

Holding Back the Raging Waters

They didn't make headlines. In fact, they worked so well that hardly anyone noticed.

But if the Jacobs Creek flood control measures hadn't been there when a 25-year storm hit the area this past May 25, things would have been very different indeed.

The 4.5 inches of rain that fell in just 24 hours would have caused severe flooding—damaging property, undermining roads and bridges, and perhaps even endangering the lives of people in Scottdale, Everson, and surrounding areas. Long-term area residents may remember scenes like that when devastating floods, such as the one in 1972, hit their communities and left destruction and tragedy in their wake.

But today, the three dams and one channel that make up the flood control project quietly and effectively did the job of handling the onslaught of water that fell during the spring storm. This is at least the second time in two and a half years that potentially major floods hit the Jacobs Creek Watershed and passed through, under control, causing no damage to property and no interruptions for residents.

Many, many people were involved in making this important flood control project a reality. One was Orlando Capretto, who some twenty years ago, assumed responsibility for one of the project's most critical steps -- acquiring the property and the easements.

"The purchases were going to be cost-shared by the federal government, and the two counties involved in the

continued on page 6



The Franklin Regional team, pictured with Westmoreland County Commissioner Tom Balya (far left), placed first in the county competition and third in the state.

Envirothon Results

Fifty high school students from 10 area schools spent the better part of May 5 at Twin Lakes Park. They explored a soil pit, measured trees, and tested water samples. They analyzed the pros and cons of pesticide use. And they identified natural history items such as bird eggs and turtle shells.

It was all part of the Envirothon, a fun and challenging academic experience where students test their knowledge of the environment. This is the 12th consecutive year the District has sponsored this educational event.

At the end of the day, the team from Franklin Regional came out on top . . . Kiski Area High School students took second place . . . and the team from Derry Area High School placed third.

Also competing were five-member teams from Belle Vernon, Burrell, Greensburg Salem, Hempfield, Mt. Pleasant, Norwin, and Yough high schools.

As county Envirothon champs, Franklin

Regional then went on to compete on the state level at the Pennsylvania Envirothon on May 28 and 29 at Shawnee State Park, Bedford County. Of the 55 teams competing, Franklin Regional captured a very respectable third place.

A number of cooperating agencies assisted the Westmoreland Conservation District in hosting the county Envirothon, including: the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, the Pennsylvania Game Commission, the Pennsylvania Bureau of Forestry, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Westmoreland County Parks and Recreation Department, and Carnegie Museum's Powdermill Nature Reserve.

Corporate contributors play a significant role in generously providing financial and in-kind support. Major corporate underwriters of the 1997 Envirothon were: Innovative Environmental Services, Latrobe; Waste

continued on page 2

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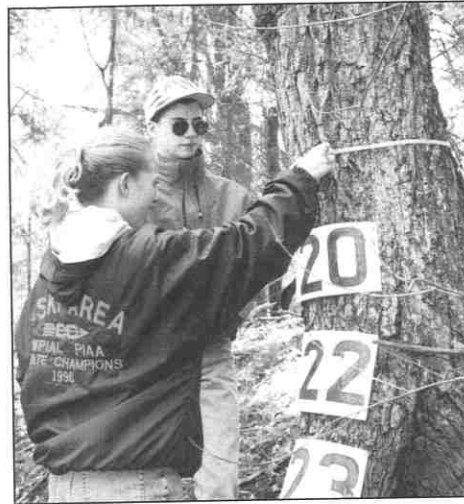
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

WESLEY M. GORDON, *District Conservationist*
 LARRY STOKUM, *Soil Technician*
 ROB KNIGHT, *Soil Scientist*

Envirothon
 continued from page 1

Management of Laurel Valley, Scottsdale; and Shop 'n Save, New Stanton. Beckwith Machinery Company, Murrysville, and the Westmoreland County Sportsmans League

provided additional financial support, and Catalyst Graphics and Jackson Graphics donated in-kind services.



Students test their knowledge of the environment at the Envirothon.



1997 WESTMORELAND COUNTY ENVIROTHON WINNERS

FIRST PLACE

Franklin Regional High School

Matthew Bragg
 Lindsey Shaginaw
 Matt Shiels
 Kevin Vargo
 Pat Vitale
 Tom Pearson & Linda Vitale, *faculty advisors*

SECOND PLACE

Kiski Area School District

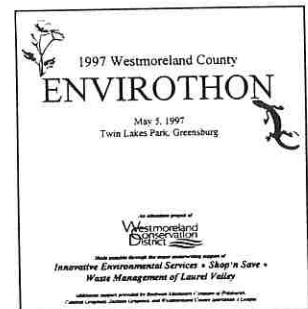
Carla Cacco
 Emily Lauffer
 Matt Lauffer
 Nikki Pencak
 Rebecca Riggie
 Julie DeFillipi, *alternate*
 Judy Hill & Ralph Lemmon, *faculty advisors*

THIRD PLACE

Derry Area Senior High School

Stacey Carothers
 Mike Goodman
 Josh Guiher
 Bill Huey
 Justin Spears
 Fred Goodman, *faculty advisor*

This year for the first time ever, the District published a program for Envirothon participants. It included information on the history of the event and past winners, as well as the names of the students and advisors participating in the 1997 competition.



Also new this year – the Envirothon program was used as part of a follow-up mailing to principals of county high schools which did not participate in the Envirothon, in an effort to encourage them to become involved next year.

Lynch Field Project Survives Its First Big Test

by Jim Pillsbury

The Lynch Field Bioengineering Project has survived its first big test — the Memorial Day weekend rainstorm that dumped 4.5 inches on Greensburg and its environs in 24 hours.

Designed to stabilize a badly eroded streambank in Lynch Field, the city's premier public recreation center, the project employs the very latest methods to prevent loss of ground to erosion.

On April 4, volunteers installed BioLog (a roll of coconut fibre reinforced with synthetics), rock riprap, and erosion control fabric, and planted hundreds of cuttings from wetland plants including dogwood and willow. By the end of May, the plants had begun to take root and grow, and the roots they put down were apparently enough to withstand the heavy flooding which took place.

Lynch Field itself was submerged under as much as three feet of water, while depths in the channel section where Bioengineering was applied reached six or seven feet, with high velocities moving much debris through the area. Conventional streambank protection, such as rock lining or concrete walls, would also have prevented erosion, but at the expense of aesthetic values and natural habitat.



The stabilized streambank, Lynch Field, Greensburg.

The Bioengineering project holds the streambank in place while providing shelter for wildlife and improving fish habitat. The profusion of plants presents a pleasant picture to perambulating pedestrians, pausing to peruse the panorama.

As time goes by, the Lynch Field project will be a model for many other such natural improvements in our county. It is being undertaken as a community partnership of a number of area groups, and is funded by the Heinz Foundation.

FIND THE FIDDLE

Thanks to everyone who participated in last issue's "Find the Fiddle" Contest. Sharon Love of Scottsdale, Barb Gongaware of Export, and Theresa Nelson of Whitney all correctly identified the location of the fiddle (it was hidden in the picture of vegetables on page 2) and each won a CD of Vivaldi's "The Four Seasons."



We couldn't resist... Once again, somewhere in this issue we have hidden a violin identical to the one seen here, but much smaller. The 8th, 10th, and 12th callers to 837-5271, with the correct location of this small violin symbol will each win a Vivaldi "Four Seasons" CD. (Previous winners are not eligible to win again.)

Special Notice for Engineers and E&S Plan Preparers

For the first time in five years, the District in mid-July increased the fees it charges for reviewing erosion and sediment pollution control plans. The District board made the decision because of increasing operating costs and the growing demand for District services.

The board also retained the many **FREE** services the District provides, including:

- erosion and sediment pollution control and stormwater management plan preparation consultations
- stormwater management plan reviews
- site visits
- woodlot management and forest road layout consultations, and
- pre-construction meetings.

A letter explaining the change was sent to many of our clients in late June, along with a detailed, revised fee schedule. If you want more information about the new schedule, call the District at 837-5271.



The stormwater pond at The Legends.

The Legends Project- Sprucing Up a Stormwater Pond

by Craig Barras

You've probably seen them near shopping centers and in new housing plans, and wondered what they were – a length of tall chain link fence, surrounding what looks like an ordinary hole in the ground.

Actually, they're good conservation in action. Because these holes – or ponds – do the important job of quickly collecting and then slowly releasing the rain water that runs off the nearby buildings, parking lots, and other hard surfaces. If it weren't for these ponds, the rush of stormwater could end up in nearby basements and streams.

The problem is, although they do a good job, most of these stormwater detention ponds aren't very attractive. But it doesn't have to be that way, as a group of conservation-minded citizens proved in May at the new Legends housing development in North Huntingdon.

Some 35 teenagers from Adelphoi Village group homes in Latrobe and Saltsburg joined District staff, and Joe Stefko, education specialist for the South-

west Regional Office of the Pennsylvania Game Commission, in planting seedlings in and around the stormwater pond in The Legends to give it a more natural look that blends with the environment.

Streamcoe willow seedlings were planted in the edges and corners of the pond; mugo pine and white spruce were planted in small clusters on the inner banks of the facility. A wood duck box was installed in the pond to further enhance the habitat for wildlife.

This model project was approved and promoted by North Huntingdon Township, and has been talked about in many other municipalities in the county as being a mandatory portion of subdivision planning ordinances.

The Game Commission provided the seedlings, and PA CleanWays helped identify volunteers to do the plantings.

If you are interested in learning more about this project, or how to enhance an existing pond, please call Craig Barras, District erosion control specialist, at 837-5271.

Field Day for Farmers

by Holly Dugan

Forty people attended a field day on July 8, to learn more about livestock health, nutrient management planning, and successful demonstration projects.

The event combined presentations on topics such as pastures and soil fertility, with tours of area farms where participants could see conservation practices in action.

Speakers for the event included Dr. Frank Skacel, a local veterinarian, who shared his personal experiences with streambank fencing; John Tyson, extension agent and agricultural engineer, on barnyard stabilization; and Dr. Doug Beegle, Penn State professor of agronomy, on fertility management in pastures.

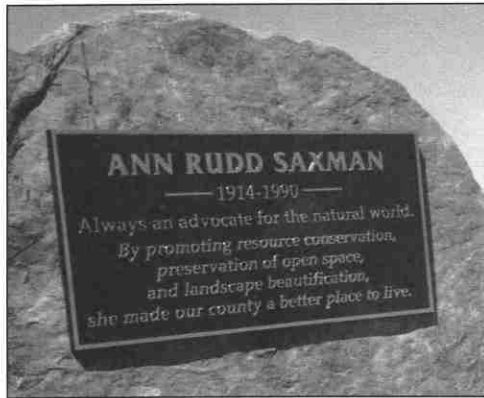


Holly Dugan, nutrient management technician with the conservation district, also spoke, and explored participants' reasons for not using conservation practices such as streambank fencing. She and the other presenters then offered ways to overcome these reasons, such as combating weed growth near fenced-off streambanks by letting cattle graze the area at night when they are less likely to go in the water.

The group toured Kennan's Green Hill Farms in Hempfield Township to see the barnyard stabilization project designed by NRCS Soil Technician Larry Stokum, and Terry Matty's replacement heifer operation in Smithton to see a stream crossing and rotational grazing scheme.

For more information on nutrient management and water quality, call Holly at 837-5271.

Nature Park News



The new memorial to Ann Rudd Saxman was completed in June.

Summer is a perfect time to refresh your spirit in the cool quiet forest of Ann Rudd Saxman Nature Park. It's also a chance to see some of the many new things that have been done in the park and the adjacent grounds of Donohoe Center.

NEW ADDITIONS

As you step out of your car, stop for a moment at the newly erected bulletin board. Here you can learn more about the history of the park and the legacy of the woman so instrumental in its creation and preservation, Ann Rudd Saxman. Brochures containing information about Ann, the park, and the Donohoe Center demonstration areas will be available at the bulletin board in late August.

Opposite the bulletin board is the new park sign, complete with a planter box that has been filled with flowers and maintained by the Penn State Master Gardeners.

As you travel down the park's newly paved crushed limestone trail, stop for a moment at the new memorial to Ann. A bronze plaque honoring her life and work has been permanently affixed to a large sandstone rock found in the park. The memorial is surrounded by native plants, and was designed and planted by the Penn State Master Gardeners and friends of Ann, including Carol Pollock, who coordinated the planting.*

When you get to the end of the paved trail, continue on the grass and dirt paths and across the wooden bridges maintained by the Westmoreland County Parks Department. The Parks Department also plans to install several new benches throughout the park where you can rest and quietly enjoy nature.

NEXT STEPS

AmeriCorps is conducting a survey of the trails. When that is complete, we expect to make some minor changes (for instance: one trail may be carefully rerouted to eliminate a series of earthen steps that visitors must now go down to get into the park). The trails will then be marked with blazes, and a trail map created. The map will be posted on the bulletin board and included in a second brochure, along with highlights of some of the park's natural history points of interest.

Inventories of the park's natural resources also are under way. The Westmoreland County Bird Club is inventorying the bird population, the Botanical Society of Westmoreland County is recording the seasonal wildflowers, and District staff members are surveying other features of the park as follows:

- Alex Dado – soils
- Holly Dugan and Bob Ventorini – aquatic life
- Jim Pillsbury – stormwater management
- Tony Quadro – forest resources
- Charles Barras – geology.

* It was incorrectly reported in the last *Landmarks* that this work would be done by the Greensburg Garden and Civic Center.



In June, Assistant District Manager Lorrie Stouffer gave a presentation on Nature Park to the Latrobe Women's Club.

Many of the women attending knew Ann Saxman personally and the group generously gave a donation of \$50 toward the park's revitalization.

All the physical work that has been done in the park has either been in-kind donations, or paid for by the more than \$40,000 donated by area foundations, government organizations, businesses, and individuals.

Also in June, the Greensburg Garden Club held its monthly meeting at Donohoe Center.

District Manager Greg Phillips spoke to more than 20 Garden Club members about Nature Park and then led a walk into the park.



Nature Park

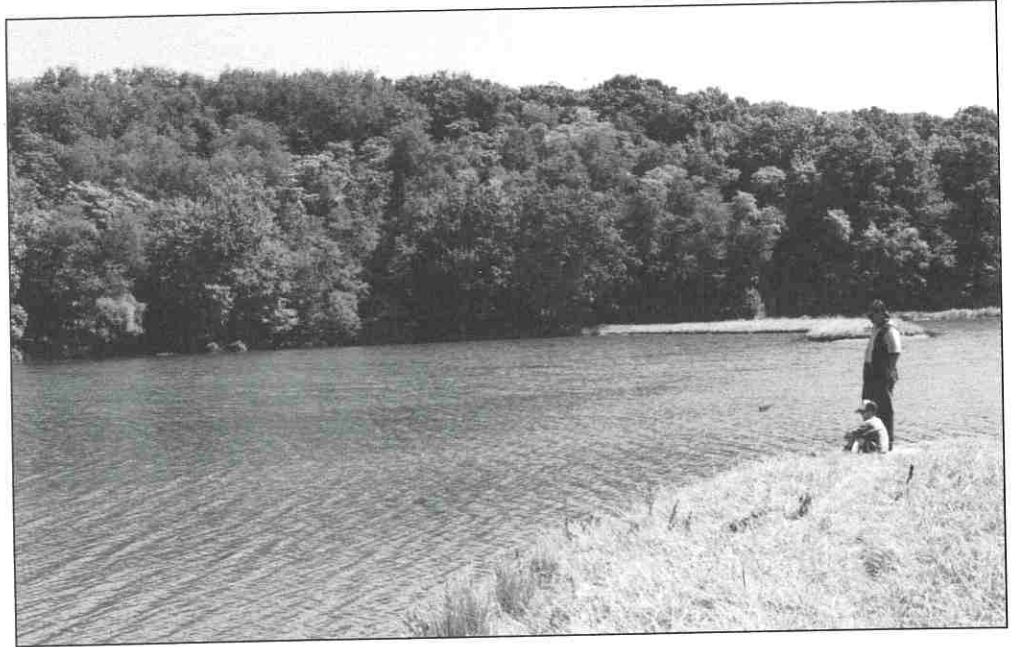
Raging Waters
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project, Westmoreland and Fayette," Orlando explained, "and the federal government wouldn't even agree to start the project until all the easements were obtained."

That was no small job. When it was all said and done, Orlando had negotiated and closed on more than 60 different properties, ranging from private family homes to a restaurant, from parcels of unimproved ground to a welding business, and even a golf course. In each case, he worked hard to ensure that the owners were satisfied with the value they received for their property. He also helped individual homeowners find a new home that was comparable or better than the one they were leaving.

During his decade of service to Westmoreland County, Orlando acquired all but five of the properties needed to make the flood control project a reality. Looking back on it today, the County Planning Department retiree reminisced, "I was a little reluctant to take the job at first, but I'm so happy I did."

The people of Scottdale and Everson, who just got through a 25-year storm without missing a beat, are happy you did, too, Orlando.



Bridgeport Dam, one of the many places to benefit from the Jacobs Creek flood-control measures.

In Memoriam

It is with sadness that we report the passing of Penn State Cooperative Extension Director Bill Kelly on July 3.

Bill was a good friend of the District for many years, and a major force in the local agricultural community. He will be missed.



Last November, the District presented Bill with the Distinguished Service Award for his many outstanding achievements.
Pictured (l-r) are: Bill, District Director Graydon Long, and District Manager Greg Phillips enjoying a light moment after the award presentation at the District's annual planning meeting.

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We also carry DeLorme Atlas/Gazetteers
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A special supplement to Landmarks, the official newsletter of the Westmoreland Conservation District
Please carefully remove for future reference.

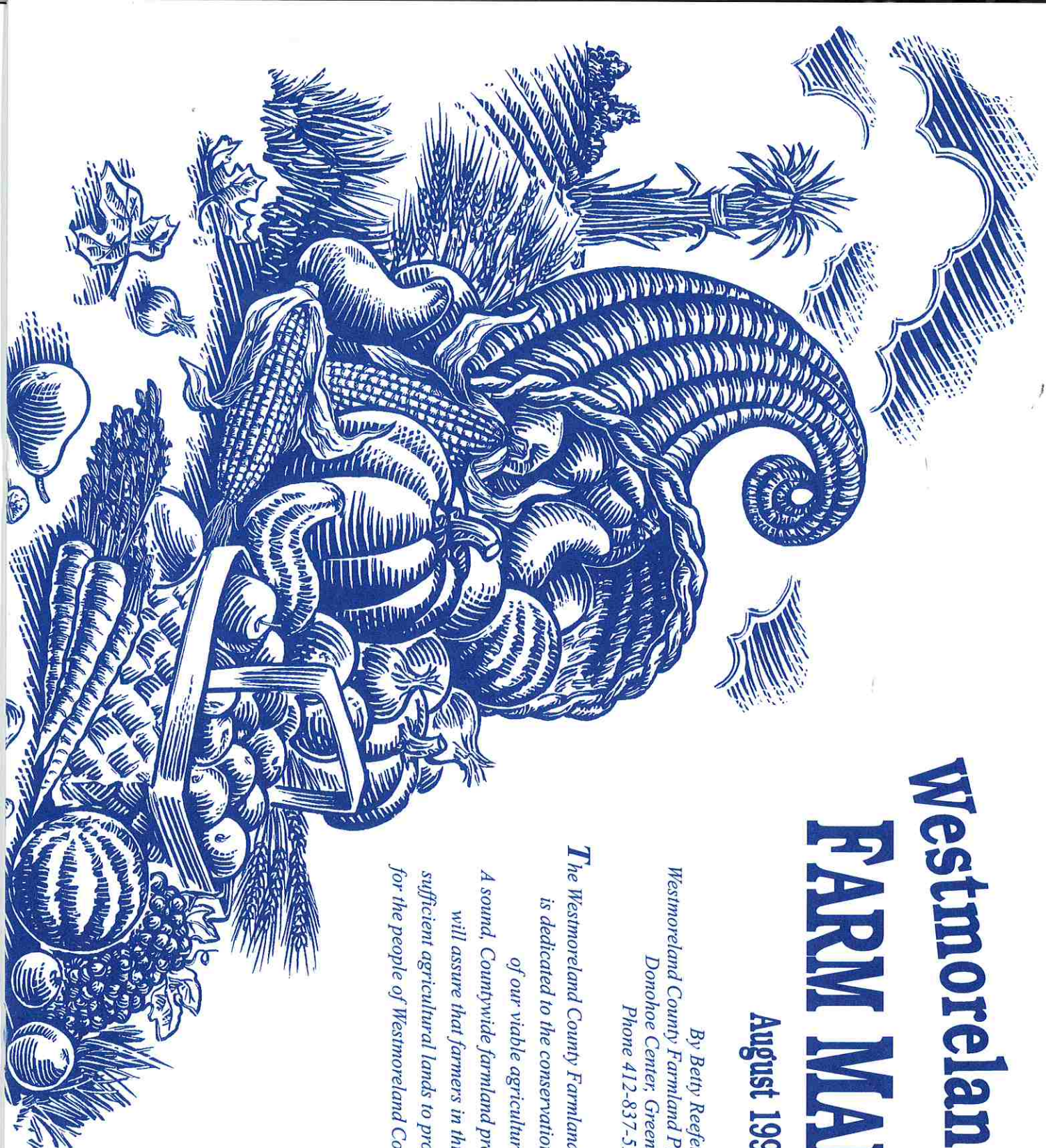
Westmoreland County

FARM MARKETS

August 1997

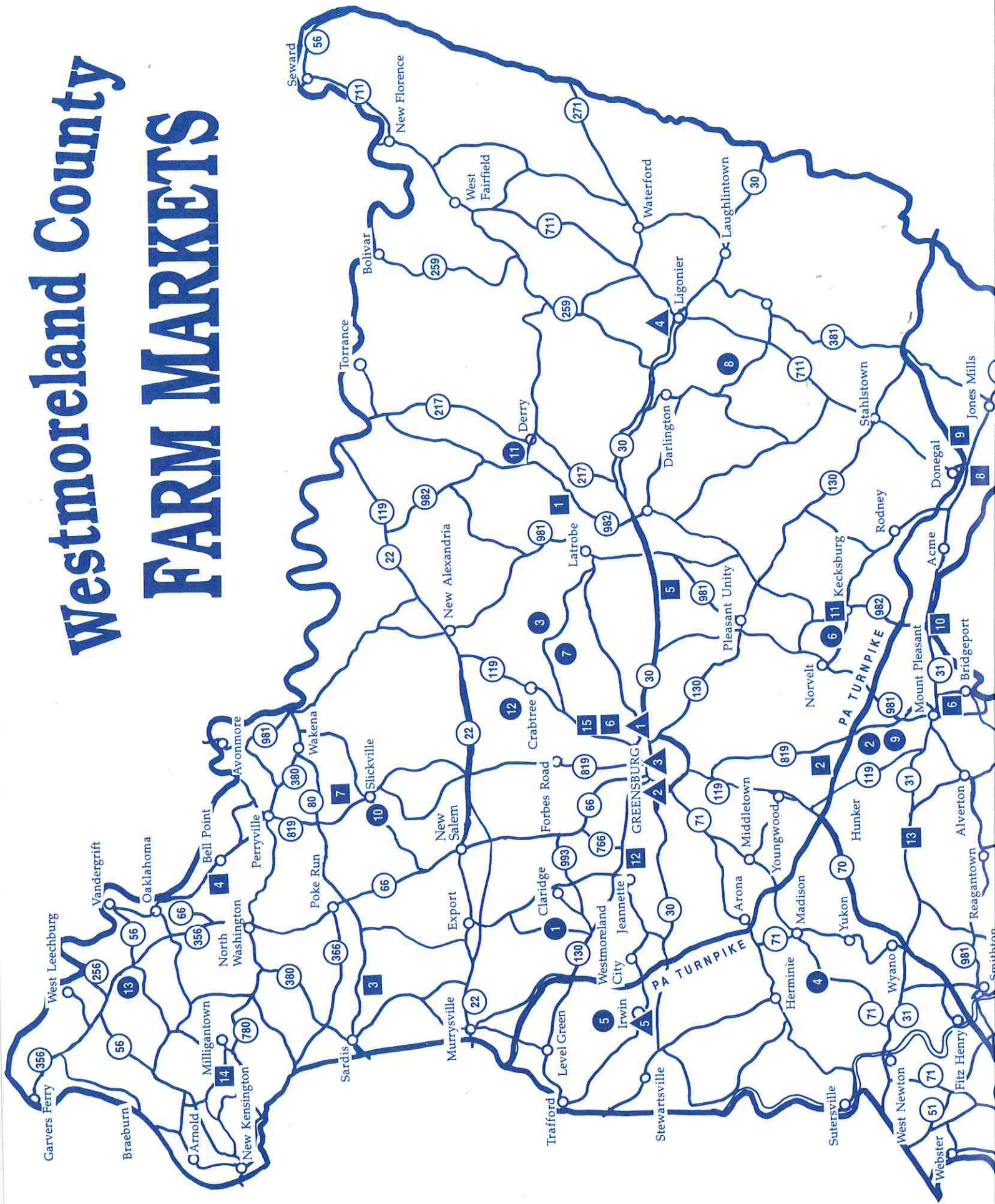
*By Betty Reefer
Westmoreland County Farmland Preservation Program
Donohoe Center, Greensburg, PA
Phone 412-837-5271*

*The Westmoreland County Farmland Preservation Program
is dedicated to the conservation and protection
of our viable agricultural lands.
A sound, Countywide farmland preservation program
will assure that farmers in this County have
sufficient agricultural lands to provide farm products
for the people of Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania.*



Westmoreland County

FARM MARKETS





-ROADSIDE MARKETS-

Dates and times for these markets are 'by chance' during the harvest season.
Offerings include sweet corn, fresh vegetables, fruits, and pumpkins in season.

-FARMERS' MARKETS-

- 1 **HEMPFIELD MARKETS***
Thursdays, 3 p.m. - 6 p.m.
Freight Liquidators Parking Lot
(Near Westmoreland Mall)
Until October 31
- 2 Saturdays, 9 a.m. - noon, Route 136, Harold
Zion Lutheran Church Parking Lot*
(Near Fort Allen)
Until October 31
- 3 **GREENSBURG MARKET***
Tuesdays, 3 p.m. - 6 p.m., West 2nd Street
(1 block from Pennsylvania Ave.)
Until October 31
- 4 **LIGONIER MARKET**
Saturdays, 7 a.m. - noon, Baldonieri's
Mill Creek Inn
(Route 30, Ligonier)
Until September 27
- 5 **IRWIN MARKET**
Saturdays, 8 a.m. - noon
Until the end of October
Craft shows and farmers' markets on
August 16, September 20, and
October 25, 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.

- YEAR 'ROUND MARKETS-

- 1 **SCHRAMM'S PRODUCE MARKET**
Harrison City Road
- 2 **SAND HILL BERRIES**
Route 819, Mt. Pleasant
- 3 **JAMISON'S LAMB FARM**
Crabtree
- 4 **GREENAWALT EGG FARM**
West Newton
- 5 **KERBER'S DAIRY**
Irwin
- 6 **HUTTER'S DAIRY**
Mt. Pleasant
- 7 **HEINNICKEL'S BEEF**
Crabtree
- 8 **HOFFER'S MEATS**
Ligonier
- 9 **HILLSIDE ORCHARDS**
Route 819, Mt. Pleasant
- 10 **KARAS MEAT PACKING**
Slickville
- 11 **ECKER EGG FARM**
Derry
- 12 **BARDINE'S MEATS & FRESH VEGETABLES**
Crabtree
- 13 **POUNDS TURKEY FARM**
Allegheny Township



* Indicates that certified organic vegetables are available at these locations.

This list is far from complete, and we apologize for any markets that I may have missed. Please contact the Conservation District office at 837-5271 if you would like your market included in our next updated map.

- 1 **J&K PRODUCE**
Bradenville - Route 982, across from convenience store on the Latrobe-Derry Road
- 2 **BILL USCHOCK**
Norvelt - Mt. Pleasant Road (2 1/2 miles from the Open Pantry at Norvelt, on Route 819 toward Mt. Pleasant)
- 3 **JOHN DAUGHERTY**
Sardis Road, along Route 286 between Sardis and Mamont
- 4 **JOHN BOWMAN**
Bell Point, Route 819 N., near Apollo
- 5 **RICHARD FIRESTONE**
Route 30 East, near the Latrobe Airport
- 6 **RON HYSKELL**
Near G&L Feeds on Route 119, Greensburg (near Lynch Field) and also at the County Market Plaza, Mt. Pleasant
- 7 **MCQUAIDE'S FARM**
Route 819 north of Slickville
- 8 **PLETCHER'S MARKET**
Route 31 near the Donegal turnpike exchange
- 9 **MOUNTAIN GROWN PRODUCE**
Route 31 near Jones Mills, near the Pie Shoppe
- 10 **MOUNTAIN GATEWAY**
Mountain Gateway parking lot, near Laurelville
- 11 **COMP'S GREENHOUSE & PRODUCE**
Kecksburg
- 12 **OAKFORD PARK MARKET**
Route 130 east of Jeannette
- 13 **FOREJT FARM MARKET**
Intersection of Route 31 & Stoner Rd, Ruffsdale
- 14 **SCHAFER'S MARKET**
Seventh Street Road, New Kensington
- 15 **SELEMBO'S FARMS**
Next to G&L Feeds, Route 119

If you want to enjoy the best of Westmoreland County, stock your kitchen from the area's farm markets.

You'll find

- first-rate fruits and vegetables
- organic selections
- tempting baked goods
- unique handmade crafts
- jams, honey, and maple syrup
- milk, eggs, and homemade ice cream,
- locally processed meats — from fresh turkey and lamb, to the best kolbasi in Pennsylvania.

To help you plan your shopping expedition, we put together a map of the farm markets we knew about (see reverse side). Most likely, there are others. If you know other markets that should be listed, please call the Conservation District office at 837-5271 so we can update the map.

Remember: Many of these markets are here for only a short time so enjoy them while you can.

MARKET HIGHLIGHTS

Every market has its own special delights to choose from. Here are just a few examples to whet your appetite.

1 Paul Sarver offers his **certified organic produce** at Farmer's Markets in Hempfield, Greensburg, and the Freight Liquidators parking lot.

5 **Large craft shows** are part of the downtown Irwin Farmer's Market once a month, through October.

12 Bardine's Meats in Crabtree recently received an award from the Pennsylvania Meat Processors for the **best kolbasi in Pennsylvania**. This year, they also offer fresh vegetables.

2 Sand Hill Berries is the place to go for **anything raspberry** — vinaigrette, jams, preserves, fruit spreads, and fresh berries in season. It's also a beautiful place to visit. The buildings are all painted green and raspberry red. And if you go during the peak of the season, you are welcomed with the fragrance of raspberries as you step out of your car.

Be sure to stop next door at Hillside Orchards for **seasonal produce from spring strawberries to crisp fall apples**.

3 The Chicago Tribune rated Jamison's Farm-Fresh Lamb **"The best lamb in America!"** It is 100% natural, antibiotic, and hormone-free. The lambs are raised "free-range," outside, using a clean, rotational grazing system. Be sure to ask Jamison's about their lamb pasta sauce, made from fresh tomatoes, ground lamb and spices.

6 Hutter's Dairy in Kecksburg offers the **best chocolate milk** you will ever hope to find. The family works the land, milks the cows, and bottles the fresh cow juice every day.

4 **Greenwalt Eggs** in West Newton is a busy place, especially in the spring when the Egg Festival is held. This family affair is a chance to see the operation up close and enjoy a fun-filled festival that features Gretchen the Hen.

1 You have to have some of Schramm's **fresh peaches** for peach cobbler! They also offer a variety of other fruits, vegetables, honey, maple syrup, and have their own bakery department.

13 **Pound's Turkey Farm** in Allegheny Townships has fresh turkeys, turkey jerky, marinated ready-to-cook turkey breasts, and ground turkey that tastes great in any recipe that calls for ground beef. Last year, I served a Pound's turkey for Thanksgiving. They cost a little more than the frozen jobs at the local grocery chains, but there's no comparison in taste!



What's Cookin'?

Does deciding what to have for dinner tonight leave you feeling uninspired?

Are you tired of serving the same old things?

Well, Spaghetti Corn (see recipe to the right) is just a sample of the fresh recipe ideas you'll find in "Naturally Delicious," the Westmoreland Conservation District cookbook.

In addition to Spaghetti Corn, "Naturally Delicious" contains more than 224 other ideas to spice up your meal times — including, appetizers, beverages, soups, salads, vegetables, main dishes and casseroles, meat, poultry and seafood, breads and rolls, pies, pastry and desserts, and cakes, cookies, and candy.

All the recipes are easy to follow . . . most require no special ingredients . . .

and they're packaged in a stain-resistant, three-ring binder that makes it easy to add pages of your own.

To receive your copy of "Naturally Delicious" — now at a special price — complete the coupon below, include it with your check payable to Westmoreland Conservation District, and mail to: "Naturally Delicious," Westmoreland Conservation District, Donohoe Center, RD #12 Box 202-B, Greensburg, PA 15601.

Proceeds from the cookbook will be used to develop a series of outdoor demonstration areas that show innovative and effective conservation practices — such as controlling the runoff of rain water to prevent erosion — on the grounds of Donohoe Center.



NATURALLY

Delicious

By Lori Whalen

Spaghetti Corn

A recipe from *Naturally Delicious*
Submitted by Ellen Fleissner

- 1 can creamed corn
- 1 can kernel corn with juice
- 1 c. mozzarella cheese (or Monterey Jack)
- 1 stick butter
- 1 c. broken spaghetti, uncooked
- 2 tsp. chopped onion

Stir creamed corn, kernel corn with juice, cheese, butter, spaghetti, and onion together. Place in casserole. Bake at 350° for 30 minutes with lid and an additional 30 minutes without lid.

Make your dinners even more delicious by using fresh ingredients you purchase from area farmers' markets.

Here in Westmoreland County, we're blessed with a wealth of roadside and year 'round markets where you can buy top-quality, locally grown produce, homemade baked goods, and even bouquets of fresh garden flowers to grace your table.

But because these markets aren't always easy to find, we thought it would be a good idea to have a map showing where they are and telling a little bit about them. Our first guide to Westmoreland County Farmers' Markets is just off the press and included as a special insert with this issue of *Landmarks*.

It is definitely a "work in progress." It lists all the farmers' markets we knew about, but we're sure there are more that should be included. If you know of others, please call and tell us (837-5271), so we can update the map.

In the meantime, remember: Many of these markets are here for only a short time, so enjoy them while you can!

"Naturally Delicious" Cookbook Order Form

Your name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ ZIP Code _____

Daytime phone number _____



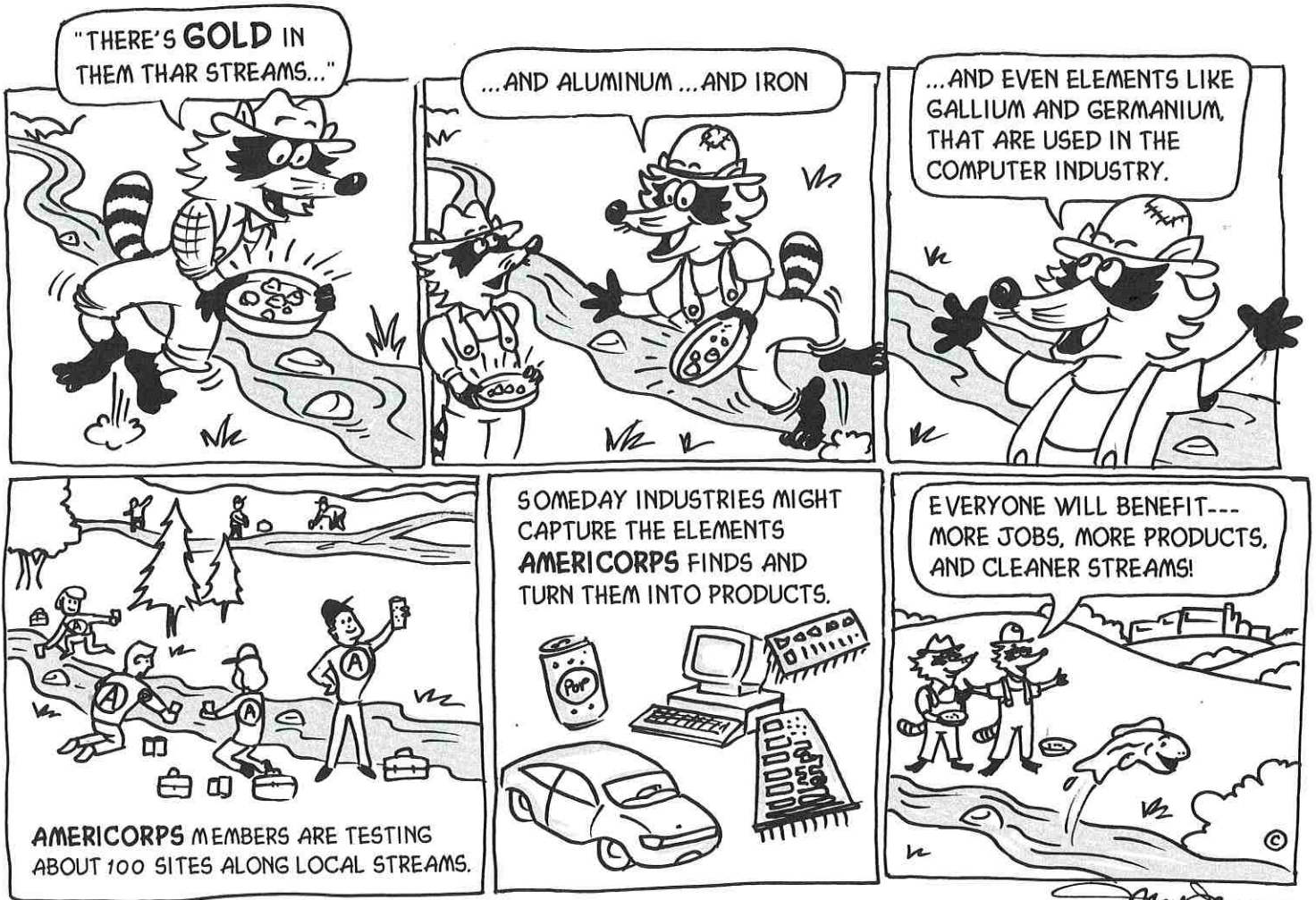
_____ number of cookbooks

\$ _____ total for cookbooks
(\$10 @ SPECIAL PRICE!!!)

\$ 3.00 shipping & handling

\$ _____ TOTAL

THANK YOU!!!



KATHY'S KIDS KORNER- Summer News

By Kathy Fritz

T K N A B M A E R T S S B L O
 E E S T A B I L I Z A T I O N
 K N D D L Y K P B V V C O A L
 C V N E P L C R E N E O L I O
 A I E L E L I O S V O O O N T
 J R G I R A U C K V U K G A S
 T O E C K R F I N W R B U T E
 C T L I T U J R A D L O I U W
 I H E O E T X E T Y A O B R A
 R O W U S A I M C W N K D E G
 T N I S T N F A I A D H F P E
 S T A H T C I R T S I D G A I
 I N B M L W A R P S N A B R U
 D G N O I T I T E P M O C K H
 Z T Q J A C K ' S R U N Z G Y



Can you find the following words in the puzzle to the left?

- | | |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| a. Americorp | k. Naturally |
| b. Biolog | l. Nature Park |
| c. Competition | m. Onlot Sewage |
| d. Cookbook | n. Perk Test |
| e. Delicious | o. Save Our Land |
| f. District Hats | p. Save Our Towns |
| g. District Jacket | q. Septic Tanks |
| h. Envirothon | r. Stabilization |
| i. Jack's Run | s. Streambank |
| j. Legends | t. Urban Sprawl |

Critical Problem Addressed At Workshop

Pennsylvania has the dubious distinction of having more on-lot sewage systems (primarily septic tanks) than any other state in the nation. Many of these are old or inadequate, and leaking contaminated waste into our waterways. In fact, in Westmoreland County, sewage is second only to coal mine drainage as the greatest pollutant of our creeks and streams.

Another complication of this way of life is the fact that 90% of the soils in Westmoreland County won't pass a perk test . . . yet we have one of the largest rural populations living beyond the reach of sanitary sewers of any county in the state.

The first-ever county workshop to discuss this critical problem was held in May at Westmoreland County Community College. The standing-room-only audience included township supervisors, sewage enforcement officers, real estate agents, loan officers, waste water design engineers, planners, legislators, county officials, and environmental organizations with an interest in planning, designing, financing and installing on-lot sewage treatment systems.

Among others, they came to hear Deputy Secretary Hugh Archer present DEP's

position on alternative waste water technologies . . . a panel of experts explain alternative technologies that are appropriate for this region . . . and a session on financial assistance.

Tom Hylton, Pulitzer Prize-winning author of "Save Our Land, Save Our Towns: A Plan for Pennsylvania," spoke after lunch about the questionable wisdom of encouraging growth in rural areas, especially since conventional sewage treatment is out of the question – either financially or physically – for many of these areas in Westmoreland County.

Hylton's position is that the former concept of building towns and cities – where homes, stores, and work places are clustered close together – is a better use of resources and provides more of a sense of community than the current "urban sprawl" approach, where development is spread out across the countryside.

County Commissioner Tom Balya hosted the day-long workshop, and the Westmoreland Conservation District coordinated it, with assistance from the Penn State Cooperative Extension and Penn's Corner Resource Conservation and Development.



More Web Sites of Interest

Remember: You can reach the Westmoreland Conservation District at wcd202B@aol.com.

Here are some other places you might want to visit if you're surf'in' the 'net.

www.nacdnet.org

Site of the National Association of Conservation Districts and the nation's 3,000 local conservation districts.

Check this site for the latest conservation news, legislative updates, and on-line links to other natural-resource-related sites.

www.libertynet.org/~pahouse/george

Home page of State Rep. Camille "Bud" George, chairman of the House Environmental Quality Board and the standing House and Senate environmental committees.

<http://www.farmlandinfo.org>

Farmland Information Library. Offers literature, statutes, maps, news and events, information by county, a farmland protection primer, and more.

<http://www.crest.org/index.html>

Information service of the Center for Renewable Energy and Sustainable Technology.

Provides information on renewable energy, energy efficiency, sustainable living.

<http://www.dgs.state.pa.us>

New home page of the Pennsylvania Department of General Services. Information useful to small business and others new to commonwealth business.

Copies of Thomas Hylton's Pulitzer-prize-winning book, "Save Our Land, Save Our Towns: A Plan for Pennsylvania," are available from the District at the special rate of \$12.00 each, plus \$3.00 shipping and handling. Use this form to order, or save the handling charges by picking your copy up at the District office.

SAVE OUR LAND ORDER FORM

Name _____

Street address _____

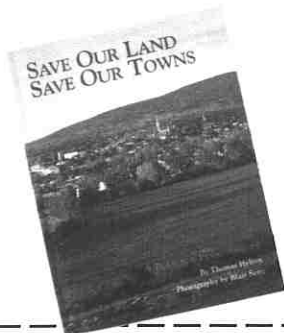
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_____ Shipping & handling (\$3.00/per book)

_____ TOTAL ENCLOSED



Make checks payable to:
Westmoreland Conservation District.
Mail to: "Save Our Land"
c/o Westmoreland Conservation District,
RD #12, Box 202-B, Greensburg, PA 15601

News 'n Notes...



AWARDS AND KUDOS

Area conservation organizations and their partners fared very well in the competitive and prestigious **Three Rivers Environmental Awards** competition this spring.

The Natural Resources Conservation Service of Western Pennsylvania captured the award in the Planning, Design, and Development category for its assistance in helping local river clean-up groups with the battle against abandoned mine drainage.

The Capstone Course of the Greater Latrobe School District captured the award in the Education – Primary or Secondary category for its multi-disciplinary environmental class in which seniors study water quality problems in Nine Mile Run (Loyalhanna Watershed) which runs beside the high school.

The Western Pennsylvania Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation was selected as a finalist in the Community – Environmental Organizations category for the 16 projects it has under way to halt abandoned mine drainage in our region's waterways.

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

In late April, the District hosted elementary students from **Christ the Divine Teacher School in Latrobe** to a conservation learning experience in their own backyard.



Christ the Divine Teacher students learned about local conservation.

We met them after school at Saint Vincent Lake where we introduced them to basic conservation principles and showed how conservation actions were cleaning up the mine drainage in Monastery Run (a major discharge of mine drainage, known as the Bubbler, is right beside Saint Vincent Lake).

Helping us make the presentations were staff from the Western Pennsylvania Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation and Powdermill Nature Reserve.

Earthmoving contractors were invited to a District-sponsored **workshop on erosion control** on February 28.

More than 50 attended the all-day event that introduced new products and techniques, and offered practical advice from fellow contractors on how to save time and money while maintaining good conservation practices. Improper erosion controls are some of the biggest causes of problems on construction projects.

Participants were treated to popcorn while they watched videos on earthmoving, erosion control, and the construction sequence; and on Pennsylvania's general rules and regulations for erosion and sediment pollution control. At the end of the day, County Commissioner Terry Marolt presented each participant with a certificate of completion.

Three of our staff gave Sunday afternoon **presentations at Powdermill Nature Reserve** in Rector during the spring.

Holly Dugan, nutrient management technician/conservation planner, spoke on how excess nutrients such as nitrogen and phosphorus can affect the quality of water in our local streams; and Bob Ventorini, watershed coordinator, and

Mark Killar, regional coordinator, Western Pennsylvania Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation, spoke on the cause of mine drainage, which affects more than 3,000 miles of streams in Pennsylvania, and how it is being treated using passive methods.

District Manager Greg Phillips gave a presentation on the District's mission, programs, and activities on April 5 to area high school teachers as part of the **BRIDGES program**.



BRIDGES is a partnership of area school districts, colleges, and industries that helps teachers incorporate real-world issues in their lesson plans in mathematics and science.

Nine hundred eighth-grade students from 11 middle and junior high schools attended the **Career Fair**, hosted by Westmoreland County CAREER PREP Consortium on March 4.

Jim Pillsbury, District hydraulic engineer, manned our booth and talked to students about the schooling and interest it takes to prepare for a career as a conservationist.

District Erosion Control Specialist Craig Barras participated in the **Greensburg Oil and Gas Roundtable** on March 27, sponsored by the PA Department of Environmental Protection's Office of Mineral Resources Management (DEP OMRM).

The group was particularly interested in the District's "common sense" approach to dealing with those who do not comply with regulations, and with the District's proactive philosophy of conducting upfront education as a way to ensure fewer violations. At the request of DEP OMRM Deputy Secretary Dolence, Craig submitted his comments in a detailed letter to the agency.

Kathy Fritz, program secretary, helped kindergarten students at the **R. K. Mellon Elementary School in Ligonier** learn more about wetlands. Each student drew a wetland plant or animal and then the 25 drawings were sewn onto fabric to create a quilt-like wall hanging that was presented to the principal in honor of Earth Day.

PROGRAMS

The first **Corridor Management** meeting was held in April. The purpose was to develop a public/private partnership to enhance and

preserve the landscape along some of Westmoreland County's highway corridors.

The group discussed a vision for the project and how they might coordinate, enlist volunteers, provide technical expertise, and raise resources.

This initiative is viewed as a vital element in the county's continuing effort to encourage quality economic development . . . promote awareness of our scenery . . . foster community pride . . . and instill a sense of appreciation for our scenic/ environmental assets.

The project to **clean up Monastery Run** near Latrobe took a major step forward in early June when construction began on the first of three passive wetlands that will be used to settle out the stream's polluting iron oxide. Construction of the second wetland began in early July.



Working on wetland #3.

When all three wetlands are built and functioning, the stream will be cleansed of about 90% of the iron oxide.

Work is underway on reclaiming the 135-acre **Old Home Manor coal-mining site** in Ligonier and Fairfield townships.

Because of the contractor's other obligations, the project began later in the year than expected, but should be concluded by November.



Reclaiming damaged land at the Old Home Manor Site.



Learning more about the District at our Legislative Breakfast were (l-r): Rep. Jess Stairs; John Boyle, aide to Senator John Murtha; Senator Allen Kukovich; and Christine Irwin, aide to Senator Rick Santorum.

Soil will be reclaimed, spoil piles eliminated, and a dangerous high wall covered.

POLITICAL ACTION

Eleven government officials attended or were represented at our **Annual Legislative Breakfast** on April 4.

PA Senator Allen Kukovich, PA Representatives Jess Stairs and Tom Tangretti, and attorney Jay Ober (who subsequently has been named a Westmoreland County Common Pleas Judge) were among those who got a firsthand look at District activities from presentations by each of our staff members, Board Treasurer Ron Rohall, and Farmland Preservation Board Chairman Don Fretts.

Also attending were representatives of US Congressmen Frank Mascara and John Murtha, US Senator Rick Santorum, PA Senator Richard Kasunic, and PA Representatives Herman Mihalich, Joseph Petrarca, and James Casario, Jr.

District Board Members Connie Donovan and Roy Kemerer, and Associate Directors Bill Kotsenas, Doc Shea, Theresa Rohall, and Bob Ackerman rounded out the attendees.

PUBLICATIONS

Our innovative 1996 annual report – built around the theme of classical music and Vivaldi's "The Four Seasons" – earned a hearty round of applause from our readers. Here's just a sample of the feedback:

"I've sent your terrific and imaginative 1996 annual report to conservation-minded people here in Maryland."

— Joe Doherty, author of Growth Management in Countryfied Cities

"I'd like to commend those involved for the creativity and superb issue of the annual report."

— Barbara Ferrier, assistant superintendent, Hempfield Area School District

"You did it again! Another masterful annual report worth framing. You do indeed work in harmony, and it shows."

— Kurt Leitholf, executive director, Conservation & Natural Resources Advisory Council, Harrisburg



"I thoroughly enjoyed it and could almost hear the music as I read through it."

— Terry Marolt, Westmoreland County Commissioner

"Again, you have produced a classic annual report. Congratulations on another super year of work."

— Boyd Wolff, former Pennsylvania Secretary of Agriculture, Harrisburg

Thanks to everyone who took the time to call or send a note. We appreciate your kind words and encouragement.

continued on back page

CONSERVATION CONNECTIONS

The District is pleased to have been able to lend some **financial assistance** in recent months to organizations we work closely with, including the Five Star Trail Chapter of the Regional Trail Corporation (\$200 grant).

Our arboretum grew in variety this spring when two new trees were planted. On Earth Day, a sourwood was planted in memory of Cheshamac Garden Club member Nancy Miller (a gift from the garden club), and a bald cypress was planted in memory of Michael Tokesky (a gift from his daughter Marie).

DISTRICT BOARD AND STAFF NEWS

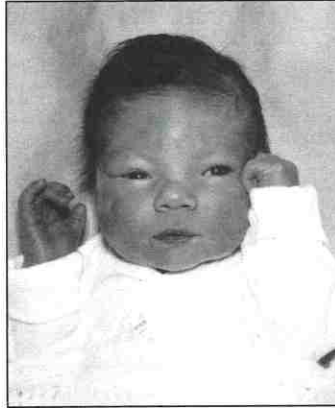
Officers were elected at the June 11 meeting of the Board, as follows: J. Roy Houston, chairman; P. Graydon Long, vice chairman; Ron Rohall, treasurer; and P. Roy Kemerer, secretary.

Jim Pillsbury, our hydraulic engineer, recently passed the challenging Pennsylvania state exam to obtain his professional engineer's license. Jim feels this is an important accom-

plishment not only for him personally, but for the district as well. "It brings even more credibility to the work we do," he said.

Greg and Leanne Phillips became the proud parents of a baby boy, Brandon Michael, on July 1.

Brandon entered the world at 7 pounds, 20-1/4 inches.



Brandon Michael Phillips

Bob Ventorini, watershed coordinator, Western Pennsylvania Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation, is working on his master's degree in biology at California University of Pennsylvania.

After completing two courses in each of the spring and summer semesters, Bob has scheduled another two for fall and hopes to have his degree requirements about half completed by December.

Lori Whalen, secretary/clerk, completed a second course, "Business Communications," toward her goal of obtaining an Associate in Applied Science degree in Office Administration at Westmoreland County Community College.

Lori plans to continue her education in the fall with Shorthand I.

Tammy Ross is the newest addition to the District staff. She joined us in March as secretary.

As the District assumes new and enhances existing programs, the need for administrative support has increased. We're glad to have Tammy with us and have already benefited from her skills. Tammy has an associate in Specialized Business, Executive Secretarial Program, Business Careers Institute. She and her husband Jason live in Connellsville and are expecting their first child this spring.



Tammy Ross

Upcoming Events

August 25

Environmental Logging Workshop
7:15 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Powdermill Nature Reserve

September 10

District Meeting
8:00 p.m., Donohoe Center

September 14-17

National Association of
Conservation Districts Meeting
Atlantic City, NJ

LANDMARKS

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