

# THE CAROL HEANEY NATURE TRAIL



## NEWARK ACADEMY LIVINGSTON, NJ

### Carol J. Heaney Nature Trail

Encompassing 1.5 miles of marked walking trails, an astronomy lookout station, a pond, two outdoor classrooms, a bird blind and a wildflower hill, the nature trail is dedicated to the memory of Carol Heaney, a former biology teacher at Newark Academy who died in July, 2000 after a courageous battle with breast cancer. An esteemed teacher, an intellect, a humanist, an artist, and a lover of the outdoors, the trail commemorates the many ways in which Carol enhanced and enlivened life at our school.

Under the direction of Debra Tavares, science teacher and Department Chair, the school community volunteered many hours of service to map and construct the trail completing such tasks as digging post holes, making benches, spreading wood chips, and researching animal and plant life indigenous to the area. Principally funded by an Ohaus Grant, generous donations were also received from individual parents and faculty and the parents association.

Please take time to walk the trail, read the poems on Poet's Path, listen for the songs of the many birds that live here and enjoy quiet moments of reflection. We ask that you adhere to the requests for proper trail use so that others who come after you may enjoy the same experience.

### REGULATIONS

1. Stay on the marked trail.
2. Trail is for foot traffic only. Motor vehicles and horses are strictly prohibited. Mountain biking with permission only.
3. Trails are open from dawn to dusk. During school hours, students must have permission to use the trail.
4. Injury, disturbance, damage or removal of botany, structure, rock, plant, cultural material, bird or animal is strictly forbidden.
5. Fires are not permitted on the trail, including smoking.
6. Carry out all trash and refuse. There are no trash receptacles on the trail.

### History of the Area (1)

In 1964 Newark Academy moved its campus from First Street in Newark to the current site, purchasing 68 acres bordered by what are now South Orange Ave., Eisenhower Parkway and the Cedar Ridge Reservoir.

Long before the first humans walked this area, however, an immense polar ice-cap stretched from the North Pole to this area. While a wide river had previously eroded deep channels into the sandstone and shale bedrock, the retreating glacier left millions of tons of sand, gravel and stone in its wake. The loop area of the trail is part of this glacial till.

The original residents of the area were the Leni-Lenape Indians, part of the Delaware nation. Principally forest dwellers, they lived by hunting game in the area. The nearby Passaic River provided ample water for fishing. In 1699 early colonists bought the parcel of land from the Indians that is now between the Passaic River and Newark Academy. Because the glacial stone and poor soil created poor farming conditions, the colonists turned to logging the hardwood timber and the cedar trees and sold it to the builders of surrounding towns and cities. Some of the more uphill land away from the river, toward the school, was able to be used for pasture and orchards. As a result, Newark's rising leather industry received two important products from the area—the hides of cattle and oak bark for tanning them. A major tannery existed on the old Squire property of Livingston just to the north of the trail.

The cattle kept the pastures cleared of all young trees except the cedar trees due to their sharp needles. Consequently, the farmers allowed the cedars to grow large enough and then cut and sold them as fence posts because of their excellent rot resistant qualities.

As you walk the trail through the woods, note evidence of early settlement in the stone walls toward the west and north sides, the relatively young hardwood trees and the presence of cedar trees throughout. Keep an eye out for the many kinds of small wildlife who come to forage for the hickory nuts and acorns of the many oaks.

- (1) Information obtained from the Livingston Conservation Council Cedar Ridge Trail Pamphlet

### Trail Markers

The trail is marked by numbered wooden posts to help you navigate the trail. You will also note along the way copper identification tags highlighting points of interest. Take an extra special stop at the following post markers to observe the natural life of the trail.

**Classroom #1:** Wooded site; charts of edible plants, indigenous animals, tree identification

**#1-#3** Poet's Path poems; Sugar maple tree (*Acer saccharum*)  
Sassafras tree (*sassafras albidum*); Nuttall oak, pin oak  
and red oak trees (*Quercus nuttallii*)

**#4** Poet's Path poem; stone walls; main trail goes Left

**#5** Invasive species of grapevine overtaking indigenous growth;  
Black oak (*Quercus velutina*)

**#6** Crossroad of the trail... bear Left at the fork; Northern white  
cedar (*Thuja occidentalis*)

**#8** White cedar trees (*Thuja occidentalis*)

**#9** Invasive species takes over and breaks through tree canopy;  
Common hoptree (aka water ash) (*Ptelea trifoliata*)

**#10** Dogwood trees (*Cornus florida*); black oak grove (*Quercus  
velutina*); American Hornbeam (*Carpinus caroliniana*)

**#12** Chipmunk borroughs; white oak (*Quercus alba*); Shagbark  
hickory (*Carya ovata*)

**#14** American beech tree (*Fagus grandifolia*)

**#22** Shagbark hickory tree (*Carya ovata*)

**# 23** Fallen giant tree; white ash tree (*Fraxinus Americana*)

**# 26** Giant white oak (*Quercus alba*)

**# 35** Look for great blue herons, ibis, gulls and kingfishers in  
the reservoir; bat house on tree

**# 38** Astronomy Lookout; bluebird houses on wildflower hill

**# 39** Lady bug house on the tree

**# 40** Freshwater pond; look for snapping turtles, frogs, snakes:  
**DO NOT PUT HANDS IN THE WATER**; look for  
swamp reed, sawgrass, cattails and pickerel weed (has  
small purple flowers)

**Classroom #2:** Pond site; wren houses; animal track board;  
rain gauge; sundial

