swamp. 8:00am-10:00am: Join New Jersey Audubon Society (NJAS) naturalists on guided walks to look for migrating birds and other signs of spring. Bring binoculars if you can. Meet at the Wildlife Observation Center (the blinds) on Long Hill Road. New Jersey Audubon Society. (908)766-5787.

4, Goose Gandering. 1:00pm-2:00pm: (Ages 3-5 with parent) Some of the most conspicuous residents of Lord Stirling Park are our cackling Canada Geese. Come take a closer look at these wild animals that are close to home and easy to observe. \$8 per pair/\$4 per additional child. Course Code: 51086. Somerset County Park Commission Environmental Education Center. (908) 766-2489.

4, Spring Bloom. 5:30pm-7:00pm: As the sun starts to shine the flowers come out. Take a walk around the swamp to see the first colors of year. We will learn the parts of the flowers, how to identify them, and what they need to grow. \$9 per person. Somerset County Park Commission Environmental Education Center. (908) 766-2489.

7, Hike to the Headwaters. 10:00am-12:00pm: Meet at the Hoffman Center and we'll explore the Passaic river headwaters and flood plain as far north as the Patriot's Path Bridge looking for spring wildflowers, birds, reptiles and amphibians. The cost is \$5 per family. Scherman-Hoffman Wildlife Sanctuary. (908) 766-5787.

7, Water Monitoring Demonstration. 1:00pm-3:30pm: On the banks of the Passaic River. We will conduct a Benthic Macro invertebrate survey (catch big bugs on the bottom of the river) and elaborate on their use as indicator species of water quality. The cost is \$5 per family. Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge. (973)425-9510.

7, Weird World of Water. 1:00pm: (Ages 6-10) Collect and study slimy pond critters and find out how they are important. Make it rain on a watershed. Play H2O Olympics! Cost: \$5. Great Swamp Outdoor Education Center. (973) 635-6629.

Long Hill Township

White Bridge Road bridge replacement

Several residents from Long Hill and Basking Ridge attended a public hearing on a plan to replace the bridge that spans the Passaic River on White Bridge Road (Lord Stirling Road). It is a bi-county bridge (Somerset and Morris County) with Morris County taking the lead on the proposal. The residents were unanimously and strongly opposed to the proposed replacement. The proposal called for widening and straightening White Bridge Road at the bridge approach, enlarging the intersection with Carlton Road, paving approximately 150 ft of Lord Stirling Road, and then constructing what would be the widest bridge span (37 feet!) in the Great Swamp basin. Residents noted that this is a low-traffic road and that the current bridge serves to calm traffic. Most of those at the hearing said they would favor closing the road as an alternative to replacing the bridge. This large-scale proposal is especially disheartening in view of the environmentally sensitive bridges that were constructed on Long Hill-New Vernon Road just a few years ago.

After the public hearing, plans to pave the Lord Stirling Road side of the bridge were dropped due to lack of support from the Bernards Township Committee. Amended plans for the bridge were being prepared.

Great Swamp Greenhouses

After hearings at both the State and County Agricultural Development Boards, the Great Swamp Greenhouses application for an Agricultural management Plan has been formally approved. Long Hill Township had prepared a detailed report and challenged many aspects of the Agricultural Management Plan before the Morris County Agricultural Development Board in January. A few weeks later, Long Hill officials met with Mr. Michael Beneduce, owner of Great Swamp Greenhouses, and signed an agreement that permits the County to govern all aspects of the operation. We believe this is probably the only commercial operation in the Township not under municipal jurisdiction.

Len Hamilton

Chatham Township

Sterling Properties

In March, the builder for Sterling Properties bulldozed most of the trees on the 28-acre site near Shunpike and Green Village Road to make way for a 56 townhouse complex. There is, however, a variable width conservation easement along the northern property line. A wetlands area near Shunpike Road will also be left in tact.

Plans for development of the site have gone on since 1996. The first proposal was for 146 townhouses. The Board of Adjustment approved 115, but a neighborhood group stopped it by appealing to the Township Committee. The Committee decided that there were an inordinate number of height and other bulk variances. Sterling came back in 1998 with a 96-unit design, but failed to pursue it fully.

The 56 townhouse proposal began in June 2000. The property is beset by stormwater management problems, since a Madison storm sewer pipe dumps water on the property, causing deep erosion, and there is a pond and dam on the property that needed reconstruction.

Darcy School Moving In

After withdrawing plans in the Fall to build a new school building on the 15-acre wooded property at 700 Shunpike Road near Loantaka Way, the Darcy School applied this Winter to the Chatham Township Board of Adjustment for a use variance to occupy the existing buildings and parking area for its school operations. The school has no current plans to change the exterior of the buildings or parking area. The property is zoned residential but in the past was given a conditional use variance for TransWorld Radio, a non-profit company, and then for Magla Prodsuts, a for-profit company that had promised a limited number of employees and parking spaces.

The Darcy School has indicated that it may grant a conservation easement on 5 acres on the west side of its property, but that it would like to build playing fields on the easement. The Planning Board has not yet ruled on the easement or athletic fields.

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Swamp Watch — Local Environmental

Bernards Township

Bridge Replacements

Somerset County is currently working on five bridge replacement projects in Bernards Township. A 1902 bridge on Mine Brook Road is being replaced this spring. The existing bridge is 26.5 feet wide and will be completely replaced by a 30-foot-wide structure. The bi-county bridge on White Bridge Road/Lord Stirling Road, a one-lane Warren Pony truss bridge on stone abutments constructed c. 1890 and one of the oldest in the township, is proposed to be realigned and widened to a 28 foot-wide two-lane concrete structure faced with stone, on concrete abutments. The NJ Historic Preservation Office has determined that the existing bridge is not eligible for New Jersey or National Register listing. The roadway on the Bernards side of the bridge is unpaved and currently floods during periods of high water. Plans to pave the road as part of the bridge replacement project appear to have been scrapped as a result of citizen comment to the Morris County Engineering Department.

Other bridges targeted for replacement within the year include Hardscrabble Road, Haas Road, and Mine Brook Road. Suggesting that the old bridges actually perform as “traffic-calming devices”, some local residents have expressed concern about potential impacts on traffic posed by the new bridges with their increased widths and straightened alignments.

Ordinance Discussion

The Bernards Township Planning Board is beginning the process of preparing three new ordinances in line with goals of the 2003 Master Plan. Two of the proposed ordinances are aimed at the protection of critical natural resources and environmentally constrained lands on tracts proposed for development. As the township allegedly nears “build-out”, remaining open tracts are generally ones with significant environmental constraints, such as wetlands, stream corridors, and steep slopes. The third ordinance is focused on managing infill development in established neighborhoods, with an aim of conserving community character. In recent years, the township has seen an increasing number of older homes that are being demolished and replaced with an ever-larger scale of new construction.

Ann Parsekian

Morristown & Morris Township

Foote's Pond

Finally, all state permits have been received for the restoration of Foote's Pond. The project has been put out to bid and is expected to be completed this year. Great thanks are owed the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation whose generosity is making the project possible, as well as the Morristown Rotary and the Town of Morristown. Particular kudos to JoAnne Casadevall, who is leading this effort, for having the vision to bring the project to fruition.

St. Mary's Abbey

The Order of St. Benedicts appears to have begun a new effort to construct a 240-unit Continuing Care Retirement Community on their property next to the Delbarton School. Advertised as giving the monks of St. Mary's Abbey the “opportunity to extend their mission of service and ministry to older adults of the area,” little further detail has yet been presented. To date, there is no evidence of new plans having been filed either at the Township or State level.

The Watershed Association's concerns about this proposal remain unchanged. Located immediately next to the nation's first National Historical Park (the Jockey Hollow section of the Morristown National Historical Park,) the site has mature forest, Category 1 waters, steep slopes, habitat for several threatened and endangered species, exceptional value wetlands and is in Planning Area 5 (the most environmentally sensitive and/or historically significant) of the State Development and Redevelopment Plan.

Julia Somers

Membership Survey continued

was Very Satisfied with their membership and the last group didn't respond to the question. No one indicated they were Not Satisfied with their membership, however, we must all keep in mind that the individuals returning these forms are renewing members so it stands to reason that they would have some level of satisfaction with the organization if they were supporting it monetarily. We plan to follow up with those members who indicated they were Somewhat Satisfied to understand what would make them Very Satisfied. More to come on that.

We plan to continue to solicit your feedback through Member Information Sheets (as part of the Membership Renewal process) so that we can monitor how we're doing. The Member Information Sheets will be revised and updated based on the information we have received to date as well as to confirm our ideas about program introductions or enhancements.

With or without the Membership Information Sheets, I want to encourage each of you to provide us with feedback at any time, both positive and negative. We take our members' comments seriously and want to make every effort to respond appropriately.

I hope that you found the above information interesting and will continue to be involved members in the future of the Great Swamp Watershed Association!

Greening of School Grounds Program Begins

GSWA's Director of Outreach and Education, Hazel England, has begun offering advice to local area schools wishing to improve their school grounds for wildlife and for education. The program, which is available for a small fee, covers the gamut of habitat and educational questions.

A **FREE** schoolyard habitat development workshop is being offered on May 4th, cooperatively with Morris County Park Commission at the Chatham Outdoor Education Center and will cover all aspects of creating a site at your school or other place of learning. For more information or to register call Hazel England at (973) 538-3500, ext 20, or email hazele@greatswamp.org.

“Ask A Friend”... You Might Win a Great Prize!

by Anne Essner, Development Committee Chair

The Great Swamp Watershed Association is looking for new members and we need your help! Watch for our new “Ask a Friend” campaign – arriving in your mailbox shortly – for the chance to win your choice of one of the following fabulous prizes:

- iPod Shuffle – the newest, coolest, smallest iPod yet;
- \$100 American Express Gift Certificate – good for purchases just about anywhere;
- Dinner for two (valued at \$100) at either Pierre's, Grand Café or Tre Vigne – perennial area favorites

What is the “Ask A Friend” Campaign?

The “Ask a Friend” Campaign is a fun new program aimed at attracting new members through the efforts of those who know the organization best – current members like you! You know that GSWA is working hard on everyone's behalf to protect our drinking water and to preserve and protect the region's natural areas. But you may not know that increasing our membership rolls is essential to allowing GSWA to continue this important work.

You can help by signing up neighbors, friends and family as new members of GSWA. Enclosed in the “Ask a Friend” mailer, which will be arriving shortly, is a description of the program and materials you can use when approaching friends and neighbors about joining GSWA. These materials are designed to be simple and easy to use.



Why are we running the “Ask A Friend” Campaign?

Contributing members provide most of the funds needed by the GSWA, but more members are needed if we are to continue this important work. The Great Swamp Watershed Association is a member-supported non-profit organization dedicated to protecting the water you drink and the places you love in your community. For the past 25 years, GSWA has been committed to improving community awareness of environmental issues, protecting water quality and quantity, and supporting informed land-use decision-making – in short, enhancing your quality of life in this beautiful part of New Jersey.

Our goal is to have each current GSWA member enroll one new member to help us fulfill our mission of protecting the water and land in your town. It is an ambitious goal. But by helping us today, you have invested in your future, enabling our organization to advance its important mission for years to come.

Why should I help to make the “Ask A Friend” Campaign a success?

The Great Swamp Watershed Association succeeds in its mission thanks to member contributions of time and money, helping us to protect your drinking water and preserve land to maintain the beauty and livability in your town. With a larger membership base, GSWA speaks with a greater authority and a louder voice. Please take a few minutes out of your day to ask a neighbor, friend or family member to join our ranks. By enrolling new members, you help us to help you.

Membership Survey Results: It's All About You!

by Patsy Claw

I want to thank each and every one of you who took the time to complete and return their Member Information Sheets! I appreciate the fact that you took a few minutes out of your busy day to provide us with information that will allow us to better serve you!

Since the collection of this information started last June, we have received feedback from over 350 of our members. This is better than a 16% response rate. Based on your responses, we now have a better understanding of our members and their interests.

The information collected has also been an input into this year's Strategic Planning effort. Using your feedback on programs and activities, we are able to focus more of our resources on the things you feel are important. Your ongoing feedback and support are critical to our success and our commitment to continuous improvement. In short, it's all about you!

Where Do Our Members Live?

Not surprisingly, many of our 2,200 member households reside in the ten towns of the Great Swamp Watershed. However, we are very proud to say that we have members from over 40 municipalities in New Jersey and a large number of members from Short Hills and Summit!

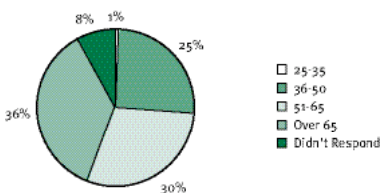
How Old Are Our Members?

Respondent replies suggest that approximately thirty-six percent of our members are over 65 years young! As it turns out, this group is also responsible for the largest amount of individual giving received by the Association. This is consistent with the findings of the Annual Report on Philanthropy for the Year 2003, which states that

individuals 65 to 84 years of age accounted for 34% of all individual contributions received by U.S. non-profits in 2003. However, the age spectrum of high net worth individuals is broadening which makes it important for

the Great Swamp Watershed Association to attract more members in the 37 to 55 and 55 to 64 age group categories. We would certainly like to have a more evenly distributed membership and will work to see what we can do to 1) keep our existing members happy and 2) create opportunities to attract members in the other age group categories.

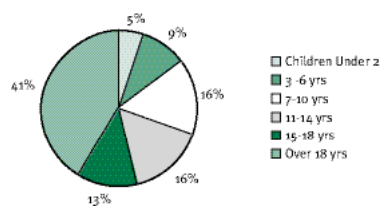
Age Distribution of Respondents



Do Our Members Have Children?

The majority of those members who returned their Membership Information Sheets have children over the age of 18. Respondents with children tend to have children between 7-14 years of age. This information is very helpful in trying to create educational programs and meaningful member events for the different market segments. We

Respondents with Children

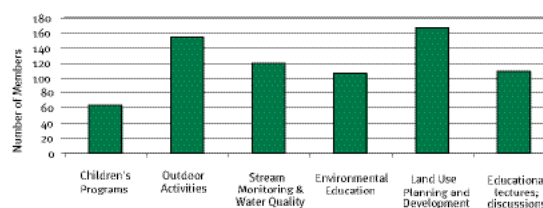


constantly track the level of responsiveness to our events in an effort to try and offer activities that our members enjoy! Take a look at our website (www.greatswamp.org) and join us for one of our upcoming events!

Activities of Interest

This section of the Member Information Sheet wasn't constructed very well in that it asked members to select items of interest from a list of both programs (which the staff at the Watershed Association perform) and activities (that we sponsor for our members). We apologize for that and will try to be more specific next time. We were trying to get an indication of the types of activities in which are

Programs of Interest to Respondents



members are interested. The graph above shows the range of responses from our members. Most of you indicated an interest in our Land Use Planning and Development activities and our Outdoor Activities. We're thrilled that so many of you are interested in Land Use Planning and Development but we aren't sure if you think it's a valuable service that we provide OR whether or not you would like to more actively participate in Land Use Planning and Development seminars, meetings, etc. The same type of confusion arises with Stream Monitoring and Water Quality. For better or worse, the results of the information you provided to us are shown above. We'll have to offer you a better question the next time around.

Ranking the Importance of Programs

Members were asked to rank order the importance of existing Watershed Association programs in this part of the form. Land Use was the clear winner, with Water Quality Monitoring coming in second, Education and Outreach third, and Heritage Programs last.

Membership Satisfaction

Members were asked to classify their level of satisfaction with the organization as Very Satisfied, Somewhat Satisfied or Not Satisfied. The majority of respondents indicated they were either Very or Somewhat Satisfied with their membership. The next largest group

From the Desk of the Executive Director

Calling All Volunteers!

Volunteers are the heart and soul of most non-profit organizations and the Watershed Association is no different. Almost any day of the week, you can find a volunteer performing some job that is essential to what we do, starting with our Board of Trustees.

Currently, twenty committed people (we may include up to twenty-three) serve as Trustees, giving us the benefit of their time, knowledge and financial support. Every board needs three things represented among its trustees: time, talent and treasure (or work, wisdom and wealth!) Our trustees also represent a geographically diverse area across and around the watershed as well as many different professional disciplines and interests that benefit us. They are residents, some come from the corporate world and many are longtime volunteers for us and other community organizations.

Trustees serve on at least one Committee where they are joined by non-Board member volunteers on the Land Use, Finance, Outreach and Education and Development Committees. Serving on one of these Committees is a great way to find out more about the Watershed Association and whether you, too, might like to be part of our leadership.

A wonderful example of people who got involved because they cared are Chris Hepburn and Judy Kroll. The Star Ledger recently published an article about them and how they began Madison Matters. Both were able to turn vision, energy and some of what they learned on our Board into an organization that has contributed much to Madison.

Volunteers work on our Conservation Area in Harding. It's hard work but very rewarding if you enjoy being outside with like-minded people restoring a wetlands property, removing invasive plant species, maintaining or clearing trails and enhancing wildlife habitat. A local scout achieved his eagle badge with a project here.

Other volunteers assist the staff with in-classroom presentations, grant writing or work in the office on a regular basis. One has even taken on a huge project using Geographic Information Systems, mapping out on the computer every watershed community's open space and another project mapping different habitats within the Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge.

For those who like to get their feet wet, we have an ongoing stream monitoring program called the Stream Team. We are measuring water volume and collecting water quality samples before and following stream events. This group has big plans to expand their goals, all with the mission of protecting our streams.

I can continue, but you get the picture ... There are endless opportunities to volunteer here. We try hard to make your experience a rewarding one, as well as one that tackles a project that is important to us. A win/win situation for everybody. If you want to help out, or learn more about what you could do, please call us at 973-538-3500. Lee Goyeneche at Ext. 15 will direct you to the right person to talk to about a project you find intriguing. Come, volunteer!



Across the Watershed is a quarterly publication of the Great Swamp Watershed Association. The Watershed Association works to protect the ecological, historic, and cultural integrity of the Great Swamp and its watershed. The Association promotes the conservation and restoration of the watershed's natural resources and encourages land use that is compatible with these goals.

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Across the Watershed

Editing & Layout: John Malay

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Kathy Abbott
Hazel England
Anne Essner
Ruth Kerkeslager

Corporations Fund Study of Great Swamp's Most Polluted Stream

by Ruth Kerkeslager

The Great Swamp Watershed Association has received generous grants from three of its Corporate Council members – Maersk, Schering-Plough and Wyeth – to support the continuation of our “Adopt-A-Stream” Restoration Program on Loantaka Brook. The funds will allow us to continue vital water testing and analyses and to develop a plan for water quality improvements and restoration work.

The Great Swamp Watershed Association is deeply grateful to these Corporate Council members for their support. Thanks to the funding received from these three corporations last year, the Great Swamp Watershed Association was able to make significant progress on our Restoration Program on Loantaka Brook. The brook, adjacent to Giralda Farms, is the most polluted of the five tributaries in the Great Swamp watershed and flows into the Passaic River, becoming a source of drinking water for over a million New Jersey residents. This program has begun to identify the problems with the brook and aims to eventually restore the stream.

The objective of Phase I was to identify how Loantaka Brook becomes contaminated. Stream samples were collected in 2003 and

2004 and assessments were conducted to identify sources of key contaminants. The work has identified several non-point source pollution issues and potential ways to address immediate problems. The water quality sampling continues in 2005 in order to observe concentration trends and sources of additional pollutants.

The current grant will allow the Watershed Association to continue the necessary water quality sampling and to transition into the next phase of the program. The objective of Phase II is to develop a plan for water quality improvements and ecological restoration. The objective of Phase III is to implement the remediation measures in Phase II. Restoration measures are being identified as the program begins to transition to Phase II. A Restoration Plan for a segment of Loantaka Brook located in the Loantaka Brook Reservation (part of the Morris County Park System) is being developed with the aid of an expert from the Delaware River Basin Commission (under contract to the NJDEP).

Support of this project by Maersk, Schering-Plough and Wyeth is an exemplary model of how corporate neighbors can impact a community problem.



**MAERSK
SEALAND**



Wyeth



New Pesticide Free Zones in Chatham Township

This Spring Chatham Township placed attention-grabbing “Pesticide Free Zone” ladybug signs at each of its five playgrounds. The Chatham Township Environmental Commission requested the signs as part of its pesticide awareness campaign. The purpose is to protect the health of children that come into contact with weed and grub killers on their lawns and to protect the local drinking water sources which receive runoff of pesticides from suburban lawns.

While the Township has never used pesticides under the playsets, it is common practice for private landscapers to spray herbicides on mulch by swingsets and in gardens. Long term, low dose exposure to pesticides is associated with childhood leukemia, lymphoma, brain cancer, birth defects, reproductive disorders, asthma and other illnesses.

Information on how to have a beautiful and pesticide-free lawn can be found at www.chathamtownship.org.

Children at Esternay Park in Chatham Township pose below the “Pesticide Free Zone” ladybug logo. Esternay is one of 5 township parks to become pesticide free under the new program.

Write us at:
P.O. Box 300
New Vernon, NJ 07976



ACROSS THE WATERSHED

Visit us at:
568 Tempe Wick
Harding, NJ 07976

Spring 2005

The Great Swamp Watershed Association

Vol. 25 No.2

Join Us For Do The Swamp Thing 2005 Fifth Annual Celebration of the Swamp

Once again the month of May will be dedicated to celebrating the exceptional recreational, historical, and educational resources abundant in the Great Swamp watershed. The Watershed Association will be publicizing events held from April 24th through the beginning of June at venues throughout the region.

The celebration will begin with a kick-off on April 24th from noon until 4 pm at the Morris County Outdoor Education Center on Southern Boulevard in Chatham Township. Rather than have a formal opening ceremony, this year the participants have opted to have a day-long event, featuring a host of family-friendly activities, educational exhibits, presentations, games and walks, live animals, as well as a Swamp Wildlife Art Exhibit done by the students at the Southern Boulevard School. Admission is \$2 per person. The event will be held rain or shine.

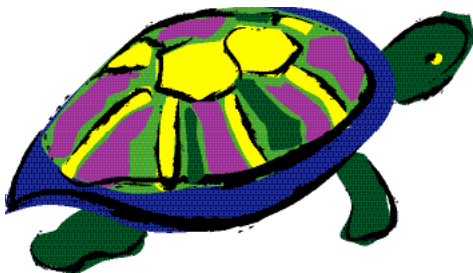
“This year we’d like to use the Do the Swamp Thing Celebration to point out to people how important it is to preserve land and water quality as well as what our organization and our other conservation partners do to uphold the quality of life throughout our region.”

Besides the Watershed Association, participants will include the Morris County Park Commission, the Somerset County Park Commission, the National Park Service, US Fish & Wildlife / Friends of the GSNWR, NJ Watershed Ambassadors, NJ Audubon Society and The Raptor Trust.

Also scheduled for the month are a series of adult hikes run by the Morris County Park Commission, a program of “kid-friendly” walks at the Somerset County Outdoor Education Center in Basking Ridge, and teacher training for elementary school educators. Of special interest is the 25th Annual Wildlife Art & Carving Show and Sale at the Somerset County EEC, held on April 30th and May 1st from 10:00 am-5:00 pm. Over fifty artists will be exhibiting their wildlife art at this unique show. Realistic woodcarvings, decoys, paintings, sculptures, photographs, and drawings are featured, as well as individual interpretations of animals and plants from around the world. Artists will demonstrate their techniques and discuss their subject matter with viewers. Works will be available for purchase and there will be a silent auction. There is a suggested donation of \$4.00.

Julia Somers, Executive Director of the Watershed Association, said “This year we’d like to use the Do the Swamp Thing Celebration to point out to people how important it is to preserve land and water quality as well as what our organization and our other conservation partners do to uphold the quality of life throughout our region.”

“Do the Swamp Thing” is organized by Great Swamp Watershed Association and sponsored by Kings Super Markets Inc., PSEG, and Recorder Community Newspapers. This year’s celebration includes a four-page advertising supplement in many of Recorder’s local papers, a weekly ad highlighting a wide variety of family activities and publicizing the event on Kings grocery bags.



For updated “Do the Swamp Thing” events and calendar information, check our website at www.greatswamp.org.