



# Environmental Focus

Winter 2010

"an aesthetic, unpolluted environment with a natural and historic heritage"

## BCEQ's Fall Meet & Greet

BCEQ hosted its Meet and Greet this past November at Monroe College. Members, educators and friends gathered to meet new members, talk about Bronx issues and to celebrate the new BCEQ membership brochure. Gary Axelbank gave a brief welcome and board member Dr. Dena Robbins led the crowd in a BCEQ rap. Congressman Engel and Serrano sent representatives who spoke about legislation and programs that will help improve the Bronx's environment.

A special thanks to Monroe College for its hospitality. If you would like to receive a copy of the new brochure, please send an email to [membership@bceq.org](mailto:membership@bceq.org).



Photo on left: Gary Axelbank welcoming attendees to Monroe College.

Below: Dr. Dena Robbins leading the crowd to a BCEQ rap.



Photo on Left: BCEQ 1st VP, Dr. Paul Mankiewicz talking about his guest appearance on *The Daily Show* and about climate change.

## The 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Bronx Parks Speak Up!

*Open Spaces, Environment and Health*

**Saturday, February 27th, 2010**  
 at Lehman College Faculty Dining Room  
 11:30 am to 5 pm  
 11:30 am–12:30 pm Registration, Networking,  
 Refreshments & Live Music

**Presentations:** Recycling in NYC, Harlem River Working Group & Shape Up NY

**Workshops:** Rain Water Harvesting, Organic Growing Techniques & Worm Bins Made Easy (composting)

**Panel Discussion:** Sustainable Green Development

For more info or to register e-mail to [bxspeakup@hotmail.com](mailto:bxspeakup@hotmail.com). To reserve a table please send an e-mail to [speakuptabling@hotmail.com](mailto:speakuptabling@hotmail.com) by 2/19/10. Also on the BCEQ web page at <http://bit.ly/cO8emN>

Sponsored by the Bronx Coalition for Parks & Green Spaces, **ConEdison**, Lehman College & Verizon

## BCEQ's Annual Membership Meeting is the 9th Annual Water Conference

**"Examining Harlem River Water Quality: Inputs, Effects and Solutions":**

**Wednesday, March 17, 2010**  
 Leo Engineering Building – Manhattan College  
 2:30 pm – 5:30 pm

**Networking. Refreshments.**

**The public is invited to attend this free event.**

RSVP or to set up a table email: [harlemriver@bceq.org](mailto:harlemriver@bceq.org) or call Dart or Brenda at 718-324-4461

For more info go to the BCEQ web page at <http://bit.ly/dkZz1n>

To learn more about the Harlem River Working Group on page 3.

Sponsors include: Borough President Ruben Diaz, Jr.; New York City Soil and Water Conservation District; Partnerships for Parks, Con Edison, Manhattan College, National Parks Service, Friends of Brook Park, Urban Divers Ecology Center and Highbridge Community Life Center.



Ivy is a local environmental educator who is available to answer your questions about environmental topics. *Ask Ivy* is written for entertainment/informative purposes only and doesn't necessarily represent the views of BCEQ nor its editorial staff. If you have a question for Ivy email her at [askivy@bceq.org](mailto:askivy@bceq.org) or send it to: Ask Ivy, c/o BCEQ, P.O. Box 265, City Island Station, The Bronx, NY 10464.

Dear Ivy,

*I love outdoor winter activities, especially ice skating. Is there any where to ice skate in the Bronx? What about Van Cortlandt Lake?*

*Ice Skater in Eastchester*

Dear Ice Skater:

Lakes not freezing, is another issue that we can blame on Global Climate Change. I know many people who learned to ice skate on Van Cortlandt Lake and wish they could take their children there today. In fact, thousands of people used to skate on it every day many years ago. Now, with our winters being warmer and with fewer

consecutive days of frigid temperatures, the ice doesn't freeze enough to make the conditions safe for an ice skater. In addition, increased pollution, e.g. runoff from nearby highways has decreased the freezing point of lake water. The NYC Department of Parks requires that the ice be at least 4 inches thick in order to open any lake within a city park to ice skating.

Unfortunately, that has not happened for many years. I think that if we want to bring ice skating back to the Bronx we need to build an artificial rink. Where? I'm open to suggestions.

*Ivy*

Dear Ivy -

*I keep hearing talk about "green" development and sustainability. What makes development "green" and sustainable?*

*Wondering in Wakefield*

Dear Wondering:

Green and sustainable development are definitely hot buzz words that we are becoming growing trends in the coming years.

Green (or sustainable) development are land use planning concepts that meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. By building "Green," the overall impact of the built environment on human health and the natural environment is reduced by:

- Efficiently using or re-using energy, water, and other resources
- Protecting occupant health and improving employee productivity
- Reducing waste, pollution and environmental degradation

There is too information, too much to handle in the space I'm allowed, so I would suggest that you attend the 16th Annual Bronx Parks Speak Up on Saturday February 27th where there will be a panel discussion on this very topic. Visit [www.bronxpeakup.org](http://www.bronxpeakup.org) for more information or see the front page of this issue of *Environmental Focus*.

*Ivy*

**Bronx Council for Environmental Quality**



**Environmental Focus** [www.bceq.org](http://www.bceq.org)

"In authentic, unregulated environments with a natural and historic heritage"

Founder *Theresa Lato*  
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*Thank you for your support.*

Environmental Focus Volunteer Reporters/Proofers: AskIvy, ML Ramirez, Christina Taylor, Dart Westphal, Jane Sokolow, Mricle; and Supervising Editor Karen Argenti;

## Harlem River Working Group Update

The Harlem River Working Group has been meeting regularly now for several months and lots of BCEQers are right in the thick of it. Composed of stakeholders from throughout the Bronx side of the Harlem River, the group has three active committees: the Ecology Committee, the Outreach & Advocacy Committee and the Greenway & Access Committee.

Some goals for the group include the development of a preliminary watershed management plan, a stakeholder meeting on water quality on March 17th, a Fall 2010 event highlight progress on the development of access to the river, outreach to all Community Boards along the River and the development of a map that includes existing conditions, property ownership, opportunities/challenges.

Other Efforts are in the works to revitalize the Harlem River:

- CB 7 is developing a waterfront subcommittee. They may do a 197(c) rezoning. Prof. Ethel Sheffer's Columbia University class is working with them.
- BCEQ has received funding for Phase 2 of the BOA study, extending to 161st Street.
- South of 161st Street, SOBRO is working on a BOA for

area brownfields, only some of which are on the waterfront.

- *United Parents of Highbridge* - This year's art competition and science fair will focus on the Harlem River.



HRWG members at the November Meeting held at the Rebel Diaz Artist Collective.

For further information contact: [harlemriver@bceq.org](mailto:harlemriver@bceq.org), visit [www.bceq.org](http://www.bceq.org), or attend our Annual Meeting which is sponsoring the stakeholder meeting at the Water Conference on March 17th (see page 1 for more info).

### Impromptu Networking with other Bronx Environmentalists!

Save money and the environment. They recycle, reuse and sell building materials



ReBuilders Source, the Green Workers Cooperative  
[www.rebuilderssource.coop](http://www.rebuilderssource.coop)

After the Water & Education Committee Meetings, BCEQers (Karen Argenti, Jane Sokolow, Ellen Pollan, and ICLE) Network at **Bronx Green Drinks\*** at the Bronx Ale House on West 238th St. off B'way



\*Join the eclectic mix of green movers and shakers in the Bronx and beyond on the 3rd Thursday of every month, 6:30-8 pm. Next Bronx Green Drinks: Feb. 18th at the G-Bar. For more info: [amrunfola@yahoo.com](mailto:amrunfola@yahoo.com)



**BCEQ Board** meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the month, except for July and August, from 6:30 pm – 8:30 pm  
 For more info or directions please email: [volunteer@bceq.org](mailto:volunteer@bceq.org)

<b>March 17<sup>th</sup></b> (note this is the 3 <sup>rd</sup> Weds.)	Leo Engineering Building, Manhattan College, 3825 Corlear Ave 3 pm— <b>Annual Membership Meeting</b> 2:30-5:30 pm <b>H<sub>2</sub>O Conference</b> 6-7:30 pm <b>HRWG</b> 7:30 pm <b>Board Meeting</b>
<b>April 14<sup>th</sup></b>	TBA
<b>May 12<sup>th</sup></b>	TBA
<b>June 9<sup>th</sup></b>	Chez Mankiewicz Annual BBQ & <b>Environmental and Education Awards</b>



B.C.E.Q. President  
I.C. Levenberg-Engel

Wondering what's on my mind?

Visit me on my blog, listed on every page on the right side bar -

[www.bceq.org/presidents-blog/](http://www.bceq.org/presidents-blog/)

**The 2010 Harlem River Working Group Meets on the Third Wednesday**

Month	Date	Place	Time
February	17	Borough President's Office	4-6 pm
March	17	Manhattan College	6-7:30 pm
April	21	Borough President's Office	4-6 pm
May	19	TBA	6-8 pm
June	16	Borough President's Office	4-6 pm

**Is your BCEQ membership up-to-date?**

If the date on your mailing label has expired please visit [www.bceq.org](http://www.bceq.org) to renew your membership. You don't want to miss an exciting issue of our Environmental Focus newsletter.

Thank you!



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