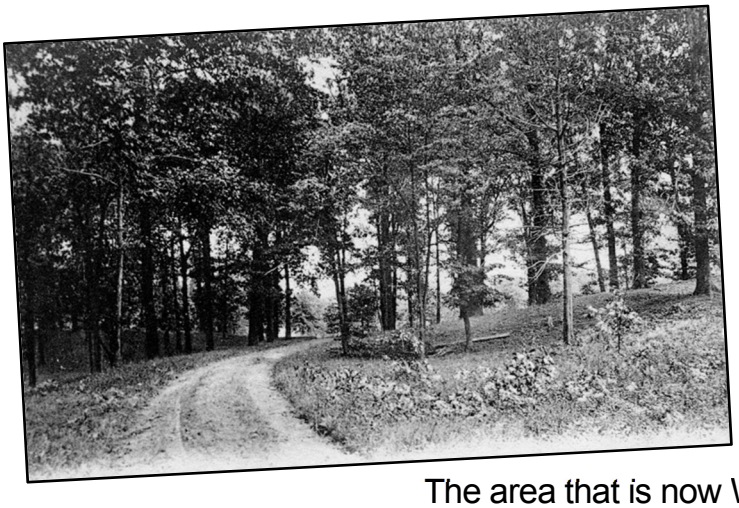
NannyKids

Edition #7 *The Metuchen-Edison Historical Society Newsletter for "Kids"* Fall 2015

Welcome to our Woodwild Park edition of *NannyKids*. We hope you learn a little about the park and decide to go for a visit. The following was written by the Woodwild Park Association (WPA), the organization that takes care of the park. To learn more about them, visit www.woodwildpark.org.

Woodwild Park, A Natural Wonder



Woodwild Park is a 3.5-acre natural park and wildlife sanctuary in Metuchen, New Jersey, bordered by Middlesex, Oak, and East Chestnut Avenues. The park is one of the few places in Metuchen that has remained undeveloped, thanks to the foresight and generosity of Charles and Elizabeth Corbin. In 1897, the Corbins donated the land and chartered the Woodwild Park Association in order to preserve it.

The area that is now Woodwild Park was originally the site of an estate house that was built by Thomas W. Strong in the mid 1800s. The four stone pillars that stood at the entrance to the estate still stand on Middlesex Avenue and now mark the entrance to the park.

There is a 14-foot difference in elevation between the highest and lowest points in the park. This rugged topography was carved by a glacier during the most recent ice age. The low point is a "kettle hole", a geologic formation created by a large block of glacial ice that was buried among rocks and debris, leaving a depression which has since become a seasonal pond. The pond is visited by ducks and serves as a watering hole for deer and other wildlife, including a diverse array of resident and migratory birds that prefer a "wild" environment.

Oak Avenue includes the antique "horse trough" that is one of the symbols of Metuchen and also a part of Woodwild Park. In 1900, the trough was erected as a water fountain by the Woodwild Park Association at a cost of $450, a sum equivalent to over $10,000 in year 2011 dollars.

Top left: An early twentieth century postcard image of Woodwild Park. *Right:* One of the stone pillars that mark the entrance to the park. *Bottom Left*: An early image of the "Horse Trough" when was located very close to Middlesex Avenue. It was later moved back to sit further from the road.

Any comments or suggestions for future editions? Contact us by email at "ayersallenhouse@msn.com" or mail to NANNYKIDS, c/o the Metuchen-Edison Historical Society, P.O. Box 61, Metuchen, NJ 08840. ***NannyKids* is published by The Metuchen-Edison Historical Society, Tyreen A. Reuter, Editor.**

Walk in the Park!

Over 100 different species of plants – trees, shrubs, flowers, and, yes, weeds – can be found in Woodwild Park, including Black Oak, Red Oak, White Oak, Mockernut Hickory, Shagbark Hickory, Black Birch, American Beech, Tulip, Sweetgum, Red Maple, White Ash, Sassafras, Sweet Cherry, Black Cherry, Flowering Dogwood, Gray Birch, Willow, Highbush blueberry, Lowbush blueberry, Pinxter flower, Deerberry, Arrowwood, Blackhaw, Mapleleaf viburnum, Elderberry, Wild grape, Japanese honeysuckle, and Virginia creeper.

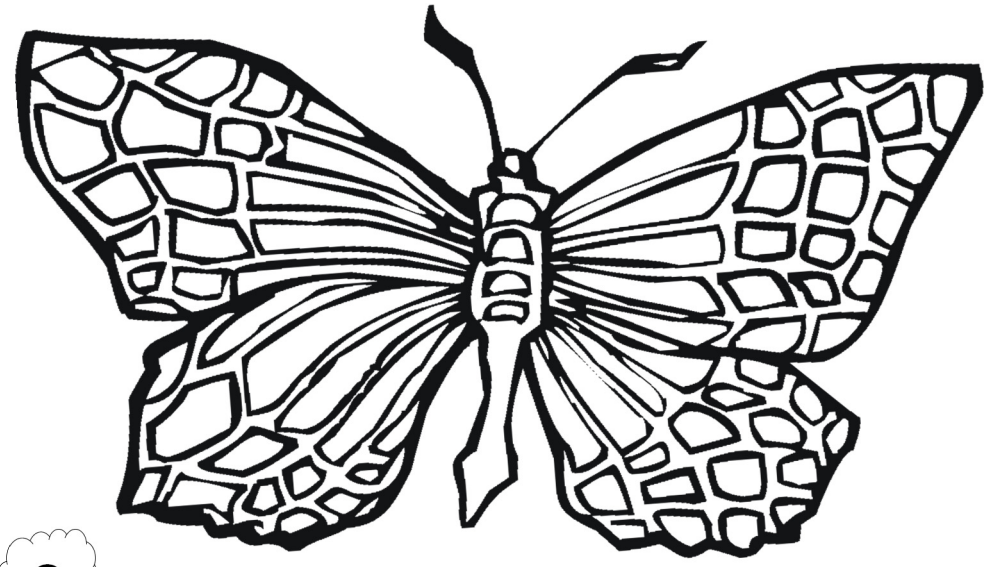
The park is managed by the Woodwild Park Association, a group of volunteers dedicated to maintaining and preserving the park for future generations. The park is meant for passive recreation and there are trails for walkers and bicyclists, but automobiles and other motorized vehicles are not permitted in the park.

Park Residents

Above are some of the "residents" who have been photographed in the park. On the top left is a Red Fox and on the bottom left are three White Tailed Deer. On the top right is a Hooded Warbler (bird) and on the bottom right is a Painted Lady butterfly. Don't forget to take your own camera when you visit the park!

Colorful History

This beautiful house at 300 Middlesex Avenue in Metuchen was built between 1907 and 1910 by Charles Corbin, one of the donors of Woodwild Park, for his wife. They named the home "Woodstock." Enjoy coloring local historic sites? Limited quantities of our *Coloring Book of Metuchen Architecture* are still available for $5 each, (plus shipping if applicable) via www.metuchen-edisonhistsoc.org.



Just for Laughs…

Why do we *park* in the DRIVEway and *drive* on the PARKway?

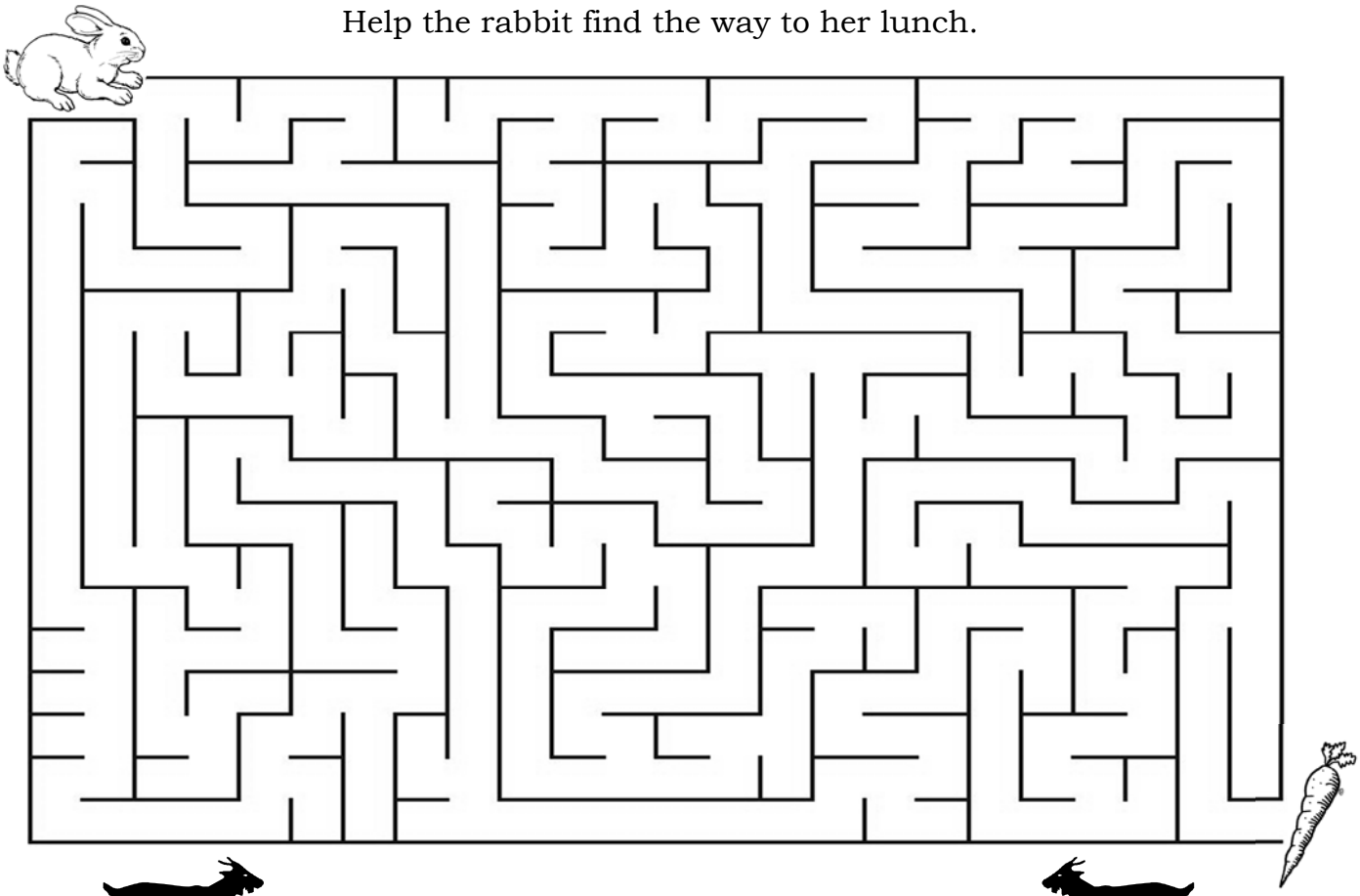
What did the tree say to his pesky little brother?
Leaf me alone!

What is the one kind of vegetable that oak trees like?
A-corn.

What exactly is a *Nannykid*? J. Lloyd Grimstead, *a local historian who took almost 3000 pictures* of the Metuchen-Edison area during the 1930s, collected anecdotes, articles, and reminiscences about our local history. Instead of "anecdotes," he nicknamed them "nannygoats," which has a similar sound. The Society calls its newsletter *Nannygoats* in honor of Mr. Grimstead, and, since young goats are called "kids," these editions are *Nannykids*.

Lost in the Woods!

Help the rabbit find the way to her lunch.



Word Find

Bark
Birch
Branch
Corbin
Deer
Dogwood
Duck
Elderberry
Fox
Glacier
Glen
History
Honeysuckle
Kettle
Leaf
Maple
Oak
Painted Lady
Park
Preserve
Rabbit
Sassafras
Seasons
Seeds
Skunk
Sled
Squirrel
Strong
Tree
Trough
Volunteers
Walk
Warbler
Willow
Woods
Woodstock

S	W	O	O	D	S	T	R	O	N	G	H	U	H	L	T
Q	U	P	R	O	O	F	C	O	R	B	I	N	O	O	R
U	G	A	W	G	L	E	N	S	E	A	S	O	N	S	O
I	L	I	A	W	I	L	L	O	W	T	T	R	E	E	U
R	A	N	R	O	A	P	T	U	B	S	O	N	Y	K	G
R	C	T	B	O	S	A	S	S	A	F	R	A	S	E	H
E	I	E	L	D	E	R	B	E	R	R	Y	D	U	T	L
L	E	D	E	O	A	K	F	E	K	I	D	U	C	T	F
B	R	L	R	L	W	O	O	D	S	T	O	C	K	L	A
I	M	A	P	L	E	L	X	S	K	U	N	K	L	E	F
R	I	D	E	E	R	V	O	L	U	N	T	E	E	R	S
C	O	Y	E	P	R	E	S	E	R	V	E	W	A	L	K
H	R	A	B	B	I	T	E	D	E	B	R	A	N	C	H

What other words can you find hidden in the puzzle?