



NJ Friends of Clearwater Newsletter

March 2011

Volume 4, Number 3

New Jersey Friends of
Clearwater
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Upcoming NJFC Events

Sunday, March 6
General Meeting, 2PM
Eatontown Community Ctr
72 Broad Street,
Eatontown

Sunday, March 20,
8:30AM
Environmental Cmte Mtg.,
Cobblestone Restaurant,
Eatontown

Festival Mtg,
Tuesday, March 10,
25 Peters Pl, Red Bank

Circle of Song Sing-Along
March 17, 6:30pm,
United Methodist Church,
Grand Ave, Asbury Park

Board of Directors
Wednesday, March 23,
25 Peters Pl, Red Bank

For more info on NJFC
meetings go to:
http://www.mcclearwater.org/calendar_Newicalendar.php

NJFC Announces the 36th Annual Clearwater Festival in Asbury Park for 2011

The NJ Friends of Clearwater Festival are happy to announce that it will hold its 36th annual open-air music and arts festival in Asbury Park for the eleventh straight year. The Festival celebrates the spirit of people working and singing together for the environment. The finest in music combines with environmental activism to encourage our continued stewardship of Planet Earth. We are continuing our kickoff drive at our Festival meeting at 7pm, March 10 at 25 Peters Place in Red Bank. All serious volunteers welcome to help create the best Festival ever. Look for updates on our Festival webpage at: <http://www.mcclearwater.org/festival.php>. If you like to volunteer, participate as a vendor, or become a performer, contact us at: ClearwaterFestival@mcclearwater.org.

Next Restoration Advisory Board Meeting Set for April 7, 2011

By Ed Dlugosz

Our next RAB meeting is now scheduled for April 7, 2010. Please join us at this important meeting and we can guarantee you will support our efforts.

On January 20, we held our last RAB meeting where Clearwater pushed 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. While we were not fully successful, we were able to reach a compromise where, the community members could hold *ad hoc* meetings in person or electronically. If review of materials required clarification, the Army would be willing to meet or teleconference. We also would not have to wait until a quarterly meeting to receive new data. The Army would distribute the documents to RAB members and make it available online. We have already reviewed data from the meeting in this manner and have received two new documents as interim deliverables.

In other business we were again frustrated by the unavailability of the testing and results of the Baseline Ecological Evaluation (BEE) Work Plan. Apparently those results were sent to an additional group of Army engineers and were still being reviewed. The results of the Parker/Oceanport Creek sediment and laboratory vapor intrusion testing were critical to us. Our continued quest to have the ten landfills properly capped and protected is being blocked by the Army's budget woes. There's no money to even design and engineer the capping much less implement a viable solution.

Clearwater Group Opposes Privatizing Government Services

The New Jersey Friends of Clearwater (NJFC) has joined a coalition of environmentalists, unions, and public affairs organizations to make sure that some politicians' fascination with privatizing public agencies and functions does not increase costs to the taxpayers, deprive public employees their employment and work benefits, nor decrease services to the taxpayers in favor of private profits.

Joellen Lundy, president of the NJFC organization, announced this week that her organization is joining the New Jersey Coalition On Privatization (NJ COP), which includes about 15 other organizations that dispute claims that privatizing certain public services will reduce their costs.

"Our organization suspects that the current political fad to 'privatize' traditionally governmentally controlled functions, such as environmental reviews, libraries,

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

Email 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

If any of the links do not work, cut and paste the full URL into the address box.

Join as NJFC MEMBER

NJFC Membership Info:

www.mcclearwater.org/ds/cs/membership-form.htm

prisons, parks, water supplies, toll collectors, and health and environmental protections has nothing to do with saving taxpayers money. Instead, it is designed to favor politically connected individuals and businesses, which can eliminate accountability while ultimately increasing costs and decreasing services."

NJCOP is an outgrowth of the efforts of a nationwide organization, Food and Water Watch, which was a prime mover in forming NJCOP. According to Jim Walsh, Eastern Region Director of Food & Water Watch, "NJ Coalition on Privatization member organizations are working to ensure that public assets and services are managed for the public good, rather than for private gain." Currently there are many fights to stop privatization in the state, including Turnpike toll workers, TV station NJN, the PATCO (rail) Speedline, and public water supply systems, to name a few.

There is a bill under consideration in the Legislature in Trenton that would help protect communities from damaging privatization contracts, SCR131 in the state Senate and ACR150 in the state Assembly.

Ms. Lundy said NJFC opposes privatizing functions that only government can perform. She noted that NJFC joined a lawsuit against the National Park Service (NPS) at Sandy Hook when it announced plans to privatize and commercialize 36 buildings in historic Fort Hancock.

Clearwater Plans April Whale Pond Watershed Cleanup

By Ed Dlugosz

Continuing with our "Protect Our Watersheds" theme, NJ Friends of Clearwater is



sponsoring a second cleanup of the Whale Pond Brook Watershed in early April with other members of Friends of Whale Pond Brook Watershed. Date, time and specific location will be announced. As you might recall we gathered 50 bags of refuse and recycled 2 lawn mowers and other metals

FMERA Meeting of Environmental Advisory Committee

The third Fort Monmouth Economic Revitalization Authority (FMERA), Environmental Advisory Committee (EAC) meetings was held Thursday, March 3 at 5:30pm at the FMERA offices in Eatontown. Ben Forest and Ed Dlugosz represent Clearwater (Ed also represents Eatontown). Michele Siekerka is the chairperson of the EAC and represents the NJDEP administrator NJDEP ex officio on the FMERA Board

The EAC was provided with a presentation from MATRIX Design Group on the Best Practices process for Risk Management they expect to implement for protecting the public's interest. Community members insisted that the EAC primarily advises the FMERA Board/Chairperson and should not be titled the Environmental Staff Advisory Committee, which connotes a lesser role than it traditionally played. The community members also opposed blanket confidentiality restrictions on information discussed at meetings. Reps opposed closed sessions and agreed to the restrictions only in the case of sensitive financial negotiations.

7th NJ Clearwater Circle of Song Sing-Along

by Ingrid Heldt

Please join us for our seventh Sing-Along tentatively scheduled on Thursday, March 17, 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]

Is the National Park Service Up to Its Old Tricks?

by George Moffatt

The National Park Service has put together a "secret panel" – quietly and without publicity -- to evaluate what many regard as its almost criminal destruction of 78 Fort Hancock buildings for the past 36 years.

Board of Directors
President: Joellen Lundy
VP: Ben Forest
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Ed Dlugosz
Jim Franchi
Andrea Spinelli
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The Park Service tried 10 years ago to privatize and commercialize one-third of Fort Hancock when it chose James Wassel to rehab and rent out 36 buildings, but his two alleged contracts have been cancelled for lack of funds. When the commercialization triggered public outcries, the Park Service deceitfully claimed public hearings on their plan weren't necessary because they had been held in the mid-1970s. That, of course, was a lie.

The Park Service then refused to reveal the details behind their inept decision, just as they seem to be ducking public scrutiny today with their "secret panel." What are they hiding this time? While the Park Service plods and plots, here is a simple plan to slow Fort Hancock's destruction.

First, reveal the identities of these "secret" panelists and open up their deliberations to the public. Second, reveal the identities of those who are behind this panel. Are they Wassel supporters? Third, the Park Service should develop now what it should have developed 36 years ago -- a coordinated three-stage maintenance plan -- it's not a rehab plan:

- Short-term, clean out all the buildings and board them up.
- Mid-term, stabilize them on a "best-case-first" basis, repairing roofs and windows, propping up collapsing porch roofs, and painting deteriorating wood trim.
- Long-term, decide what it will do with buildings that clearly are beyond rehabilitation.
- This plan should be implemented before the Park Service revises its general management plan for Gateway, lest they rig that plan to justify future commercial drive-bys.

The planning process should include:

- Reaffirming it has no intention of permitting commercial tenants whose activities have nothing to do with the core mission of the National Parks, which some mis-managers still speak of sotto voce.
- Inviting evicted environmental and other non-profit groups to return to the Fort, a plan proposed by Rep. Frank Pallone but ignored by the Park Service.
- Forming a committee of state, county and municipal officials to explore using buildings by government agencies.
- Forming a citizens' committee to recruit non-profits that don't need a year-round facility or can't afford commercial rents elsewhere.

Meanwhile, the "secret panel's" deliberations must be made public, unless the Park Service still plans to privatize and commercialize Fort Hancock to undo its failures. Otherwise, why the secrecy?

Editors Note: As many of you know Clearwater leased, restored, and maintained an Officers Row home, known as the Clearwater House, for 16 years. NPS chose to displace us and commercialize the property, negating 16 years of expense and sweat equity, leaving "our house" and all the rest to literally rot to build a case for their method of "restoration". Clearwater was key member of Save Sandy Hook and a plaintiff in our lawsuit against the NPS, DOI, and Sandy Hook Partners to stop commercialization and privatization.