



Douglas Manor Environmental Association

## SUMMER 2016 • NEWSLETTER OF THE DMEA

### DMEA AND SAVE THE SOUND

The Douglas Manor Environmental Association (DMEA) has formed some valuable partnerships over the years to accomplish its mission to sustain and protect the natural environment and recreational areas of our beautiful and historic waterfront community. (Read more about DMEA's mission statement and events at <http://www.dmeanyc.com/index.html>.)

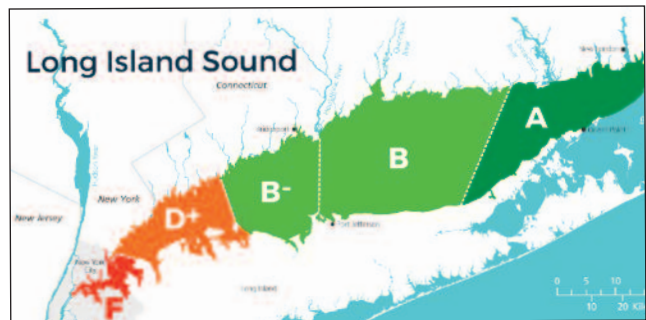
Recently, we connected with the Connecticut Fund for the Environment & its Bi-State program Save the Sound, to explore ways to work together to improve the water and marshland of our western Long Island Sound. Connecticut Fund for the Environment (CFE) was founded in 1978. Save the Sound was founded in 1972. In 2004, CFE and Save the Sound merged, with Save the Sound incorporated as a program within CFE. (Read more at <http://www.ctenvironment.org/#!/new-york-western-sound/c5gb>.)

Save the Sound (STS) has been involved for years in a Unified Water Study of the embayments of the Sound, most recently of the western Sound. STS supplements and supplies water quality data of the Sound to the Environmental Protection Agency, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, in a unified effort to reduce the nitrogen and other pollutants in our shared waters.

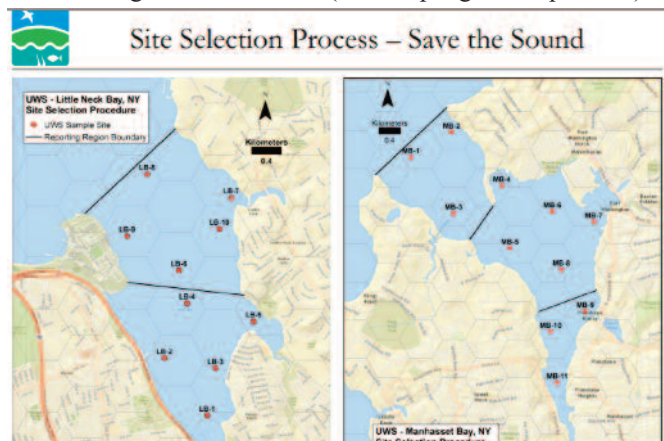
In June 2016, DMEA Board Member Catherine Bealin attended a Citizen Science conference at Stony Brook University, hosted by STS. Amazingly, she found herself looking at a map of Douglaston on the big screen during this presentation! STS had identified Manhasset Bay and Little Neck Bay as their 2016 summer water quality testing sites! In the report card that STS showed for the Long Island Sound water quality, unfortunately, Douglaston came up with an "F". As one would expect, based on the increase in population and waterway congestion in our New York City area, a hypoxic (low oxygen) condition of the Sound is most critical in our western area, versus the less inhabited, open spaces further east. Water quality gradually improves to "D+" in Nassau County, "B- to B" around Port Jefferson, and finally reaches "A" by Orient Point. (See the map below.) Water quality is based on, among other things, measurements of levels of nitrogen and other pollutants, clarity, turbidity, salinity, and temperature. A nitrogen proliferation on our shores can lead to fish and other animal die-offs, loss of the salt marsh, and the eventual acidification of our wetlands.

Ms. Bealin introduced herself to Terry Brown, Director of the

Western Sound Programs, and Peter Linderoth, Water Quality Program Manager, both of whom were conference speakers. At the invitation of the DMEA, Mr. Linderoth and his team came out to Douglaston for a site visit the next week. DMEA President, George Schmidt, DMA President, Mike Gannon, and DMEA Secretary, Jamie Sutherland, met the STS crew to give them a tour of Douglas Manor and our shores.



Recognizing the timeliness and importance of the work of STS right here in our neighborhood waters, DMA agreed to provide, two kayaks, rack space and locker space and the Douglaston Yacht Squadron agreed to provide a mooring with launch service to STS to further their studies of Little Neck Bay. Ten sampling sites from the inner bay outward to the end of Fort Totten will be tested throughout the summer. (See sampling site map below.)



In exchange, we will be kept directly in the loop to sampling results and any proposed water remediation projects. DMEA is very excited that a scientific study of this magnitude is taking place in our community to investigate an issue that DMEA has been actively involved in improving for quite some time.

—Suzanne Avena

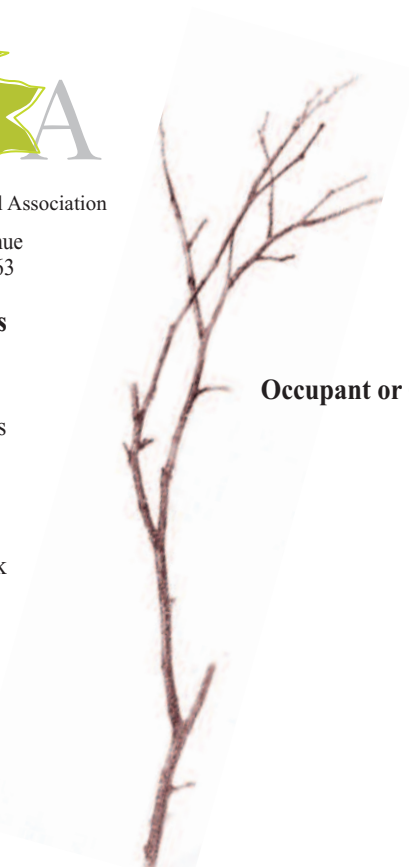


Douglas Manor Environmental Association

234-21B 41st Avenue  
Douglaston, NY 11363

**Board Members**

- Suzanne Avena
- Catherine Bealin
- Mary Alice Dadras
- Aline Euler
- Mike Gannon
- Hal Goluboff
- Melanie McGillick
- Tom Oliva
- Carol Panagi
- Ron Saar
- George Schmidt
- Jamie Sutherland
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**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE BELOW THE FOLD**

Dear Neighbor,

The summer heat is upon us and our new trees are suffering. We ask that you please help them survive the heat by keeping the "Treegator" bag filled at least twice a week per the enclosed instructions. If your tree or trees near your home has no bag, please make an effort to water them with a garden hose. These trees represent a significant investment and we need your help insuring their survival. And please consider making a generous tax deductible donation to the DMEA so we may continue our work in behalf of this very special neighborhood.

Thank you,  
George Schmidt  
DMEA President

May we suggest a donation of \$100, or whatever you can afford.

**DONATION:**

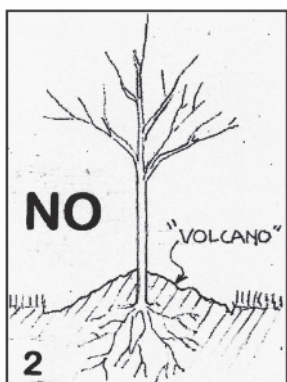
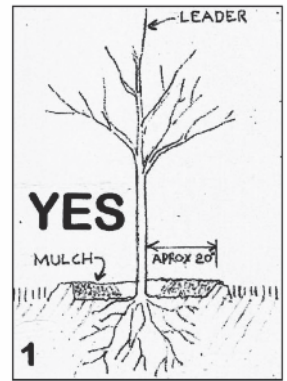
Please make your check out to DMEA and mail to  
234-21B 41st Avenue, Douglaston, NY 11363

\_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Check # \_\_\_\_\_

**MULCH CAN KILL TREES**

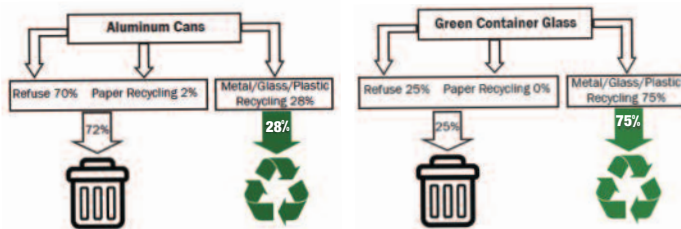
That got your attention, right? **ILLUSTRATION 1** shows the correct method for new tree mulching. Note the four to six inch berm located about 20 inches from the tree trunk. That creates a reservoir to ensure that the tree gets water evenly distributed to the roots system. The interior of that reservoir can be filled with appropriate mulch material to delay evaporation but must not touch the trunk. Improper mulching as shown in **ILLUSTRATION 2** seems to have become common to many garden services and homeowners. This "Volcano" technique can lead to rot and suffocation over a period of time and must be avoided completely. Pruning of new trees must be done with great care and under no circumstances should the central limb or "leader" be cut. These simple precautions will help our new trees prosper, providing beauty and shade for future generations.



## HOW MUCH OF THE CITY'S CURBSIDE RECYCLABLES GET PROPERLY RECYCLED?

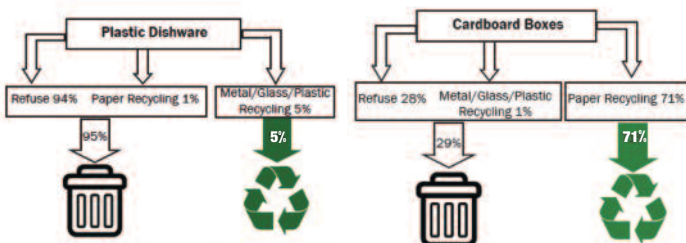
New York City recycles a wide variety of waste, but some materials are more likely to be recycled than others. The city has three solid waste streams: refuse, paper recycling, and metal/glass-plastic recycling. Overall, about 44 percent of recyclable material is "captured" by city recycling programs with the remainder sent to landfills, according to data from the Department of Sanitation's 2013 Residential Waste Characterization Study. But a lot of recyclables are thrown in the wrong bins—aluminum cans, for example, tossed in with regular trash. As a result, the capture rate for each of the recyclable materials varies widely, from as low as 5 percent to as high as 75 percent. Material that ends up in the refuse stream or the wrong recycling stream is not recycled. In fact, such "contamination" makes recycling more expensive.

—Ron Saar



- Only about 28 percent of aluminum cans collected by the Department of Sanitation are captured in the metal/glass/plastic stream.
- This below-average rate may in part reflect the more frequent scavenging of cans from the city's recycling bins than trash cans. This takes aluminum cans out of the recycling stream, but leaves them in the refuse stream and headed to landfills. Aluminum is one of the most valuable recycled metals providing greater incentives for scavenging.

- Green container glass has the highest capture rate of any material category, with 75 percent of this glass in the waste stream being recycled.
- Glass has a long history of being recycled and public awareness is high, boosting the capture rate. Additionally, glass is not a valuable recycling commodity; only bottles that require a deposit have value outside the city waste stream.



- Plastic dishware, which includes single use plastic cups, plates and cutlery has the lowest capture rate—only 5 percent of the material collected enters the recycling stream.
- Plastic dishware is part of rigid plastics, which was added as a voluntary category for recycling in 2013—during the Waste Characterization Study period. It did not become a required recycling category until after the study ended. It can years for recycling rates to rise as New Yorkers learn about items added to the list of recyclables.

- Cardboard boxes and related paper products have one of the highest capture rates of any material, with 71 percent entering the paper recycling stream.
- The city has a long and uninterrupted history of paper recycling. The high capture rate may also reflect the ease of recycling large foldable items like boxes.
- Paper is the only material for which commodity prices exceed the cost of processing—meaning that New York City is paid to recycle paper.

## RESTORING THE WETLANDS

This past May the Douglas Manor Environmental Association (DMEA) applied to the Long Island Sound futures Fund (LISFF) for a \$60,000 planning grant to restore six acres of wetlands surrounding Memorial Field and north to the Point. LISFF, a private non-profit dedicated to improving wetlands in Long Island Sound, will announce grant awards October 1st of this year.

The proposed restoration will include removal of invasive Phragmites reeds, and re-introduce native plantings and "living shoreline" plantings to enhance wildlife habitat and strengthen the shoreline against storm surges. The project will also improve water quality in our surrounding sound.

The DMEA—whose mission includes protecting and enhancing our wetlands—formed a Wetlands Restoration Committee two years ago to research applying for funding from LISFF. We discovered that we must first apply for a "planning grant" to establish what condition the area to be restored is in and how best to restore it. Later on—once a restoration design is created—we will apply for an "implementation grant" to construct the actual restoration. The application process is daunting.

The DMEA hired an environmental consultant to help us and advise us. Partners and support from local organizations are required. The DMEA reached out to local organizations and we were pleased not only with the enthusiastic response, but the inventive efforts of some of our new partners to be part of the project. We have partnered with the Douglas Manor Association, the owner of the site; the Alley Pond Environmental Center (APEC); the Douglaston and Little Neck Douglaston Historical Society (DLNHS); the NYC Parks Department; Hofstra University; and local public schools MS67 and PS98. The Udalls Cove Preservation Committee sent an enthusiastic letter of support. Each organization will participate in and contribute to the project.

One of the most exciting aspects of this process was the creative involvement of the local schools. If DMEA is awarded the grant, MS 67 & PS 98 will be formulating an entire science curriculum for all grades at both schools for a period of 3 years that will involve more than 500 students and 16 teachers! In addition, Hofstra University students in the Department of Geology, Environment and Sustainability have been working on the project since the fall of 2015 doing coring samples of the wetlands, which reveal the geologic history of the site. They will be back this fall, conducting further sampling.

It was a tedious application process in a very competitive field. Keep your fingers crossed!

—Jamie Sutherland, Kevin Wolfe

The mission of the Douglas Manor Environmental Association is:

- To stimulate community participation in the planning, development, use, and maintenance of local parks and recreation areas.
- To preserve the scenic beauty of the Douglas Manor shore, with special emphasis on the remaining open space lands within the community and ecologically significant marshlands also its perimeter.
- To manage open space and recreational lands for use by the community, including the acquisition, holding, and transference of real property or interests in real property for community benefit.
- To promote public awareness of the environmental sensitivity and value of open space lands within the community.



The proposed wetland restoration site (left) looking North from Memorial Field toward Big Rock.

**LEAF BLOWER RESTRICTION  
LEGISLATION MAKES ITS WAY  
TO CITY HALL**

Summer months are here and we hope that residents are enjoying a quieter environment. We want to thank participating landscapers who have voluntarily stopped using leaf blowers upon customer request. As we bring more information about the negative health impacts due to the over use of gas powered leaf blowers, we hope that more residents will request the May 15-September 15 restriction of use.

Council Member Daniel Dromm introduced legislation Int. No. 59 – A local Law to amend the administration code of the city of New York, in relation to the sale and use of gas-powered leaf blowers. The DMEA and DMA have been working with Council Member Dromm’s office to try and assist them in passing this legislation to become law. On Monday June 27, 2016 Mike Gannon, Dr Lucy Weinstien, and myself were invited to testify in front of The New York City Council, Committee on Environmental Protection to support Council Member Dromms Int. 59. Along with our DMEA/DMA support testimony, Dr. Lucy Weinstein Chair, Environmental Health Committee New York Chapter 2, American Academy of Pediatrics delivered her medical evaluation on the negative health impacts that gas powered leaf blowers cause. Her testimony was very comprehensive and we truly thank her for all of her efforts in working with us. We also want to thank Douglaston resident Dr. Joseph Abularrage who is the President of the American Academy of Pediatrics for sponsoring Dr. Weinstein in joining us for this hearing.

Practical steps can be taken both by residents and government to achieve cleaner air and a quieter environment. The implementation of seasonal leaf blower restriction is such a step.

We look forward to continue to have a dialogue with our local Government Officials and move forward to implement a restriction of Gas Powered Leaf Blowers City-wide between May 15-September 15.

Please continue to ask your Landscaper to limit their use of Gas Powered Leaf Blowers. Together we can make a real difference. Enjoy your Summer!

Sincerely,  
Melanie McGillick  
DMEA



*l to r: Melanie McGillick, Mike Gannon, Dr. Lucy Weinstien outside City Hall*

**DEAR LANDSCAPER:**

Dear Landscaper, please don't use leaf blowers on my property from May 15th to September 15th. Thank you. Your satisfied customer,

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(Enclose this request along with your August landscaper’s bill and let’s enjoy a quiet summer.)