

WATERSHED CONNECTIONS

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13th WASHINGTON COUNTY CHILDREN'S GROUNDWATER FESTIVAL SCHEDULED FOR MAY 14

Wednesday, May 14 is the date set for the 13th Washington County Children's Groundwater Festival. The Festival will be held again at California University of Pennsylvania.

Gerry Lewis and his program *Science Rocks* will return to the Festival for a second year. *Science Rocks* was a big hit with both students and teachers in 2007.

More than 1100 students from 10 schools have registered for the Festival. Two schools, Charleroi Middle School and Bobtown Elementary School, are first-time participants. Carroll Middle School also has registered after an absence of several years. Other schools enrolled include: Allison Park Elementary School and Bentworth, California Area, John Fitzgerald Kennedy, Jr., Madonna Catholic, McGuffey, and Trinity Middle Schools.

The 2008 Festival program includes *Birds of Prey*, to be presented by Chuck Tague assisted by the staff and birds of the Nature Observer News. Many of the other exhibits and classroom presentations have taken part in previous festivals. Altogether, the Festival is expected to include about 25 varied, interactive exhibits in the Exhibit Hall, and some 19 or 20 classroom presentations.

Major funding for the Festival is provided by the Pennsylvania American Water Co. and CONSOL Energy.

The Festival is planned and carried out by the Festival Steering Committee. Members include: Sheila Burcin and Joan Jessen,

co-chairpersons, Barbara Webb (California University of PA liaison), Barbara Dunst (Musser Engineering), Kris Carter (DCNR), Greg Holesh (PADEP), Bev Park (Retired Teachers' Association), Donna Lee Stone (California Area Senior High School teacher), and Julie Sigler (Washington County Conservation District). Sponsor representatives on the committee are Joseph Cerenzia and Lynn Manning (CONSOL Energy) and Josephine Posti (PA American Water)

Also on the Steering Committee are Julie Constantine, Lindsay King and Katie Bakewell, California Area Senior High School students, who recruit and assign the 58-60 student volunteers. The Festival would not be possible without the student volunteers.

ON THE CALENDAR

SPECIAL EVENTS, MEETINGS

February

19 — Alliance Meeting; 7 pm; WCCD Ag Office, Crouse-Hinds Building., Meadowlands

March

19 — Alliance Meeting; 7 pm; WCCD Ag Office, Crouse-Hinds Building., Meadowlands

28, 29 — Ag Days, Washington Crown Center

April

05 — Spring Clean-up along Peters Creek and Piney Fork.. See pg. 3, **Watershed Briefs.**

05 — Tire Collection; 9-12; Findlay Twp. Public Works Building. See pg. 3, **Watershed Briefs.**

16 — Alliance Meeting; 7 pm; WCCD Ag Office, Crouse-Hinds Building., Meadowlands

26 — Wetlands Walk, 10 am, North Franklin Wetlands. Call 724-941-9370 for details.

May

14 — Wash. Co. Children's Groundwater Festival

21 — Alliance Meeting; 7 pm; WCCD Ag Office, Crouse-Hinds Building., Meadowlands

WATERSHED ALLIANCE AT AG DAYS, MARCH 28, 29

Do you want to know more about the watershed you live in? Do you have questions about groundwater protection or recharge areas or what to do about household hazardous wastes?



Come visit us during Ag Days!

Volunteers from the watershed groups in Washington County will be on hand to answer these and other questions.

Visitors will also find a variety of informational handouts at the display, which will be located next to the Washington County Conservation District booth.

SPRING WATER QUALITY MONITORING

Several of Washington County's watershed associations expect to conduct water quality monitoring in April or May. Their activities will include both chemical testing and macroinvertebrate collection and identification.

At this writing, the schedule has not been set. If you are interested in helping with these activities, please call Julie Sigler, Washington County Watershed Specialist, for specifics. Her phone number: 724-222-3060x117.

WILDFLOWER IDENTIFICATION BOOKS GIVEN TO COUNTY LIBRARIES

The Washington County Watershed Alliance's display about Invasive Plants has completed its tour of Washington County's libraries. It was shown for a month at each one, including the 14 public libraries and the libraries at Washington and Jefferson College and California University.

As a follow-up to this display, the Chartiers Creek Watershed Association provided copies of Dr. Mary Joy Haywood's identification book, *Wildflowers of Pennsylvania*, to each library. Jean Bear, the project leader and a member of the Association, presented the books to Kathy Kennedy, Director of the Citizens Library and District Library Center, in October, 2007 for distribution to the public libraries. Copies were sent to the college libraries as well.

The Invasive Plants display is available for other groups. A Power Point Presentation and brochures are also available, free of charge. Call Julie Sigler, WCCD Watershed Specialist, at 724-222-3060x117, to schedule a display or program.

WATERSHED CONNECTIONS is a publication of the Washington County Watershed Alliance.

The goal of the Washington County Watershed Alliance is to promote the conservation of the natural resources of the watersheds in Washington County; protect and improve land areas and surface and groundwater; and assist the county's watershed associations. To achieve its goal, the Alliance conducts educational activities and provides materials on natural resources to schools, municipal officials and the general public.

For further information: Washington Co. Conservation District, 100 West Beau Street, Suite 105, Washington, PA; tel. – 724-228-6774.

WATERSHED BRIEFS: NEWS and NOTES from the WATERSHED ASSOCIATIONS

❖ BUFFALO CREEK

- The purpose of the Association's January meeting was to facilitate coordination among official parties interested in restoring Dutch Fork Lake. Some 40 people attended, including speakers, organization reps, and the public. Colonel Mike Crall, Pittsburgh District Commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, kicked off the meeting by discussing prospects for Dutch Fork Lake as an Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration Project. Several possible avenues of restoration were discussed at the meeting. In attendance were U.S. Congressman Tim Murphy, State Rep. Pete Daley, representatives from the PA Fish and Boat Commission, Western PA Conservancy Watersheds Director Nick Pinazatta, Washington County Commissioners Larry Maggi and J. Bracken Burns, and Louis Brandenburg of the Washington Co. Sportsmen's and Conservation League, among others.

- The BCWA March (the 13th) meeting will feature Kathy Patnode, U.S. Fish and Wildlife biologist, speaking on pollination, including bees, other insects and methods of pollination.

- The April (the 10th) meeting will feature a program on mushrooms with a speaker from the Western PA. Mushroom Group. The Master Gardeners will be invited to these programs, which are open to the public.

❖ CHARTIERS CREEK

- 2008 officers of the Chartiers Creek Watershed Association (ChCWA) include Susan Morgan, President; Demo Agoris, Vice-president; Joan Jessen, Secretary, and Carrilee Hemington, Treasurer. Other members of the Board of Directors are: Sheila Burcin, Tom Hart and Barry Piacenza.

- The restoration and improvement of Canonsburg Lake remains a high priority for 2008. The Army Corps of Engineers expects to complete its Feasibility Study before the end of October, 2008. The Corps' Final Draft of the Study, presented to the Canonsburg Lake Restoration and Improvement Committee in December, 2007, offers a number of possibilities for lake restoration and habitat enhancement. The committee has begun the task of raising funds to implement the study's recommendations. Check out the ChCWA website www.upperchartierscreek.org for details.

- The annual North Franklin Wetlands Walk will be held on Saturday, April 26 from 10 am till 12 noon.

For details or to make a reservation, call Joan Jessen, 724-941-9370.

❖ CROSS CREEK

- Construction has begun on the stream restoration project on Cross Creek at the site of the Meadowcroft Rockshelter. A construction bid notice was advertised, and a site showing took place on December 14. Six bids were received and were opened on January 4. BKG Industries will be doing the construction, which will be completed before the Rockshelter re-opens in the spring. Plantings of historically native trees and shrubs will also take place in the area around the stream bank and Rockshelter.

❖ PETERS CREEK

- Peters Creek Watershed Association (PCWA) has completed work on the Peters Creek Watershed User's Manual – a citizen's guide for a healthy watershed. This eight page booklet explains watersheds, threats to our streams and some solutions throughout the Peters Creek watershed. copies can be requested at

peterscreekwsa@verizon.net

- State Senator John Pippy, R-Moon Twp helped to secure a \$10,000 grant from the PA Department of Community and Economic Development for the Peters Creek Watershed Association. This grant will provide funds for environmental assessments within the watershed.

- PCWA will partner with the Tri-community Anglers and The South Hills Friends of the Montour Trail on a spring clean-up along Peters Creek and Piney Fork on **April 5, 2008**. See PCWA website www.peterscreek.org for details. Click on *News*.

❖ RACCOON CREEK

- A community tire collection will be held on Saturday, April 5 from 9 AM to 12 Noon at the Findlay Township Public Works Building, 1058 Clinton Road. Disposal costs vary with size: up to 17" off rim, \$2 each; up to 17" on rim \$4 each; tractor trailer tires up to 22.5" (no rims please) \$20 each; farm tractor rear (no rims please) \$20 each

Individuals and small businesses are welcome and there is no limit to the number of tires brought for disposal. Checks will be accepted with ID.

The tire roundup is sponsored by the Independence Conservancy and Findlay Township