

NEWSLETTER

FREE

ADMISSION

WINTER 2016

Working Since 1972 to Save the Environment of Moorestown

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." — Margaret Mead

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Calendar of Upcoming STEM Events

Wednesday, January 20 STEM Steering Committee Meeting 7:00 p.m.

Tuesday, January 26
Annual Joint Meeting
Community House
Main Street, Moorestown
7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, February 3 NAC Annual Site Leaders Meeting 7:00 p.m.

> Sunday, February 7 STEM Strategic Meeting 10:00 a.m.

Wednesday, February 17 STEM Steering Committee Meeting 7:00 p.m.

> Saturday, March 12 NAC Conservation Project TBD 9:30-11:30 a.m.

Wednesday, March 16 STEM Steering Committee Meeting 7:00 p.m.

THE ANNUAL JOINT MEETING

Hosted by Moorestown Improvement Association, STEM, Pompeston Creek Watershed Association, and the Moorestown Garden Club

Twenty-five Years Later—The Moorestown Historic District
Presented by MIA's KIMBERLY BUNN AND LYNN SCHILL

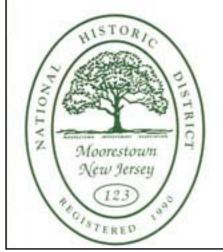
Tuesday, January 26, 2016 at 7:30 p.m

The Garden Room, Moorestown Community House 16 East Main Street, Moorestown

Moorestown's Historic District was first listed on the National Register of Historic Places twenty-five years ago. As the Township celebrates a quarter century

under this designation, join MIA, STEM, PCWA, and the Moorestown Garden Club for an evening presentation and learn more about Moorestown's Historic District. The Moorestown Improvement Association (MIA) would like to share its perspective on what it means to be designated "historic" and what has changed over the past twenty-five years.

Presentation date and location appear above. Light refreshments will be offered after the program. For questions and/or details about the presentation, contact MIA at: 609-410-5969 or www.moorestownimprovement.org.



Images above courtesy of MIA files.

A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Happy New Year! January is an excellent time to reflect on the past year and contemplate how the year ahead can be even better. We are celebrating the accomplishments STEM achieved in 2015 with help from supporters like you.

Here's the recap for 2015:

- Natural Area Care monthly seasonal work sessions
- Jean Mancini's bee presentation at the Moorestown Library for the Annual Joint Meeting
- The Plant Sale at Moorestown Day
- Presentation of the STEM Environmental Scholarship Award to Moorestown graduating senior Evelyne Richardson-Thomas (the award was recently re-named in honor of Kay Smith)
- The Annual Picnic honoring the Photo Contest Winners

- The Fourth of July Parade on Main Street
- The Stokes Hill Historic Marker dedication honoring Carol Mastran
- STEM's participation in Sustainable Moorestown's Green Fair
- STEM Steps Out Fall Festival Celebrates Sustainability at Strawbridge Lake Park
- The Esther Yanai Memorial Walk at Boundary Creek Natural Resource Area led by Burlington County Park Naturalist Jen Bulava

What a year! In February, STEM's Steering Committee will be holding its annual Strategic Meeting to map its future direction. Please feel free to contact any Steering member with your thoughts—a list of members appears on page 8.

We would love to hear from you.

—Elizabeth Endres Hines



Kay Smith Honored for Service to STEM

Kay Smith, an active founding member of STEM and MEAC (Moorestown Environmental Advisory Committee), was the guest of honor at a gathering hosted by Chet and Pat Dawson at their home on the afternoon of December 12, 2015.

Kay's recent move to Medford Leas makes us all fully realize how much we have relied on her experience, expertise, enthusiasm, hard work, and contributions to STEM and NAC over the four-plus decades she has been involved with the organization.

In 2014, STEM instituted an environmental scholarship to be awarded yearly to a graduating Moorestown High School senior who has exhibited outstanding environmental concern and commitment to STEM's mission. In her honor, the STEM scholarship has been renamed "The Kay Smith/ STEM Scholarship" (shown above) and it will continue to remind our community of Kay's years of service.

We hope that Medford is not too far away for some frequent visits by Kay to Moorestown! —Margo Foster

What's Next for STEM?

STEM's mission is to preserve, protect and enhance the natural environment of Moorestown for today's and future generations.

Back in 1972, STEM was founded with the idea that Moorestown needed an independent citizens organization with local environmental issues as its sole focus. That recommendation was the outcome of a four-session seminar presented by the Moorestown Area League of Women Voters and sponsored by the Moorestown Council of Churches. The seminars included several speakers all discussing how to address environmental concerns at the local level.

Environmental issues, including air and water pollution, and development pressures, were prominent in the headlines. Recycling was minimal and left mostly to volunteers.

STEM worked to find tools to improve things by both governmental and individual actions and worked to educate itself and the wider community as to what measures could be undertaken.

An important early project created by STEM was the Natural Resources Inventory that consisted of eighteen mylar maps and texts. The maps could be overlain to consider several parameters at the same time. The purpose was to provide the Township with a planning tool when evaluating the deluge of development proposals pouring in. Its completion took about fifteen years! The recently updated Environmental Resources Inventory was done digitally in one year, was contracted out to DVRPC, and was paid for by STEM.

Another ambitious STEM project was the first Moorestown Open Space Inventory which became the model for all subsequent additions.

Open Space Preservation was a major STEM goal from day one. STEM

worked tirelessly to support various open space referenda over the years at state, county, and local levels. All were successful. STEM contributed \$50,000 toward the purchase of the Esther Yanai Preserve, STEM holds and monitors a Conservation Easement on Pompeston Woods, next to Pompeston Park. In addition, STEM recently played an important leadership role in the community discussion of how Open Space Trust Fund dollars should be used.

As the Township preserved more and more open space it became apparent that these sites required care and maintenance to keep them usable and an inviting community asset. STEM's Natural Area Care (NAC) Committee routinely tackles some of that job with scheduled work sessions from March through November.

"What is next for this independent citizens oganization as it faces the future?"

Over the years many of STEM's important goals and objectives have come to pass. STEM is pleased that the Township has found it useful to create three advisory committees whose members are appointed by Township Council

-the Moorestown Environmental Advisory Committee, the Open Space Committee, and Sustainable Moorestown. These commmittees provide environmental input to Township Council and the Planning and Zoning Boards.

The STEM Steering Committee periodically reviews its Strategic Plan to assess progress and reset priorities—its next meting is scheduled for February 7, 2016. An important item it will look to address is what is next for this independent citizens oganization as it faces the future? What do you think?

Contact any Steering Committee member to share your ideas. -Kay Smith





Photos on left by Chet Dawson from December luncheon honoring Kay.

Far left: Ken, Don, & Jean share conversation. Near left: Steve Yanai. on left, chats with others at the afternoon party.

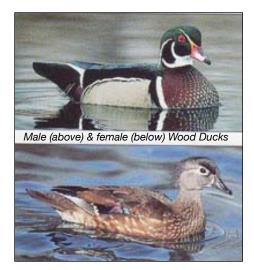
From My Yard—The Best of "Yard Birds" by Mark Pensiero

Over the years I have tallied 106 species of "yard" birds. Simply put, yard birds are those birds viewed either in my yard, or from my yard. "From my vard" simply means the bird does not have to be physically in my yard for me to count it; rather I have to be in my yard when I see the bird. And with the quality of optics today, "from my yard" can cover a pretty long distance. An example would be a flyover by a Bald Eagle (multiple times) or a kettle of migrating Broad-winged Hawks (once). As much as I would love to have a Bald Eagle or a Broad-winged Hawk alight in one of my backyard trees, it simply isn't very likely. Isn't likely does not mean impossible. Recently a neighbor on Paul Drive had a mature Bald Eagle on the ground in her yard—hard to believe but I have seen the pictures!

Of those 100 plus species, I wanted to think back and see who would make it on a "Top Five Backyard Bird List" and find a couple of reasons why each of them made the cut.

1) Wood Ducks

Wood Ducks in my Elm Tree. I have seen hundreds of Wood Ducks, and they are absolutely gorgeous. I have seen them on lakes, ponds, and flying overhead. Only once have I seen them in a tree and that one time was in my backyard. Now, that is crazy—but not quite so crazy as finding a Bald Eagle on the ground in your back yard-still hoping for that one.



2) Wilson's Warbler

One fall many years back, I had a pair of Wilson's Warblers in my backyard. Only reason I saw them was that I was home from work nursing a bad back. I have seen Wilson's Warblers only a

handful of times. They are a western breeder and primarily seen in our area during their fall migration. It makes me wonder how many other great birds have passed through my yard unseen by me because I was healthy and at work.

Wilson's Warbler



3) Great Horned Owl

Before their numbers were significantly reduced by the West Nile Virus, Great Horned Owls were regulars in the woods behind our house. One fall evening, a male owl perched in a dead oak on the edge of our property hooting up a storm. I set up my spotting scope and proceeded to illuminate him with an old 4 D battery Maglite flashlight. He just kept on hooting, apparently totally oblivious to the flashlight and the group of noisy neighborhood kids who were now lined up and waiting their turn to see the owl fill the scope when I hit him with the high beam.



Great Horned Owl

Photos: clockwise from above top: Wilson's Warbler, Cape May Warbler, Gray Catbird, Great Horned Owl, and Wood Ducks-all courtesy of National Audubon Society Field Guide to N. American Birds. Bull & Farrand, Jr.

116th Christmas Bird Count

This year's count was missing Mark Pensiero, but Jody Hey led the group-Susan & Judy Buffalino and Tom Klak. The tally was 42 species of birds in 8.5 hours, visiting 8 sites & walking 5 miles.

4) Cape May Warblers

Two different years I had Cape May Warblers in my yard. These are uncommon birds and, like the Wilson's Warbler, are far more likely to be seen in our area during the fall rather than the spring migration. I have seen Cape May Warblers probably eight times in my life. Simple math tells me that twenty-five percent of my Cape Mays were seen in my own back yard.



5) Gray Catbird

Catbirds make the list not because they are rare, beautiful, or exotic. In fact, for a neo-tropical songbird they are downright pedestrian in their coloring-grey with a slightly chestnut underside near their tail. But they are charming, chatty, and inquisitive. They are birds with a personality. If you can't "pish" in a catbird then you need some serious help. I love the fact that every year I have a pair that sets up "home" immediately upon arrival in my vard—and they always arrive as a pair. They provide me a message of hope, that with all the problems of the world they continue to soldier on, somehow making their way to my backyard and continuing the cycle of life.



My yard list doesn't grow so quickly as it once did, and I doubt I will ever hit 125 species at 433 Paul Drive. But when I gaze through my list I am amazed at the window it represents into the amazing world of birds and the natural world. You can bet my binoculars are always within easy reach, as one thing I have learned over the years is that when it comes to birds—almost anything is possible.

NATURAL AREA CARE - Caring for the Environment

Looking forward to seeing you at one of the NAC Projects

About the NAC Committee

The NAC Committee will start off the year with a site leaders meeting on Wednesday, February 3 at 7 p.m. If you are interested in helping to maintain any of the nine Moorestown preserved open spaces that STEM manages (site locations appear on the right), please contact Jean Fox at foxjean62@gmail.com or 856-642-7864 and consider attending the meeting. You might be concerned about an open space that is in your neighborhood, or one where you commonly walk. Moorestown is fortunate to have such a treasure trove of hikable spaces, but they are not self-sustaining and need these annual clean-ups to keep the trails in good condition. The NAC calendar on the right is a tentative schedule for 2016 and is subject to change. Please check the STEM website for finalized information post meeting.

Volunteers Needed for all NAC Sessions

Natural Area Care conservation projects are now being listed on *MeetUp.com*. The NAC Committee is hoping to generate fresh interest among volunteers looking to donate a few hours of their time to the environment. A thorough knowledge of plants and habitat management is not needed to participate in open space stewardship projects—a love of the outdoors is the only prerequisite. Site leaders and regular NAC volunteers are well-versed in what needs to be done and are ready to guide the newcomer and give direction. Typical projects include trail maintenance, invasive plant removal, and litter pick-up, but can extend to fallen tree removal, stream bank restoration, trail blazing, and bridge/boardwalk construction. Each session usually includes a hike through the site. For images and interesting facts about each open space, visit the STEM website at www.stemonline.org.

Eighth Annual Esther Yanai Memorial Hike Jen Bulava Adds Special Interest to the Event

Sunday, December 6, 2015: We were lucky with the weather. It was a bright and sunny day—temperature in the low 50°s F—at Boundary Creek Natural Resource Area, usually shortened to Boundary Creek Park. Nearly thirty STEM members and other interested folks met there for the Eighth Annual Esther Yanai Memorial Hike, traditionally scheduled for the first Sunday afternoon in December. Esther, an ardent environmentalist, was a founding member of STEM in 1972.

An intriguing feature of this year's walk was the participation of Jen Bulava, Burlington County Park Naturalist. Jen opened our eyes to seeing features we usually miss in the mostly leafless, almost-winter landscape—from insect cases on reedy plants, to sprouting acorns disdained by squirrels, to an appreciation for the native Sycamore tree, which hosts a wide array of animal and insect species.

Jen shared her favorite Boundary Creek story: When guiding a kindergarten class to the beaver dam, she told them not to expect to see any beavers, as they are nocturnal animals. However, the vibrations of little feet and voices above its den disturbed one of the beavers enough to drive it into the creek, where it slapped its tail and expressed its dismay. Since that incident, the beavers have resettled across the creek.

During the walk, STEM President Elizabeth Endres paused to read a traditional favorite poem of Esther's, "How to Build a Community," including my favorite—"pick up litter!" NOTE: Additional text and photos are on page 5.

-Margo Foster

2016 NAC Draft Calendar

Subject to change, please check website

Saturday, March 12 9:30-11:30 am Strawbridge Lake Buffer Route 38

Saturday, April 9 9:30-11:30 am Pompeston Park Upstream of New Albany Road

Wednesday, April 20 9:30-11:30 am Waterworks Woods Kings Highway@Waterworks

Saturday, May 14
9:30-11:30 am
Esther Yanai Preserve
Garwood Road@Swede Run

Tuesday, May 17
9:30-11:30 am
Little Woods on the Rancocas
Creek Road@Laurel Creek Blvd.

Saturday, June 11 9:30-11:30 am Wigmore Acres Westfield Road

Saturday, July 9 8:30-10:30 am Pompeston Park Downstream of New Albany Road

Saturday, August 13
8:30-10:30 am
Little Woods & Susan
Stevens Halbe Preserve
Creek Road@Laurel Creek Blvd.

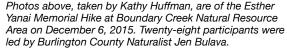
Saturday, September 10 9:30-11:30 am Waterworks Woods Kings Highway@Waterworks

Tuesday, September 20 9:30-11:30 am South Valley Woods Behind South Valley School

Saturday, October 8
9:30-11:30 am
Pompeston Park Downstream
of Fernwood Drive

Saturday, November 12 9:30-11:30 am Pompeston Park Upstream of New Albany Road





Betsy Schnorr's reflections on the memorial hike are below:

It was an unseasonably warm December day. Twenty-eight curious people gathered to take an interpretive hike around the park, considered to be one of the premier parks in the county. It borders Rancocus Creek on Creek Road-the entire loop circling the park is approximately one mile.

Along the way, we learned much from Jen. She pointed out insect galls that are abnormal growths on bushes and trees. Inside these galls, many insects lay their eggs. In winter months when birds find little food they often peck inside these galls for much needed nourishment. Jen also showed the group the leaves and acorns of the white oak tree. Unlike the red and black oaks, the white oak tree drops its oval shaped acorns not in the spring, but in the fall. Immediately the acorn sprouts and tries to root itself. It was fun to feel and see nature at work.

To Save or Not to Save?

STEM was founded in 1972. Today, that adds up to 43 years of collected archival history and documentation saved by various STEM members in a variety of attics, basements, barns, and storage facilities. When these members move or relocate, the material does as well.

It has become time to review, consolidate, and even discard some items from the past. Lacking an official archivist, several members took the initiative to rent temporary space at a commercial storage facility until there was time to do some sorting.

If there any archivists out there reading this who would like to lend their experience to this sometimes difficult task, please contact Elizabeth Endres at 856-222-1163 or eendres03@gmail. com and offer to volunteer your help.

A photo of the team tackling this project appears on page 8. Thank you to Claire Rollin Adair, Mark Pensiero, and Barb Rich for their help.

-Margo Foster

Waterworks Woods—A Best Kept Secret



Do you know that every time you drive out of town via the west end of Kings Highway you pass the trailhead at Waterworks Woods? Sad to say, the entrance to this preserved open space site is pretty well concealed unless you know where to look.

Proceeding from the corner of Kings Highway and Haines Drive toward the water treatment plant (hence the site's name-Waterworks Woods), you will cross a bridge and immediately see a trailhead sign on the left. Descending the stairway takes you to a trail—the lower trail—which

follows the wooded shoreline on the "other" side of Strawbridge Lake.

About 50 or so yards along the lower trail you can spot another trail on your right that heads up the hill—the upper loop trail. From the higher elevation, you have a better view of the lake. Behind you, when not obscured by vegetation, you can see the backs of the homes in the Blason Woods development. At the crest of the hill, there is a rope swing tied to a high branch in the old Sycamore tree-great fun for

kids, teens, and some older folks as

well! Navigating the trail is pretty easy, as the lake is almost always in view.

On the upper loop trail, you will also come across the remnants of several old stone fireplaces used for picnics in the earlier decades of the twentieth century. As the upper loop trail decends to the lake shoreline it passes through some swampy areas and around the old swimming hole which overflows into Strawbridge Lake. Private homes at the dead end of Nixon Drive (off Route 38) border Waterworks Woods at this end of the park.

> All in all, this is a great walk, easily reached from the center of town, and full of interesting things to see and wonderful views in all seasons. It's a terrific natural resource that STEM hopes will be discovered by more people. -Joseph Ponessa

Photos above left and map. courtesy of Joseph Ponessa

K-Mart Legend Water Park boundary 57 high point Route 38 Private hom Strawbridge Lake Nixon Dr.

Waterworks Woods

www.stemonline.org 5

October 4, 2015 STEM Steps Out "Celebrates Sustainability" Thank you to Bill Creekmore for the engaging photos and thank you to all who attended.

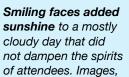


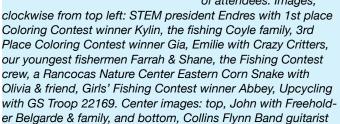


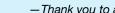
























Annual STEM Membership Form Return to:

P.O. Box 704, Moorestown, NJ 08057

Is your membership up-to-date? (An expiration date appears on the mailing label.)

Name ______ Check HERE for electronic Newsletter

Address _____ E-mail _____ E-mail _____ D

Memberships:	New 🗌 Renewal
Individual (\$15)	\$
Family (\$25)	\$
Student (\$10)	\$
Donations:	
Open Space Fund	\$
Ongoing activities	\$
Amount enclosed:	\$
Dues and donations	are tax-deductible

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES (please circle your areas of interest)

Communications

Flyers, brochures, & postcards Newsletter

Public relations

<u>Advocacy</u>

Attend town meetings Letter writing Phone calls

Education

Community education
Educational materials
School-based programs

Events

Children's activities Donating plants for Plant Sale

Plant Sale staffing Open Space Festival Refreshments

Outdoor Activities

Conservation projects
Lead nature walks
Litter Patrol
Natural Area Care
Open space monitoring

Administrative

Clerical Computer related Fundraising Legal issues

Visual and Creative Arts

Arts and crafts
Fine Arts
Graphic design
Photography

<u>Other</u>

STEM is a 501c3 non-profit organization. Contributions are tax-deductible to the extent permitted by law. Information filed with the Attorney General concerning this charitable solicitation may be obtained from the Attorney General of New Jersey by calling (201) 504-6215. Registration with the Attorney General does not imply endorsement.



STEM Steps Out 2015 Fall Festival Thank You

STEM Steps Out Celebrates Sustainability was held October 4, 2015 at Strawbridge Lake. The weather was not perfect but the event was a huge success. We are so thankful to everyone who participated or volunteered time, talent, or made another important contribution to the success of the festival. STEM would like to extend a special thank you to:

Committee would like to thank all members who volunteered on Sunday, October 4 and gave so generously of their time and energy.

The STEM Steering

Bill Creekmore

Browning Hess Farm

Center for Aquatic Sciences at Adventure Aquarium

Cherry Hill HS East Environmental Club

Ranger Chris Derkas

Colleen Malloy LoPresti

Collins Flynn Band

Crazy Critters 4-H Club

Dave Bicking

Diane Miskowski

Fancy Feathers 4-H Club

Flagg's Garden Center

Flying Feather Farm

Freedom Center for Wildlife

Girl Scout Troop #22169

Haines Farm & Garden Center

Harry Mayer Jerry Huffman

Lew's Farm Market
MHS Environmental Club

MHS Interact Club

Moorestown Emergency Squad

Moorestown Improvement Association

Moorestown Parks and Recreation Department

Moorestown Police Department

Moorestown Public Works

NJ Outdoor Club Paolo Trinchieri

PCWA and Deb Lord
Rancocas Nature Center

Sky McClain

Starbucks Coffee Company, Moorestown

Stellwag's Garden Center

Theresa Miller

Walt Fox

Photo below from SSO 2015 by Bill Creekmore, of a Freedom Center for Wildlife resident Barn Owl.



Save The Environment of Moorestown, P.O. Box 704, Moorestown, NJ 08057 Visit us online at www.stemonline.org. Our newsletter looks great in color!



Save the Environment of Moorestown P.O. Box 704, Moorestown, NJ 08057 www.stemonline.org

> *Membership Renewal Benefits STEM Projects*

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Tuesday, January 26, 2016 at 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday, January 26, 2016 at 7:30 p.m.

ANNUAL JOINT MEETING

The Moorestown Historic District Moorestown Historic Distri

It's been an eventful year for STEM. Photos below by Chet Dawson and Margo Foster, respectively. Top: Kay Smith receives the "Golden Glove" award from Tom Hottenstein for her decades of contribution to the NAC Committee. Bottom: from left, Claire Rollin Adair, Mark Pensiero, and Barb Rich sort through STEM archives at a storage facility in December 2015.





STEM Steering Committee Members for 2015-2016

Elizabeth Endres Hines, President; 856-222-1163 & eendres03@gmail.com
Joe Ponessa, Vice-president; 856-235-6376 & jponessa@comcast.net
Mark Pensiero, Treasurer; 856-235-0171 & mpensiero@gmail.com
Susan Buffalino, Sec. & Newsletter Ed.; 856-866-9506 & sbuff4@aol.com
Claire Rollin Adair, Director; 856-727-3830 & cerollin@gmail.com
Margo Foster, Director; 856-235-5862 & mcmfoster@yahoo.com
Jean Fox, Director; 856-642-7864 & foxjean62@gmail.com
Paula Horton, Director; 856-296-0798 & phorton100@comcast.net
Kathy Huffman, Director; 856-778-2201 & kajer3@comcast.net
Diane Miskowski, Director; 856-235-6523 & dmiskowski@emsl.com
Betsy Schnorr, Director; 856-235-6348 & betsybjs@aol.com
MHSEC Representative

STEM's Steering Committee meets the third Wednesday of each month (with a break in December), and it's there that decisions are made about STEM's activities for the year, STEM involvement at public events, directions on environmental advocacy, financial commitments, legal obligations—in short, most aspects of the organization.

Steering Committee members are nominated in late winter and early spring, and their acceptance is voted on at our Annual Meeting in the spring. STEM members are welcome to attend a Steering meeting (though, per our by-laws, not permitted to vote on motions), and any STEM member who is interested in serving on the Steering Committee is encouraged to speak with someone on our Nominating Committee. New views keep the organization dynamic! For information about STEM and its programs, contact Elizabeth Endres Hines, President; 856-222-1163 & eendres03@gmail.com

Join us on the third Wednesday of the month—you'll be surprised how much you'll learn not just about STEM, but about Moorestown in general.

See the calendar on the front page or contact one of our Nominating Committee members:

Claire Rollin Adair at 856-727-3830 & cerollin@gmail.com

Kathy Huffman, Director; 856-778-2201 & kajer3@comcast.net

Barb Rich at 856-234-2787 & barbrich37ec@gmail.com