

EPA REGION III
CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL LEARNING

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EPA CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL LEARNING

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UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION III

841 Chestnut Building
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19107

CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL LEARNING

FACT SHEET

The objectives of the Center For Environmental Learning (CEL) are to promote environmental education, to improve the public's understanding of current and emerging policy issues and to increase opportunities for the public to communicate with the Agency.

To that end, the Center has sponsored an environmental lecture series featuring prominent environmental speakers and has also conducted forums and seminars. Enclosed on page 8-10 is a listing of events held in 1987-88.

To support and promote environmental education efforts within the Region through official EPA recognition, The Center for Environmental Learning, with assistance and guidance from its Advisory Board, selects and presents Environmental Education Awards to exemplary programs.

In 1987 CEL presented its first award from 57 nominations to Ms. Majorie Crofts, coordinator of Delaware's Inland Bays Environmental Education Program. In 1988, 74 persons and programs were nominated for the annual CEL Award, from which seven were chosen. Enclosed is a description of those interesting and innovative programs is on pages 5-7.

In FY 1988-89, CEL plans to accomplish its goals by learning more about supporting environmental education through dialogue on key issues with educators, non-profit organizations, industry and other constituencies in informal meetings, conferences, and forums; by supporting and promoting outstanding contributions, via Agency recognition through CEL's Annual Awards; by being a visible supporter of all citizens' understanding of environmental issues and related public policy developments; and by stimulating others to provide environmental education.

The Director of The Center for Environmental Learning is
Bonnie Smith, U.S. EPA, Region III, 841 Chestnut Building, Philadelphia,
PA 19107 (215-597-9072).

PLANS FOR FY 1988-89

- Plan and implement roundtables and seminars on key issues and management themes.
- Videotape CEL events and distribute tapes.
- Continue to support program staff in their environmental outreach.
- Develop recommendations for an agencywide environmental education program.
- Develop a plan with the Secretaries of Education in Region III to assist them in developing superior curriculum on the environment and environmental public policy issues.
- Speak both formally and informally about the importance of environmental education.

In August, the Director will address members the National Council of State Gardens Clubs whose 1989 agenda is to launch a campaign of environmental education throughout the country.

- Be available to serve on planning boards for conferences of other environmental groups to enhance visibility of EPA speakers.
- Meet with leaders in universities, schools, non-profit organizations and industry to understand, encourage and inspire their efforts in environmental education.
- Contact all EPA Regions and Headquarters to develop a reference list of EPA staff who will serve as resource personnel on environmental education information.
- Work in tandem with the External Affairs Plan, ICEM and Office of Public Affairs, to maximize CEL's contribution and effectiveness.
- Meet periodically with the Advisory Board to seek their advice and participation in the CEL Awards nomination and selection process.
- Review and revise the CEL mailing list.

RATIONALE

A. The Center expands networks for EPA.

1. The Center increases the quality and quantity of relationships between EPA and the states, citizens, industry, elected officials, educators, educational institutions and other federal agencies.

(The Center has participated in the Temple University Forum Series, and has served on the advisory board for the Center for Hazardous Materials Research at the University of Pittsburgh; CEL supports Regional program staff in their educational training efforts, and features them as well as the RA, DRA, ARA and Division Directors in events throughout the Region to help the public understand EPA better. CEL also invites outside speakers to discuss new and stimulating ideas with EPA staff. Programs often include EPA staff and the public together as presenters to encourage closer working relationships between them and those who form audiences. CEL's Advisory Board also increases opportunities for networking with outside-Agency groups and educational institutions.)

B. The Center raises the level of importance of environmental education.

1. CEL gives EPA a credible avenue to interact with educational institutions and educators.

(The Center emphasizes environmental education, educators and educational institutions by inviting educators to participate in Center seminars or to speak at the CEL guest lecture series, by including educators on the CEL Advisory Board and by helping to arrange EPA speakers for events held by those institutions.)

2. CEL expands the learning curve of the public as well as EPA employees.

(The Center sponsors regular brown bag lunch lectures featuring prominent speakers from a variety of environmentally-related groups to stimulate EPA staff members and the public).

3. The Center raises the level of consciousness of environmental education and the environmental ethic through particular programs and awards.

(The Center sponsors annual CEL Awards to honor significant contributions in environmental education and sponsored an all-day program to celebrate Rachel Carson's birthday and her contribution to the perpetuation of the environmental ethic).

C. CEL increases public understanding of EPA and its mission.

1. CEL provides EPA opportunities to discuss and clarify the role of the Agency.

(At forums, the Regional Administrator and other EPA staff speak in a continuing effort to clarify the Agency's mission and programs.)

2. CEL allows EPA to focus the public's attention on EPA's major environmental management themes.
- D. CEL increases public understanding of environmental issues.
1. The Center offers EPA the opportunity to discuss with the public new and emerging public policy issues and to receive their feedback on those issues in an educational and non-confrontational setting.
 2. The videotaping of CEL programs, such as the one on environmental dispute resolution, current environmental challenges brought up at the Rachel Carson Birthday Celebration, the Northeast Hazardous Waste Exchange and the Impact of the Clean Water Act on Wilderness, have expanded the CEL audience beyond those who can attend. Those on the CEL mailing list are notified of the tapes and many tapes have been in constant circulation since they were made.
- E. CEL increases public trust in government and supports the Human Resources Management Theme.
1. CEL events allow citizens direct access to public officials, and that direct access increases EPA accountability. CEL events also allow EPA staff the opportunity to validate their own professional work and receive recognition for it.
 2. Inclusion of state and local officials on CEL programs increases visibility of state and local officials and improves cooperation between EPA and the state.

1988 CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AWARDS

Terry Thompson

Accomack County Schools, P.O. Box 330, Accomac, VA (804-787-1319)

Ms. Thompson has designed and implemented more than a dozen successful conservation education projects for educators and students in Accomac and North Hampton Counties. Coordinating the Math and Marine Science Lab, Ms. Thompson designed a marine science curriculum for all 6th, 7th, and 8th grade classes complete with modern lab stations and aquaria. Adjacent to the lab, Ms. Thompson worked with the Chesapeake Bay Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) in a project which renovated areas of high marsh, constructed an observation deck, cleared the area of debris and established trails and stations which will provide access to wildlife with minimal impact on the ecosystem. Both YCC students and middle school students in the area can now and in the future enjoy the fruits of these efforts.

The Mathematics and Science Center of Richmond

2401 Hartman Street, Richmond, VA 23223 (804-788-4454)

Contact: Ms. Elizabeth Waring, Director

The Mathematics and Science Center since 1969 has been owned by the public school divisions of Chesterfield, Goochland, and Hanover, and Henrico Counties and the city of Richmond, and is an integral part of their operations. It provides enrichment education for students and inservice training for teachers. They were nominated and chosen to receive the CEL award for developing a superb curriculum entitled River Times to teach Virginia's students about the ecological and historical significance of the James River. Most of the program is adaptable to wherever there is a need for a water-related curriculum. Activities were designed for in the classroom and at the river. These quality materials will be used to teach thousands of students each year.

Dr. William Ritter and Mrs. Ruth Almond

Robbins Park for Environmental Studies, Butler Pike, Ambler, PA 19034

(215-643-8870) In a joint venture between the Upper Dublin Township and the Upper Dublin School District, Dr. William Ritter and Ruth Almond have spearheaded a "living environmental classroom" where students, teachers, and members of the community both learn and teach others about our environment. K-8th grades have part of their science program in the Park and as volunteer teachers in grades 9-12. Most of the teaching is done by adult volunteers for K-3 and special classes, under the guidance of school science teaching staffs. Eagle Scout David Moffatt with the assistance of Ruth Almond, classmates, fellow scouts and many others developed a nature trail for Fort Washington Elementary School. These three individuals received the CEL Awards for encouraging community wide activities in Upper Dublin Township Environmental Education Programs.

Patricia Haddon

Anne Arundel County, Office of Planning & Zoning, Arundel Center
Annapolis, MD 21401 (301) 721-7696

Ms. Haddon was given the CEL's award for environmental education by a government employee. Specifically, her efforts were recognized as they relate to reducing contamination to the Chesapeake Bay through the use of citizen volunteers both in a water quality maintaining program and in a benchmark effort involving both community and youth groups -- boy and girl scouts -- in a public awareness campaign. The latter program involved the painting of storm drains with a warning that contaminants will flow directly through them into the Chesapeake Bay. Subsequently, this highly successful effort's methods were shared with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation so that through their influence this effort could be spread to communities throughout the Bay's watershed.

Pennsylvania Power & Light Company, Two North Ninth Street, Allentown,
PA 18101 (215) 770-4976. Contact: R.E. Cary, Manager-Land Management

Contact: PP&L operates recreational areas and environmental education centers in 29 counties of Central Eastern PA with comprehensive programs at environmental centers in PP&L's Montour Preserve, Susquehanna Riverlands and Holtwood/Lake Aldred land management projects. Staff naturalists provide a full range of programs. Working in cooperation with PA DER, PA Fish and Game Commissions, Conservation Society of York County, Scouts and others, additional programs are created. PP&L's land management function provides for preservation forestry and wildlife habitat improvement. These practices, especially soil conservation and farm management plans prepared for tenant farmers are significant contributions toward the protection of the Chesapeake Bay. These combined efforts demonstrate a good land ethic and significant commitments to environmental education for which PP&L was selected to receive the CEL Award.

National Wildlife Federation's Backyard Wildlife Habitat Program
1400 Sixteenth Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20036 (703) 790-4360

Coordinator: Craig Tufts

The program's goal is to assist and encourage people to create Wildlife Habitats where they live, work and go to school. Through clearly written materials they instruct people of all ages to create wildlife habitats in both rural, urban, and suburban settings. To encourage the interest in Backyard Wildlife Habitats NWF produces television segments, Mr. Tufts authors articles bi-monthly made available free to 12,000 publications, and they make presentations for organizations and businesses so they in turn will encourage their members. At present there are 6,000 certified Backyard Wildlife Programs nationwide. This is a first-rate program of the nation's largest conservation education organization and is applicable throughout the Region.

Center for Hazardous Materials Resources

Univeristy of Pittsburgh Applied Resource Center

Pittsburgh, PA 15238 (412-826-5320) Contact: Dr. Edgar Berkey

The Center For Hazardous Marterials Research (CHMR) has published a comprehensive, easy-to-read manual describing techniques and procedures that will enable businesses to minimize their production of hazardous waste if they are for small quantity generators. Included in this 250-page volume are detailed descriptions of: waste minimization incentives; hazardous waste regulations; approaches to waste minimization; how to conduct a waste audit; specific waste minimization practices; financing; and sources of information. Specific information is provided on eleven Pennsylvania industry sectors. This information has already been widely distributed (1000 copies nationwide) and the manual became the key reference document for a statewide technical assistance program conducted by CHMR and funded by U.S. EPA Region III. The usefulness of the manual persists beyond the grant term. It continues as a primary reference document for the Hazardous Hotline, ongoing workshops, and on-site consultations. CHMR was nominated and selected to receive CEL Award in the educational product category.

CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL LEARNING 1988 AWARDS

FORMAL COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN EPA AND THE PUBLIC IT SERVES

PRESENTED BY

THE CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL LEARNING

Presentation of Center for Environmental Learning Awards: To recognize significant contributors in Environmental Education. Seven award winners were selected from 74 nominations of individuals and groups throughout the Region. Described in detail on pages 5-7. (July 1988)

Environmental Forum in Wilmington, DE: A one day seminar jointly sponsored by the Leagues of Women Voters of Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Maryland on household hazardous waste collections, with practical discussion about sponsoring and participating in Hazardous Waste Collection Days, as well as certain liability issues surrounding them. (May 1988)

April 7 and 8 - Waste Minimization: Some Solutions: A conference jointly sponsored by CEL and the Pennsylvania League of Women Voters for industry and environmental groups, to focus on solutions to source reduction and waste minimization. A follow up to the CHMR conference held under an EPA 8001 grant in November, 1987. Held in Harrisburg area of Pennsylvania. (April 1988)

Conflict Resolution: Solutions on siting issues articulated by the Executive Director of PEC, and PEC's director of their Conflict Resolution Center, Wendy Emrich, and PP&L's supervisor of Community Planning. Over 80 EPA staff and environmental leaders viewed the video and joined in the brown bag luncheon discussion. (January 1988)

Risk and Reality: A Discussion of Risk Analysis and Risk Communication with Dr. Kunreuther, of Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, and Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce President, and 50 industry leaders, EPA staff and environmentalists. A lively discussion on all aspects from financial to ethical considerations filled the luncheon session. (February 1988)

The Roanoke, VA CEL Forum featured EPA speakers on SARA Title III and air toxics, as well as state and local speakers who formed panels on these subjects at a day-long conference attended by 120 business and civic representatives as well as local, state and federal officials. (November 1987)

A Celebration of Environmental Education in Pennsylvania was held for 130 teachers, environmentalists and business leaders at which representatives from each of those groups described the latest trends in environmental education. (October 1987)

Northeast Hazardous Waste Exchange was described by its executive director, Lewis Cutler, at a brown bag luncheon discussion at EPA before 65 attendees. (September 1987)

The Wheeling, West VA Educational Forum featured speakers from EPA, industry, the state, and environmental groups on such diverse topics which involved the Director of Pennsylvania's Environmental Education program discussing trends in his field, the Director of EPA's ESD Division speaking on risk decision-making, and the head of EPA's SARA Title III program outlining the key issues. A panel composed of prominent local representatives of industry, an environmental group, and a state official discussed Title III from their perspectives. Over 130 participated, primarily from West Virginia and western Pennsylvania. (July 1987)

Environmental Dispute Resolution and Negotiated Rulemaking: Fifty-five EPA staff and representatives from local area environmental, business and educational institutions heard Gail Bingham, Director of the Environmental Dispute Program at the Conservation Foundation in Washington, DC discuss her program at the EPA office. (June 1987)

The First Center for Environmental Learning Award was presented to Ms. Marjorie Crofts, Coordinator of the Inland Bays Environmental Education Program, in the State of Delaware. Ms. Crofts was selected for her significant contribution in environmental education from 58 programs nominated from throughout the Region. (June 1987)

PA Horticultural Society: Director participated as member of panel of 12 in a program to renew the urban infrastructure. (June 1987)

Rachel Carson's Birthday Celebration: A one-day seminar was held at EPA which featured prominent members of the industry, regulatory and environmental communities who spoke on past accomplishments and future challenges in the environment. Remembrances of Rachel Carson by personal friends and Audubon Society staff members were given. Fifty-five were in the audience representing EPA and local area environmental business, and educational groups. The all-day seminar was taped and distributed to interested citizens unable to attend the session. (May 1987)

Scientist's Institute for Public Information's President Alan McGowan and Program Director Bonnie Smith, discussed SIPI's unique referral program which puts environmental and scientific experts in touch with the working press with 35 EPA staff and representatives from the local business and environmental community. (April, 1987)

Temple University Forum: Director moderated panel on environmental risks before audience of 150. (April 1987)

Indoor Air Pollution: A major regional conference held in Philadelphia for 150 attendees featuring nationally known speakers from Harvard School of Public Health, EPA and industry, as well as state regulators, health professionals and citizen activists. A videotape of the conference has circulated widely. (March 1987)

Pennsylvania Environmental Council Annual Conference - Director chose and moderated a panel on radon before an audience of 200. (March 1987)

Note: During the 1987-1988 the CEL Advisory Board met twice. A listing of the CEL's Advisory Board is on page 11.

EPA CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL LEARNING
ADVISORY BOARD

From EPA: 841 Chestnut Building
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