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### Pupils to pounce on park litter

June 11, 2003

**MARK WEINER**  
ENVIRONMENT NOTEBOOK

Inspired by scientists who conducted a "bioblitz" to catalog plants and animals in Elmwood Park last month, some Syracuse elementary school pupils have come up with a unique follow-up.

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Children in three classes at Roberts Elementary School in Syracuse plan to conduct a "litter blitz" at Elmwood Park next week to clean up as much trash and debris as they can find.

The pupils came up with the idea after a 24-hour inventory of the park's biodiversity conducted by faculty and students at the State University College of Environmental Science and Forestry in Syracuse.

The second-grade and kindergarten pupils from Roberts will join staff from the Centers for Nature Education in Marcellus to clean litter from the park. Their blitz is planned for 10:30 a.m. Tuesday. The rain date is June 18.

The cleanup is one of three activities to celebrate the end of the school year, and the end of the first year of the Neighborhood Opportunity Based Environmental Learning Program, or NOBEL.

NOBEL's goal is to introduce city teachers and school administrators to elementary-age environmental education activities and programs, using Syracuse parks as outdoor classrooms.

"The idea for the litter blitz really came from one of the classes," said Carol Stokes-Cawley, the NOBEL program director. "I suggested an end-of-year

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celebration with a picnic in the park. But the teachers suggested a litter blitz."

She said pupils in Nina DeFio's and Adele Toney's second-grade classes at Roberts are eager to do the cleanup. Pupils recently noticed a large sneaker, a belt and a folding chair among the litter in Furnace Brook at Elmwood Park.

After the cleanup, the second-graders and Joan Siple's kindergarten class will play nature games and picnic in the park.

Hazardous-waste collection Onondaga County residents who want to properly dispose of unused paint, pesticides or other household chemicals will have a bonus opportunity this year.

For the first time in its history, the Onondaga County Resource Recovery Agency plans a summer collection of household hazardous waste. The free collection normally takes place once each spring and fall.

OCRRA added a third collection this year in response to public requests. If the extra collection proves to be popular, it could become permanent, said Andrew Radin, OCRRA's recycling director.

The collection from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. July 19 will take place at OCRRA's Ley Creek Transfer Station on Seventh North Street in Salina.

Although the service is free, reservations are required. Call OCRRA's automated line at 453-2870 or visit the Web site at [www.ocrra.org](http://www.ocrra.org) to make a reservation. Forever wild Another big chunk of Adirondack land will be preserved under an agreement disclosed Monday by state environmental officials.

The state Department of Environmental Conservation made a deal with an environmental group and a loggers association to protect 840 acres along the Moose River in the town of Webb, Herkimer County.

DEC Commissioner Erin Crotty said the deal will allow the state to buy a 333-acre parcel between the Adirondack Scenic Railway and the Moose River. The state will buy the land from the Adirondack Nature Conservancy. The land will be added to the state's Forest Preserve.

The Northeastern Loggers Association will buy the remaining property, which will be subject to a state conservation easement. The easement will allow for sustainable forestry, encourage forestry education and interpretation, and outline public recreation rights, Crotty said. Mark Weiner covers environment and science issues for The Post-Standard. To reach him, call 470-2274 or send e-mail to [citynews@syracuse.com](mailto:citynews@syracuse.com).

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