

40 Years



**New Jersey  
Meadowlands  
Commission**  
1969-2009

ELECTRONIC NEWS

APRIL 2009

For more details on any of these stories visit our Web site at

[www.njmeadowlands.gov](http://www.njmeadowlands.gov)

click on "Press Room"

**April  
Flyway Gallery  
Exhibit**



The nature paintings of North Bergen resident Lissanne Lake will be on display at the NJMC's Flyway Gallery from April 2 through April 29. The Flyway Gallery is located in the Meadowlands Environment Center and is open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays and 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. weekends. A reception for the artist is scheduled for 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. April 5. For more information, call 201-460-8300 or visit [www.njmeadowlands.gov/ec](http://www.njmeadowlands.gov/ec).



# NJMC Today

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE NEW JERSEY MEADOWLANDS COMMISSION

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## Greetings from Chairman Doria



Welcome to the latest edition of NJMC Today, the New Jersey Meadowlands Commission's electronic newsletter. We recently celebrated the one-year anniversary of our Center for Environmental and Scientific Education and William D.

our work to help businesses and District Municipalities go green, the NJMC shows its commitment to improving our environment through smart energy policies. In keeping with this mission, the NJMC launched an innovative greenhouse gas study recently to measure the amount of carbon that is captured by our wetlands. This will not only help us better understand these unique urban marshes, but also could lead to wetland enhancement programs designed to reduce the impact of global warming.

McDowell Observatory. Thousands of students and adults have studied the Earth's environment and gazed at the galaxy since the facilities opened last March. The science center is a fully green building constructed to Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design standards, and it is used by educators to illustrate lessons on sustainability. The observatory, open to the public on Monday and Wednesday evenings, features a state-of-the-art telescope with a 20-inch mirror and special light-pollution filters that make it ideal for this area. I encourage you to visit this remarkable resource.

Finally, I would like to make you aware of a wonderful opportunity to learn more about the history of the Meadowlands. The NJMC is presenting a series of slide-show talks on the history of the area and the Commission's work, as part of our 40th Anniversary celebration. These colorful, engaging presentations provide great insight into the region and include amazing nature photographs and wonderful historical pictures and illustrations. We hope to present these talks in each of our 14 District Municipalities this year. For listings of scheduled shows – and other special events – click on the 40th Anniversary Section in the lower right hand corner of our Web site, [www.njmeadowlands.gov](http://www.njmeadowlands.gov).

March also saw the NJMC recognized by the U.S. Green Building Council's New Jersey Chapter, which named the Commission the recipient of its 2009 Green Policy Award. We are extremely proud of this honor, which acknowledges our efforts and leadership in reducing energy consumption and fighting global warming. Through our efforts to reduce our own energy usage, and

*Thank you,  
Joseph V. Doria, Jr.  
Commissioner, New Jersey Department of Community Affairs  
Chairman, New Jersey Meadowlands Commission*

On March 26 the NJMC celebrated the one-year anniversary of the opening of our Center for Environmental and Scientific Education and William D. McDowell Observatory. Over the past year, thousands of students and adults learned about the environment here on Earth and the planets and stars beyond at our new facilities. Built with solar panels, recycled construction materials and an energy-efficient heating system, the science center is considered one of the greenest classrooms in the State, and the building provides a focus for lessons on alternative energy and sustainable design. Approximately 2,000 children a month in grades K-12 from throughout North Jersey participate in educational programs at the science center and observatory during the school year. Close to 1,000 adults have also visited the observatory during our Monday and Wednesday night public viewing sessions. The new facilities are located on the NJMC campus in Lyndhurst and staffed by Ramapo College, which partners with the NJMC to run the education programs. For more information on the observatory and its viewing schedule, the science center, and the NJMC's educational programming, visit [www.njmeadowlands.gov/ec](http://www.njmeadowlands.gov/ec), or call 201-460-8300.

## HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!



## NJMC Honored With Green Policy Award



The New Jersey Chapter of the U.S. Green Building Council recently named the NJMC the recipient of its 2009 Green Policy Award. The USGBC honored the Commission's commitment to cutting energy consumption, fighting global warming and enhancing quality of life for its constituents. The Commission was recognized for several policy initiatives. These include the publication of several "green guidelines" to help developers and towns identify ways to cut energy consumption and reduce pollution; the opening of the NJMC Center for Environmental and Scientific Education, a fully green building; and the NJMC Sustainable Communities Planning Service, which provides free professional assistance to Meadowlands District towns looking to go green. The Commission was also acknowledged for its Energy Master Plan, which was adopted last year and lays the foundation for the Commission's energy goals and policies. The Green Policy Award will be presented to the NJMC at the New Jersey Chapter's 3rd Annual Building A Greener New Jersey Gala on May 21, in Parsippany.

## Greenhouse Gas Study Launched

This month the NJMC began measuring the capability of urban wetlands in the Meadowlands District to capture and contain carbon dioxide, a harmful greenhouse gas. This carbon sequestration study will help our scientists better understand the wetlands, and could lead to marsh enhancements designed to trap the emissions that contribute to global warming. The study is being conducted by the Meadowlands Environmental Research Institute (MERI), the scientific and technological arm of the NJMC, and reflects the Commission's proactive approach to improving the environment. The measurements are being taken near the two most abundant plant species in the marshes: the salt marsh cordgrass, known as spartina, and the invasive common reed, Phragmites.

## Astronomy Event a Success

Approximately 100 visitors attended a talk by best-selling science author Dava Sobel on March 14 at the Meadowlands Environment Center. Many also used this opportunity to observe Venus through the Commission's state-of-the-art telescope at its William D. McDowell Observatory. The event was part of the NJMC's year-long schedule of 40th Anniversary festivities and the International Year of Astronomy 2009, a worldwide celebration marking 400 years since Galileo first pointed his telescope toward the stars. Sobel is the author of the New York Times bestseller "Galileo's Daughter," which chronicles the astronomer's life and discoveries through letters sent to him by his eldest daughter. The telescope, which features a 20-inch mirror and special light-pollution filters, is among the largest in the area. The visitors on this day included a group of visually-impaired teens and adults that participated in the NJMC's Marsh Access program, which enables visitors with special needs to enjoy the trails, parks and programs at the NJMC's DeKorte Park. The group used tactile models of the sun to learn about its qualities, and received a hands-on demonstration of the telescope. For more information on the NJMC's 40th birthday celebration, including event listings and details on participating in our Oral History Project, click on the 40th Anniversary logo on the lower right corner of our Web site, [www.njmeadowlands.gov](http://www.njmeadowlands.gov).

## Skeetkill Marsh Cleanup



More than 50 people participated in the Meadowlands Conservation Trust's annual Family Clean-Up Day, which was held on March 26 at the Skeetkill Marsh in Ridgefield. After meeting at the park entrance around noon, volunteers worked for about three hours and braved threatening rain to collect about 50 bags of trash. The volunteers included 25 seventh- and eighth-graders who are members of the Environmental Club at the Slocum Skewes School in Ridgefield. The NJMC acquired the 16-acre marsh for preservation in 1996 and transferred ownership to the MCT in 2008. The MCT was formed in 1999 and remains the only public land trust in the northeastern section of New Jersey. The NJMC also restored the marsh, which was overgrown with the invasive common reed Phragmites, by opening water channels and planting diverse vegetation. As a result, more waterfowl and other wildlife are now using this critical wetlands.

## Business Accelerator in the Spotlight

The NJMC Business Accelerator was featured on New 12 New Jersey's "Spotlight New Jersey" program recently. Accelerator Director Michel Bitritto discussed how the program helps provide the skills start-up companies focused on green technology need to succeed. Accelerator clients Theresa Kim and Rob Schucker also appeared. Kim is CEO of GRAIN, a company that supplies and manufactures eco-friendly cabinetry and millwork. Schucker owns Eco Earth Design, which develops and installs environmentally responsible outdoor projects, including green roofs and water-efficient irrigation systems. In March the accelerator also announced its newest clients, Waterfront Health Care Services and Change and Response Strategies. Located in a Lyndhurst office building, the accelerator was launched in October with a \$1.5 million, three-year grant from the NJMC. It provides affordable rents, services, business skills and opportunities to entrepreneurs, especially those focused on the green economy. To learn more about the project and find out how you can join, visit [www.njmcaccelerator.com](http://www.njmcaccelerator.com) or contact Michel Bitritto at 201-438-1245 or [michel.bitritto@njmeadowlands.gov](mailto:michel.bitritto@njmeadowlands.gov).



## Tune in and join us as we bring you "Your Meadowlands."



<b>Time Warner</b>	Channel 10	Mondays	7:00 pm
<b>Comcast</b>			
Union	Channel 190	Wednesdays	7:30 p.m.
Jersey City	Channel 190	Wednesdays	7:30 p.m.
Meadowlands	Channel 190	Wednesdays	7:30 p.m.
<b>Cablevision</b>			
Oakland	Channel 78	Thursdays	7:30 p.m.
Bergen	Channel 118	Thursdays	7:30 p.m.
Hudson	Channel 18	Thursdays	8:00 p.m.
Bayonne	Channel 18	Thursdays	8:00 p.m.