

Landmarks

Westmoreland
Conservation
District 

HELPING PEOPLE USE RESOURCES WISELY

Volume 26, 2013

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Westmoreland Conservation
District Chairman Ron Rohall

Awards Banquet Review

Urban Stormwater, Dirt and
Gravel Road and Landowner
Reclamation Programs are
Making a Difference.



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Greg Phillips

Dear Friends of Conservation:

The Westmoreland Conservation District has been publishing its award winning newsletter *Landmarks* for over 26 years. Originally, *Landmarks* was our main communications tool. Today, the District news, schedule of events, helpful information and much more are posted on our regularly updated website. In recent years, due to budget and time limitations, we've had to limit publishing and printing *Landmarks* to once per year.

We've seen several other organizations abandon printing hard copies of their newsletters in lieu of electronic distribution only. Although we post a downloadable version of *Landmarks* on our website, we still believe that printed hard copies continue to well serve a large portion of our audiences (yes, they still can be recycled).

After consulting with our Communications Advisory Committee and Board of Directors, we decided that it was time to transform *Landmarks* into more of a magazine-style publication. Editorially, we determined that we would like to introduce our readers to the faces of conservation – the people we serve and work with – advocates who can confirm the benefits and common sense of conservation practices. We also wanted to provide more in-depth insight into certain conservation-related topics. And finally, to feature larger, colorful photos depicting quality of life enhancing programs and projects with reader friendly descriptions.

We hope you enjoy our refreshed and reformatted *Landmarks*.



Greg Phillips
Westmoreland Conservation District
District Manager/CEO



On The Cover:

This photo of Laurel Ridge was taken by renowned Laurel Highlands photographer Stephen Simpson. 50% of Westmoreland County is forested. Forests enhance water quality by serving as giant filters when it rains. They provide recreational opportunities, habitat and a renewable resource which contributes to our economy.



**A Conversation
with Westmoreland
Conservation
District Chairman
Ron Rohall**

Mission

The Westmoreland Conservation District promotes, educates, and implements conservation principles through examples and programs.

We encourage best management practices and voluntary compliance of laws. Our Board of Directors, professionals, and volunteers are committed to the leadership and service required in pursuing a better environment. We use our skills and talents, and the cooperation of our partners, to build a culture of responsible stewardship and sustainability.

Westmoreland Conservation District Chairman Ron Rohall is a professional forester. Linn Run is in the background of this photo taken in Ligonier Township.

For 63 years, the Westmoreland Conservation District has been successfully encouraging loggers, earthmovers, developers, farmers, and others whose daily work directly affects our natural resources to voluntarily incorporate conservation practices in their projects. These projects protect the quality of the soil, forests, and streams.

The District's ability to elicit this voluntary care of our natural resources is very successful because its approach is personal, often one-on-one, and the actions it recommends are both proven and practical.

We recently had a conversation with Ron Rohall, Westmoreland Conservation District Board Chairman, about where the District is headed. We also asked some questions about how the District determines its goals and priorities. Ron pointed out that the foundation of the District's activities is its mission. Built carefully upon that mission is the District's strategic plan.

Landmarks - What is the District's number one goal and how can it be achieved?

Ron Rohall - Just two years after adopting our current strategic plan to deal with increasingly uncertain times, we have very good news to report: we have accomplished our number one

goal which is achieving a sustainable, positive net asset position. Securing income and limiting expenses have been the keys to achieving this goal. Neither has been easy, especially in times of sluggish economy and fewer government and foundation dollars...and given the fact that we were in a deficit – our 2010 organizational budget was the first ever in our history where spending was greater than income.

Because the state of Pennsylvania provides a significant portion of our annual funding, we enhanced our dialogue with our elected state officials over the past two years, using emails, letters, and face-to-face discussions to remind them of the value conservation districts bring to our communities in the form of clean streams, stable soils, healthy forests, flood prevention, and overall quality of life, and the importance of dedicating funding to make sure this work continues.

Pennsylvania also recently passed an impact fee on the Marcellus shale industry in 2012. The State Conservation Commission has allocated funding from this fee to conservation districts. This funding has helped us balance our budget for 2013 and partially replenished our operational reserve.

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A view of the GreenForge building's green roof with the Conservation District barn in the background on the Donohoe Center Campus

A Conversation with Westmoreland Conservation District Chairman Ron Rohall continued from page 1

For the last few years due to a budget deficit the Conservation District had to borrow from our reserve.

As conservationists, our board is keenly aware of what it takes to be good stewards of resources and for the past several years has reduced administrative and supply expenses. Finally, additional income was generated by setting more realistic, market-based fees for the erosion control and stormwater management services the District provides.

Landmarks - How does Westmoreland County support the District?

Ron Rohall - The base of support from the Westmoreland County Commissioners has been stable for the last five years. Westmoreland County's budget allocation is not only critically important to the Westmoreland Conservation District's operations, but also to our ability to attract additional funding from other sources. We are grateful for the consistent support we received from the county over the years and are very aware that much of what we have been able to accomplish is due to that support.

Landmarks - What was the number two goal in the District's strategic plan?

Ron Rohall- Our strategic plan's second goal is to maintain GreenForge as a conservation model and incubator for grassroots organizations, while moving it to financial sustainability.

This was perhaps our most challenging of the goals

accomplished. We undertook the GreenForge project in 2005, transforming a 1980s-era cinderblock building into the first green rehabilitation of a commercial building in Westmoreland County.

Today, the 23,000-square-foot center boasts other significant conservation landmarks – first green roof in Westmoreland County...first installation of permeable concrete in Westmoreland County...and one of the largest solar array installations in Westmoreland County (3.5 kilowatts).

But it all came with a price. \$2.1 million to be exact. And, given the overall economy and the nature of the project (rehabilitation vs. new construction), we were not able to raise funds at the same level we did during the creation of the District's barn headquarters in the late 1990s.

Even with the generous support of nearly 40 businesses, foundations, government agencies, and individual donors, GreenForge remained unfinished, some \$1.7 million in debt, and without a reserve to cover either routine building maintenance or major repair. This was especially onerous for us, since the District was the guarantor for the debt.

In addition, District staff were supporting the project, working outside their normal duties to provide skills to keep up the day-to-day operation of the building, including property management services, rental management services, accounting services, and so on.

Over the past two years we have worked with the Westmoreland County Industrial Development Corporation and the Economic Growth Corporation in conjunction with financial institutions to restructure and reduce the GreenForge debt and to raise

additional funds for the project.

The result is now that the rental income of the building will be sufficient to complete the needed work on the building and to create a sinking fund for building maintenance and repair.

A recently negotiated agreement with the Westmoreland Industrial Development Corporation will allow District staff to get out of the property management business and to continue focusing on our core mission.

Landmarks - How will the District go about maintaining leadership for the future?

Ron Rohall - We have drafted board and staff succession plans, and begun the appropriate training and development programs.

As many of our leadership staff are now in their 50s, this was an especially timely activity that should ensure continuity and quality of the District's programs.

Landmarks - Does the District have a communications goal? If so, how are you adapting to get your information out effectively in today's complicated world?

Ron Rohall - We want to be the first-in-mind conservation resource for targeted audiences and building organizational identity.

Our solid communications and outreach program was enhanced even more last year with a complete overhaul of our website, with improved functionality and quick links for the things our technical audiences need most – forms, permits, and tracking plan reviews.

Also recently, we've begun posting videos on YouTube and we launched our first foray into the world of the social media with a presence on Facebook.

If you're a registered Facebook user, be sure to "like" us...and interact regularly with us by liking our posts and commenting about them.

Our presence on Facebook gives us yet another way to communicate the conservation message and to reach a demographic that includes a significant number of young adults.

Landmarks - How will the District continue to provide quality programs to meet the needs of our local citizens now and into the near future?

Ron Rohall - As soon as we're able to shore up the District's foundation on all corners, we will be able to return our full focus on our mission and our core conservation programs – erosion and sediment control, stormwater management, forestry, and agriculture/nutrient management. Our first actions will be to evaluate their effectiveness and to find ways to respond to emerging needs in the county.

In November 2012, we initiated a quality-check of our largest conservation program, erosion and sediment control, with an

on-line survey of the clients we serve. The 43 respondents – engineers, surveyors, developers and municipalities – reported a high level of satisfaction with District service. 97% said that guidance on plan permitting or review was helpful and easy to follow, and 91% find our fees reasonable. We also received many comments praising our staff's efforts to educate and inform our clients at workshops and seminars.



The Appalachian Gateway gas line construction site is winterized by covering disturbed earth with straw mulch.

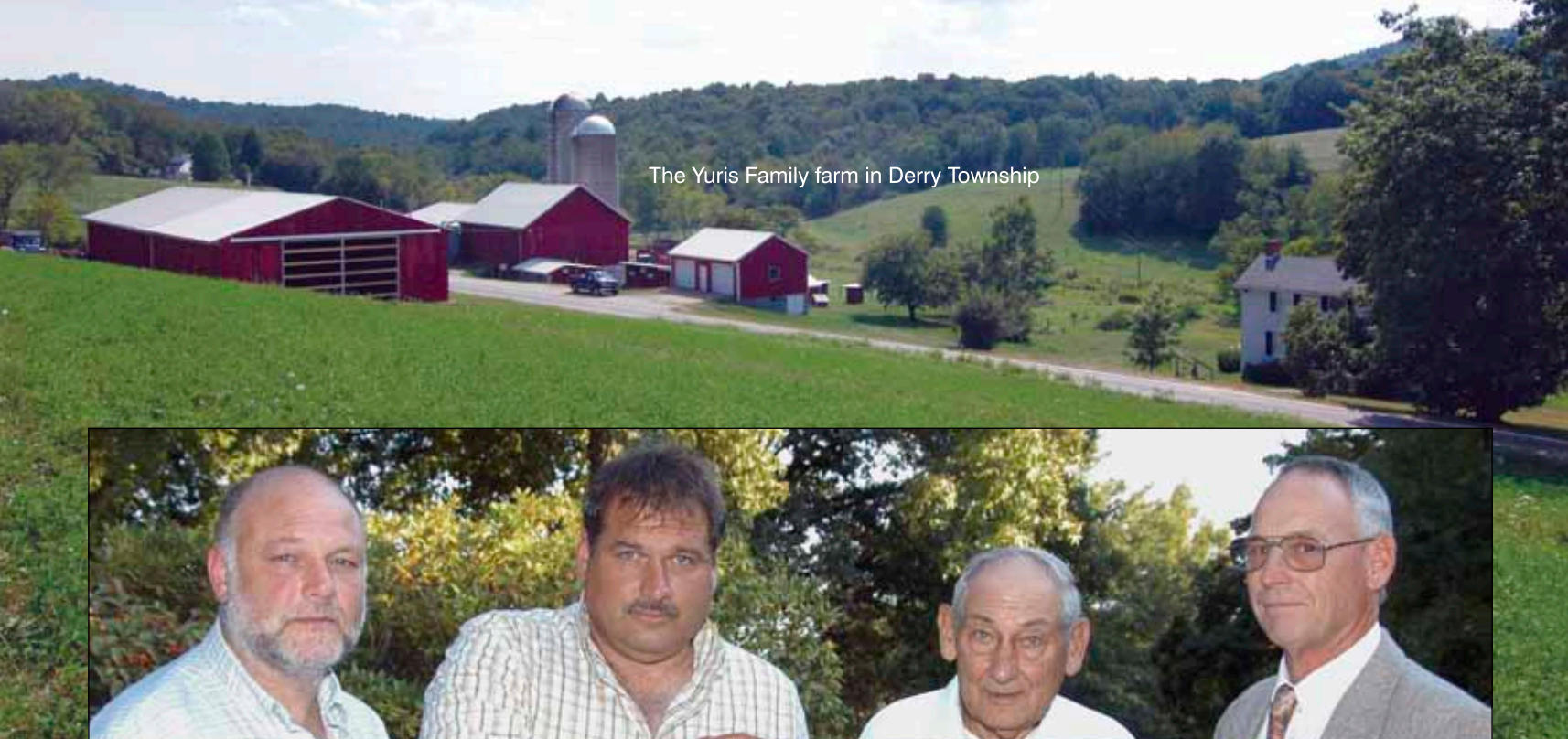
Photo courtesy of Dominion Transmission

Landmarks - If the District could secure additional funding sources where could it take you?

Ron Rohall - We hope to create several highly visible conservation demonstrations on existing shale gas drill sites in Westmoreland County to show how these practices – which are proven, practical, but not currently employed by the industry – could better protect our natural resources. The practices can help to infiltrate rain water, reduce runoff, improve the stability of newly cut roads, reduce erosion, lessen soil compaction, restore native species, minimize sediment in nearby streams, and protect water quality.

At the same time, demand for our staff's expertise in core programs such as erosion control, and innovative stormwater management continues to grow. New requirements from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection to review plans faster and to hold pre-plan meetings as a matter of course will increase workload even more.

We anticipate that we will soon need to add additional technical staff to help with the increased workload in erosion and sediment control and stormwater management. Before these new positions can be filled, the board will need to identify long term funding mechanisms. ■



The Yuris Family farm in Derry Township



I-r: Dave, John and Nick Yuris accept the 2012 Westmoreland Conservation District Farmer of the Year Award from District Director Fred Slezak.

Outstanding Conservationists & Partners Honored at Awards Banquet

The District's Awards Banquet returned to the Westmoreland Country Club and nearly 200 people joined us in mid-September for a night of fun, fellowship, and celebration of conservation.

Yuris Family 2012 Farmer of the Year

The Yuris Family of Derry Township was selected as the District's 2012 Farmer of the Year.

Nick Yuris and his wife Marian purchased their 115-acre farmstead in 1978. And at that time, Nick said it didn't even have a fence post on it. So, over the next three and a half decades, he and Marian

and their sons David and John have built a barn, a milk house, hutches for the calves, and a number of other buildings, and turned the property into a model dairy farm, complete with a variety of conservation measures.

As far back as 1984, they installed tile drain to manage water in the fields and planted in contour strips. Since then, they have added such conservation practices as rotational grazing, which

allows animals to graze in only one area of the pasture at a time while the other areas are rested. They also recently purchased a no-till corn planter, which will eliminate plowing and reduce erosion tremendously.

The Yurises installed fencing along the stream that runs through their property, and created a healthy buffer area for this high quality cold-water fishery that empties directly into the Conemaugh River. The buffer is now maturing to the point where it is beginning to develop trees. That's good news for water quality because trees are among the most effective natural water filters.

The Yurises also established an animal walkway from the barn to the pasture and created three access roads – totaling nearly 1,900 feet – that allow them to move equipment around the farmstead

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I-r, Dianna and William Hoffer accept the 2011 Farmer of the Year Award from District Director Fred Slezak.



District Chairman Ron Rohall presents the first ever J. Roy Houston Conservation Partnership Award to the Westmoreland County Commissioners past and present. Commissioners in attendance to help accept the award are, I-r: current Westmoreland County Commissioner Chairman Charles Anderson; current Commissioner Ted Kopas; past Commissioners Ted Simon, William Davis, and Tom Balya; current Commissioner Tyler Courtney; and past Commissioner Phil Light.



Past District Chairman J. Roy Houston is inducted into the Hall of Honor. Pictured, l-r: Roy's daughter Tracy Halleck, District Manager/CEO Greg Phillips, Roy's daughter Kathy Heider, Roy's sister Lou Houston

Awards Banquet continued from page 5

without running through the stream or causing pollution on the public road that bisects their farm.

In addition, the Yurises have a nutrient management plan for their operation, are a recognized Dairy of Distinction, and are a preserved farm under the Westmoreland County Agricultural Land Preservation Program.

Nick, Marian, John, and David were honored for their outstanding conservation efforts at the District's Awards Banquet in September.

William and Dianna Hoffer 2011 Farmer of the Year

William and Dianna Hoffer received the District's 2011 Conservation Farmer of the Year Award for the many conservation measures they've installed on their 120-acre Mount Pleasant Township dairy

cow and beef cattle farm to manage water and benefit Jacobs Creek.

The Hoffers were recognized for their achievement in 2011 but officially received their award at this event because the District did not have a banquet in 2011.

J. Roy Houston Conservation Partnership Award

The Westmoreland County Commissioners, past and present, were the first recipients of the new J. Roy Houston Conservation Partnership Award. Since the District's founding in 1949 by an act of the County Commissioners, these elected officials have provided the strong and consistent support that has allowed the District to make great strides in conserving our county's natural resources for the benefit of all citizens.

The new J. Roy Houston Conservation Partnership Award was created to honor the memory and spirit of Mr. Houston,

whose 40 years of service as the District's chairman from 1970 until his death in 2010 was the longest volunteer commitment in the District's history.

Hall of Honor J. Roy Houston

J. Roy Houston was inducted into the District's Hall of Honor at the Awards Banquet.

During his tenure as District chairman, the organization grew from one conservation program to seven, from one employee to 13, and from a shared office location to its own unique historic-barn conservation center. He also helped to forge many partnerships that put important conservation projects on the ground – reclaiming abandoned mine lands, building flood protection measures, and creating hiking/biking trails.

Special thanks for helping with the Awards Banquet...



Larry Larese

Master of Ceremonies Larry Larese, the District's newest associate director, served as the official host for the evening and did a great job of keeping the program running smoothly. Larry recently retired as executive director of the Westmoreland County Industrial Development Corporation and the Westmoreland County Department of Planning and Development.



Barry Kukovich

Barry Kukovich, manager of Communications and Community Affairs for Peoples Natural Gas, spoke of his company's commitment to our region and desire for a strong partnership with the District.

Peoples Natural Gas is the sponsor of the new J. Roy Houston Conservation Partnership Award. Roy worked for many years as marketing manager at Peoples Gas and it was that company's commitment to employee volunteerism that introduced Roy to the Westmoreland Conservation District in 1968.



Local producers again provided many of the fresh, delicious foods enjoyed at the banquet. All supplied foods were featured in culinary treats from hors d'oeuvres through desserts.

These producers included:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| All Saints Brewing Company | Kerber's Dairy |
| Bardine's Country Smokehouse | Sarver's Hill Organic Farm |
| Friendship Farms | Simplicity Acres |
| Greenhouse Winery | Turner Dairy Farms |
| Hoffer's Ligonier Valley Packing | Wendel Springs Farm |

Table centerpieces were provided by local grower, Jason Wilkinson Nurseries, Inc.



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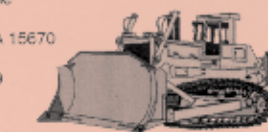
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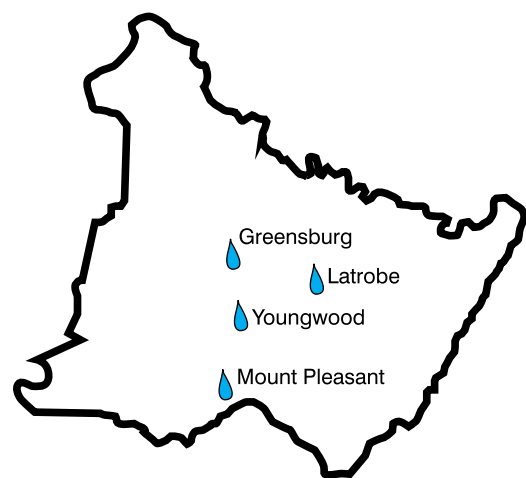
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Managing Urban Stormwater



The Westmoreland Conservation District is helping local communities control stormwater through a variety of programs and best management practices.

Hurricane Sandy showed us the devastation that can happen when too much water invades urban areas...and why stormwater management is critically important.

Of course, no amount of manmade stormwater management could have prevented the flooding from a storm the size of Sandy, but in places where these conservation measures were in place, they did a lot of good.

As the hurricane sent a week of steady rain into our area of Pennsylvania, grass waterways on farms and the green roof on the GreenForge building acted as sponges to help absorb the excess water. Permeable concrete parking areas and walkways on our campus and gravel driveways at homes across the county provided a way for the rain to soak into the ground and landscaped islands in shopping center parking lots and rain gardens in yards throughout Mount Pleasant soaked up significant amounts rainwater, and prevented it from running off into already-swollen streams.

Installing hundreds of these kinds of stormwater management measures throughout our county over the years lessened the impact of the storm on homes, businesses, communities, and people.

Likewise, ongoing good stewardship of our natural resources – especially the undeveloped, forested ridges in the eastern part of the county – also played a significant role in absorbing the four inches of rain that fell in Westmoreland County during our visit from Hurricane Sandy.

City of Greensburg

Barb Ciampini, Greensburg City Planning Director, and Sue Trout, City Administrator, recently talked to the District about the challenges and creative solutions of managing stormwater in a historic urban area.



Barb Ciampini
City of Greensburg
Planning Director

Barb: When it was originally installed about 100 years ago, the storm sewer system in the City of Greensburg was one, combined system that handled both stormwater and sanitary sewage. That's the way things were done back then.

But as the city grew, having one combined system proved not to be such a good idea. More buildings and paved areas meant more water runoff, and when it was too much for the system to handle, problems like flooding and pollution overflowing into our local stream, Jacks Run, would occur.

Slowly but surely, we're separating the two systems, removing the stormwater from the sanitary system. But while this work is underway, we still have to deal with an excess of stormwater that just goes out to the curb and channels itself into the next open space.

So, a few years ago, when we had an opportunity to do something innovative and to make a big difference in the amount of rainwater that flowed into the system, we took it.



Sue Trout
City of Greensburg
Administrator

Sue: The State of Pennsylvania was relocating some of its offices into downtown and needed parking spaces for its workers. The City worked with the Westmoreland Conservation District to create two new surface parking lots that not only could accommodate about 300 cars, but that also had innovative stormwater management features built in.

In these lots, we used inlets to collect water and convey it to infiltration tanks buried under ground. We included areas of grass and plants that absorb water like a sponge. And we created about 10% of the parking spaces without the use of asphalt at all, instead using infiltration pavers that allow the water to sink into the ground.

The result is that about 90% of all the water that falls on these three acres of parking lots goes into the ground and not

into the city's storm sewer system.

When the lots were completed in 2008, Greensburg was the very first municipality in Westmoreland County to use Pennsylvania's new best management stormwater practices in an urban retrofit project.

Moore Avenue Parking Lot



Construction begins on the Moore Avenue lot.



Grass swales between the rows of parking collect runoff.



Stormwater runoff infiltrates into the ground from the grass swales.

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Westmoreland County Community College, Youngwood

Jim Pillsbury, PE, District Hydraulic Engineer, and Kathy Hamilton, RLA, Stormwater Technician, designed and coordinated the installation of buffer and porous concrete areas along a creek which runs through the Westmoreland County Community College Campus parking lot. These best management practices will help reduce the volume of stormwater runoff entering the

creek from the parking lot by absorbing it into the ground. Less stormwater stress on this creek, which is a tributary of Sewickley Creek, will help control flooding downstream.

This project was completed in partnership with the Sewickley Creek Watershed Association.



l-r, Jim Pillsbury, PE, District Hydraulic Engineer, and Kathy Hamilton, RLA, Stormwater Technician, survey the creek channel at Westmoreland County Community College.



Workers install a porous concrete sidewalk near the creek. When finished stormwater will be able to pass through the concrete into the ground.



Acres of asphalt near the creek allows for great volumes of stormwater runoff to pour into the creek at a high speed.



The asphalt in the "before" photo has been removed and replaced with a grassed buffer and swale. These will help absorb stormwater runoff coming from the rest of the parking lot before it reaches the creek.



Asphalt dominated the landscape near the creek increasing the volume and velocity of stormwater runoff from the parking lot.



Here's the same view. The asphalt was replaced by a rain garden, which will absorb stormwater to nourish its attractive plants and shrubs.

Mount Pleasant

A residential rain garden program underway in the Ramsay Terrace neighborhood of Mount Pleasant recently entered into Phase II. Once completed, 21 beautiful residential rain gardens will help control flooding in the area by capturing stormwater runoff from rooftops.



Residents eligible for the rain garden program in Ramsay Terrace chose what type of plants and shrubs they wanted to have in their gardens from a list.



Many residents added their own creative touches once their gardens were finished.

City of Latrobe

In October, the District helped the City of Latrobe with the design and installation of street trees and porous concrete on a section of Lloyd Avenue.



left photo (l-r), Jarod Trunzo, Community Engagement and Sustainability Coordinator for the City of Latrobe and Kathy Hamilton, RLA, District Stormwater Technician, discuss the placement of street trees along Lloyd Avenue. right photo: Workers smooth out porous concrete, which will help nourish the street trees when it rains and reduce maintenance for residents. For more photos visit us on Facebook.

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Dirt & Gravel Road Restorations Help Keep Streams Clean

Two Fairfield Township Roads Greatly Improved

THOMAS ROAD



BEFORE

The level of Thomas Road had degraded to the point that waters from a nearby creek would flow into it during heavy rains turning sections of the road into a river of stormwater.



AFTER

Restoration of Thomas Road included applying an average of three feet of fill to bring it up to a safe level which now allows stormwater to drain properly.

BRIDGES ROAD



BEFORE

Poor stormwater drainage eroded deep gullies on both sides of Bridges Road.



AFTER

The last load of fill leaves Bridges Road. The gullies are gone and the road will now be able to drain without causing erosion.

The Westmoreland Conservation District has been working on improving run-off from dirt and gravel roads since 1998. It was at that time the newly created Dirt and Gravel Road Program, with financial support from the State Conservation Commission, began to fund improvements to Pennsylvania's dirt and gravel roads. Through this program, the Conservation District has worked with many municipalities to improve their unpaved roads.

The goal of the program is to create a more environmentally and economically sustainable road network through education,

outreach, and project funding. Funded projects primarily address water volume and the implementation of Best Management Practices to control the sediment laden run-off that is often associated with unpaved roads. These projects significantly reduce the quantity and velocity of the water, thus reducing the amount of sediment leaving the unpaved road and keeping it out of our local waterways. The presence of some sediment is a natural and necessary part of a healthy stream. The addition of excess sediment however, can cause great harm to the aquatic ecosystem.

The Westmoreland Conservation District recently completed its Dirt and Gravel Road projects for 2012. The year was an exceptionally active one for the program, with many road projects completed. Among those projects were Locust Road in Laurel Mountain Borough, Mansville Road in Cook Township, Skyview Road in Donegal Township, Thomas Road, Baileys Road, and Bridges Road all located in Fairfield Township.

The Conservation District, in partnership with Fairfield Township and the Western PA Conservancy was able to make vast improvements to the township roads located in the Hypocrite Creek Watershed. In 2010, this watershed was designated as a priority by the Department of Environmental Protection. Because of this designation, the Conservancy was able to secure a Growing Greener grant to make environmental improvements in the watershed. These improvements included addressing run-off from the roads that drain into Hypocrite Creek. The Conservation District was able to supplement its existing Dirt and Gravel Road funds with this grant and make major improvements to these roads. It is through these types of partnerships that projects can become successful and improve our county's waterways.

The Conservation District's Watershed Specialist Rob Cronauer administers the county's Dirt and Gravel Road Program. He will be hosting a workshop at the District on March 19, 2013 at 7:00 p.m. for landowners dealing with issues on their private dirt and gravel roads. For more information call Rob at 724-837-5271.

"In a rural area, such as Fairfield Township, the dirt and gravel roads program proved to be an important resource in order to complete some necessary road work. On Thomas Road, for instance, without this resource, a worthwhile project may have had to wait many years before being completed. I believe the board of supervisors were happy to have access to this program because they were happy to correct a situation and have some help in doing so."

– Jordan Frei
Legislative Aide/Office Manager
Representative Mike Reese



Due to its lower elevation, Thomas Road was covered with geotextile to help keep mud from coming up through the fill.



Fill is applied over the geotextile layer on Thomas Road to make the road's level higher than the neighboring creek.



Bridges Road required three feet of fill to bring it up to a level which would disperse stormwater effectively.

Landowner Reclamation Program

The South Huntingdon Township Site Neighboring Wyano

photo - Stacey Federoff, Tribune-Review, Times-Sun



Discussing reclamation plans, l-r: District Watershed Specialist Rob Cronauer and Landowner Charles Casturo

“I had known the property even before I purchased it, and envisioned what it could be, and it has turned out even better than I had envisioned.”

– Landowner Charles Casturo
Triple C Recycling

Helping Landowners in Bovard and South Huntingdon Township Restore Abandoned Mine Land

When coal is mined in Pennsylvania the mining companies are required to pay into a bond, which is set aside for the restoration of the land once the mining is completed. When a company stops mining the coal and does not restore the land, the bond money is then forfeited. Under Pennsylvania’s Landowner Reclamation Program, landowners are able to get help restoring this scarred mine land using bond forfeiture funds allocated by the State Conservation Commission.

Unique to these two sites is the fact that both current landowners also own and operate heavy earthmoving equipment. So with some guidance from the Westmoreland Conservation District and Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection they were able to make available restoration funding go a long way.

Adam Eidemiller, Inc

This most recent reclamation marks the second, in just three years on this Bovard property. Adam Eidemiller, Inc. has once again taken advantage of this program to reverse the effects of past mining activity. This second restoration effort has reclaimed over 10 acres of previously unproductive landscape. The restoration included upgrading old sedimentation

continued on page 20

The Bovard Site



Landowners Lou and Brandon Battistella

“The project addressed a long standing eyesore on the property. Not only has it been an environmental improvement, but it has made the land more productive, and appealing for future use.”

Lou Battistella
President – Adam Eidemiller, Inc.



BEFORE

Prior to restoration this abandoned mine site neighboring the village of Wyano featured acres of coal waste and “bone” piles.



AFTER

During restoration vegetation was established as well as improved stormwater drainage.



BEFORE

AFTER

People in the News

Board



Al Barnett, a member of the District's board since 1990, was recently made Director Emeritus. He is the longest-serving member of the current board and only the second director in the District's history to receive this distinction. The first was Frank Skacel, who received this distinction in 1996. As Director Emeritus, Al will continue to attend and participate in meetings of the District board in an advisory capacity.

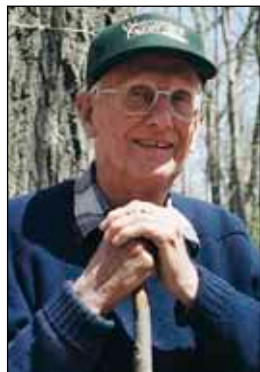
Staff



Greg Phillips, District manager/CEO, was named president of the 2012 Regional Trail Corporation Board of Directors.

The Regional Trail Corporation is a non-profit partnership whose mission is to acquire, develop, and manage appropriate trail corridors in southwestern Pennsylvania and to create and promote opportunities for recreation, tourism, economic development, and historic and environment conservation.

Associate Board



Robert Ackerman, who served the District since 1993, recently retired as an associate director.

Bob is an environmental tree farmer and retired chemical engineer. He is a member and past president of the Westmoreland Woodlands Improvement Association, and a Dom Care Provider for the Area Agency on Aging, Westmoreland County.

We are very grateful for Bob's two decades of volunteer service to the District.



Jim Pillsbury, PE, District hydraulic engineer was selected to receive the Government Engineer of the Year Award by the Pittsburgh section of the American Society of Civil Engineers.



Larry Larese was named an associate director of the District.

Larry recently retired as executive director of the Westmoreland County Industrial Development Corporation and of the Westmoreland County Department of Planning and Development.



Dana Rizzo was presented with an Achievement Award from the National Association of County Agricultural Agents. The award recognized her excellent work in water quality education over the past six years.

Westmoreland Conservation District directors and associate directors are volunteers who share their time, professional expertise, skills, and insights to help encourage the conservation of our county's natural resources.

Western Pennsylvania Environmental Award



I-r, Westmoreland Conservation District Associate Director Joe Dietrick, WTAE-TV personality Sally Wiggin and District Watershed Specialist Rob Cronauer help accept the 2012 Western Pennsylvania Environmental Award.

The Westmoreland Conservation District, Pucketa and Chartiers Watershed Association, the New Kensington-Arnold School District, the Municipal Sanitary Authority of the City of New Kensington, Westmoreland County, PennDOT, the State of Pennsylvania, and the Colcom Foundation received one of five 2012 Western Pennsylvania Environmental Awards.

For the past four years, this coalition of partners has been putting innovative conservation measures in place to reduce

recurring flooding from Little Pucketa Creek in and around Upper and Lower Burrell townships and the City of New Kensington.

Flooding in this area – one of Westmoreland County's most severely impacted watersheds – had been occurring for decades, with 2004's Hurricane Ivan swelling the stream to an inch of Valley High School's front door.

In Memoriam



Elmer G. Slezak, a member of our associate board, passed away in January, 2012.

Elmer was a member of our volunteer associate board since 2000.

A retired social studies teacher, Elmer also was a member and past president of the Sportsmen's Association of Greensburg; a past president of the Westmoreland County Sportsmen's

League, a life member of the Arlington and Keystone Rod & Gun Club, a Judge Advocate of the VFW Post 33 in Greensburg, and a Saint Vincent College Fellow.

An eight-year veteran of the U.S. Navy who served in both World War II and the Korean War, Elmer presented a tribute to the men and women who served our country at the District's 2010 awards banquet, which was held on Veterans' Day.



Dorothy Stoner, who served the District as both a board member and an associate board member, passed away in August, 2012.

A retired Unity township dairy farmer, Dorothy served on several local township committees as well as on the group Pro-Ag. She was a former member of the Farmers Home Administration Committee, and the

ADCS Community Committee.

She served as a member of the District board for 12 years (1995-2007) and as an associate director for 3 years (2009-2012). Dorothy served on many committees over the years to help plan District Awards Banquets and special events. She will be fondly remembered for her extraordinary baking skills, dedication to family and educating others as to the tremendous value of farming and local producers.

Thank You Donors

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The Westmoreland Conservation District headquarters has become a very popular place for hosting workshops and meetings. In 2012 the District Board of Directors decided it was time to increase our interior capacity by closing in the barn deck. This added 400 square feet of space. These photos show how the new room was carefully integrated into the existing building utilizing the unique energy saving features the building has become famous for. Special thanks to Peoples Natural Gas Company for their financial support of this project.



One of the insulations used is made out of recycled newspapers.



The recycled newspaper insulation is applied to the inside walls prior to paneling.



Extending the geothermal heating and cooling system to work in the newly enclosed deck addition.

Enclosing the Barn Deck



Framing in the last remaining barn deck to add more interior meeting space. The siding style and color will match the rest of the barn.



Westmoreland Conservation District staff members and members of the Botanical Society of Westmoreland County prepare Christmas decorations in the newly enclosed deck area.

Landowner Reclamation continued from page 15

basins, regrading the soil, and vegetating land that previously was barren and lacked little, if any, growth. With proper grading and ground stabilizing vegetation, this property is not only more aesthetically pleasing, but it will improve the water quality in downstream Jacks Run, which flows through Greensburg.

Triple C Recycling

A large landowner reclamation project was recently completed in South Huntingdon Township, Westmoreland County, adjacent to the town of Wyano. This 60 plus acre site once showed the ugly scars of past surface and deep mining.

The new owner of the property is Triple C Recycling, managed by Charles Casturo. He was approached by the Westmoreland Conservation District and the PA Department of Environmental Protection to reclaim the property using available bond forfeiture funds.

Mr. Casturo was more than willing to assist with the project, and in 2010 contracted with the District to perform the work under the Landowner Reclamation Program. Over the past several years, Mr. Casturo has not only worked to remove the past mining scars, but has gone so far as to improve the property beyond the scope of work covered by the allocated funds. Through the use of his heavy equipment, the land was reshaped to more closely resemble the natural landscape. In addition, biosolids were used as a soil amenity to boost nutrient and pH levels to a point capable of sustaining vegetation. This once unproductive, uneven and barren land has now been transformed into a more natural, productive and lush landscape.



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DISTRICT BRIEFS



Like us on Facebook

The Westmoreland Conservation District launched its Facebook page in October, 2012. Look us up and like us to receive informal updates on our programs, projects and activities.

The official Westmoreland Conservation District page features a black and white icon of two hands holding soil. The top banner features a Stephen Simpson photograph of Loyalhanna Creek and the District logo.

District Engineers Workshop

The same workshop will be presented on two different days. Choose which will best suit your schedule.

Thursday, March 14, 2013
Friday, March 15, 2013

Fred M. Rogers Center, Saint Vincent College, Latrobe, PA
Register online at www.wcdpa.com



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Free, professional forest management advice can mean more profit for you and better long-term health for your woodlot. Talk to Forester Tony Quadro at the Westmoreland Conservation District: 724-837-5271

2013 District Board Meetings

Wednesday, January 9 at 11:00 a.m.
Wednesday, February 13 at 11:00 a.m.
Wednesday, March 13 at 11:00 a.m.
Wednesday, April 10 at 5:00 p.m.
Wednesday, May 8 at 5:00 p.m.

Wednesday, June 12 at 5:00 p.m.
Wednesday, July 10 at 5:00 p.m.
Wednesday, August 14 at 5:00 p.m.
Wednesday, September 11 at 5:00 p.m.
Wednesday, October 9 at 5:00 p.m.
Wednesday, November 13 at 5:00 p.m.
Wednesday, December 11 at 11:00 a.m.

Landmarks

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