

SEA Currents



The Newsletter of the Caribbean Student Environmental Alliance
(Caribbean SEA)

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Watershed Camp & the Power of Kids in Marigot Village!



When the Marigot Watershed team, led by Starr Adams, planted their mangroves this spring, they thought that all was right with the world. They were doing a good thing for everyone in the bay and one of the businesses, Discovery, was providing a lot of support. After asking permission of the owners of Chateau Mygo. They transplanted over 200 mangrove seedlings to the stream outlet so the sediment would not get to the bay. They were shocked the next day to find all of their mangroves pulled out. After much talk, they realized that they must be

catching someone's attention, so they decided to communicate with every group they could think of who uses the bay... fishermen, business owners, families. Because of their coura-



geous outreach, (especially one time they told cantankerous businessmen that they thought it would be better to solve their problems together rather than taking it to the government!), the businesses all donated funds or services to take all the kids at

watershed camp on a boat trip on Ricky J's Cruiser to learn about mangroves and the reef through snorkeling lessons! Kiki from Dennery even got to drive the boat! Camp introduced us to the kids from Forestiere, who were the positive force for camp and the Belvedere group who were our local connection at the fabulous National Trust camp near Canaries. Local teacher, Ian Frederick, and PCV's Hailey Thompson and Justin Williams are now fully integrated members of our team! The students are working diligently on their action projects to keep raising awareness and improving the water!



National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Awards SEA another grant!



Piggeries and banana farms dominate the Mabouya Valley, St Lucia, where the drinking water is questionable and the pig waste makes other uses of the river dangerous to human health. Working with the IWCAM Demonstration Project and the farmers, we will install a biogas digester and wastewater wetland, and help begin a composting program in the valley to give the farmers other ways to dispose to the pig waste without destroying the health of the water or their neighbors! In addition, the digesters produce methane which will provide heat and light for the farmers' houses. We love it when we can help economically and environmentally. It's also more likely to be self sustaining!

Caribbean SEA founds local chapter, TenneSEA!



On our kickoff with the Tennessee River Rescue's 20th anniversary, we collected water quality and bacteria data from all of the River Rescue zones. Thanks to local supporters

Christine Bock, Jim Roxlo, Jimmy Caldwell, Tina Stewart, Nancy Brice, Rebecca Robinson, and Larry Cook Caribbean SEA is now reaching out to Chattanooga area kids. Our first watershed teams are at Whitwell High School, Calvin Donaldson Elementary School, Notre Dame High School, and possibly the leadership club at Hixson High School in coordination with North Chickamauga Creek Conservancy

and Red Bank High School in coordination with the Mountain Creek Greenway. The kids are really excited about making a difference in protecting their water as well as the possibility of connecting with the kids in the Caribbean. We have received great support from the Tennessee River Rescue, Tennessee American Water Company, Tennessee Aquarium, Chattanooga Stormwater Department and Aquatic Resources, Inc.. We can't wait to see what these kids come up with!



Summer Interns Make their Mark in St Lucia!

And perhaps St. Lucia made its mark on them! Each of the four interns can sing the Calypso Carnival song “Suzette” without hesitation. They all know where the best snorkeling is, the best jumping spots, and where the sewage is the most concentrated so DON’T TOUCH THE WATER!!! They have all experienced the generosity of folks like Mama Sheila and Marguerite and Gregory Edward. We appreciate our interns and their efforts so very much. Big thanks go to Laura Keys, PhD student at UC Berkeley, Gracyn Sansbury, Senior Civil Engineering major at Vanderbilt, Michael Boehmler, senior environmental science major at Rhodes, and Scott Kennedy, naturalist in residence!

I was amazed at so many of the locals' attitudes towards the water; many of the children did not know how to swim and had been taught to be afraid of the water. There was a prevailing attitude that no matter what you put into the river, the water would take care of everything and just whisk any problems away. People threw away trash in it, cleaned laundry and dishes in it, and even washed their cars in it! Luckily for the Lucians, there are people like Marguerite who see the watersheds as being in trouble and are willing to work hard to keep them cleanLaura Keys



St. Lucia certainly made an impact on me. The beautiful landscape, the wonderful people, and an opportunity to improve the living conditions on this island all left a lasting impression. Seeing the locals' faces light up when we told them our goals to test the water and educate children on the country's watersheds was extremely fulfilling. Working with the children was as much fun as it was tiring; hiking, cleaning, snorkeling, and making them go to sleep was worth every mosquito bite. Hopefully, I will have another opportunity to revisit St. Lucia and assist Caribbean-SEA in the preservation of this amazing island.

.....Michael Boehmler



Scott Kennedy didn't want to come home to Atlanta! He said that St. Lucia felt like home. His actions matched his words as he made friends where ever he went. His favorite snake was the rainforest boa constrictor, but he kept wishing he would see a Fer de Lanse, the extremely poisonous snake of St. Lucia. CRAZY!



At press time, I had not yet heard back from Gracyn with comments about her experience, but I know she fell in love with the place and the people. She and Laura both became swim teachers for the kids from camp and by the end of camp, all of the Forestiere kids could swim! We appreciated her help so much!

Kids are kids....wherever you are!



From Calvin Donaldson School in Chattanooga to Forestiere Village in St. Lucia, the kids we work with are so enthusiastic and clever, it's a joy to be with them! After spending a week at camp with the Forestiere boys, they endeared themselves to me and all of the interns. They tried EVERYTHING!!! From building an incredible tent area with tarps to learning how to swim and snorkel, these boys were

the epitome of what you expect from young people...eagerness to learn, to make friends, and have fun! My daughter, Katie, was able to be one of the campers this summer. She was the only pale skinned camper and felt welcomed and part of the gang! She had such fun and made wonderful friends. Isn't that the way the world is supposed to be? Add the fact that 4 interns joined us in St. Lucia to help....from 4 different schools or walks of life and they also bonded with each other and with St. Lucia and St. Lucians! We have the honor and privilege of meeting and working with young people and community leaders in Marigot, Canaries, Dennery, Castries, Laborie, and all around St. Lucia as well as in Dominica, Curacao, and Jamaica. As they welcome us into their homes and their lives, we do our best to ensure that our work is really doing a service to their communities. As Margaret Mead once said *"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtfully committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."*

I am sure that group of citizens includes our watershed kids!!

Mary Beth Sutton

Executive Director



Parrots of the Caribbean 4

Thanks to the

River City Parrot Head Club!!

For all of their generosity, hard work, and support and the general fun loving atmosphere that surrounds their gatherings! Check out their website at www.rivercityparrothead.com. Special thanks to Sue, Lynette, Harry, Carol, KC, John, and Phil...Lissa, Mac, Emily, Padgett, and Emmy. You all are amazing!



Leading the way toward better sewage treatment in Dominica!

Thanks to Rotary Foundation's International Service Grant, The Crothers Foundation, DOMLEC and MAN



Diesel, our project in Dominica is moving forward! Dominican Rotarians Adler Hamlet, Gloria Tavernier, Joel Huggins, and Aurie Roberts, President of Rotary Dominica, are diligently working with the Soufriere Village Council to find the appropriate site and design for our public toilet and model wastewater garden. Since sewage treatment is not widely utilized in Dominica, it is essential for Rotary to present this as a model for low cost, decentralized sewage treatment that can be used to keep the water free of bacteria, viruses and other harmful agents. The students in the village will be in charge of monitoring the water and the wetland to ensure everything is working appropriately. The coral reefs and diversity of Dominica's oceans are relatively unscathed at this point and if sewage treatment becomes the norm, they have a much better chance for long term survival and adaptation to the warming oceans. PS Last Friday, our friend and advocate, Joel Huggins, GM of Domlec, passed away unexpectedly on his Liat flight back home to St. Vincent. His leadership, intelligence and good judgment will be missed by all.

Caribbean SEA

Our mission is to empower students and their communities to protect and restore their local environment through collaborative watershed projects.

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Check us out on the WEB!
www.caribbean-sea.org



Anne Curran , Queen of the Limbo!

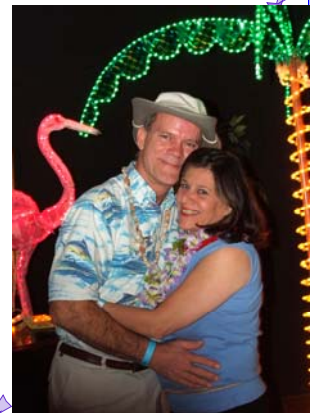
Save the Date!!!

Fourth Annual Caribbean Beach Party with
OGYA World Beat Band!

Friday, January 30, 2009

Can you contribute to the auction
by donating something special?

Call or email Connie Hill (conniehill2125@yahoo.com) 423-605-3483
or Mary Beth Sutton (marybeth@caribbean-sea.org) if you can help!



WISHLIST: WE NEED A WEBMASTER!!!! Donated Auction Items!!

Volunteers to help the local stream teams. Friends to sign up for BILO Boosters (see insert).

Special thanks to the Coolidge Family at Chattanooga Printing and Engraving for helping with our newsletter!