



NJ Friends of Clearwater Newsletter

January 2011

Volume 4, Number 1

New Jersey Friends of
Clearwater
P.O. Box 303
Red Bank, New Jersey
07701

NEW: Clearwater Hotline:
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Website:
www.njclearwater.org

Upcoming NJFC Events

Sunday, January 9
General Meeting, 2PM
Eatontown Community Ctr
72 Broad Street,
Eatontown

Sunday, January 16,
8:30AM
Environmental Cmte Mtg.,
Cobblestone Restaurant,
Eatontown

Board of Directors/
Festival Mtg,
Tuesday, January 12
25 Peters Pl, Red Bank

Circle of Song Sing-Along
January 20, 6:30pm,
United Methodist Church,
Grand Ave, Asbury Park

For more info on NJFC
meetings go to:
http://www.njclearwater.org/calendar_New/calendar.php

Clearwater Sponsors Whale Pond Watershed Cleanup & Strategy

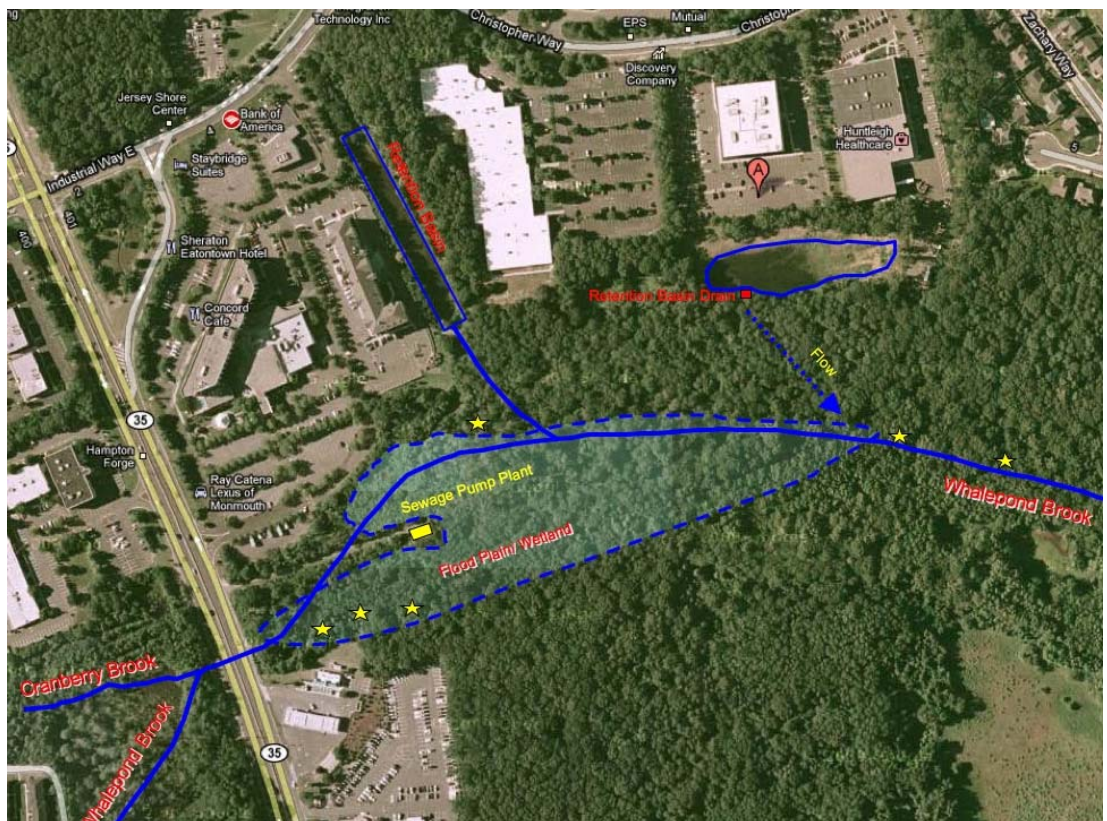
By Ed Dlugosz

In keeping with our on-going theme "Knock Out Pollution, Protect Our Watersheds", NJ Friends of Clearwater sponsored a cleanup of a central portion of the Whale Pond Brook Watershed, which serves as the border between Eatontown and Ocean Township. It was held on the morning of Saturday, December 11, 2010.



Last year Clearwater officially adopted the Whale Pond Brook Watershed as their prime target for stream cleanups and helped found the Friends of Whale Pond Brook Watershed. The Watershed starts as Cranberry Brook in Tinton Falls, which meets with Whale pond Brook and acts as the border between Eatontown and Ocean Township,

then flows through WLB and Monmouth U. into Takanassee Lake in the West End section of Long Branch and finally into the Atlantic Ocean. Clearwater and Friends have already planned for more cleanups in the spring



Cleanup includes retention basins and areas denoted by stars in locations in Eatontown and Ocean. Clearwater thanks a group of hardy souls who braved the cold to amass 50 bags of garbage and recyclables, 2 lawnmowers, tires and wheels, chairs, copper piping, a hot water heater, outboard motor, and construction materials. Besides Clearwater officers (Ed Dlugosz, Joellen Lundy, Tim Johnson, Lynn Humphrey) this contingent

**ANNUAL
MEMBERSHIP
DUES
RENEWAL
NOW DUE!**

NJFC Membership
Info:

www.mcclearwater.org/boards/membership-form.htm

of people represents a partnership of Environmental Commissions (EC) and organizations along and near the watershed including Eatontown, Ocean Township, Tinton Falls, Long Branch, West Long Branch, and Red Bank who call themselves Friends of Whale Pond Brook Watershed. We were able to recycle and sell the metal to profit our new endeavor.



Seated: Ed Dlugosz; 2nd Row: Valerie Rogoff, Tim Johnson, Joellen Lundy, Laurel VonGerichten, Lynn Humphrey; 3rd row: Laura Bagwell, Faith Teitelbaum, Mary Kinslow; Last row (L-R): Bob Sandberg, Jerry Keelen, Jeff King, Ray Pogwist. Photograph by Faith Teitelbaum/Jack Kearns

Fish Ladder Discussion

Later that day, many of these same Watershed people met at the flume that connects Takanassee with the Ocean to hear Captain Paul Erdman and Carl Alderson, a member of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), discuss the NOAA's idea to create a series of "fish ladders" to return the Watershed as a spawning ground for herring, stripped bass, and other native aquarian inhabitants. Presently the flume, two dams, and the culvert make it impossible for the herring and other fish on the lower rungs of the foodweb to spawn. A fish ladder is a series of pools on an incline separated by short increments so as to enable fish to swim up past a dam or other obstruction. Of all the northern

Jersey seaside lakes, Takanassee has the greatest potential to help the various herring and other species come back from their "Threatened" status. During this Discovery Hike, we also learned about the genesis of the problem from Beth Wooley, a Long Branch historian who related that the town fathers, in the late 1800s, had made Takanassee their reservoir and to fight seawater intrusion, damned the Lake.



Pictured: Carl Alderson—NOAA and Paul Erdman--Captain

Baykeeper Discusses Oyster Bed Controversy at NJFC Meeting

By Ed Dlugosz



Clearwater had the pleasure of listening to NY/NJ Baykeeper Debbie Mans discuss the history and scope of the Baykeeper's mission in NJ waters at our December 2010 Membership Meeting. The Baykeeper's domain includes not only the Raritan and Sandy Hook Bay, but also the NY Harbor. Debbie's main topic was the Baykeeper's 2010 battle with the NJDEP over the seeding and maintenance of oyster beds in the Raritan Bay and other locations.

The NJDEP's objection was the possible poaching of the oysters from the experimental beds for commercial food product use. Baykeeper's purpose for creating the oyster beds has always been to use natural devices to help filter and clean the marine environment. Clearwater's Environmental Sail

Program and its Tuckerton Garvey "Adam Hyley" has helped Baykeeper build the shell bed infrastructure, seed the oyster beds, and help maintain them. The Garvey helped carry volunteers to the Navesink River shoals off Oyster Point, Red Bank to perform those duties. (See www.mcclearwater.org/esp.php for more info.)

In the end, the battle was won by NJDEP who ordered the Baykeeper to remove the oysters and beds from their location near the Keyport NJ waterfront, a natural location for oysters since Native American times.

Restoration Advisory Board Meeting Set for January 20, 2011

By Ed Dlugosz

We are pushing for monthly RAB meetings rather than the present quarterly ones. With so little time left with the original Fort Monmouth Installation Management DPW personnel, who made promises, we need to maximize face time to achieve our goals. Once those current people leave, there will be no corporate history since the minutes are so selective and the budget is so weak. Our next RAB meeting is now scheduled for January 20, 2011. Please join us at this meeting and listen for yourselves. We guarantee you will support our efforts

FMERA Plans Meeting of Environmental Advisory Committee

The first of the Fort Monmouth Economic Revitalization Authority (FMERA), Environmental Advisory Committee (EAC) meetings will be held Monday, January 10 at 4pm at the FMERA offices. Ed Dlugosz was again appointed by Eatontown to serve as its representative at the FMERA EAC. No other memberships have been announced.

We are expecting newly-appointed FMERA Executive Director Bruce Steadman to kick things off with a presentation from MATRIX Design Group on the environmental and infrastructure condition of the base.

On December 15, 2010 FMERA held its monthly meeting at the Eatontown Borough Hall. The minutes of the meeting have not been published yet, but its agenda is available at http://www.nj.gov/fmera/agenda/pdf/101215_agenda.pdf. Among the agenda items are: Status of Advisory Committee Formation; Status of Planning, Engineering, Architectural and Environmental Engagement; Meetings with the Office of Economic Adjustment; and another Meeting with the Army in DC.

4th NJ Clearwater Circle of Song Sing-Along

by Ingrid Heldt

Please join us for our Fifth Sing-Along on Thursday, January 20, 2011, at 6:30pm, at the First United Methodist Church of Asbury Park 906 Grand Avenue. Asbury Park, NJ 07712 [two blocks from the Stone Pony]

Board of Directors
President: Ed Dlugosz
VP: Joellen Lundy
Treasurer: Tim Johnson
Secretary: Lynn Humphrey
Ben Forest
Jim Franchi
Andrea Spinelli
Marylin Johnson
George Moffatt
Ingrid Heldt

Article Deadline for the
January issue of NJFC
Newsletter is Monday,
January 21, 2011

E-mail your articles to
newsletter@mcclearwater.org

By the deadline stated
above, please use the
phrase "MC Clearwater
article" in the subject of
your e-mail

Newsletter Information
Editorial Committee:
Ed Dlugosz, Lynn
Humphrey

NJFC Membership
Info:
[www.mcclearwater.org/
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If any of the links do
not work, cut and paste
the full URL into the
address box.

Fort Hancock's Condition Unpleasant to Behold

by George Moffatt

It was a bleak, rainy day as I wandered Fort Hancock to find the former headquarters of the man once chosen by the National Park Service to rehabilitate the fort: James Wassel. He occupied Building 26 rent-free for several years while scrambling to raise a promised \$72 million to \$90 million — the numbers bounced about like rubber balls — to rehab 36 fort buildings. After choosing Wassel as its developer, the park service stopped its minuscule maintenance of other fort structures. But nothing happened. Businesses, banks, even "vulture" lenders specializing in distressed projects, wouldn't touch his plan.

And Wassel, who should have had the bulk of his funding when he applied for the project, was coddled by the park service for 10 years until it finally canceled his quasi-contract in October 2009. But Wassel wasn't dead. He had previously cherry-picked three fort buildings with an under-the-table lease in 2007 from an acquiescent park service, which admitted it wanted to keep him afloat. Two buildings, the chapel and the old Army/park service headquarters, had been more-or-less maintained, while the third, the theater, had been rehabbed earlier by the Sandy Hook Foundation. Wassel's improvements were mostly "fixer-uppers," much like any homeowner's repairs. But in November 2010, the park service declared him in default of his sweetheart contract, and with a surprising twist of the knife, said it changed the locks.

On the bleak day I roamed the fort, just two days after Wassel's demise, his once rent-free, taxpayer-subsidized Building 26 looked even bleaker. Peering through a dirt-encrusted basement window, I saw trash scattered about. In contrast, when New Jersey Friends of Clearwater had a summer lease on Building 11, it cleaned and painted its basement. Clearwater's idea of rehab — sweat equity — was alien to park service managers, so they threw Clearwater out a decade ago and gave Wassel the well-maintained building.

My attempt to access Building 26's front porch to peek inside was barred by two overgrown evergreens. Just as well. The steps' pock-marked appearance suggested they were rotted, and a collapsed section of porch railing and rotting porch beams confirmed my suspicions. Windows and the porch ceiling were unpainted and, in places, trim was falling off. The unpainted rotting and rusting eaves and fascia had several gaping holes. Some storm windows were not closed, exposing the wood sash to the weather.

I thought, "A wonderful advertisement for Fort Hancock's 'master redeveloper.'" In contrast, Clearwater's members were always scraping and painting Building 11, replacing trim, plastering, fixing windows. Then, nothing leaked. Today, 10 years after being given to Wassel, Building 11 is a disgraceful shambles.

I couldn't evaluate Wassel's renovations inside Building 26. The blinds were drawn. But a second-floor window framed a dead potted plant — an apt metaphor for the park service's destructive attempt to privatize and commercialize Fort Hancock. Other fort buildings suffered a worse fate. Signs on Officers' Row warn "Danger: Hard Hat Zone" and "Danger: Falling Objects" as buildings are literally falling apart. And a small sign blowing in the wind by Wassel's decrepit-looking headquarters announced, "For access to this building, call the Superintendent's Office." Make sure your life insurance is up to date, and watch where you step

George Moffatt lives in Oceanport. He joined New Jersey Friends of Clearwater after the organization was evicted from Fort Hancock. George's commentary appeared 1/1/11 in APP.

2011 Festival Committees Reforming

The NJ Friends of Clearwater Festival is our annual open-air music and arts festival celebrating the spirit of people working and singing together for the environment. The finest in music and dance combines with environmental activism to celebrate our waterways. This year our Entertainment Committee has a new lead, Steve Dlugosz and Ingrid Heldt returns as lead for the Circle of Song. We need volunteers

to plan and manage the upcoming 36th Annual Clearwater Festival through the following committees:

- Site
- Children's Area
- Environmental Display
- Hospitality
- Publicity
- Peacekeeping
- Recycling
- Roadies: Onloading/Offloading of Festival Supplies truck and installation at site

If you liked what you saw or would like to make a change, then volunteer by emailing to: ClearwaterFestival@mcclearwater.org or visit us at:

http://www.mcclearwater.org/docs/clearwater-festival/Volunteer_Form_Festival.pdf

Come to our January 12th Meeting: 7pm at 25 Peters Place, Red Bank, NJ.

Quote of the Month:

“Happy New Year! May this be the best ever!”—Ed Dlugosz

PLEASE NOTE: If you would like to be removed from the NJ Friends of Clearwater Newsletter List

Please e-mail Lynn (newsletter@mcclearwater.org) with the message: “Remove from NJ Clearwater Newsletter List” in the subject box