



Sept. 2017, Volume 46, Issue 4

NEWSLETTER

FALL 2017

Since 1972, STEM's mission is to preserve, protect, and enhance the natural environment of Moorestown for today's and future generations.

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Calendar of Upcoming STEM Events

Wed., September 20
STEM Steering Committee Mtg.
7:00 p.m.

Sat., September 23
NAC Stewardship Project
South Valley Woods
Behind South Valley School
9:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Sun., October 1
STEM Open Space Festival
Strawbridge Lake & Haines Drive
Noon to 4:00 p.m.

Sat, October 14
NAC Stewardship Project
Pompeon Park Downstream
of Fernwood Drive
9:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Wed., October 18
STEM Steering Committee Mtg.
7:00 p.m.

Wed., November 15
STEM Steering Committee Mtg.
7:00 p.m.

FALL 2017 OPEN SPACE FESTIVAL Naturalist-led Tours of Four Preserved Sites "Sunday in the Parks" – Free Bus Transportation

OCTOBER 1 FROM NOON TO 4 P.M.

AT STRAWBRIDGE LAKE & KINGS HIGHWAY (RAIN OR SHINE)

Moorestown is home to 15 preserved natural areas—local treasures, but unknown to many. So for this year's fall celebration, STEM looks to introduce these gems to the public by offering timed, naturalist-led, easy-paced hikes in: Little Woods on the Rancocas on Creek Road; Esther Yanai Preserve on Garwood Road; Waterworks Woods on Kings Highway; and South Valley Woods behind South Valley School. Free buses will provide transportation to and from each site or you can drive yourself and join the group.

These interpretive walking tours are family-friendly and offer a chance to explore each site while learning about its history, habitat, wildlife and trails. Details about the times for the bus tours appear on pages 2 & 3. Waterworks Woods can be reached by walking—no bus needed!

The center of the festival remains at Strawbridge Lake Park on Haines Drive by the Kings Highway dam and all trips will begin and end there. The afternoon will include interactions with live animals, educational displays, activities for children and adults, and a display of STEM's Nature in Moorestown Photo Contest winners. The STEM table will feature interactive maps of the Township you won't want to miss. Refreshments will be available on-site. The festival flier with additional details appears on page two of this newsletter.



Photo of Swede Run in the Esther Yanai Preserve by Susan Buffalino.

Enjoy a fall afternoon outdoors and share STEM's appreciation of the natural world and its beauty. Questions? Visit the STEM website at www.stemonline.org or contact Kathy Huffman at kajer3@com-cast.net or Susan Buffalino at sbuff4@aol.com.

A Note From the President's Desk

Great news! The most recent Moorestown budget, for fiscal year 2017, contains a \$90,000 appropriation to create open space parking.

This initiative began several years ago when detailed drawings for parking at several open space parks were developed by Gub Maines (thanks, Gub!). In the summer of 2016, STEM identified two sites most in need of parking areas: Susan Stevens Halbe Preserve on Creek Road, and Esther Yanai Preserve at Swede Run on Garwood Road. Shortly thereafter, STEM began conversations with township officials concerning funding and construction of these improvements.

In both locations, the plans call for six spaces—one paved for handicapped access and the remaining spaces with a gravel base. At the Halbe site, because of traffic considerations on Creek Road, the project will also include slow-down and acceleration lanes. The interior of the preserve will also include a trail around the pond—a popular fishing site. (Continued on page 5)

2017 FALL FESTIVAL

sponsored by Save The Environment of Moorestown

Sunday, October 1 Noon to 4 p.m. (rain or shine)

Strawbridge Lake at Kings Highway, Moorestown



FREE!
BUS RIDES
to Visit
Moorestown's
OPEN SPACES

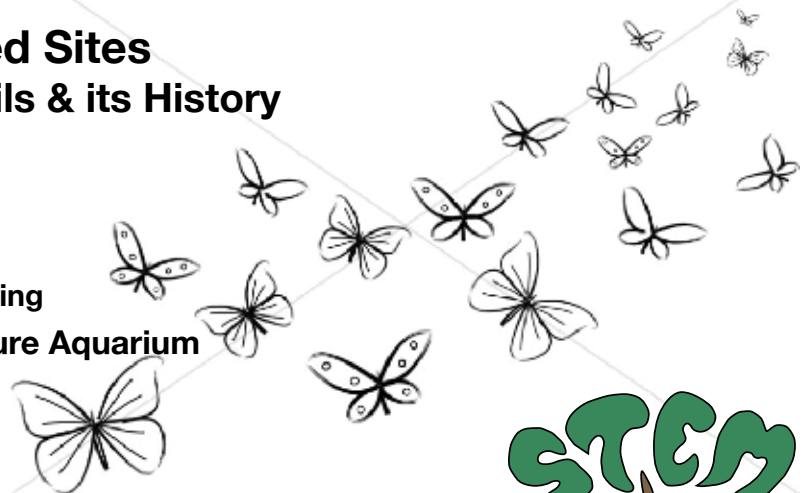
Hike
with a naturalist

Buses leave
Strawbridge Lake
at **12:15, 12:45,**
2:05 & 2:30pm

Explore Four Local Preserved Sites

Learn About the Habitat, its Trails & its History

- **ALSO ENJOY:**
- **STEM's Photo Contest Winners**
- **Educational Displays**
- **Interact with Live Animals, including**
Center for Aquatic Sciences at Adventure Aquarium
- **Activities for Children**
- **Refreshments Available**



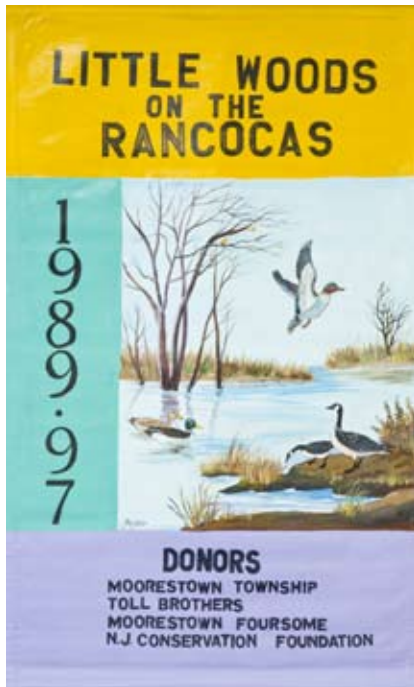
Admission to the festival is free, but donations are always appreciated. Proceeds benefit STEM's mission to preserve, protect, and enhance the natural environment of Moorestown.

Contact betsybjs@aol.com or visit STEM at www.stemonline.org for details.



This is Your Chance to Take a Guided Tour of Four Moorestown Preserved Open Spaces

Little Woods on the Rancocas is an 11-acre site with a trailhead and signage on Creek Road. It is named in honor of its former owner and forest caretaker, Silas Little.



From its trailhead on Creek Road, the western side of the looped trail heads north through a mature American Beech woods as it meanders toward the Rancocas Creek. The creekside elevation offers unexpected views of the water, rewarding hikers; this spot is considered one of the most beautiful in Moorestown. Bald Eagles have been sighted along the creek as they hunt for prey.

The New Jersey Conservation Foundation (NJCF) holds a conservation easement on the property and oversees the conservation restrictions on it. STEM, as its local partner, maintains the trails.

This site will be the first to be toured during the fall festival. **The bus to Little Woods leaves Strawbridge Lake promptly at 12:15 p.m.** Emile DeVito, Ph.D., NJCF's Manager of Sciences and Stewardship will lead the hike, assisted by STEM veteran Kay Smith.

Banner Artists:

Little Woods on the Rancocas:

by Toni Ruffalo

Esther Yanai Preserve

by Cathy Hipple

South Valley Woods

by Nancy Gipson, Kay Smith, and Sue Lindeboom

Waterworks Woods is the 20-acre natural portion of Strawbridge Lake Park. This part of the park was set aside many decades ago. It borders the far bank of Strawbridge Lake's lower lake and runs from the public waterworks on Kings Highway to Nixon Drive.

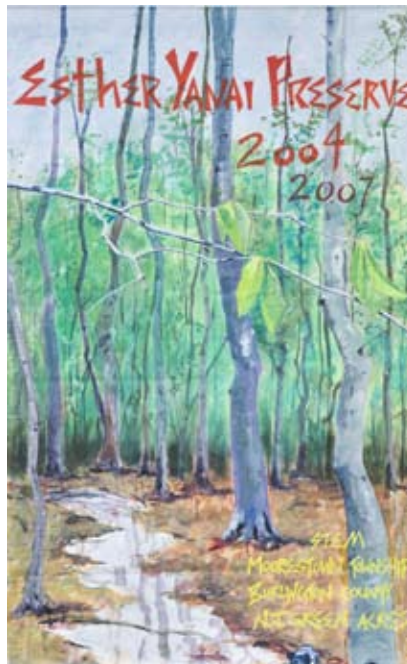
Its varied elevation is host to a diversity of vegetation, including mature trees, i.e. Tulip Poplar, American Beech, several species of oak, and an uncommon Bald Cypress, in addition to understory shrubs and herbaceous plants.

Historically, the interior of the park was used recreationally by families wanting to picnic and swim. Evidence of old fireplaces and a water-filled, cement-sided swimming hole can be seen along the back trail.

As this site is located across Strawbridge Lake near the main festival site and can be accessed on foot, please **gather by the STEM table at 2 p.m.** The hike will start promptly at 2:05 p.m. Mark Pensiero, knowledgeable birder and STEM Treasurer will lead the hike, assisted by STEM President Joe Ponessa.

Esther Yanai Preserve comprises 34 acres on Garwood Road and straddles Swede Run. Preserved as a Moorestown open space in 2004 after a long acquisition process, the site is considered valuable wildlife habitat with its broad floodplain, vernal pools, and key wooded areas.

STEM contributed \$50,000 (a major portion of its fundraising proceeds)



toward the \$390,000 purchase cost of this tract. The remaining funds came from Moorestown Township, Burlington County, and NJ Green Acres.

Through continued efforts, STEM President Joe Ponessa was able to get a funding commitment from Town Council to move forward with parking area improvements at this site.

The bus to Esther Yanai Preserve leaves Strawbridge Lake promptly at 12:45 p.m. Susan Buffalino, Sanctuary Director at the Rancocas Nature Center will lead the 40-minute hike.

South Valley Woods is located on South Stanwick Road and is contiguous to South Valley School. Originally comprised of hundreds of tiny, unbuildable lots, much of this approximately 100 wooded acres was acquired and preserved over time. It is managed by New Jersey Natural Land Trust with STEM's assistance.



The trailhead starts at the back of the school on the far side of the parking lot and connects to several different trails through the large preserve. Varied woodland and wetland vegetation is excellent habitat for birds and other wildlife. A few small tributaries flow into Hooten Run.

This site will be the last to be toured that day. **The bus to South Valley Woods leaves Strawbridge Lake promptly at 2:30 p.m.** Jack Cresson, a noted archeologist and STEM member will lead the hike, assisted by Susan Buffalino.

NATURAL AREA CARE

—Caring for the Environment



*NAC projects are
now listed on
MeetUp.com*

NAC at South Valley Woods

On Saturday, September 23, 2017 from 9:30 -11:30 AM volunteers will meet at the far end of the parking lot behind South Valley School for a fall open space clean-up. The site, accessed from South Stanwick Road, is a blend of woods, wetlands, and small Hooten Run tributaries. It is one of four open spaces that will be targeted for a guided tour during STEM's Fall Festival on Sunday, October 1.

Give the preserve a last-minute trail maintenance to prepare for the event. A NAC site leader will direct the activities. Supplies and hand tools are provided. Dress for the weather and working outdoors. Questions? Contact Kathy Huffman at kajer3@comcast.net.

Recent NAC Projects

Summer Natural Area Care projects occurred at Pompeston Park, up and down-stream, and at Little Woods on the Rancocas. We had a record turnout for the NAC work day in Pompeston Upstream of New Albany Road. In addition to regular workers including Colleen Malloy, Dave LoPresti (Colleen's husband), Kathy Huffman, Dave Bicking, and Paula Horton, we had a new volunteer Linda Porter, along with 2 families (10 people) from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Moorestown. We removed wisteria from the site, removed knotweed from the creek bed, and picked up trash along the trail and along New Albany Road. Thank you!



Left and above, volunteers Joe Ponessa, Dave Bicking, and Jack Cresson remove invasives at Pompeston Downstream of New Albany Road.

Little Woods on the Rancocas Sign Relocated

The Fall 2016 Newsletter reported that STEM President Joe Ponessa had formally requested that the Little Woods open space sign be moved from its location on Creek Road to the trailhead a hundred yards east, for both safety and visibility purposes.

Thanks to Doug Nims and his crew at the Department of Public Works, the sign has been repositioned to the safer location in time for the STEM Fall Festival. The site will be one of four featured on the bus tour schedule that afternoon.

Named for its previous owner, Silas Little —not for its size—this wooded open space leads to spectacular views of Rancocas Creek. It is well worth a walk in the woods!



Photo above, Little Woods trailhead signage on Creek Road..

2017 NAC Calendar

Volunteers Always Welcome

Saturday, March 11

9:30-11:30 am

**Susan Stevens Halbe Preserve
Creek Road**

Saturday, April 8

9:30-11:30 am

**Wigmore Acres
Westfield Road**

Saturday, May 13

9:30-11:30 am

**Esther Yanai Preserve
Garwood Road@Swede Run**

Saturday, June 10

9:30-11:30 am

**Pompeston Park Upstream
of New Albany Road**

Saturday, July 8

9:30-11:30 am

**Little Woods on the Rancocas
Creek Road@Laurel Creek Blvd.**

Saturday, August 12

9:30-11:30 am

**Pompeston Park Downstream
of New Albany Road**

Saturday, September 9

9:30-11:30 am

**Waterworks Woods
Kings Highway@Waterworks**

Saturday, September 23

9:30-11:30 am

**South Valley Woods
Behind South Valley School**

Saturday, October 14

9:30-11:30 am

**Pompeston Park Downstream
of Fernwood Drive**

**Lady Bird Johnson
on the Environment:**
"The environment is where
we all meet; where all have
a mutual interest;
it is the one thing that
all of us share."

Open Space Banners Rehung in Town Hall

Moorestown's Open Space banners have at long last found a new home. Years ago, they hung in the Council chambers in the old Town Hall building. When that building was demolished, the banners were stored in the old library and later hung on the high walls in the lobby area there. When that building, too, met the wrecking ball, the banners were moved to storage in the new library.

This past July, thanks primarily to the efforts of Moorestown citizens Gina Zegel and Dave Schill, the banners have again become viewable by the public. Credit goes also to Karen and Dave Daily and Joe Ponessa—they helped with measuring, nailing, and mounting the banners in the hallway between the library and the Council chambers. All 15 banners are now arranged chronologically in the order that each property was acquired/preserved.

It's worth making a visit to Town Hall to see these colorful banners commemorating each open space, perhaps inspiring a visit to the site! —Margo Foster



Photos above: on left, Joe Ponessa checks a measurement; on right, Dave Schill, Joe Ponessa, Margo Foster, and Dave Daily relax after the job is done.

The Kay Smith/STEM Scholarship, 2017

The Kay Smith/STEM Scholarship was presented to Reese Balderson on June 13, 2017 at the Moorestown High School Recognition Reception in the Athletic Center.

Since its inception in 2014, the scholarship has been awarded annually to the MHS senior who has exhibited outstanding environmental awareness and a concern for and commitment to STEM's mission to preserve, protect, and enhance the natural environment of Moorestown for today's and future generations.

Reese plans to enroll in the Ross School of Business at the University of Michigan and to major in business/environmental science. During his high school years he earned 19 awards at science fair competitions for designing a solar-powered desalinization unit useful on earth and for the colonization of Mars.

MHS students are encouraged to keep a log of their environmental activities to use as reference when filling out their scholarship application forms. STEM appreciates their participation in our events, such as STEM's Fall Festival and Natural Area Care (NAC) projects.

Previous recipients of the award were Kayla Rini (2014), Evelyne Richardson-Thomas (2015), and Alexis Angelini (2016). —Margo Foster



Photos above, Reese Balderson, scholarship recipient, Joe Ponessa and Betsy Schnorr attend Moorestown High School's Recognition Reception.

Note From the President's Desk (Continued from page 1)

The Esther Yanai Preserve features newly-blazed trails and level terrain. As Ms Yanai was a founding member of STEM, her husband has offered a generous donation in support of the parking improvements at this site.

Many thanks to Town Council members whose support has made this possible. Access to these preserved open spaces will be dramatically improved. All are encouraged to "Take a walk in the woods!"

NOTE: The Esthe Yanai Preserve will be one of the featured open spaces in our Fall Festival Bus Tours on October 1st. See related article on page 1.

—Joe Ponessa

Volunteer projects are available for scout groups & community service hours.
Contact Kathy Huffman at:
kajer3@comcast.net or 856-778-2201

Why Does Each Open Space Have a Banner?

If you have traveled the hallway in the Township Municipal Building recently, you may have noticed that the walls are decorated with colorful 3' X 5' fabric banners. Each banner commemorates the preservation of a Moorestown open space.

The idea originated with STEM volunteers early on in the preservation process, and the banners cover almost

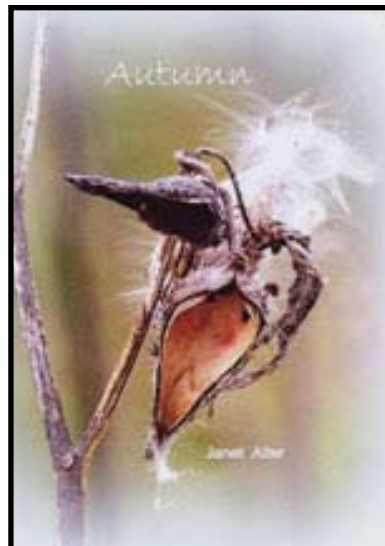
30 years of advocating for environmentally sensitive habitat and saving it from development.

Each property has its own story about how it came to be preserved and who donated and/or purchased the land. Visit the STEM website at stemonline.org to read some of the interesting history.

The “Nature in Moorestown” Photo Contest Winners!

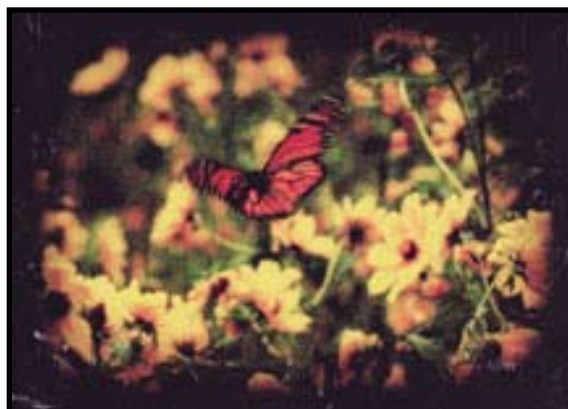
Thank you to—all who submitted images, to Bill Creekmore, who coordinated the event, and to Bob Laramie and Gretchen Rector, who lent their expertise in the photo judging at the STEM Annual Picnic.

Top row from left:
Child 2nd Place:
“Lonely” by Sarah Agnew; Adult Honorable Mention:
“Dianthus” by Geoff McClain; Adult 3rd Place: “Autumn” by Janet Alter.



2nd row from left:
Adult Honorable Mention:
“Wood Duck” by Carlos Hernandez; Adult 2nd Place:
“The Vibrancy of the Yellow Warbler” by Therese Warger.

3rd row from left:
Child 3rd Place: “Flower” by Matthew Strauss; Adult 1st Place: “Honey I’m Home” by Barbara Doreste; Child 1st Place: “Peace” by Sarah Agnew.



Bottom row from left:
Adult Honorable Mention: “Mirror Image” by Graham Warger; Adult Honorable Mention:
“Silently Spreading Joy” by Janet Alter.



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. Make checks payable to S.T.E.M.

(Please print)

Name _____ Check for electronic newsletter only

Address _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

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

Advocacy

- 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

Other

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.

Annual Plant Sale on Moorestown Day—A Wildlife-Friendly Day

Planting natives has caught on in a big way, and vegetation that provides food for animals is available if you know where to look. STEM promoted planting natives on Moorestown Day, June 3, but other outlets offer these plants from spring through fall. For a listing of sources, visit the Native Plant Society of New Jersey website at npsnj.org. October and November are great months to plant, allowing roots to acclimate over the winter.



**Welcome
New
STEM Members**

**Nicole Gillespie
&
The Finity Family
&
Margaret
Dennison**

**Remember, STEM
members need to
renew annually to
keep their mem-
bership current.**

Thank You!

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!

Photos above: top right, manning the STEM booth on Moorestown Day are Mary Smith and Diane Miskowski; bottom right, late summer blossoms of giant sunflower, phlox, aster, and Autumn Joy sedum attract a multitude of pollinators and American Goldfinches in this native plant garden in Moorestown; bottom left, Betsy Schnorr and Elizabeth Endres share native plant display on Moorestown Day.



**FALL
2017**

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

**Membership Renewal
Benefits STEM Projects**

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

SAVE THE DATE!
Sunday, October 1 from noon to 4pm
2017 FALL OPEN SPACE FESTIVAL
"Sunday in the Parks"
Free Bus Rides to Moorestown Open Spaces
At Strawbridge Lake, Kings Hwy. & Haines Drive
Details on Pages 1 & 2

The Annual Picnic & Photo Contest Judging



As pictured above, Bob Laramie and Gretchen Rector share their photography expertise with STEM members in choosing the winners of the annual photo contest, "Nature in Moorestown." The judging is one of the highlights of the afternoon pot luck picnic, hosted this year by the Dey family on Sunday, June 25. Thank you to Maura and Jeff for sharing your home and backyard.

The winning photos appear on page 6 of this newsletter. Bill Creekmore, photo contest coordinator, has created a display that will be featured at STEM's Annual Fall Festival at Strawbridge Lake on October 1. Stop by the STEM table for a close-up look. Post-festival, the winning images will be on display at the Moorestown Library.

STEM Steering Committee Members for 2017-2018

Joe Ponessa, President; 856-235-6376 & jponessa@comcast.net
Elizabeth Endres Hines, Vice-President; 856-222-1163 & eendres03@gmail.com
Mark Pensiero, Treasurer; 856-235-0171 & mark.w.pensiero@lmco.com
Paula Horton, Secretary; 856-296-0798 & phorton100@comcast.net
Claire Rollin Adair, Director; 856-727-3830 & cerollin@gmail.com
Susan Buffalino, Director & Newsletter Ed.; 856-866-9506 & sbuff4@aol.com
Jean Fox, Director; 856-642-7864 & foxjean62@gmail.com
Kathy Huffman, Director; 856-778-2201 & kajer3@comcast.net
Diane Miskowski, Director; 856-235-6523 & dmiskowski@emsl.com
Joan Ponessa, Director; 856-235-6376 & joanponessa@comcast.net
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:

Joe Ponessa, President; 856-235-6376 & jponessa@comcast.net

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