



Trout in the Classroom

Trout in the Classroom (TIC), a supplementary educational activity supported by the NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife, has partnered with Freehold SCD to provide six schools in Middlesex and Monmouth Counties with the opportunity to raise Trout in the Classroom.

Schools and teachers participating in this partnership for the 2006-2007 school year are:

Fords Middle School —
Jennifer Hutchinson

St. Stanislaus Kostka School —
Irene Foret

South River Middle School —
Gayle Martinez

Communications High School —
Jeanine Gomez

Summerfield School —
Ted Beekman

Middletown High School South —
Kevin Sullivan

Sixteen additional teachers applied to participate in the TIC program and are on the waiting list for aquariums for the 2007-2008 school year.

Raising trout in the classroom is a hands-on activity that engages students and helps to connect them to real-life water quality, fish and wildlife issues and problems and inspires them to seek solutions.

Watching fish hatch from eggs and develop from fry to fingerlings generates enthusiasm among students and helps them develop caring attitudes about fish and their habitat.

TIC encompasses science, language arts, math, social studies and art and the 62-page TIC Activity Guide is correlated to the NJ Science Standards.

Holly Posna and Paul Califano, of Freehold SCD, coordinated the purchase of the aquarium equipment through Tropiquarium, of Ocean Township, and arranged delivery to all six schools. TIC volunteers delivered the brook trout eggs, which are native to NJ, to each school and they will handle all permits for the spring release.

The Freehold SCD office houses a TIC demonstration aquarium to give builders and developers a first-hand look at the wildlife impacted by changes in their habitat.

Updates on the TIC program will appear in future issues of *Conservation Connection* and online at www.freeholdscd.org.



Brook trout eggs are starting to hatch at six schools participating in the TIC program.

Von E. Mauger Middle School Outdoor Classroom is a Success

Question? What do you get when you put together a sterile grassed interior school courtyard, two dedicated teachers, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and 180 enthusiastic seventh graders?



Answer: A schoolyard wildlife habitat area of such high quality that a mallard family now calls it “home.”

Patrick Ferrante and Mike DiPaolo, science teachers at Von E. Mauger Middle School, Middlesex Borough, contacted the NRCS Freehold Service Center in 2004 with plans to expand the school’s fledgling outdoor classroom. They were seeking technical and financial assistance to achieve their goal of creating a living learning center designed by students.

The outdoor classroom, originally started in 2002, was named the Elizabeth Tallman Memorial Courtyard to honor the school’s late co-vice principal, an avid gardener who provided the original inspiration for the student’s vision of a diverse outdoor setting where they

could experience hands-on learning in several subject areas. Over the next two years of fundraising they added a pond, vegetable garden, trees, shrubs and grasses.

With the aid of a NRCS Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) cost-share contract, teachers and students went at this project full throttle. Between spring of 2005 and spring 2006 another 184 trees/shrubs and 891 herbaceous plants were planted by students and teachers. All plants are NJ native species and a diverse wildlife population has been drawn to the garden. The mallard family, with five ducklings, share their home with songbirds and sparrows, butterflies, bees, a tagged racing pigeon from Connecticut, a rabbit and red-tailed hawks.

“The students have responded so enthusiastically to the project, and have learned so much throughout the whole process. Even students I never thought would be interested in gardening and wildlife got involved and excited,” said Patrick. “With the support of WHIP and NRCS, we were able to keep their interest high and complete the plantings ahead of schedule. (continued on page 3)

2007 Envirothon at Lighthouse Center in Ocean County

The Lighthouse Center for Natural Resource Education in Waretown is the site for the 2007 New Jersey Envirothon, which will be hosted by the Ocean County Soil Conservation District on May 12th. The NJ Envirothon is a hands-on environmental competition for high school students.

The Lighthouse Center is owned by the NJDEP—Division of Fish & Wildlife and is managed by the Natural Resource Education Foundation of New Jersey, Inc., a not-for-profit corporation dedicated to environmental leadership through education, research, interpretation and communication. The Foundation, founded more than 20 years ago, provides ecological programming and activities through “Experience Barnegat Bay,” an experiential education project located at the Lighthouse Center.

The Lighthouse Center has much to offer the 2007 Envirothon participants. The diverse habitats include salt marsh and bay front, a fresh-water pond, maritime forest and coastal thicket on 180 acres.

This former camp for the blind has extensive facilities including cabins, dormitories, a rustic lodge with a large dining hall, all handicapped accessible. The Foundation has completed several site improvements including a series of six outdoor learning stations including interpretive signs, picnic tables and teaching podiums.



2007 Envirothon participants will discover diverse habitats and wildlife at the Lighthouse Center.

Envirothon team registration is currently open and registration forms are available at <http://nj.nacdnet.org/envirothon/envir.htm>. Envirothon sponsorship opportunities are also available with additional information available at <http://nj.nacdnet.org/envirothon/sponsor.htm> or by calling Rich Belcher at 609-633-2549 or Christine Raabe at 609-971-7002. Registration deadline is March 2, 2007.

Today is the Day to Be Part of Conservation's Power!

"Today is the Day to Be Part of Conservation's Power" is the theme for the 2007 Poster Contest sponsored by Freehold SCD and the NJ Association of Conservation Districts.

Students in 2nd—12th grades are encouraged to explore conservation practices in their community — in homes, schools, farms, or parks, etc. — that save energy or help to create alternative or renewable energy.

Have you heard about solar, wind, or alternative fuel resources, of no-till farming practices, or do you practice energy conservation at home? This is a fine opportunity to learn about energy conservation and create an entry for the 2007 Conservation Poster Contest.

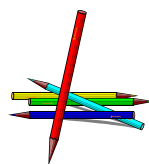
Who Can Participate?

The NJ Conservation Poster Contest is open to all students in grades 2-12. Youth groups, home schooled and all public, parochial and private school students are invited to participate. Middlesex and Monmouth County students enter through Freehold SCD.

Why Participate?

- Learn about the power of conservation
- Highlight your community's efforts to conserve energy

- Show how conservation can make a difference for us all
- Win prizes and school recognition



Local Prizes

1st—\$100 bond

2nd— \$75 bond

3rd — \$50 bond



All first place winning entries are submitted for State level competition and one Grand Champion winning poster will be reproduced onto a pocket-folder and distributed statewide.

Entry forms are available at the Freehold SCD office, by email to: info@freeholdscd.org or by calling 732-683-8500.

Entry deadline: March 9, 2007



WHIP Success Story (continued from page 2)

Most importantly, we were able to provide students with a place to learn about biology, ecology and wildlife where they can see it, smell it, and touch it," he added.

Submitted by

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Von Mauger School Courtyard 2002



After WHIP Funding in 2006.

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*Serving Middlesex & Monmouth
Counties since 1938*



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Three \$1,500 Scholarships Awarded by Freehold SCD

Freehold SCD Board Chairman, Bill Schauer, recently awarded \$1,500 scholarship checks to three District area students.

- **Christa R. DiLalo, East Brunswick**, received the Neal W. Munch Scholarship. Christa is a student at Cook College majoring in environmental policy.
- **Jacquelyn M. Verdon, Freehold Township**, received the Mac Clark Scholarship. Jacquelyn is majoring in landscape architecture at Cook College.
- **Heather L. Gosack, Howell**, received the Freehold SCD Scholarship. Heather is a student at the University of Rhode Island with a double major of geosciences and math.

The Munch and Clark Scholarships honor the memory of two highly recognized conservationists and have been awarded for 27 consecutive years.



(L-R) Board Chairman Bill Schauer, Heather Gosack, Jacquelyn Verdon and District Manager Ines Grimm

**2007 scholarship applications will be
available on our website and at the
FSCD office in December.**