

# Mission Statement

The River Edge Environmental Protection Commission provides leadership in bringing environmental best practices to River Edge, New Jersey and its surrounding communities by coordinating events, communicating with the public, and staying current with global environmental practices.

The Commission strives to improve recycling participation, increase support for commission events, and to be a leader in our County and State for environmental awareness and support.



## EPC Members

- Patty Almberg, co-chair 1/1/23 to 12/31/25
- David Kraft, co-chair 1/1/23 to 12/31/25
- Gary Barth, Member 1/1/22 to 12/31/25
- Pamela Gould, Member 1/1/23 to 12/31/25
- Mary Daly, Member 1/1/22 to 12/31/24
- Chris Caslin, Member 1/1/21 to 12/31/23
- Brian Mitchell, Member 1/1/23 to 12/31/25
- Laura Hoogstrate, Alternate #1 1/1/22 to 12/31/23
- Klodiana Malellari, Council Liaison



# Storm Water Education and Art Contest – Oct 2023 (painting)



## Contest Summary and Details

- Combines student activism, community education and public art
- Collaboration between:
  - EPC
  - DPW
  - Police
  - Watershed Ambassadors
  - Volunteers - RDHS Art Department
- Part of the 5<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum
- Students taught about watersheds, pollution, wildlife, and then participate in the contest
- Each school selects 5 to 6 finalists
- The EPC and Green Team then select one winner per school
- This year's artwork at Roosevelt School, on Continental, and near the teacher parking lot

# River Clean Up May 2023



## Hackensack River Cleanup

- Despite a rainy day, but we had 50 volunteers
- Collected an estimated 2,000 pounds of trash including:
  - Hasbro Cozy Coupe
  - Various plastic bottles
  - Basketballs and Tennis Balls
  - Styrofoam
  - Tarps
  - Traffic Cones
  - Wood
  - But not nearly as many plastic bags
- Worked with the Bergen County Clean Community
- Received a \$200 grant
- September River Sweep cancelled because of inclement weather

## Showing of American River

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## American River Movie Screening

- Screening included a Q&A with Captain Bill Sheehan (the Hackensack Riverkeeper)
- Based on the book: An American River: from Paradise to Superfund, afloat on New Jersey's Passaic by Mary Bruno
- Award winning documentary follows Mary Bruno and River Guide Carl Alderson as they kayak from the Passaic's pristine headwaters to its toxic mouth in Newark Bay

# Paddling Day

## July 19, 2023



## Paddling Day Notes:

- Laura Hoogstrate, Patty Almberg and our Riverkeeper representative (Tyler) hosted the first ever paddle day
- Launched 8 canoes from the River Edge Boat Ramp
- Two time slots were offered for participation (10am and noon)
- The 10am trip went North to the Oradell town line
- The noon trip went South to the Von Steuben house.
- It was a reminder of how beautiful the river is and encouraged residents to keep it clean

# Other EPC Events

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- Sustainable Jersey – Bronze Status (min 150 points, 210 for River Edge)
- ANJEC Membership – Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions
  - Advocate for strong state and regional environmental policies
  - Provides programming, resources, and advice
- New Jersey Plastic Bag Ban
  - 2023 law prevents grocery stores and retail establishments from providing single-use plastic bags to customers
  - Prevents foam and other polystyrene food containers for takeout items
  - Single-use plastic straws can only be provided upon request
  - Results:
    - An estimated 5.5 billion single use plastic bags were eliminated
    - 37% decrease in single-use plastics
    - Plastic straws reduced from 17 million down to 2 million per month

# 2024 Goals

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- Continue to reach out to the community and county to enhance environmental options and communications
- Be more active at the Mayor and council meetings providing updates and highlighting events
- Augment our work with other teams including the DPW, Shade Tree, Recreation Commission, Beautification and Historical committees, the school district, and others
- More actively attempt to identify grant opportunities to augment options
- Further connect with the elementary, middle and high schools and provide volunteer opportunities for the community youth
- Be more active in hosting lectures, films, live presentations, and other events for our residents regarding environmental issues and activities

# GT Members

- Marie Papaleo, chair
- Laura Hoogstrate, EPC rep
- Chris Leishman, DPW
- Henry Semler, Shade Tree
- Mary Ann Komar, Recreation
- Ally Mathews
- Michael Lam
- Shu Lam
- Linda Mei
- Karen Clemments
- Kiera Caslin, RDHS rep
- Noah Cole, RDHS rep



# Styrofoam and Paper Shredding April 15 and October 14, 2023



## Styrofoam and Paper Shredding

### notes:

- Collections held at the DPW yard from 9am to 1pm
- Volunteers help direct traffic safely and assist unloading vehicles
- Very popular events with the residents of River Edge

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Chance Toy Drive April 22, 2023

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## 2<sup>nd</sup> Chance Toy Drive

### notes:

- [www.secondchanetoys.org](http://www.secondchanetoys.org)
- Held in Cherry Hill School Parking lot
- Gathered 700+ plastic toys
- Toys were donated to Ukraine this year
- We are one of the few communities who run this type of event

## Prom Boxes Returned and Used



## Prom box return notes:

- The team coordinated an effort with River Dell Florist
- Post the River Dell Senior prom, High School students were encouraged to return the plastic containers from corsages and boutonnieres
- Incentive was a \$25 Dunkin gift card
- Owners are very happy to work with us on the effort (Mary Kay)
- 16 boxes were returned for 2023 for the first effort

# Garden Contest

## Garden Contest notes:

- This was our 3<sup>rd</sup> annual contest
- Contestants send in pictures with a brief description
- The concept is to encourage home gardens for community benefits
  - Vegetable gardens reduce the carbon footprint
  - Growing native plants encourages pollinators
- Winners receive a small gift certificate from Ace hardware



## Other Events

### Bracco Farms Presentation

- Tony Bracco presented at the River Edge library
- Discussed where our food comes from, growing methods, adapting small farm techniques to home gardening, and the tools to use
- 30 attendees were given a wealth of knowledge about farming

### Recycling 101 Presentation

- Patty AlMBERG (EPC Co-Chair) presented at the River Edge library
- Information presented on sustainability and recycling
- Claire O'Connor was attended as well from the River Dell Middle School and presented some of their student's efforts

### Advertise Environmental Opportunities

- This includes holiday lights, county hazardous waste events, and other Bergen county town events to name a few



The River Edge Green Team is hosting a speaker on home gardens.

Tuesday Nov 14  
7:30 - 8:30 pm  
River Edge Library

Tony Bracco from Bracco Farms ([www.braccofarms.com](http://www.braccofarms.com)) will talk about where our food comes from, growing methods, and adapting small farm techniques to backyard gardening. This is a great program for all home gardeners or those who have always wanted to start a garden. All are welcome.



### WASTE COLLECTION EVENTS

Take your hazardous waste to a safer place!

PARAMUS	MAHWAH	MOONAGHIE
Bergen Community College 400 Paramus Road (Entry via Paramus Rd. ONLY)	Bergen County Campgaw Mountain Reservation 200 Campgaw Road (Ski Area)	Bergen County Utilities Authority Foot of Empire Blvd. (Entry via Empire Blvd. ONLY)
<b>SUNDAY</b> April 16 June 11 October 15	<b>SATURDAY</b> May 13 July 15 September 9	<b>SATURDAY</b> March 11 November 18
9:00 am - 3:00 pm	9:00 am - 3:00 pm	9:00 am - 3:00 pm

All collection sites open (rain or shine) at 9:00 a.m. and close promptly at 2:00 p.m.

FREE OF CHARGE FOR BERGEN COUNTY RESIDENTS ONLY - ID REQUIRED!

**NO COMMERCIAL VEHICLES ALLOWED.**  
Absolutely no business or commercial waste will be accepted.

**DO NOT BRING** electronics, paper for shredding, or tires to hazardous waste collections!

Visit [www.bcua.org](http://www.bcua.org) for additional information.

Recycle! Printed on recycled paper.

**NO RETURNS.** This includes gasoline and motor oil containers. Please plan accordingly.

# Green Team Short and Long Term Goals

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## Short Term Goals

- Continue to run the following events:
  - Paper shredding / Styrofoam collection (2x per year)
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Chance Toy Drive
  - Prom Box Reuse
  - Garden Contest

## Long Term Goals

- Attract more volunteers
- Use other town event to promote support (River Edge Day, Farmer's Market, County Styrofoam Densifier)
- Review grant opportunities for support and / or funding
- Expand lecture film series