



Penns Valley Conservation Association

www.pennsvalley.net

SUMMER 2013



Eastern Brook Trout young of the year.

Executive Director's Meanderings

--By Andrea Ferich--

By the time you read these words the raspberries and blueberries will have come and gone in the fields, and hopefully we will be knee deep in the abundance of squash and tomatoes. I have been here three seasons now, and have glimpsed the axis on which the community rotates, turning again, year after year like an auger going deeper with the cycle of the seasons. My job of guiding this boat to sea is about finding these rhythm with our oars in the water, and to tell your stories. One early morning in June I went out with George Kelly and Lysle Sherwin of the Watershed Committee to observe a fish inventory being conducted by the Fish and Boat Commission in the upper waterways. The mountain tributaries of the Upper Penns Creek Watershed are its treasures. It was a magical morning along the mountain tribs. The inventory analyzes pounds of trout biomass per acre of water. We were quite interested in brown or brook trout species and the evidence of

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An Update from the Environmental Education Program

--By Jenny Campbell--

Wow! What an exciting spring we had on the Environmental Education front! We had a total of ten full Environmental Education days reaching students and teachers from Kindergarten through 7th grade for a total of 549 students and extending to all four buildings in the district. The program utilized four educational locations including Muddy Paws Marsh, the Shimp Farm, Millbrook Marsh and R.B. Winter State Park. I would love to give a shout out to the 14 volunteers that provided their time and expertise to make these days a success. Without them this program would not be possible.

We started the week of May 20th with Kindergarten, 1st grade and 4th grade attending Millbrook Marsh for a program based on "Exploring the Marsh: Using Your Five Senses." One of the Kindergarten groups even got to see deer on their exploration of the marsh. With the Kindergarten and 1st grade group, I had the opportunity to teach a quick lesson on pollination and the importance of bees. These students make excellent worker bees. ☺ As we entered the final week of May we had a group of Kindergarten students attend the Shimp Farm for a program on sustainable living. It was noticed that some of the students had never been on a farm before as they were very distressed when they stepped in some fresh goat droppings. The learning experience for some of them extended to wiping their shoes off on a log or in the grass. To finish the month of May a group of 3rd graders traveled to Muddy Paws Marsh for a program on habitat, tree classification and frog/butterfly life cycles. The 3rd graders did an excellent job writing stories and poetry about

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President's Column

--by Jim Zubler--

It is mid-summer and that can only mean that the creative and volunteer energies of the Penns Valley Conservation Association are focused on Crickfest and the planning designed to stage a fun celebration of the Watershed with minimal impact on our beautiful Valley. Once again, the Community Outreach Committee and its partners are requesting your help and assistance in maintaining this credo. As always, the COC has a number of new activities on tap to ensure that this is the summer event you won't want to miss.

Crickfest was established over a decade ago to raise monies to fund an Environmental Educator who would work with children introducing them to understanding their influence on the world exceeding the highest educational standards yet presented in a fun and impactful manner. Our new Environmental Educator, Jenny Campbell, with the help and assistance of a great stable of community volunteers along with the student's caring instructors, delivered great place based environmental education to students in the Penns Valley Area School District during the Annual Spring Environmental days. In review of the range of activities and orientation provided, I am struck by how this instruction embodies a most appropriate quote by Margaret Mead. "Children must be taught how to think, not what to think". Indeed.

As we have attempted to convey through the writings contained in our newsletters, Penns Valley is enriched by the contributions given by a great number of citizens, both financial and physical in nature, channeled through PVCA to achieve maximum impact in the Watershed.

Come to Crickfest and celebrate the fruits of your gifts and those of your neighbors.

Thank you for being a great steward of the Valley.

--Jim

PVCA's Mission and Vision

PVCA serves as a steward for the natural and cultural communities in the Upper Penns Creek Watershed. We seek to preserve and honor the agricultural roots of Penns Valley by protecting and conserving its waters, farmlands, forests, and rural heritage.

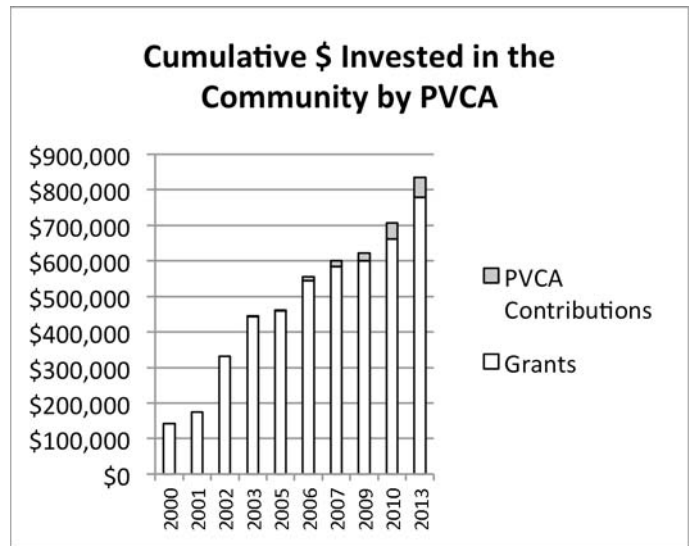
PVCA envisions an engaged community, where growth is balanced with support for healthy natural systems that foster the local economy. Our Valley has dark night skies, clear streams, healthy forests, prosperous farms, and local jobs.

Ex. Director, Continued from p. 1

reproduction through finding the “young of the year”. Perhaps some of these understudied troutways will be classified through this inventory. As a member you make this good work happen. matter matters.

Can you hear the sound of the headwaters trickling, sometimes pouring? The smell of the hay-scented ferns? The morning sun dancing and dappling? The coolness of the large boulders? I work to enter that mystery when I write grants for PVCA. Recently PVCA acquired over \$90,000 from a DEP Growing Greener Grant to implement Agricultural Best Management Practices (Ag BMPs) on the Clint Buck farm and on his downstream neighbor’s farm. It is my hope that the work done on these farms will tell the story to all who pass by, of the health of the livestock, the health of the waterways, the money saved for the farmer, the ever increasing beauty brought into the countryside, the regeneration of the earth through loving our neighbors. Currently we have multiple pending grant proposals for symbiotic ecological economy and for signage to tell more of this story of the work of PVCA and Partners.

Over the last few months I have combed through all of the PVCA files. I worked closely with Jennifer Farabaugh of the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy and Scott Leff of the Bayer Center for Nonprofit Management at Robert Morris University to quantify twenty years of PVCA projects. As the numbers are calculated I am increasingly proud of the work that PVCA has done. We are finalizing the project numbers now. Soon we will be able to say how many feet of streambank fencing PVCA has completed, how many trees were planted, how many cattle crossings, and youth educated. Here is a chart of the economic impact through funding that PVCA has brought into region since 2000. We hope that PVCA will cross the million dollar mark this year for cumulative funding. The stories of our members help the grant applications to have a much greater success. Why are you a member? Look at the money you have helped to bring into our region since 2000:



The best is yet to come. Recently the members of the Education Committee met with an exceptional young man, Gino Nicosia, at the Penns Valley Environmental Center located behind the Elementary School on route 45 to walk the trails and hear his vision for this space. He is working toward his Eagle Scout and would like to give back to the community through improving the current condition of the environmental center, connecting more of his classmates and scouts to opportunities for environmental stewardship in this space, and working with the Education Committee to make this a site for Environmental Days while increasing the ecosystem function of this forest. It is young leaders like Gino that give me even more hope about the work that we do together through PVCA. Stay tuned or join the Education Committee to be part of how this will all take shape. It is all the work we do together that matters, our strength is in our spreading root mass.

One day I was coming back into the office after a day with the Watershed Committee doing some field work around George’s Valley. There by the playground at the Old Gregg School I saw Lisa Beherec and her young son Henry looking into Lisa’s cupped hands. It was a morning after one of June’s raging evening thunderstorms and they had found a baby bird under the nest on the ground. In Lisa’s hands the bird’s breathing was slowing. I thought to myself that this situation

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Catch them Live at Crickfest!

♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪

12:30 - 1:30

Hannah Bingman & Doug McMinn

2:00 - 3:00

Myra Sletson, Dave Mudgett & friends

3:30 - 4:30

Chicken Tractor Deluxe

5:00 - 6:00

The Wiyos

Learn New Things!

Late Summer Bird Talk & Walk

Mark King, Cathy Pierce, Hilel Brandes

Basic Bicycle Maintenance

with the Millheim Bicycle Coop

Herbs or Weeds? Menace or Medicine?

Jennifer Tucker and Warren Leitzel

Ballroom in the Park, Dance Instruction

with Janet and Kerry Gyekis.

Join in the Fun!

Rubber Duck Races

*Mountainside Homestead
Farm Animals*

*Children's tent with games and
crafts*

Pennsylvania Honey Queen

Dance Lessons

Educational Exhibits

And More!

**CRICKFEST
2013!**

11:00—6:00

**Sunday, Sept. 1st
at
Coburn Park**



Local Foods!

Prepared by Bobbie's Kitchen
and Kathy Shimp

- ★Sloppy Joes
- ★Pulled Pork Sandwiches
- ★Hot dogs
- ★Coleslaw
- ★Potato salad
- ★Grilled Corn
- ★Mexican Salad
w/ grilled chicken
- ★Mixed Fresh Fruit Salad
- ★Grilled Vegetable Wraps
- ★Cornbread

New this year at Crickfest – PVCA Member Rewards!!

Please visit the PVCA Members table at Crickfest to receive your
Member Rewards Buck.

\$1

2013 MEMBER REWARD

\$1



*Use toward the purchase of a Crickfest T-shirt or bag,
PVCA water bottle, Duck Race, or Sweet Creek Café item!*

\$1

One Crickfest Buck

\$1



Dear Friends,

Every year, PVCA volunteers spend a frantic summer pulling together all of the organizational details that go into creating an event like our annual Crickfest Celebration, held each labor day Sunday at Coburn Park.

Each year we make an effort to add new features and activities, become more sustainable, and attract new attendees. It isn't intended to be a big fundraiser for us, which is why we've never charged admission. We aim to create a day of learning, appreciation, and celebration of the watershed and the wild and human communities that it supports. And the proceeds that we do make go toward supporting our Environmental Education programming in area schools.

Because it is not inexpensive to put on an event of this nature, each year we ask for your help to cover some of our expenses. And every summer we are gratified to find so many **Friends** out there who are willing to chip in and help us get it all rolling.

If you're able to send a contribution, please fill out the form below, and thank you in advance for helping us fund Crickfest 2013! We hope to see you there!

VOLUNTEER, DONATE OR BAKE!!

Volunteers Needed

It takes many volunteers to bring Crickfest to the community and have it be such a great event. We have many folks already working behind the scenes, and we give a big Thank You for their efforts; but we need more people to man the stations and events at the festival. It is fun to work a shift!

Please join our volunteer team. Call or email Barbara Lange at 349-5692 or balange42@gmail.

Seeking Silent Auction Items

Are you an artist or craftsperson? Do you run a local business? Please consider donating an item to PVCA's 11th Annual CRICKFEST Silent Auction!

Contact Asta at pere_grine1@hotmail.com. Please enter "CRICKFEST SILENT AUCTION" in email subject line. Deadline for a donation commitment is July 31 and deadline for submission/collection is August 15. Nothing will be accepted after the August 15th deadline.

Thank you!

Sweets for Sweet Creek

The Sweet Creek Café would love some help with their baked goods menu! Please bring cookies, brownies, muffins, etc to the Café on labor day Sunday. Thanks for your help! All proceeds support environmental education in Penns Valley!

✂.....

FRIENDS OF CRICKFEST

Name _____

Business _____

Address _____ City/State/Zip _____

Friends of Crickfest----- \$25 \$50 \$75 I'd like to volunteer

Sponsors of Crickfest----- \$100 \$200 Other \$ _____

Please keep my donation anonymous

Amount Enclosed _____

--All donations are tax deductible--

Please make check payable to PVCA and mail to PO Box 165 Aaronsburg, PA 16820

Slow Money Update



Magicians at the Mayfly Festival.

The Millheim Business Community's Mayfly Festival in early June was a complete success in the eyes of the merchants and the many visitors we attracted to downtown Millheim. Musicians, craftsfolk, food vendors and magicians all helped bring some sparkle to the Millheim "brand."

A new effort to support Valley culture and economics is underway in the form of a group applying for a low-power FM community access radio construction license under PVCA's umbrella. A group has met several times, and we now have some important committees set up:

Guidelines - Catherine Smith
smithcath@ecu.edu

Fundraising - Lisa Marshall
lisa@smartworkco.com

Technical - Larry Wolken
larrywolken@earthlink.net

Programming - Gary Gyekis
gggyekis@gmail.com

Although it will be a while before we're actually on the air, we're actively soliciting PVCA members for programming ideas, fundraising suggestions and other contributions. Whether you are interested in becoming a "radio personality" or working behind the scenes or contributing to the effort in any way, please respond to one of the committee chairs! You can check out the Facebook page, "Penns Valley Area Radio Station" for updates on meeting times and cool program ideas.

Environmental Education, Continued from p. 1

their experiences at and understandings of the Marsh.

As we entered into the first week of June we hosted a two day 7th grade program at Muddy Paws Marsh focused on aquatic macroinvertebrate sampling, trout health, invasive species and water sampling/testing. This was a great opportunity to get the students physically into Penns Creek, with waders and nets, to understand the importance of diversity within the stream. By the time the 7th grade departed they were able to identify purple loosestrife and even helped the Marsh by removing some of this invasive plant. Toward the end of that week we hosted the 6th grade to R.B. Winter State Park for a program based on forestry and watershed science with a link to the upper Penns Valley watershed. Although the day to R.B. Winter was rather wet, the students fully enjoyed digging in the sand to create their own watershed. The final event took place at Muddy Paws Marsh with a group of 3rd graders with a focus on habitat and watershed science. The weather held off just long enough to complete the programming on this day and a great time was had by all.

Looking ahead, we have begun to plan trips and educational opportunity for the fall. In my role as Environmental Education Coordinator, I look forward to continuing to expand the program into higher levels and to reach additional groups within the community as it is important to continue conserving and protecting the beauty and heritage of Penns Valley and the upper Penns Creek Watershed. Other events that we will be attending include FarmFest (August 2 and 3) and CrickFest (September 1). We would love to see you out at these events!

*Interested in
Volunteering with
PVCA's Environmental
Education Program?*

*Contact Jenny at
pvcaeducator@pennsvalley.org*

News from Muddy Paws

--by Mary Kay Williams--

Spring 2013 was a bustling time for Muddy Paws Marsh. We are so happy to have provided many free events, offering many opportunities to get the community out into nature and get their 'paws muddy' while learning about the importance of environmental stewardship. We started with a 'Soiree'--A Soiree in the Swamp in April. The event was a great evening program where we partnered not only with PVCA but also with Clearwater Conservancy, the Centre County Master Gardeners, Conservation District, PA Native Plant Society and Save the Frogs. We learned about the state of amphibian health both locally and globally from a presentation by Jerod Skebo from Shavers Creek. After his presentation, soiree participants were set to hop about the marsh to find some frogs, play some fun frog games, and enjoy the waterfowl as they descended into the wetlands for their evening repast. About 100 participants came to experience nature at this unique program.

Environmental education and stewardship is the keystone of Muddy Paws, and we are thrilled to continue partnering with PVCA and their new Educational Coordinator, Jenny Campell. This year Jenny worked diligently to have two local student groups visit the marsh--third and seventh graders. What better way for children to understand the importance of conservation than by getting involved with nature? All activities are presented in learning stations located throughout the marsh and are based upon the PA education standards for specific grades. Some stations this Spring included nature scavenger hunts, art interpretations of what students see in nature, habitat tag, learning about macroinvertebrates, water quality and temperature, purple loosestrife bio-control methods and even a bit about fly fishing. Muddy Paws Marsh is very grateful to the many volunteers who lead the station activities and we could not offer these free programs without the assistance of the Centre County Extension's Master Gardeners. If anyone would like to volunteer--we would be so appreciative if you would contact us to help us encourage



Attendees enjoy a presentation at the Soiree in the Swamp.

environmental stewardship.

The third annual frog festival was a 'hoppy' event that was held on Saturday, June 8. We hosted many 'frog experts'—herpetologists--that helped attendees learn about tadpoles and frogs. Dr. Jim Julian is always a favorite and is our 'main' presenter, sharing his love and passion for amphibians. Jim had some extra help this year from Jerod Skebo from Shavers Creek and Carla Hess, a herpetologist from the Master Gardener program. We also had two special features this year: educators for the Snetsinger Butterfly Garden at Tudek Park shared their knowledge of the life cycle of butterflies as well as the necessary host plants for any garden. The Master Gardeners were also on hand to share information about their wonderful Master Gardener program as well as literature about growing successful pollinator gardens. One of the favorite stations this year was hosted by Shaver's Creek and included a variety of animals, such as a black rat snake and some turtles. They shared their knowledge of the animals and stressed the importance of an appropriate habitat in order for these animals to be successful.

Muddy Paws is proud to continue offering the opportunity for all in the community to get out and appreciate nature. This year we also hosted the PA Young Scholars Charter School and St. John's Childhood Center. Please call us if you are interested in bringing your group to visit the Marsh: 814.422-8787.

Stream Temperature Monitoring Expanded

--By Lysle Sherwin--
PSU Ecosystem Science and Management

Now in its fourth season, the summer stream temperature monitoring program has been expanded from 17 to 24 sites in the upper Penns Creek watershed above Coburn. The new locations target coldwater tributaries at Vonada Gap and Synagogue Gap in the Muddy Creek watershed, Kettle Run near Zerby, and sites upstream and downstream of a stream restoration and buffer planting project to be constructed this fall at the Martinec farm on Penns Creek about two miles upstream of Spring Mills.

The Muddy Creek locations will provide stream temperature data on coldwater inputs from tributaries entering a critical reach of lower Muddy Creek experiencing peak temperature increases on the order of 2-3 degrees F per stream mile. The Martinec farm sites will provide a baseline to compare “before and after” conditions following a restoration project in an important trout spawning nursery water. Kettle Run will be surveyed by PA Fish and Boat Commission biologists this summer to verify the presence and abundance of native brook trout. Physical habitat and water quality does appear to be impaired by siltation from an extensive network of dirt and gravel roads in the Kettle Run watershed.

The additional temperature loggers were obtained at no cost with assistance by Jason Detar, PAFBC regional fisheries biologist from a completed research project. Remaining battery life of the used equipment valued at \$800 is sufficient for several years of data collection programmed to record hourly samples 24/7 from June to September. The data from all 24 sites are being shared with PAFBC for their long term monitoring of Penns Creek which includes electrofishing a number of sites this year in the watershed to assess wild trout populations and trends.



George Kelly and able assistants draw the winning raffle ticket.

AND WE HAVE A WINNER!!!

As announced, the drawing for the Jim Downes bamboo fly rod and Tom Doman wading staff was done at the Elk Creek Café and Aleworks on Sunday June 23rd and the lucky winner was Chris Morelli from Hershey, Pennsylvania. When Tim Bowser called to notify him, he discovered that Chris was in the area and was able to come to the Café to claim his prizes. It turns out that Chris has a house in Woodward and was here for the weekend. It was great to talk with him and find that he spends time in the area and appreciates the work that PVCA does in the watershed.

Total money raised by rod raffles over the last several years is approaching \$4,000.00. PVCA appreciates and wants to thank everyone who bought a raffle ticket and helped to contribute \$1,250.00 to our conservation efforts in the valley.

And a very special “thank you” to the local craftsmen who made it possible, Jim Downes for the beautiful hand-crafted fly rod and Tom Doman for the wading staff. Thanks guys!

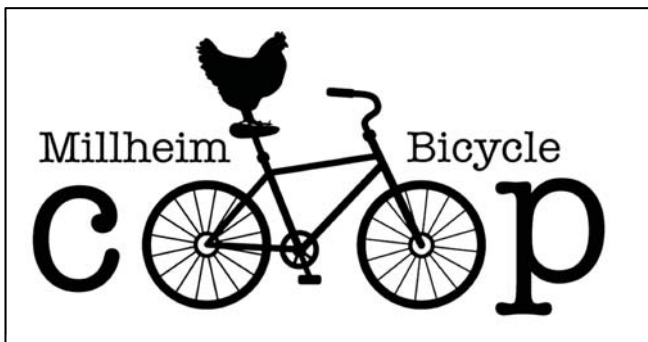
PVCA's New Website is Up and Running!

Come Visit! Useful Features Include:

- ★ Our New Blog
- ★ Beautiful Photos of the Watershed
- ★ New and Archived Newsletters
 - ★ PVCA's publications
 - ★ A Map of the Watershed
- ★ Crickfest News and Information
 - ★ Committee Updates
 - ★ Community Calendar
- ★ Volunteer Opportunities
 - ★ And More!

*And, we are taking submissions! Send us a story about why you are a member of PVCA!
email to: info@pennsvalley.net*

Learn more at Crickfest!



INTRODUCING THE MILLHEIM BICYCLE COOP!

The Millheim Bicycle Coop is a growing collective of cyclists and bicycle enthusiasts excited about building community and fixing bikes!

We are hosting a Basic Bicycle Maintenance workshop at Crickfest. Come and check us out to find out more.

Contact us at:

millheimbicyclecoop@gmail.com
to find out how to become involved.

*To learn more about upcoming events,
'like' us on facebook.*

Ex. Director, continued from p. 3

never turns out well, but if anybody could do it, it would be a midwife like Lisa. The look in Henry's eyes and his sweet concerned smile toward the bird impacted me and the way that I feel about the work that we all do as we continuously birth and nurture an organization like PVCA. I saw Lisa over a week later and she told me the bird was still alive. She had taken it to the animal rescue and it turned out that it was a Cedar Waxwing! Thank you for this beautiful act, Lisa. I am inspired.

Thank you for all of your photo contest entries! We had over 75 professional and amateur entries, and we are looking forward to announcing the winners soon. Look for our new website ready to launch featuring these winners, more stories like these, your words, and a short film made during our Fish Inventory with the Fish and Boat Commission. See you all at CrickFest!

The Bike Coop Recommends This 16.5 mile ride through the backroads of Penns Valley!

FROM THE STOPLIGHT IN MILLHEIM:

Go **South** on **Penn Street**
Turn **Right** onto **Mill Street**
Turn **Left** onto **Long Lane**
Stay **Straight** onto **Big Oak Lane**
Cross **Paradise Road**, stay straight on **Orndorf**
Follow **Orndorf Road** to a 4-way intersection
Turn **Left** onto **Immel Road**
Turn **Right** across bridge,
Turn **Right** onto **Penns Creek Road**
Penns Creek Road becomes **Cooper Street**
Follow **Cooper Street** to bottom of hill
Turn **Right** onto **Water Street**
Bear **Left** onto **Firehall Road**
Turn **Right** and cross bridge over **Penns Creek**
Cross **Route 45** onto **Penns Cave Road**
Bear **Right** onto **Allison Road**
Turn **Right** onto **Green Grove Road**
Turn **Left** onto **Summer Mountain Road**
Turn **Right** onto **Smithtown Gap Road**
Turn **Left** onto **Route 45**
At the stoplight in Millheim, Turn **Left** onto
North Street
End at the **Up Texas Chapel** at **Church Street**



PO Box 165
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CRICKFEST 2013!

**Sunday, September 1st
11:00 to 6:00
at Coburn Park**



Live Music, Local Foods, Silent Auction, Educational Displays and Workshops, Rubber Duck Races, Dance Instruction, Children's Activities, Farm Animals, and more!

