

Griffith Appointed First Education Coordinator

By: Lorrie Quadro



Leanne L. Griffith has been named conservation education coordinator for the Westmoreland Conservation District.

Griffith, of Hempfield Township, will coordinate the activities of the district's Center for Conservation

Education located on Donohoe Road, east of Greensburg. The Center offers programs for older youths and adults covering conservation information and environmental issues. Programs will range from agriculture and forestry to erosion and sedimentation control. She also will work with the district staff and partner organizations

in conducting seminars and workshops.

Griffith has a degree in biology and general science from Penn State University and a teaching certificate from Indiana University of Pennsylvania. She had been serving as part-time Growing Greener Program Assistant and interim education coordinator for the District. A former homebound instructor for Marion Center School District and seventh grade science teacher at Indiana Junior High School, she also serves as a 4-H and Cub Scout leader. She is married to Daniel E. Griffith and the couple has three children.

Those interested in conservation education programs should contact Leanne at the Center, 211 Donohoe Road, Greensburg; (724) 837-5271; email: leannegriffith@yahoo.com.

See page 10 for Leanne's updates from the "Educator's Corner of the Barn"

Envirothon 2003: A Wet Success

By: Tony Quadro, Forestry Specialist



Under the direction of Tom Pearson and Lisa Laskow, Franklin Regional once again reigned as the County's champion.

Rain showers failed to dampen spirits at the 18th annual Westmoreland County Envirothon held at the new Center for Conservation Education at Donohoe Center. Over 50 students from area high schools participated in the event, which was designed to wind through Ann Rudd Saxman Nature Park. But due to the rain, which was very heavy at times, the event was held in "The Barn." The facility's two decks and

breezeway worked quite well to house the aquatics, farmland preservation, forestry, and wildlife stations. The soils and land-use station was relocated to the park under a makeshift shelter on the new stormwater loop.

The competition was intense as usual, but in the end the Franklin Regional High School team of Dan Graper, Rosemary Pike, Alicia Beacom,

Continued on page 2

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Envirothon...

Continued from page 1

Katie Ringbloom, and Mark Showalter continued to reign as the county's champion. Second place honors went to Hempfield High School; Kiski and Norwin High Schools finished in a tie for third place. Following the competition, Mr. Kim Miller, president of the Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture gave a presentation to the group.

This year's county Envirothon was sponsored by Beckwith Machinery of Pittsburgh, SONY, and Shop 'n Save, with additional support from Jackson Graphics. Our agency partners include: the PA Bureau of Forestry, the PA Game Commission, Powdermill Nature Reserve, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, and the Westmoreland County Agricultural



Land Preservation Program. The Westmoreland County Parks Department provided refreshments and equipment.

Franklin Regional went on to represent Westmoreland County at the Pennsylvania State Envirothon which was held at Penn State Mont Alto. They finished a very respectable 14th place under the advisory of Tom Pearson and Lisa Laskow. Congratulations to Franklin Regional High School for a job well done.

First Grassland Contest Held

By: Bobbi Bailey, Soil Conservationist



Pictured from left to right: Bobbi Bailey (NRCS), Mathew Venesky, Lindsey Harties, Genny Christ, Marcia Itle, and Robin Heard (State Conservationist, NRCS).

Ten teams from across Pennsylvania participated in the First Grassland Evaluation Contest held at Haler Farm, State College. The contest contained four developmental sections. They included: 1) Grassland Condition, 2) Plant Identification, 3) Wildlife, and 4) Soils. The judging site was a typical pasture area used for livestock grazing. A scenario with landowner's goals for livestock and wildlife production and aerial photographs and soil

surveys was provided at the contest site. Twenty native plants (provided by Penn State Extension Service) were set out for identification.

A total of \$3,500 in scholarship money was awarded to 4-H and FFA students. Each individual on the first place team received a \$500 scholarship.

Second place team members received a \$250 scholarship and the highest scoring individual received a \$500 scholarship.

Cambria County 4-H placed first and received a \$1,000 scholarship. The team attended the national contest in Springfield, Missouri. The second place team was North Fayette AVTS. The highest scoring individual was Genny Christ from Cambria County.

For more information, contact Bobbi Bailey at (724) 834-3970 ext. 119 or email at bobbi.bailey@pa.usda.gov.

Three Rivers Habitat Partnership Teams With Dominion For Backyard Buffers Planting

*Copy adapted from press release
by Wildlife Habitat Council*

The Three Rivers Habitat Partnership (TRHP), a regional project of the Wildlife Habitat Council (WHC), teamed up with Dominion to hold the second annual streamside buffer planting at Dominion's Oakford Station.

Dominion is one of the nation's largest producers of energy, with a production capability of more than 3 trillion British thermal units of energy per day.

Backyard Buffers, a project of the TRHP, uses corporate sites as demonstrations for landowners to teach about the importance of streamside buffers.

On May 7, volunteers and Dominion employees planted native wildflowers and large shrubs in order to enhance the effectiveness and aesthetic appeal of the buffer at Oakford Station. The impact is eye-catching and will soon be noticeable by anyone driving past. Natural streamside buffers, as a replacement for mowed lawns, create and enhance habitat for wildlife, improve water quality and provide many benefits to homeowners, including the creation of a colorful, private landscape.

Beaver Run, a small, urbanized stream at Dominion's Oakford Station, was the pilot site for Backyard Buffers in 2002. In April 2002, employees planted a combination of over 250 shrubs and trees and a 50' by 300' wet meadow and constructed 20 bluebird boxes. Since then, a bat box and informational signs have been added and the Dominion buffer has been used as a hands-on learning site through workshops held for both watershed groups and area residents.

"Backyard Buffers is a unique conservation endeavor that encourages employees to model conservation practices in their community. Corporations can play a positive role in the future of wildlife habitat", said Penny Kaercher, Environmental Consultant, Dominion Foundation. Fran Toohill,



After a hard morning of work, volunteers and Dominion employees smile next to one of the 40 native shrubs planted at the Dominion Oakford buffer.

Manager, Dominion Foundation, added "The employees are to be commended for their dedication which is making an obvious difference at Beaver Run in Westmoreland County."

Natural streamside buffers benefit both wildlife and stream quality instead of mowed lawns, which can leave little room for life, deteriorate the quality of the water, and cause erosion and flooding. Buffers offer water, food, and shelter and require little maintenance, as they become stronger. As plants mature and become more numerous and diverse, they become more capable of holding the soil in place, filtering, and slowing runoff. Wildlife further helps establish buffers by spreading seeds through consumption or carrying

them on their bodies. In addition to the many environmental benefits, riparian buffers have an aesthetic advantage by creating a colorful, private landscape. For more information on how to create or enhance a streamside buffer in your backyard or to request a brochure, please contact Colleen Filicky at colleen.filicky.b@bayer.com.

The Backyard Buffers partners include: Alleghenies Watershed Network, Dominion Oakford Station, Dominion Foundation, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, USDA Forest Service, Western Pennsylvania Watershed Protection Program and Westmoreland Conservation District.

Backyard Buffers Workshop Slated

SATURDAY, AUGUST 16, 2003

The Three Rivers Habitat Partnership will be hosting a workshop for backyard buffers. The workshop will be held at Dominion's Oakford Station in Delmont on August 16.

For more details, visit their website at:

http://www.wildlifehc.org/threerivers/backyard_buffers/
or contact Colleen Filicky at colleen.filicky.b@bayer.com.



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Conservation Tour Highlights Growing Greener Projects

By: Ashley Gay, Summer Intern



After a caffeine and sugar rush from coffee and donuts, the Conservation Tour of 2003 began with a few remarks from District Manager, Greg Phillips. He introduced guest speaker, Eric Thumma, Deputy Secretary of the State Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). He explained that the DEP is working “hand-in-hand” with county conservation districts state-wide on many Growing Greener projects at once. Thumma emphasized the practical conservative value of local projects. He noted the success of these projects is due mainly to the participation of the WCD.

Funded by grants from Growing Greener, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s Section 319 Program, and Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts, tour coordinator, Leanne Griffith, Conservation Education Coordinator, was able to invite the public to learn more about the district’s projects.

“Our goal was to [target] people we don’t usually interact with” Lorrie Quadro, Assistant District Manager,

stated. Quadro and other members of the district were excited to see many new faces in attendance. “This is awesome!” she said. Participants saw examples of the district’s on-going projects using Growing Greener funds.

Loyalhanna Gorge

Tony Quadro, Forester/Program Specialist, spoke about the forestry project at the Loyalhanna Gorge, the first stop of the tour. “This three mile gorge is home to mostly ‘second growth’ timber which is worth approximately \$200 million,” Tony noted. Roughly 11 1/2 years ago, the gorge had to be clear cut due to damages from gypsy moths and drought. Today, most of the trees have regenerated. The gorge will soon be managed by the county, and will be preserved for recreation and natural beauty.

Kline Road

Kline Road, also known as Township Road 595 in Cook Township, was the next site. Craig Barras, Watershed Specialist, spoke about the Dirt and Gravel Roads program designed to help improve drainage on roads, reducing the amount of sediments and other pollutants entering streams. Using cross pipes and other materials, roads are built up, forcing water off the roads and preventing erosion. “At least a foot of new material was added to the road,”

Barras stated. Now, when the water flows into Four Mile Run, it is virtually sediment free, which is important because the stream is a stock trout stream. Because of this program, there is “less flash-flooding from heavy rains,” Floyd Neiderhiser, Cook Township Supervisor in charge of the project, explained.

As we were now mid-way through our

tour, it was time for lunch. Lunch at Brady’s was not only delicious (stuffed chicken, Italian roast beef, rigatoni, au gratin potatoes, and green beans — I know you all were wondering), but scenic, as it is home to a natural pond and abundant wildlife.

Sagamore AMD Project

Next on the tour was the Sagamore Abandoned Mine Drainage (AMD) project near Indian Head Village. Bev Braverman, Executive Director of the Mountain Watershed Association, has worked extensively with this project; she and intern Jen Baer spoke on the process and goals of the project. After piles of slag (aka gob piles) were relocated, a series of three ponds was made to passively filter the water draining out of the mine before it reached Indian Creek. Each pond is lower than the one before it, so the water drains through each “by gravity,” Baer said. Metals and other sediments in the water sink to the bottom of the pond. As the volume of the water increases, the water will “naturally” flow into the next pond, Baer explained.

Whitethorn Watershed Agriculture Project

As we neared the last stop of the tour, Wesley Gordon, District Conservationist for Natural Resources Conservation Services, and Dan Griffith, Nutrient Management & Conservation Planner, provided a brief background on farming and various improvement projects used; an appropriate introduction to the Whitethorn Watershed Agriculture Project, covering six farms. Stream crossings for the livestock, manure pits, streambank fencing, riparian buffers, and other techniques are used to “exclude livestock from the stream” and protect the banks from erosion, thus allowing the water to stay clean, Gordon explained.

More than seventy people received an in-depth look at how our environment is being improved by the WCD and Growing Greener funds.



Forester Tony Quadro, explains the progress of the forestry project at Loyalhanna Gorge.

WATER REUSE

Supplementing our Supplies with Wastewater

By: Nicki Foremsky, District/Extension Water Quality Agent



Wastewater should not be wasted. Beneficial reuse of wastewater was the topic of the Water Symposium at the Penn Stater in State College on May 19-20.

More than 100 engineers, educators, DEP personnel, and wastewater treatment vendors attended the Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts (PACD) sponsored event. The term wastewater includes water from a sewage treatment facility, brackish water, poor quality groundwater, agricultural return flows, and stormwater. Beneficial reuse involves taking what we consider wastewater, giving it a high degree of treatment, and using the resulting high-quality effluent to supplement potable (drinking) water usage. Reused wastewater receives additional treatment to ensure that public health and environmental quality are protected.

Many states have been reusing wastewater for years. In 2001, 1.7 billion gallons were recycled nationwide per day, 91% of which came from California, Florida, Texas, and Arizona.

New Jersey also has a program of beneficial reuse developed in 1999 as part of addressing the drought emergency that summer.

Should we reuse our wastewater? With the demand for water increasing, authorities are depending on water from the rivers and surface waters around our county. With beneficial reuse, the water that passes through our homes, down the drains and out to the sewage treatment facility to be discharged into the rivers can now be treated and then reused, providing additional water for groundwater supplies, irrigating crops, and other uses that benefit the community, especially during drought conditions. Beneficial reuse therefore reduces the demands on valuable clean water supplies that we use for drinking.

The University Area Joint Authority (UAJA) community, which serves the State College region, has grown. Because of that growth, the UAJA is renovating to include reuse treatment in their sewage treatment facility. This renovation is necessary because the UAJA was denied a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit upgrade to discharge more than 6 million gallons per day (MGD) into Spring Creek, a high quality cold water fishery. The UAJA began beneficial reuse treatment for the excess of the 6 MGD. The wetland allows for the discharged water to go into the ground to replenish groundwater aquifers. According to the DEP, this recharge water must meet all existing standards for drinking water. Therefore, the UAJA cleans the wastewater with micro-filtration and reverse osmosis. The water then passes through an ultra-violet light for disinfection before entering the wetland. The water is as clean as most bottled waters at this point. The UAJA will be marketing their beneficial reuse water to commercial industries looking to relocate in the State College area. The reuse water can meet their needs for cooling water and other industrial processes.

On a smaller scale, The Penn State University Center for Sustainability has been beneficially reusing wastewater in their Advanced Ecologically Engineered

Inlet Protection Installed

By: Jim Pillsbury, Hydraulic Engineer

The old saying, "out of sight, out of mind" has historically been applied to the water that flows down storm drains. The water disappears through a cast iron grate into a deep, black hole in the ground, never to be thought of again. However, thinking of it again is the only way to improve the quality of our streams and other bodies of water. When polluted stormwater goes down these drains, a stream's aquatic life may also go down the proverbial drain. Common pollutants in runoff water from roads and parking lots include floatable trash, sediment, heavy debris, and grease and oil from automobiles. Removing these harmful substances from stormwater is a small step for people — and a giant leap for stream quality.

A recent donation to the

Westmoreland Conservation District helped us take that leap. KriStar of Santa Rosa, California donated four FloGard™ Plus storm water filters. These innovative filters consist of a stainless steel frame, a reinforced filter bag, and special oil absorbent materials contained in fabric bundles. County Engineer Henry Fitz and his crew installed the FloGard™ Plus filters in two catch basins (the drains in the middle of the parking lot) in Donohoe Center's parking lot — a process that took about 10 minutes per inlet. The District staff will monitor these filters for their performance and any need of maintenance. It is hoped that the aquatic life in our retention pond will notice the improvement in water quality!

Systems (AEES) also known as "Living Machines." Located in a greenhouse, this system uses a series of tanks to treat sewage, greywater, and wastewater. The process uses plants and artificially created wetlands to remove nitrogen and nutrients from the water. The

flowers from the plants are harvested and later sold at the local market. The system is able to handle 1000 gallons per day of holding tank sewage and does not smell due to the scrubbing effect of the biofilters. The AEES design relies on the natural ecological

sequence to clean the water and meets/exceeds advanced tertiary wastewater standards before disinfection. The AEES "Living Machines" are applicable for small communities of 15 households to townhouses and subdivisions.

More Dirt and Gravel Roads to be Improved

By: Craig Barras, Watershed Specialist

The Westmoreland Conservation District Board approved the recommendations of the Quality Assurance Board to fund six road projects using fiscal years' 2002-2004 funds in the amount of \$48,000 from the State Conservation Commission. The following roads will be improved through the program: Bailey Road in Fairfield Township, Firetower Road in Donegal Township, John Leighty Road

in East Huntingdon, Lupyran Road in Loyalhanna and Derry Townships, and North Carolina Way in the City of Jeannette.

Kline Road in Cook Township served as an example of the program for the District's Conservation Tour on May 16. Attendees received information about the program and learned how the supervisors improved their road and the Four Mile Run watershed.

Dirt and Gravel Roads Program Training

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Cleaning Water, One Site at a Time

By: Chris Droste, Erosion Control Technician

While some people may ask what an erosion specialist does, a better question is, what don't they do. Many people ask what these people inspect for and why they do it. An Erosion Control Specialist performs duties required by Chapter 102 of the Clean Streams Law delegated by the DEP (Department of Environmental Protection). The delegated duties include stream water complaint investigation, technical assistance, erosion control plan review, and inspection of earthmoving activities of sites. They also perform duties covered by the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit authority of DEP.

Chris Droste and Mike Barrick are the Erosion Control Specialists at the Conservation District. A large portion of their duties consists of reviewing erosion controls plans for residential and commercial constructions sites. After the plans are approved and construction starts, Chris and Mike perform site inspections to verify that the best management practices are being implemented. They also provide

technical assistance on drainage, stormwater runoff, and flooding issues. They assist developers, contractors, and municipal officials with issues relating to good land use planning and protection of the environment.

When preparing to visit a site, erosion control specialists first pack up the boots, the camera, the plan, and lots of inspection reports. They approach the contractor on the job and walk around the disturbed site inspecting various erosion control techniques they must follow according to the approved plan. Wal-Marts are an example of a large commercial site. There are two Wal-Marts currently under construction in Delmont and Unity Township. When Chris and Mike inspect these large sites, they are verifying controls are installed and functioning properly. Many of the controls require more than simply installing the black silt fencing. For example, collection ponds to control the extreme runoff are installed. These ponds hold all of the water, allowing the sediment to drop out. There is an outlet structure installed to control the

rate in which the water is released. The inspectors must make sure these ponds are built correctly to prevent flooding and sediment problems for residents downstream. To get the water to the ponds, large collection channels lined with rock or synthetic matting guide the water to the ponds. The inspectors verify the plan dimensions for these channels to make sure there will not be a problem. Many times our inspectors specify the use of synthetic blanket material to cover the cut and fill slopes to aid in stabilization of them. The blanket is widely used to prevent massive erosion and land sliding. When the Wal-mart building is in place and the parking lots are paved, the inspectors will look at the stormwater management facilities to make sure the controls are installed according to the plan. When problems exist, they ask for assistance of the municipal engineers and the project engineer to look into the problems. Together, they come up with solutions that will please everyone involved in the project.

Watershed News

CONSERVATION IN ACTION ACROSS WESTMORELAND COUNTY

By: Craig Barras, Watershed Specialist



Pucketa & Chartiers Watershed Association

PACWA held two outreach events in April for Earth Day. On April 24, the watershed group presented a program for 600 children at Bon Air Elementary School in Lower Burrell. As a follow up, PACWA held a Watershed Awareness Day on April 26th at Lower Burrell V.F.W. Attendees learned about macro-invertebrates, abandoned mine lands, and watersheds.

Kiskiminetas Watershed Association

KWA hosted "Know Your Watershed Day" on May 9 at Northmoreland Park. Representatives from DEP, Municipal Authority of Westmoreland County, NRCS, Penn's Corner RC&D, Kiski-Conemaugh Stream Team, Army Corps of Engineers, WCD, Armstrong County Conservation District, PA Environmental Council, and WPCAMR had displays at a pavilion for gradeschoolers from Apollo-Ridge Elementary and the Kiski High School Environmental Club.



Jacobs Creek Watershed Association

JCWA and students from Southmoreland High School's environmental club planted trees, shrubs, and grass along Jacobs Creek in Scottdale on March 21 to complete a Growing Greener Grant that JCWA had obtained.



Loyalhanna Watershed Association

LWA held a Volunteer Training session on May 31 for people assisting the group in implementing a Growing Greener Grant to assess all of the streams in the entire watershed. Field work for this project began in June. This project will take two years to complete and will provide the LWA with an accurate road map for future projects and a better understanding of how to improve water quality.

Mountain Watershed Association

MWA participated in WCD's Conservation Tour on May 16 by providing a tour of their Sagamore AMD Remediation Project in Saltlick Township, Fayette County. This project has helped to improve the water quality in Indian Creek. MWA also recently received a grant from the League of Women Voters, Water Resources Education Network to develop and implement a project aimed at educating local citizens and decision makers about the importance of protecting and improving the community's drinking water source water(s), located in Indian Creek Watershed.

Turtle Creek Watershed Association

TCWA held its annual "Fun Day" at B.Y. Park in Trafford on May 31. TCWA stocked trout in the pond for a children's fishing derby. The watershed is supported in this effort by the Trafford Borough Recreation Board. Several area individuals and businesses provided donations for fishing derby prizes.



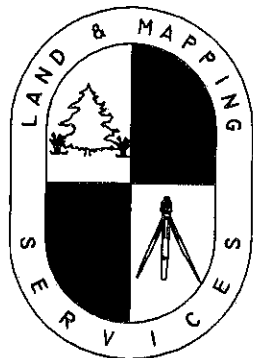
Sewickley Creek Watershed Association

SCWA held a public meeting on May 7 at Westmoreland County Community College to present its draft of the Watershed Conservation Plan prepared by the Western PA Conservancy - Watershed Assistance Center. The meeting allowed interested citizens and groups in the watershed to provide input into a long range plan for the conservation of natural resources in the area. Officials from Westmoreland County Planning, Botanical Society, WCD, Bird Club, and Mount Pleasant Township were in attendance. SCWA will use the plan to prioritize future projects in the watershed, and will share information with local and regional planners.

*Interested in learning more about your local watershed?
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at (724) 857-5271
craigbarras@yahoo.com*

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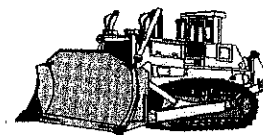
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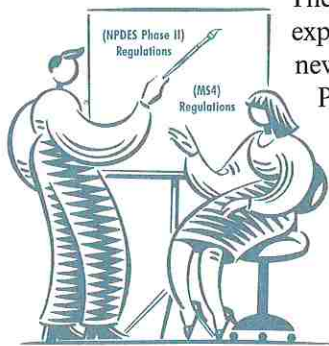
UPDATES FROM THE EDUCATOR'S CORNER OF "THE BARN"

By: Leanne Griffith, Conservation Education Coordinator

The District technical staff has been busy with workshops, tours, and outreach efforts targeting both our more traditional audiences and a new audience of teachers requesting help to meet the new Pennsylvania "Academic Standards for Environmental Education."

ENGINEERS' WORKSHOP

The District hosted a stormwater workshop for more than 250 engineers, contractors, developers, and government officials at Mountain View Inn.



The program explained the new National Pollution Discharge Elimination System Phase II (NPDES Phase II) regula-

tions and the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) regulations. Guest speakers for the day included Stuart Demanski (Environmental Planner for the DEP Division of Waterways, Wetlands and Erosion Control), Darl Rosenquest (DEP's Bureau of Watershed Management), Ed Ritzer (DEP's Storm Water Specialist), and Keith Largent (Somerset Conservation District's Erosion Control Technician). Staff presenters included Jim Pillsbury (Hydraulic Engineer), Craig Barras (Watershed Specialist), Dan Griffith (Agricultural Technician/Nutrient Management Specialist), and Tony Quadro (Forester). Kathy Fritz (Program Secretary) and Leanne Griffith (Conservation Education Coordinator) organized the event. Jim Pillsbury summed up the event's goal as, "We want people to view stormwater as a resource to be protected, not as a waste material to be disposed of."

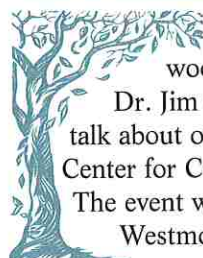
MUNICIPAL MEETINGS

With a similar type workshop, the technical staff went "on the road" in the spring presenting a series of workshops to groups of municipal officials focused on district programs and new regulations. The meetings were hosted by Rostraver Township and Ligonier Township in their township buildings and the City of Lower Burrell hosted the third meeting at the Penn State New Kensington Campus Conference Center. More than 50 municipal officials from 20 different municipalities attended one of the three workshops.

Guest speakers included Tamira Vayansky (Planning Director for Rostraver Township), Mike Nedley (Code Enforcement Officer for the City of Lower Burrell), and Grover Binkey (Ligonier Township Supervisor).

Speakers talking on behalf of their local watersheds groups included Tony Farina (President of Pucketa and Chartiers Watershed Association), Bob Kossack (President of Kiskiminetas Watershed), Diane Selvaggio (Executive Director of Turtle Creek Watershed), Drew Banas (Executive Director of Loyalhanna Watershed), Jen Baer (AmeriCorp worker for Mountain Watershed) and Mike Barrick (President of Jacobs Creek Watershed). Presentations were made by WCD staff technicians. Sara Tumulty of Western Pennsylvania Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation spoke on the group's latest efforts. Leanne coordinated the meetings with assistance from Kathy and intern Jessica Griffith.

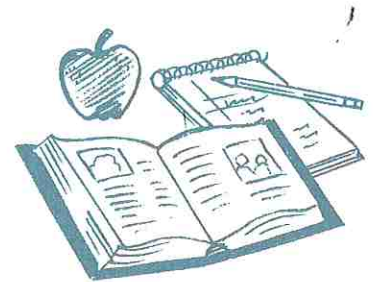
FORESTRY



More than 50 woodlot owners heard Dr. Jim Grace, State Forester, talk about our state forests at the Center for Conservation Education. The event was sponsored by the Westmoreland Woodlands

Improvement Association. Bob Ackerman (Associate Board Member) serves as president of this group and Tony is the agency advisor.

SCHOOL RELATED ACTIVITIES



Staff members visited several schools to put on watershed programs in the last several months. Lorrie and Tony traveled to Donegal Elementary and visited 35 third graders. Kathy and Leanne did a program for 21 R.K. Mellon Elementary third graders, which included planting flowers in front of the school. One child remarked, "This was the best day in my whole life. I'm going to always remember which flower is mine and bring my family back to visit it all my whole life." A program at Ramsey Elementary was presented by staff members for 90 5th graders. Leanne took interns Ashley Gay and Jessica Griffith along with volunteer Susan Carolan to Stanwood Elementary for presentations using the Enviroscape models for over 300 students from 3rd to 5th grade. Greg Phillips (District Manager) volunteered his time at Holy Cross Elementary and presented "Ferdinand the Fish" and judged their science fair program.

Tony, Nicki, and Jim worked different days at a camp for several different school districts that reached more than 400 students including Harrold Middle School and Greensburg Salem Middle School. Jim and Nicki had the students take their shoes and socks off and squish the mud between their toes in the wetlands as they learned

about water quality, pollution and acid rain. Tony discussed tree identification, forest ecology and management, and then he bored into several trees to show how tree ages are determined without cutting down the tree.

Seventy-five Maxwell Middle School 4th graders came to the Center for Conservation Education in May on a field trip developed to complement several units in their new series of science books about "Land and Water."



Nicki demonstrated Non-Point Source pollution using the Enviroscope model. Jim did stormwater experiments and showed off part of the new "Stormwater Trail". Leanne worked with a macroinvertebrate activity. Tony talked about planting riparian buffers and had them plant trees by Donohoe Creek.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Kathy and Tony met with over 700 people at State Rep. Jess Stair's Senior Citizen Day. Using a new display created by Leanne, they explained the various areas of educational programming the District is becoming involved with.



Jim and Kathy took 25 Brownies and their families on a tour of the

Ligonier Township Trail and Wetlands. Jim explained the importance of Wetlands, Stormwater Management, and preserving our natural resources along trails.

Craig and Nicki spent a cold, wet day at Kiski/Roaring Run's "Know Your Watershed Day" at Northmoreland Park and at the Pucketa and Chartiers Watershed's "Earth Day Program." They enjoyed talking with more than 400 people at those two events.

Leanne and Sara met with junior and senior high school teachers in the Greater Latrobe School District to assist them in developing their new curriculum to meet the new State Academic Standards for both Environmental and Agricultural Education. Nicki included Penn State 4-H materials and a list of her programs in the packet they used.



Several staff members worked with Carol Petrosky (Landscape Designer), 4-H members, and members of the Westmoreland County Botanical Society to plant and mulch various varieties of flowers in front of Westmoreland County Courthouse. Sandy Dzendzel (Administrative Secretary) made sure the workers had plenty of pizza that day. Greg helped with the Route 30 planting in front of the Gabriel Brother's store shopping complex. Drive by and enjoy their efforts.

CENTER & ANN RUDD SAXMAN NATURE PARK PROJECTS

Visitors to the Education Center will soon be able to use our completed "Stormwater Trail", a self-guided tour of 15 sites around the Education Center

and down into Ann Rudd Saxman Nature Park.



Project designer Jim said, "The goal for this project was to allow community members to understand that stormwater is an asset, not a liability." Mark Jackson was the graphic designer and Karen Jurkovic was the "word smith" creating the text for the signs, facts sheets and brochures. Other committee members included Greg, Leanne, Nicki and intern Ashley Gay.

Skelly and Loy staff members recently presented the preliminary "Donohoe Creek Conservation Plan" to community members. This plan shows the primary environmental problem in Ann Rudd Saxman Nature Park is the high volume of water that rushes through Donohoe Creek with any storm, causing erosion and sedimentation problems. The large number of paved parking areas that surround the 60-acre park is causing this problem. Craig is in charge of this Growing Greener Grant Assessment. Other committee members include Greg, Nicki, Dan, Jim and Leanne.



Two Boy Scouts have started work on their Eagle Scout projects in the Ann Rudd Saxman Nature Park. Sam Nicholson of Troop 304 has repaired several bridges in the park. His work contributes to the ease of hiking through Nature Park. Mark Ament of Troop 465 has installed a beautiful natural check dam in Donohoe Creek. He also stabilized some areas of the streambank.



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Earth Day at Saint Vincent College

By: *Leanne Griffith, Conservation Education Coordinator*

More than 3,100 people joined in the fun at the second annual Earth Day Event held at Saint Vincent College. Carol Wright (Loyalhanna Watershed Program Director) served as event chairperson overseeing a steering committee that included District staff members Craig Barras (Watershed Specialist) and Leanne Griffith (Education Coordinator). Nicki Foremsky (Extension Water Quality Agent) served on the committee representing Penn State Extension and Sara Tumulty (Environmental Coordinator) represented WPCAMR. Seventy-five environmental groups set up displays and gave educational demon-

strations. Staff members Joanne Kitsko (Receptionist), Karen Barnhart (Financial Secretary), Kathy Fritz (Program Secretary) and Jessica Griffith (Intern), Lorrie Quadro (Assistant District Manager), Tony Quadro (Forester), Craig Barras (Watershed Specialist), Dan Griffith (Agricultural Technician/Nutrient Management), and Leanne ran the conservation district booth. Nicki ran the Penn State Cooperative Extension booth. Paul Heyworth (Associate Director) helped Nevin Ulery (Penn's Corner Resource Conservation and Development) run their booth. Theresa Gay Rohall (Associate Director) was in charge of Powdermill's display. Al

Barnett (District Director) helped with Westmoreland County Sportsman League booth. Bruce Golden (WPCAMR) had many visitors at his booth. Sara (AmeriCorp worker for WPCAMR) was in charge of the volunteers for the day and also created the Legislator's booth. The most popular booth at the event seemed to be "Balloon Animals" which was manned by Joanna Fliss (daughter of former District staff member Jeff Fliss) and Chris and Sam Griffith (sons of Dan and Leanne) along with assistance from their parents and friends.

Staff News

By: *Miscellaneous Contributors*

Congratulations to Nicki Foremsky (Water Quality Agent) who has completed her Masters Degree in Environmental Science and Management from Duquesne University. Nicki has recently been named as the County Commissioners alternative representative to Penn's Corner Resource Conservation and Development Area Executive Council.

- Jim Pillsbury (Hydraulic Engineer) has been selected to serve on the Villanova Urban Stormwater Partnership, an education and government consortium that aims to promote innovative stormwater techniques in Pennsylvania.

This program is being sponsored by Villanova University. Jim also has attended two "Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4)" workshops learning about water quality permits for storm sewers.

- Tony Quadro (District Forester and Program Manager) has been appointed to serve on the Pennsylvania State Stewardship Steering Committee.
- Dan Griffith (Agricultural Technician and Nutrient Management Specialist) attended several days of ARC View 8.3 training in Pittsburgh. He also is the staff liaison with the ARC View Users Group of Westmoreland County.

Dan is also working on the Western

Regional CREP committee. This committee is investigating bringing this state and federal funding program to our area which will encourage further conservation practices on farms. The Regional Partnership consists of Conservation District managers, Farm Service Agency and Natural Conservation Reserve Service directors, Ducks Unlimited, Department of Environmental Protection and members of the Wildlife Habitat Project.

- Leanne Griffith (Conservation Education Coordinator) completed "Wetlands and Watersheds" teacher training at Saint Vincent College this spring.

Summer Interns

By: *Ashley Gay, Summer Intern*

Jessica Griffith spent her four weeks of internship assisting the staff with educational outreach and developing a PowerPoint program for a Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture grant. In May, Jess graduated summa cum laude from Indiana University of Pennsylvania. She will begin her graduate work at Western Illinois University in the fall following her

summer employment in Huron, Ohio.

Ashley Gay, an English for Communications major with a political communications concentration and a political science minor, has finished her freshman year at St. Francis University. Ashley has assisted with educational outreach programs and writing assignments, including the article about the Conservation Tour on page 5

of this newsletter.

Katrina Stokum, known as Katie to staff members, will be a senior this fall at Mt. Pleasant High School. She is currently applying to St. Vincent's college, Seton Hill, and University of Pittsburgh. She has spent countless hours assisting with secretarial work in our office.

Landmarks Receives NACD Newsletter Top Award



AEM President, Dennis Slater, presents Lorrie Quadro, WCD Assistant District Manager with District Outreach Award.

Westmoreland Conservation District took top honors in the Newsletter Category for its quarterly publication of Landmarks. The

Association of Equipment Manufacturers (AEM) and the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) awarded District Outreach Awards to six top conservation districts at the 57th NACD Annual Meeting in Orlando. AEM President, Dennis Slater, was on hand to present a \$500 check and plaque to the winners and to congratulate each for their outstanding work during the past year in informing the public of the importance of conserving and enhancing our natural resources. Editor Lorrie Quadro accepted the award on behalf of the district and the publication team. The publication is in its seventeenth year of printing.

Landmarks, and its associated Annual Report, which reaches over 4000 readers quarterly, has received national recognition in the following categories:

- 1990 NACD National Newsletter of the Year
- 1997 NACD National Newsletter of the Year
- 1998 NACD Special Publication
- 2000 NACD National Newsletter of the Year
- 2001 NACD Special Publication
- 2002 NACD National Newsletter of the Year

District News and Notes

PUBLICATIONS

St. Vincent College, with the assistance of Carol Wright, Program Manager of the Loyalhanna Watershed Association, has developed a new Abandoned Mine Drainage Activity Booklet Good Bye Orange Water through Growing Greener Grant funds. The resource is available online at <http://facweb.stvincent.edu/eec>, and additional copies are available by contacting the SVC Environmental Education Center at (724) 537-4554.

The Great Allegheny Passage Companion. A Guide to History and Heritage along the Trail by Bill Metzger is the most comprehensive guide to the trail on the market. (ISBN 0-9711835-2-X; \$19.95 US; 224 pages including maps, photos and illustrations; soft cover). The book is divided into 22 sections, each representing five miles of trail. These sections offer detailed maps, drawings, photographs, explanation of the local history and heritage, and things to look for (and some to avoid) along the way. The book contains an index and a resource guide to the area.

Contact the Local History Company in Pittsburgh at 412-362-2294,

or e-mail them at Info@TheLocalHistoryCompany.com for more information.

WOOD YOU?

Do you want to do the right thing for your woods? Do you want to make an informed choice regarding forest management decisions? Well, it's as easy as calling Tony Quadro, the District's forester at 724-837-5271. Tony will visit your woodlot, take a quick inventory and evaluate its potential. He can provide assistance on whether or not it is time to harvest timber and how to go about it. All this at **no cost**. You can also get a more detailed Forest Stewardship Plan. There is a fee for the plan, but it can be cost shared up to 75% with State funds.

WITH SYMPATHY

Former District Chairman Gilbert J. Hutter, 78, of Mt. Pleasant Township, died June 16 of complications following surgery. The well-known dairyman was an active member of the District for more than 25 years, many of which were spent serving as chairman, vice-chairman, and director. "Gib" will be featured in the next edition of Landmarks.

LANDMARKS

The Official Newsletter of the Westmoreland Conservation District

211 Donohoe Road • Greensburg, PA 15601

Phone: (724) 837-5271

Admin. Fax: (724) 552-0143

Tech. Fax: (724) 837-4127

Email: wcd202B@aol.com

Website: www.wcdpa.com

Editor – Lorrie Quadro

Assistant Editor – Ashley Gay

Graphic Design – Jackson Graphics:

Mark Jackson & Steph LaFrankie

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NATURALLY

Delicious

by Karen Barnhart

Fake Crab Cakes

- 2 C. grated zucchini – no seeds
- 2 C. bread crumbs
- 2 eggs
- 2 tsp. chopped onion
- 2 tsp. celery
- 1 tsp. Old Bay seasoning
- 1 tsp. salad dressing
- Parsley
- Pinch of baking soda

Make patties & fry (this is a nice way to use zucchini)

Find the Artist's Paint Brush



Variegated colors of green, blue, crimson, yellow, and brown blend an array of beauty into the environment that surrounds us. Green grass, trees, and leaves; crystal blue water and skies; bright yellow sunshine; and even the rich, russet-brown tones of the soil compliment the vibrant hues of the artist's conservation palette. It is difficult to imagine an environment without a trace of color, and so we invite you to search for the artist's brush hidden somewhere in this issue of *Landmarks* and create your own collage of vivid conservation masterpieces. The 5th, 10th, and 15th callers to Joanne at (724) 837-5271 correctly identifying the location of the artist's brush will receive some colorful prizes! Previous contest winners are not eligible. Comments regarding our publication are welcome and always appreciated. Good luck!

Joseph Schober of Latrobe, **Lee Pinto** of Greensburg, and **Clarice Munk** of Vestaburg were the lucky winners of our "Find the Classic Car" contest in the Winter 2002 issue.



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