

## Long- (and short-) range plan completed



Developing the District's new long-range plan has been a sizeable effort – more than a year in the making – but the time and energy were both well-spent. Because setting a steady course for the future in these challenging times is not something that can be done easily or quickly.

With conditions in the external environment so unpredictable, we knew we couldn't rely on previous models to guide us in the planning process, so we enlisted the help of the Bayer Center for Non-profit Management, an organization that is focused on helping nonprofits navigate today's tough conditions.

We also invited area citizens to be a part of the process so that we could get a wide range of perspectives, and more than 300 took us up on it.

Over the months that we thought, and met and talked, five major areas for the District's focus emerged: programs, finance, the GreenForge building, marketing, and organizational capacity. The goals in two of these five areas – finance and GreenForge – directly related to securing our financial condition.

The sluggish economy, state budget cuts, fewer foundation dollars, and uncertainty over whether the legislature would vote to tax Marcellus Shale drilling and allocate a portion to conservation districts all created significant uncertainty in the stability of our revenue stream. So securing our financial base became our first priority – our "short-term" plan – and how well we did that would determine the extent to which we will be able to address the major goals

*continued on page 2*

### Long-range plan goals

**Programs** – Provide vital and progressive quality programs to meet the needs of our local citizens through effective partnership and community service.

**Finance** – Achieve a sustainable, positive net asset position to ensure the District's continuity.

**GreenForge** – Maintain GreenForge as a standard for low-impact green development, as an environmental model, and as a conservation incubator, while moving it to financial sustainability within three years.

**Marketing** – Be the first in mind conservation resource for targeted audiences and build organization identity among the public.

**Organization** – Ensure the integrity and quality of leadership is maintained and developed.

Mark your calendar –  
Support the District  
On December 1  
With Westmoreland Gives



On Wednesday, December 1, every dollar you donate to the Westmoreland Conservation District via [www.westmorelandgives.org](http://www.westmorelandgives.org) will earn a little more.

From 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. on that one day only, when you go to that website and use your credit card to make a gift to the District, the Community Foundation will also give the District a donation from its pool of matching funds.

## Westmoreland Conservation District Supports Severance Tax



Photo by Stephen Simpson [www.takeavirtualhike.com](http://www.takeavirtualhike.com)

The 300 miles of streams in Westmoreland County that still run orange with iron oxide some 50 years after most deep coal-mines closed down are a daily reminder that Pennsylvania needs to make very certain that natural resource extraction is done wisely.

Part of that assurance can come in the form of dollars and cents – a tax on the extraction of natural gas – and allocating part of that tax to support the front-line people who work with industry to ensure that extraction is done with

*continued on page 10*





### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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- Kathryn Hamilton, RLA, *Landscape Architect/Stormwater Technician*
- Robert D. Cronauer, *Watershed Specialist*
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- Dana Rizzo, *District/Penn State Extension Water Quality Educator*

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### PENN'S CORNER

#### Resource Conservation & Development

- Sherene Hess, *Coordinator*
- Vivian Bernardo, *Program Assistant*

## 2011 District Meeting Schedule



District meetings are open to the public and held at the District's headquarters, 218 Donohoe Road, Greensburg.

Agendas are posted on the District's website, [www.wcdpa.com](http://www.wcdpa.com), prior to each meeting.

In November, we host an Annual Awards Banquet in lieu of a monthly meeting.

- Wednesday, January 12, 11:00 a.m.
- Wednesday, February 9, 11:00 a.m.
- Wednesday, March 9, 11:00 a.m.
- Wednesday, April 13, 5:00 p.m.
- Wednesday, May 11, 5:00 p.m.
- Wednesday, June 8, 5:00 p.m.
- Wednesday, July 13, 5:00 p.m.
- Wednesday, August 10, 5:00 p.m.
- Wednesday, September 14, 5:00 p.m.
- Wednesday, October 12, 2:00 p.m.
- Wednesday, November 9, Annual Awards Banquet, time and place TBD
- Wednesday, December 14, 11:00 a.m.

*Long- (and short-) range plan completed continued from page 1*

related to programs, marketing, and organizational capacity.

As soon as we concluded the strategic plan in July, we got right to work on securing our financial position. We approached the problem along two major fronts: working to get a dedicated source of state funding...and conducting a comprehensive analysis of our investment in the GreenForge building, from its importance to the District to its ability to become sustainable.

### State Funding

The state of Pennsylvania provides a significant portion of our annual funding. In July, we began a letter-writing campaign, sending letters from our Chairman Roy Houston urging our state legislators to pass a severance tax\* on the extraction of natural gas and to dedicate a portion of it to conservation districts.

In September and October we stepped that effort up considerably, enlisting the help of all of our board and associates to urge state legislators to not only pass a tax on Marcellus Shale extraction, but also to allocate \$15 million of it to conservation districts.

Thanks to the tremendous support of our board and associates who personally advocated for this tax allocation, we were able to reach each legislator multiple times via U.S. mail, email, and telephone leading up to both the House and Senate votes.

And although the House voted to pass a severance tax, the Senate refused

to take action, apparently killing the tax in this legislative session. As of now, Pennsylvania retains its dubious distinction as the only state with underground shale that doesn't impose a natural gas tax.

### GreenForge

At the same time that we were working to secure state funding, we also began to take a hard look at the investment of time, energy, and money we have made in GreenForge, the model green building on our campus.

We began talking with the other key players involved in this unique conservation facility to explore ways to make the building more self-sustaining.

The goal is to have GreenForge financially sustainable by December 30, 2013.

### Next Steps

How successful we are in our efforts to secure the District's finances will determine how ambitious we are able to be in setting objectives in the other key areas identified in the long-range plan: program, marketing, and organization.

The new long-range plan is designed to guide the District for the next three to five years.

\* Severance taxes are excise taxes on natural resources "severed" from the earth. They are measured by the quantity or value of the resource removed or produced. In the majority of states, the taxes are applied to specific industries such as coal mining and natural gas or oil production. They are usually payable by the severer or producer.

— National Conference of State Legislatures



# Energy Conservation Workshops Launched in Westmoreland County

When Westmoreland County recently received stimulus funding to improve the energy efficiency of county facilities, the Westmoreland County commissioners wanted to share the wealth. So they set aside a portion of the funds to help area schools, businesses, nonprofit organizations, and municipalities learn how to add energy efficiencies to their buildings as well.

The money was used this fall to host four free energy-education workshops, each customized to show the particular audience how to identify energy guzzlers, ways to save energy, and the funding available to help. The county commissioners' allocation also was used to create and launch a new website of energy-conservation information and resources, <http://energyefficiency.wcdpa.com>.

"The commissioners know that reducing energy consumption throughout Westmoreland County benefits everyone. When government, schools, businesses and organizations can spend less on their operating costs, they're able to hold the line on the costs they pass on to consumers and taxpayers," explained Jason Rigone, deputy director of Westmoreland County's Industrial Development Corporation, who is spearheading the energy-conservation effort.

The District worked with the county on the energy workshops and website, and is continuing to be involved by serving as the point of contact, connecting people who are looking to save energy with the energy-conservation resources available.

In time, the District's involvement could grow. "Our new long-range plan\* encourages us to evaluate our program offerings on a regular basis," explained Greg Phillips, District manager/CEO, "and one area we're looking hard at is energy conservation. It is not one of our core programs, but if we find that that people in Westmoreland County want a local resource that can help them save energy, and if we can find the funding to support it, we'll look into making this a new program area."

The District has always recognized the connection between natural resource conservation and energy use and, as



All four of the free energy education workshops featured top-notch speakers and were well-attended by Westmoreland County building owners and decision-makers representing nonprofit organizations, municipalities, large and small businesses, and schools.

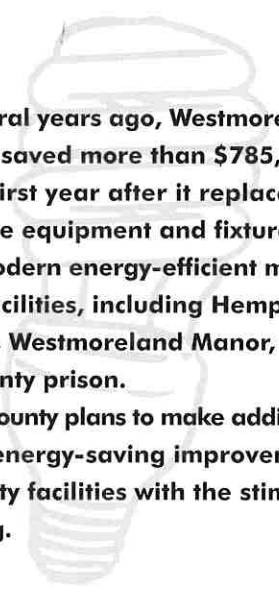
The energy workshops were sponsored by Westmoreland County, the Westmoreland Conservation District, and Allegheny Power.

Seminar materials are available at <http://energyefficiency.wcdpa.com>.

far back as 1992, included energy conservation as a major goal of the organization's long-range plan.

Over the years, the District has created a number of demonstrations – such as installing geothermal heating and cooling systems in both its headquarters and in the GreenForge building – to introduce area citizens to effective ways to save energy. It also has hosted seminars, including a biennial "Sustainable Energy Field Day" that attracts several hundred people.

\*See page 1.



Several years ago, Westmoreland County saved more than \$785,000 in the first year after it replaced obsolete equipment and fixtures with modern energy-efficient models in its facilities, including Hempfield Towers, Westmoreland Manor, and the county prison.

The county plans to make additional major energy-saving improvements to county facilities with the stimulus funding.

## ENERGY CONSERVATION CORNER

### Energy efficiency begins with a plan.

Most organizations and businesses that have seen a sharp reduction in energy use have formed an internal committee and written a plan that outlines their organizational commitment to using less gas, electric and water; recycling products and materials; and forming an Economic and Environmental Sustainability Committee.

For more tips, go to <http://energyefficiency.wcdpa.com>.





## Partnership Solves Problems, Improves Safety in West Leechburg



At the West Leechburg dam site: Nicole Miller, erosion control specialist, Westmoreland Conservation District; John Neel, superintendent, Ligonier Construction, the company doing the removal work; Lucien Bove, PE, borough engineer; Leonard Kotvas, West Leechburg Councilman; Christine Wilson, Bove Engineering, inspector for the project; and Tom Sierzega, district conservationist, Natural Resources Conservation Service.

“When I was a kid, I stood here and watched them build it...and now, 61 years later, I’m here again, watching them take it down,” Leonard Kotvas mused as heavy equipment pushed away the earthen breastwork of the West Leechburg dam this past July, dismantling the spring-fed reservoir whose water quality was legendary among both local residents and businesses like Allegheny Ludlum, which installed a special pipe to bring reservoir water to its boiler.

Removing the dam has been an emotionally difficult but financially necessary decision for West Leechburg Borough, whose 1,200 residents have been paying for yearly inspections, maintenance, repairs and, most significantly, liability insurance on the 27-acre dam since the early 1990s when the West Leechburg Water Authority disbanded and the site stopped being used as a source of the town’s water.

Borough Council had been searching

in earnest for money to remove the dam since 2002, when an outlet pipe began leaking and they were forced to drain the 60-million-gallon reservoir. In 2008, even though council still had no funding to remove the dam, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection placed it on the unsafe list, meaning it had the potential to fail during heavy rains or flooding. Six people on the lower end of Jantosik and First streets, part of the Norfolk and Southern railroad line, and a Kiski Valley Water Pollution Control Authority pump station could have been affected if the dam failed.

In 2009, Jim Pillsbury, the Westmoreland Conservation District’s hydraulic engineer, alerted the borough that stimulus funding\* was available through the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Natural Resources Conservation Service that could help pay for the dam removal, and facilitated a meeting between West Leechburg council members and Tom Sierzega, the area’s NRCS district conservationist.

That meeting led to West Leechburg submitting an application for stimulus funding under the Emergency Watershed Protection-Flood Plain Easement Program. Last fall, the council was notified that its application had been reviewed and was approved. Total cost of the project is currently estimated to be in the range of one-half million dollars, all of which will be funded.

Removal work at the dam began in early July, and was completed at the end of August. Most of the earth on the site will stay there, but be recontoured to take down the high dam breastwork and fill in the reservoir, which was as much as 60 feet deep in some places. When work is finished, the entire area will be seeded with grass.

The nearby stream, Penn Run, also will be restored as part of the project. “Our goal is to reestablish the stream valley to its natural flow,” Tom said, explaining that the stream will run through a new, rock-lined channel where the dam once was.





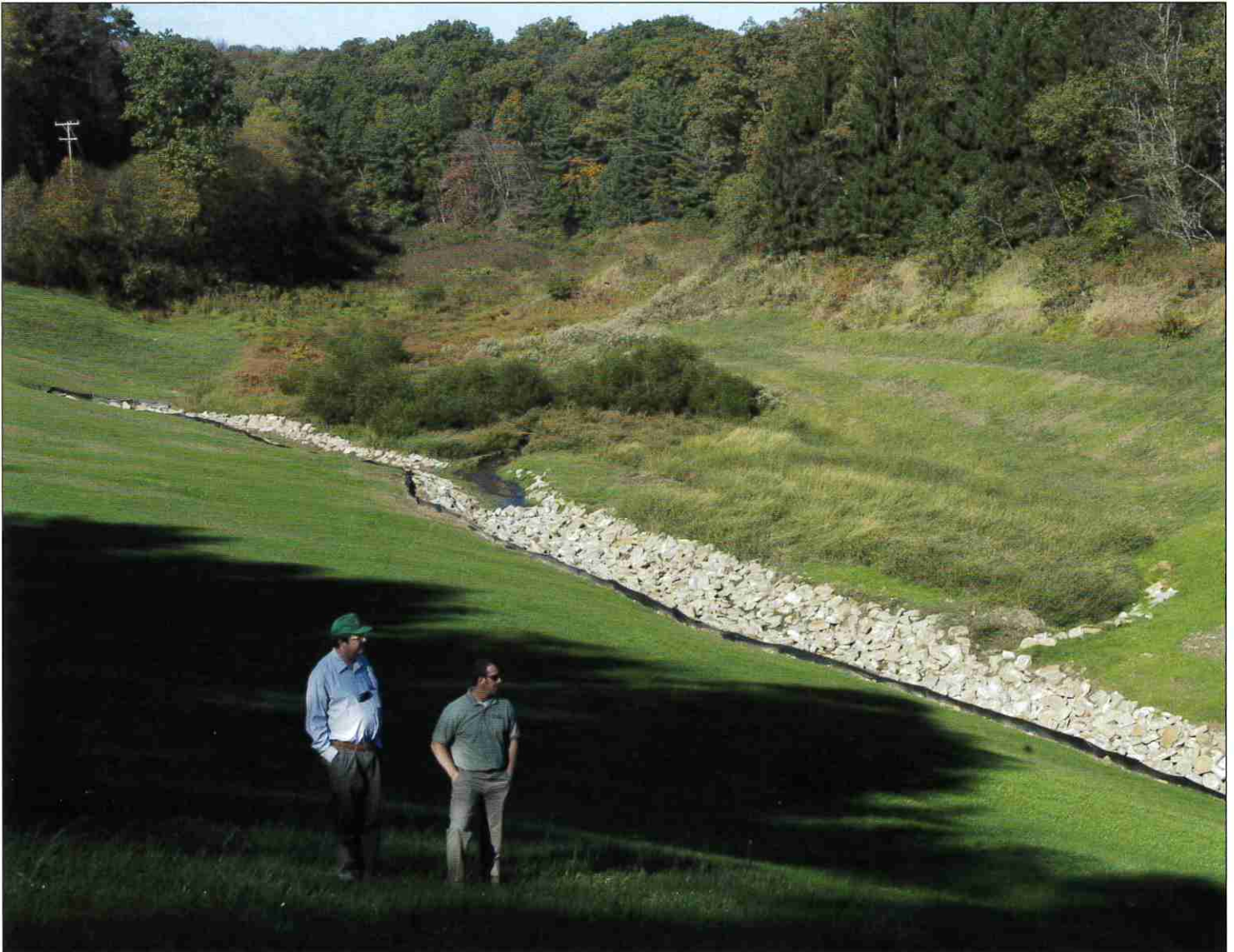
The project attracted many bidders and the winning bid was from Ligonier Construction. The company took down the 60-foot-high, 300-foot-long earthen breastwork and used it to fill the impoundment area of the former reservoir, which once had a capacity of 60,000,000 gallons of water.

The newly created stable stream channel will carry the flow of Penn Run through the former dam site.

In a nearby collaborative effort, work also is being done on Penn Run both upstream and downstream of the West Leechburg reservoir. Funding for this stream work is being provided by a different source – the Allegheny County Airport Authority – to compensate for the environmental impact the authority had on tributaries of Montour Run. As part of the airport authority funded work, some 3,900 trees and shrubs will be planted on all the work areas – around the stream, as well as on the site of the former reservoir.

Next spring, when all the work is finished, the area will look very natural, but also very different. “This dam was part of our history and I hate to see it go, but at least it got a gracious end,” Kotvas said.

*\* Stimulus funding is provided under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.*





# Conservation Work Enhances Nature

The following synopses show some of the projects the Westmoreland Conservation District is working on to improve the quality of our streams and other natural resources.

Good water quality is important to human health and aquatic life...the success of many commercial and industrial businesses...and the availability of quality recreation opportunities.

## Westmoreland Fairgrounds

*Sewickley Creek Watershed*

The latest effort to reduce stormwater runoff and erosion at the Westmoreland Fairgrounds was finished in May. A new 40-foot by 150-foot basin, capable of retaining more than 130,000 gallons of water, was created at the property's low point along Fairgrounds Road. It will catch water runoff from that road as well as from the parking lots and buildings on the hill above.

The new basin is the second to be installed at the fairgrounds. The first, an 80-foot by 200-foot one, was added last year to capture water runoff from the heavily used Grandstand Arena. A third basin is scheduled to be installed next year. It will manage most of the remaining water runoff from the fairground buildings and Fairgrounds Road.

All the work at the fairgrounds will directly benefit both the quantity and the quality of water in the Sewickley Creek Watershed, a 168-square mile area in the center of Westmoreland County.

Funding for the work at the fairgrounds is provided through an allocation by the Westmoreland County Commissioners from the Growing Greener II County Environmental Initiative Program. Significant matching funds (equipment and labor) were provided by Mount Pleasant Township for this most recent basin project.

**Work at the fairgrounds benefits everyone who lives downstream in the Sewickley Creek Watershed. That includes:**

- all of New Stanton, Youngwood, Madison, Arona and Hunker boroughs;
- all of Sewickley Township; and
- part of Hempfield, East Huntingdon, South Huntingdon, and Mount Pleasant townships.





# al Resources, Benefits Area Citizens

## Area Near Valley High School Little Pucketa Creek Watershed

When officials at the New Kensington-Arnold School District determined that an old, unused tennis court at the high school would make better sense as a parking lot, we helped them make the change in a way that resulted in double benefits – spaces for 39 cars and less stormwater running into Little Pucketa Creek.

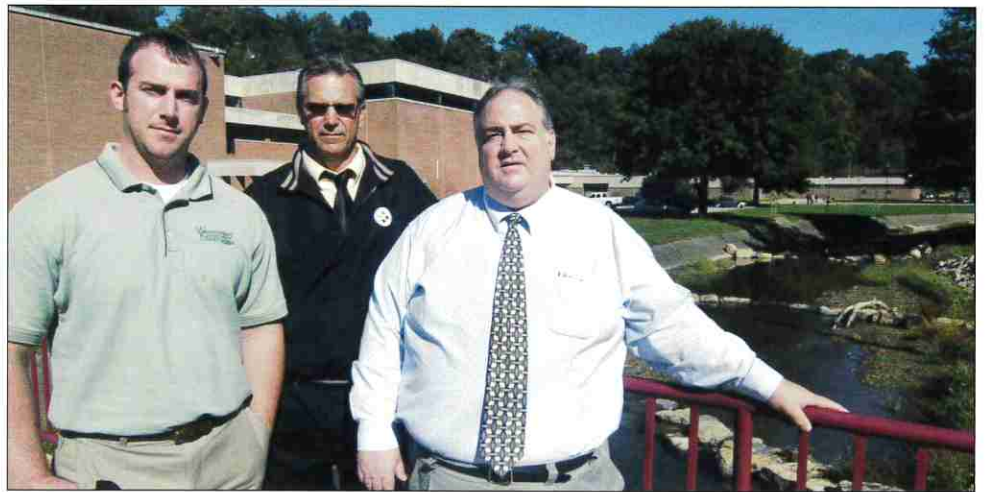
We did it by using special concrete pavers to create the parking lot. Unlike the totally solid surface of the old tennis court, the new pavers each have a gravel-filled center that gives rain and melting ice and snow a place to sink into the ground. This means that far less water runs off the surface of the lot and into the creek nearby, even though the new parking lot is the same size as the old tennis court, 100 feet by 150 feet.

The parking lot is the latest project in a two-year effort to improve water quality and lessen flooding in the Little Pucketa Creek Watershed. Working with the Pucketa and Chartiers Creek Watershed Association and school officials, we've been able to improve the flow of water in the stream near the high school by removing nearly 2,000 tons of debris from the creek bed...reduce the rate of erosion from the streambanks by adding 400 tons of rock to deflect and slow the water's flow...and improve water quality by planting trees.

**Work in the area of Valley High School benefits everyone who lives downstream in the Little Pucketa Creek Watershed.**

**That includes everyone in the city of:**

- **New Kensington.**



Thanks to Representative John Pallone (far right) who, along with former Senator Sean Logan, obtained state funding for the work being done on the stream near Valley High School. Money for the project also was provided by PennDOT, the Westmoreland County Commissioners (through the Growing Greener II County Environmental Initiative Program), and the Colcom Foundation. In all, more than \$400,000 in funds is being invested here.

Pictured with Representative Pallone are (l-r) Rob Cronauer, Westmoreland Conservation District and Mike Orr, New Kensington/Arnold School District.

The next project planned for Little Pucketa Creek is a debris basin. A debris basin is a large, bowl-shaped concrete pad that acts similar to the strainer in your kitchen sink. It catches things that could clog the creek – things like debris and sediment. The basin planned for the area upstream of Valley High School is a unique design, and would be the first of its kind in Westmoreland County. One like it was created in Allegheny County to help relieve problems along the flood-prone Girty's Run, which runs through Millville.



## Lydick Farm and Nearby Properties

### Stony Run Watershed

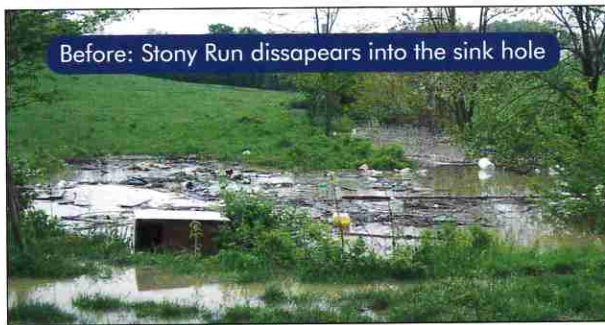
In Derry Township, we helped to prepare downstream neighbors for the effects of a very unique stream-restoration project on the Lydick Farm.

Years ago on this property, coal was deep-mined very shallowly beneath the stream, Stony Run. In time, the mine subsided, and a 20-foot-deep sinkhole formed. Stony Run actually disappeared into this sinkhole.

Over the past two years, the Lydick property was mined again to harvest some of the marketable coal still remaining near the surface. But this time, the mining work actually benefited the stream because it included an effort to repair the sinkhole and restore the stream to its original site on the surface of the ground.

The District prepared neighbors downstream of the Lydick Farm property for the re-appearance of the stream and the increased volume of water it would carry (an additional 500 acres of watershed runoff) by installing driveway culverts.

This unique stream-restoration project was made possible by the Department of Environmental Protection's



Before: Stony Run disappears into the sink hole



Restoring the streambed



Restored Stony Run flows through driveway culverts

Government-financed Construction Contract program, which gives a company the ability to mine and sell coal from an abandoned mine site in exchange for its agreement to reclaim the site. Funding for the District's work on the project was allocated by the Westmoreland County Commissioners through the Growing Greener II County Environmental Initiative Program.

**Work at and near the Lydick Farm benefits everyone who lives downstream in the Stony Creek Watershed. That includes:**

- Bairdstown and
- surrounding areas in Derry Township.

## Mansville Road

### Fourmile Run Watershed

For the first time ever, the District is investing its entire yearly allocation for dirt and gravel road improvements in just one project – repairing Mansville Road in Cook Township.

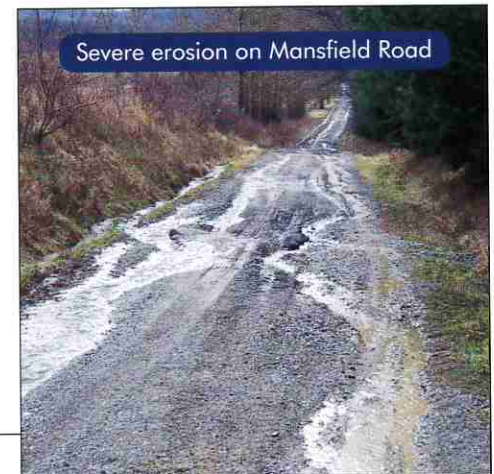
This dirt road is currently the worst in the county in terms of erosion and the amount of water that is typically on it. In fact, it often acts like more of a streambed than a roadway because, over its years of use, the road surface is as much as eight feet below the surface of the ground around it.

Work on the project started in October and will be done in two phases. By next fall, some 2,000 linear feet of this roadway not far from Routes 130 and 711 should be raised an average of four feet.

Improving this road will significantly reduce the amount of sediment that washes into the stream nearby, Fourmile Run, which is part of the Loyalhanna Watershed.

**Work on Mansville Road benefits everyone who lives downstream in the Loyalhanna Watershed. That includes nearly everyone in this 300-square-mile watershed, including those in the communities of:**

- Ligonier and
- Latrobe.



Severe erosion on Mansfield Road



Work begins



# Envirothon Winners

First place winners in the Envirothon, the annual, county-wide natural resources challenge, were Kiski Area High School Team #1, consisting of Mike Clinger, Kaitlin Martin, Matt Miller, George Petree, and Patrick Wilkinson.

Second place winners were Yough Senior High School Team #1. This team consisted of Cody Stepinsky, AJ Cieply, Sam Greenawalt, Chris Bugler, and Austin Mencer.

Third place winners were Yough Senior High School Team #2. This team consisted of Ryan Smith, Kirk Brown, Corey Cook, Roman Viecegli, and Scott Ponitz.

Awards were presented at the conclusion of the event by Westmoreland County Commissioner Ted Kopas.

Tracy Bash, systems analyst with the Municipal Authority of Westmoreland County, gave a short presentation to the students on where their water comes from and how the authority filters, stores, and distributes it to area homes.



In the Envirothon, teams of students in grades 9-12 are presented with a variety of challenges related to our natural resources. Students may be asked to measure a tree...analyze water from a stream...or examine soil to identify its characteristics.

Students work as a team to answer questions of fact, and use their critical thinking to find solutions to reality-based situations, such as how to balance the use and protection of our natural resources. Topics of the challenge include: forests, soil, wildlife, aquatic environments, and this year's special issue, which was protecting Pennsylvania's groundwater through urban, agricultural, and environmental planning.

Some 80 students participated in this year's event.

In addition to Kiski Area and Yough Senior High School, the following schools also had student teams in the event: Burrell, Derry Area Senior, Greensburg Central Catholic, Greensburg Salem, Mount Pleasant, and Southmoreland high schools...as well as The Kiski School. All schools, with the exception of Greensburg Central Catholic, registered two teams.

Faculty advisors for the teams are: Amy McGrath, Burrell; Roy Campbell and Lisa Campbell, Derry Area Senior; George Janik, Greensburg Central Catholic; Angelo Ross, Greensburg Salem; Ralph Lemmon, Kiski Area; Nancy Wells, The Kiski School; Betty Jo Breakiron, Mount Pleasant; Lindsay Di-Casolo and Josh Pajak, Southmoreland; and Greg King, Yough.



Kiski Area High School Team #1, as the winning Westmoreland County team, went on to compete against winning teams from other counties in the Pennsylvania State Envirothon in late May. They placed 22 out of 65 teams.



First place winners, Kiski Area High School Team #1.



Second place winners, Yough Senior High School Team #1.



Third place winners, Yough Senior High School Team #2.

A number of cooperating agencies assist the Westmoreland Conservation District in hosting the county Envirothon, including: The Pennsylvania Game Commission, the Pennsylvania Bureau of Forestry, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, Penn State Cooperative Extension Westmoreland County, and the Westmoreland County Bureau of Parks and Recreation.

Corporate contributors play a significant role in generously providing financial and in-kind support for this event. Special thanks for their support this year go to Kennametal Inc. and the Municipal Authority of Westmoreland County.



## People In The News

minimal impact on streams and waterways, soils, forests, and other elements of Pennsylvania's natural wealth.

The Westmoreland Conservation District Board of Directors recently unanimously passed a policy position to this effect, as follows.

- Adoption of a severance tax in Pennsylvania that extends not only to Marcellus Shale but to all natural gas extraction
- Dedicating a percentage of the severance tax proceeds to the Conservation District Fund to support the natural resource protection work of county conservation districts
- Dedicating additional, individual portions of the severance tax proceeds to counties and municipalities, the Environmental Stewardship Fund, the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, and the Pennsylvania Game Commission
- Returning 100% of the severance tax generated within a county to the above appropriations within that county.

Although the tax failed to pass in the recent legislative session, it may come up for a vote again.

We ask you to join with us in encouraging our elected officials to take the difficult but necessary action of voting to create a severance tax on all natural gas extraction...and dedicating a reasonable portion of it for natural resource protection.

### LANDMARKS

The Official Newsletter of the  
Westmoreland Conservation District

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### Directors and Associate Directors



Westmoreland County Commissioner **Ted Kopas** was appointed to the District Board of Directors.

Ted, a District associate director since 2004, was chosen unanimously by Westmoreland County's judges in May to serve on the Board of Commissioners following the resignation of Commissioner Tom Ceraso.

Commissioner Kopas then replaced Commissioner Tom Balya as the commissioners' delegate to the District.

Ted also is a member of the Board of Directors of the Westmoreland County Industrial Development Corporation, the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, Westmoreland Community Action, Emergency Food and Shelter Program and Westmoreland Land Trust.

### Staff



**Sandy Dzendzel** was promoted to director of administration.

Her new duties include managing the overall daily office operations, negotiating contracts, managing vendor relationships, overseeing network administration, and developing and managing the budget for all administrative departments.

She has been with the District since 2000.



**Mike Hamilton** joined the Westmoreland Conservation District in February to serve as the administrator of the two grants that are funding the innovative rain garden project in Mount Pleasant.

In this part-time position, Mike served as our liaison with officials in Mount Pleasant as well as with the residents of Ramsey Terrace, where many of the rain gardens are scheduled to be built.

He has a bachelor's and master's degree in environmental studies from the University of Pittsburgh and Youngstown State University respectively. In late September, Mike left the District to take a full-time job as a soil conservation technician with the Natural Resources Conservation Service in Donohoe Center.

### Interns

We were fortunate to have a record number of interns working with us this past summer.

**Zeki Alikaya**, a geology major at Oberlin College, worked with Rob Cronauer and Dana Rizzo on a variety of water-quality projects, tested soil samples, and helped to write a grant to reclaim a waste area.

**Laura Beskitt**, an environmental science major at Waynesburg University, spent three weeks with the District, on loan from her internship with the Municipal Authority of Westmoreland County, to conduct water sampling and testing for several abandoned mine drainage sites and horse farms.

**Marissa Keys**, an agroecology major at Penn State University, helped us with soil sampling on area horse farms.

**Matt Manley**, an energy, business, and finance major in the College of Earth and Mineral Sciences at Penn State University, spent three weeks with the District, on loan from his internship





Laura Beskitt, Andrea Romano, Matt Manley, Chris te Winkle.

with the Municipal Authority of Westmoreland County, to do soil and water sampling and testing.

**Andrea Romano**, a landscape architect major at Penn State University, returned to District for her second summer as an intern working on storm-water management projects, including the Mount Pleasant rain gardens and the Children's Garden at Scottdale Library.

**Chris te Winkle**, a graduate of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, applied his knowledge of geography and GIS by mapping agricultural operations in Westmoreland County.

### Transitions



**Larry Stokum**, soil conservation technician with the Natural Resources Conservation Service, retired on April 30.

Larry was a familiar face to many area farmers, having worked for more than 30 years to help add contour strips and other improvements on agricultural operations throughout the local area.

Larry joined the Natural Resources Conservation Service as a full-time employee in 1980. He had served as a part-time field employee for four years prior to that.



**Robert Hepler**, a charter member of the Sewickley Creek Watershed Association and a long-time champion of such innovative stream-clean-up projects as those at Lowber and Brinkerton, passed away last November at age 85.

to plant wheat and soybeans. The conservation work that the Baughmans did adds to the quality of the local stream, which flows directly into Beaver Run, the source of drinking water for some 50,000 homes and businesses in Westmoreland County.

Bob Berich, Conservation Farmer of the Year for 2009, also installed a rotational grazing system on the 50-acre farm he owns in South Huntingdon Township. Bob rotationally grazes his state-certified Angus beef cattle and the legacy sheep herd that was his father's, letting the sheep into a paddock right after the cows have been there to pick out the things that the cattle didn't eat.

Like the Baughmans, Bob, too, installed streamside fencing and three stream crossings to limit the access his animals have to the tributary of Meadow Run (Jacobs Creek Watershed) that flows through his farm.

The Mount Pleasant rain garden project is an innovative partnership effort to install rain gardens in both municipal and residential locations throughout the borough as a way to help manage excess rainwater and lessen the load on the municipal infrastructure. So far, rain gardens have been installed in the municipal parking lot behind Levin's (four gardens at this location), between the library and municipal building (one rain garden here), and on 11 individual homeowner lots in Ramsay Terrace.

The 2010 Annual Awards Banquet is supported by a number of area businesses and organizations, including lead sponsor Adam Eidemiller, Inc.; and table sponsors Bove Engineering Co.; Gibson-Thomas Engineering Co., Inc.; Ligonier Construction; Lone Maple Agricultural Services/Pritts Feed Mill/Hildenbrand Lime & Fertilizer; R.A. Smith National; Smart Growth Partnership, a program of Penn State Cooperative Extension; Tri-County Engineering; and Westmoreland County Parks and Recreation Citizens Advisory Board.

## NATURALLY Delicious

by Karen Barnhart



### TANDY KAKE

#### Cake

- 4 eggs
- 2 cups sugar
- 1 cup milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 2 cups flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon salt

Mix all of the above ingredients and put in an 11" X 17" greased and floured pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 12-15 minutes or until done.

Spoon on 1 cup peanut butter while hot. Do not spread – wait 5 minutes then spread. Cool until firm.

#### Frosting

- ¼ cup margarine, melted
- 3 tablespoons cocoa
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 pound powdered sugar
- enough milk to make smooth

Combine all frosting ingredients. Spread on cooled cake.



# National Association of Conservation Districts' New CEO Visits



Jeff Eisenberg (seated, second from left) is joined by (seated, l-r): Westmoreland County Commission Chairman Tom Balya, NACD Grassroots Coordinator Danielle Dills, NACD Director of Communications Bethany Shively, and Westmoreland Conservation District Chairman Roy Houston; (standing, l-r): Westmoreland Conservation District CEO/Manager Greg Phillips, NACD Director of Legislative Affairs Karl Anderson, Westmoreland Conservation District Vice Chairman Ron Rohall, and Associate Director Chuck Duritsa.

The new CEO of the National Association of Conservation Districts, Jeff Eisenberg and several members of his staff traveled from Washington, D.C. to visit to the Westmoreland Conservation District on September 28.

District Vice Chairman Ron Rohall coordinated the day-long visit, which gave the NACD staff a chance to learn more about the work the District does, particularly in urban areas; to meet many of the District's partners; and to tour the passive wetland abandoned mine treat-

ment at Monastery Run in Latrobe.

Jeff Eisenberg is a lawyer who has been associated with conservation issues for his entire career, including work with the U.S. Forest Service, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, and the Farm Service Agency. He became CEO of the National Association of Conservation Districts in January. The organization's mission is to serve conservation districts by providing national leadership and a unified voice for natural resource conservation.

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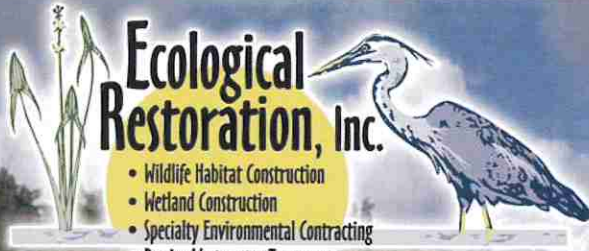
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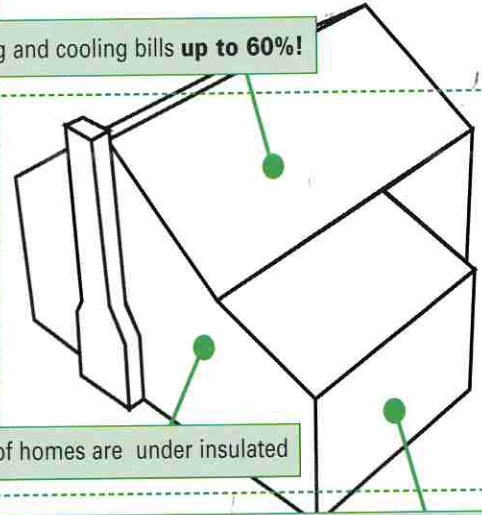
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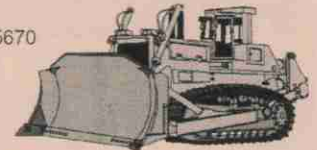
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## 2010 Annual Awards Banquet

Veterans Day, November 11, was the easy-to-remember date of our Awards Banquet this year and the venue was the sustainable, "green" Fred M. Rogers Center at Saint Vincent College, Latrobe.

As always, we enjoyed a delicious meal and honored those who have made significant contributions to conservation. This year's honorees were the 2009 Farmer of the Year, Bob Berich of South Huntingdon Township, and the 2010 Farmers of the Year, Wayne and Eileen Baughman of Salem Township.

Also featured that evening were the many partners who are working with the conservation district on an innovative, community project to install rain gardens in Mount Pleasant. Those partners include: the Borough of Mount Pleasant, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the Richard King Mellon Foundation, and a number of residents of Ramsay Terrace.

"We are pleased to be able to honor some of the many people who are doing



Wayne and Eileen Baughman



Bob Berich

great things for conservation in our county," said Greg Phillips, District manager/CEO.

Wayne and Eileen Baughman, Conservation Farmers of the Year for 2010, manage a small farm in Salem Township, where they have a herd of "Black Baldy" cattle (a cross between an Angus bull and Hereford cows) and grow a variety of crops, including small grains, hay, black raspberries, blackberries, sweet corn, tomatoes, and potatoes.

The Baughmans have made a variety of conservation improvements on their property over the past five years, adding fencing to keep the cows out of the stream, creating five paddocks so they can employ rotational grazing, installing roadways and water-runoff systems to prevent erosion, and using no-till methods to refurbish their pastures and