

Open to Summer

Even though the summer solstice has not arrived, Memorial Day says summer and we agree! Mark your calendar for an event that will launch family summer fun. The Gloucester Main Library is the scene and the time is six , Wednesday evening of June 12 and the program is RAISING BUTTERFLIES.

Talented naturalist Lucynda Carlton will delight and inform the participants about the habitat essential for raising butterflies. Your family will learn proper care and maintenance and what is needed to create a happy home for butterflies. This is a hands-on activity and the materials will be provided without cost, one habitat per family. See you there!

Long ago May thirtieth was called Decoration Day and decorate we did. We gathered flowers to decorate cemeteries and tossed blooms from the bridge across the Tonawanda Creek, quite sure those posies would find their way to the ocean. The holiday was marked by parade and speeches and concerts in the park with stores and schools closed. In an era predating TV, entertainment was homemade except for the occasional touring circus.

We were easily impressed and it was certainly awe-inspiring to see elephants walking along Washington Avenue on their way from the depot to Mr. Bogue's Forty Acres, where the kids in town would throng the fringes watching the tent go up. Because of the startling advances in scientific searches through telescopes and microscopes, we have more in our lives that inspires awe, from gene research to space exploration.

The overwhelming awe engendered by the first space photos of our small planet has faded into comfortable acceptance. What has not faded is the realization that our glorious blue Earth is a unit and the things that differentiate one part of the planet from another are inconsequential to the truth that what happens anywhere on earth affects us all. That earth is more than an opportunity for creating wealth for a few by using any means to extract the greatest monetary value from oceans, rivers, mountains, forests..

An economic model based on the unregulated extraction of natural resources is hailed as a promoter of every area's gross national income without doing the math that would diminish that grand figure by subtracting the costs resulting from the damage to the natural world, the loss of livability, community, and health. Nor is pollution of air and water counted.

Philosopher Nickolas Berdyaev commented that when economic data becomes the only measure of progress, there is no progress, and the present is not an improvement on the past. In every country there are examples where the beauty and integrity of an area is threatened by massive physical destruction to obtain a marketable product, as in Canada's boreal forests.

A new example is the ongoing loss of the natural wonders of Patagonia where environmentalists are focused on the massive hydroelectric project will harness the energy of two major rivers by means of a series of dams that will flood over 14,000 acres of one of the most biodiverse regions of the world. In addition to destroying the unique flora and fauna, the resultant flooding will also dislocate six indigenous communities. The Patagonian region of southern Argentina and Chili captures the magic that lies in vast landscapes of rainbows, snowdrifts, mountains.

Deadline Tomorrow:

May 31 is the last day to enter your application for the new Master Gardener Class starting September 3. Your opportunity to volunteer in your community, teach others to cultivate healthy landscape plants, even learn how to prune your own shrubs and trees. The fifty hours of

instruction will take place at Northside Christian Church, 1213 George Washington Memorial Hwy, York County on Tuesday and Thursday mornings, nine to noon. Check with <http://www.yorkcounty.gov/vce> or phone 804-693-2602.

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