



P.O. Box 1071  
Mt. Pleasant, PA 15666

# From the Ridge to the River



Spring 2013

## JCWA Turns the Watershed Green

JCWA may not be mean, but we are green and turning as much of our watershed green as we possibly can! No green food coloring will be involved, just lots and lots of Green Streets, Green Infrastructure and Green Best Management practices. These Green Measures address uncontrolled storm water runoff by using natural systems or engineered systems that mimic natural systems. For example, porous pavement mimics a grassy field by absorbing water and releasing it slowly to the watershed, just as a natural field would. Other types of Green Measures include rain gardens, trees placed along streets, flowers and plants placed along sidewalks, and roof drains collected and conveyed to absorbent soils.

But these Green Measures also have an added benefit – they enhance the beauty of their surrounding areas. Wouldn't you rather shop in a small town in a quaint, tree-lined street with flowers guiding you to your next locally-owned shoppe? Sure beats going to the mall or a super store, doesn't it? And wouldn't you like your children to attend a school that helps the environment by creating Green Spaces wherever it can? Us too!

JCWA has already completed several projects with Green Measures to decrease storm water flows, but these are just the beginning of our work to make the watershed Green. JCWA was recently awarded three new grants this year – and all of them will use Green measures to address the serious problem of uncontrolled storm water runoff from urbanized areas. The grants include:

**Scottdale Green Streets Construction Project:** This project will construct the functional and beautiful Green Measures that are currently under design by Civil & Environmental Consultants, Inc. The Green Measures will be placed along Pittsburgh Street, Spring Street and near the Rite Aid store and will complement the new Green Measures completed at the Gazebo Parklet. Attractive trees, colorful plantings, shrubbery and porous pavement will be placed along walkways and sidewalks, making the area attractive while decreasing rain water impacts. New crosswalks made of porous pavers will enhance the beauty of Scottdale streets, while the increased visibility of the pavers will improve pedestrian safety.

**Mt. Pleasant Green Streets Design Project:** This project will design Green Measures along Main Street, the Mt. Pleasant Shop N Save parking lot and other areas in downtown Mt. Pleasant. These Green Measures will be similar to being designed for the Scottdale Green Streets Project. Once designed, JCWA will apply for funding to construct these Green Measures that will beautify the business district and help relieve storm water degradation.

**Southmoreland High School Parking Lots Project:** This project will design Green Measures for the large parking areas that surround the Southmoreland High School, including porous pavement, vegetated swales and rain gardens. Once designed, JCWA will apply for construction grants to create these effective measures that we hope will grow into an educational experience for the Southmoreland students.

JCWA is so excited about our new Green projects, and we hope you will be too! If you'd like to turn your own mini-watershed Green, we can help. JCWA is partnering with the Fayette County Conservation District and the Penn State Cooperative Extension to present several Backyard Habitat workshops this fall. These workshops will show you how to use native plants, pollinators and rain gardens to turn your backyard into a wonderful green oasis for you and your family, as well as the birds and the bees. More information on these workshops will be in JCWA's summer newsletter and also on our website at [www.jacobs creek watershed.org](http://www.jacobs creek watershed.org).



Scottdale Borough Manager Angelo Pallone and Scottdale Council Members Jack Davis and Bud Santimyer are enthusiastic about the beautiful Green Streets measures that will soon be coming to Pittsburgh Street.



Watershed Specialist Heather Fowler and JCWA member Charlie Brethauer bundle up fruit trees for the Fayette County Conservation District's annual tree sale this past April.

## JCWA Upcoming Events

**May 23: Fayette County Children's Water Festival. Fayette County Fairgrounds.** JCWA and other water-focused groups will demonstrate to and educate Fayette County 6th graders on the importance of all things hydrologic. Presented by the Fayette County Conservation District.

**May 25: Native Plant Sale at Ohiopyle State Park, corner of Rt. 381 and Sheridan Street.** Sale hours are from 12:00 noon until 5:00 pm. Purchase beautiful native plants, shrubbery and trees for your home garden. Contact Barb Wallace at 724-329-0986 or at [bawallace@pa.gov](mailto:bawallace@pa.gov).

**June 15: River Sweep Cleanup – Greenlick Lake at Jacobs Creek Park.** Meet at the main entrance to the park at 8:00 am. Gloves and bags provided and all volunteers receive a free River Sweep t-shirt. Call JCWA for directions or additional information at 724-887-8220, ext. 3.

**June 22: Westmoreland Woodlands Improvements Association – Forbes State Forest Field Trip.** 10:00 am to 2:00 pm. The 3rd annual field trip to Forbes state Forest will be hosted by foresters Mike DiRinaldo and Dave Planinsek. Contact Westmoreland Conservation District @ 724-837-5271 for details.

**July 13: Adopt A Highway Cleanup – Clay Pike Road.** Meet at 8:15 am in the parking lot of Donegal Highlands Golf Course. Gloves, bags, reflective vests and light refreshments provided. Call JCWA for directions or additional information at 724-887-8220, ext. 3.

## JCWA thanks its new/renewing members:

Craig Barras

Rachel Hoza

Kim and Doug Coffman Family

Mark Killar

Sue and Tim Dreier

Justin Kontir

Bill Edwards

Sam Petrill

Stuart Horner

Kay Reynolds



### Board of Directors

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### Mission

Jacobs Creek Watershed Association is a non-profit organization dedicated to the conservation of our natural resources, rehabilitation of the creek and watershed, environmental education and recreation.

### For More Information

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## JCWA Tour Bus - Mt. Pleasant Glass Museum

On the next rainy spring day, take a break from the dreary outdoors and lift your spirits with a visit to a sparkly little museum in Mt. Pleasant. The new Mt. Pleasant Glass Museum is a wealth of information about glass making and has beautiful, vibrant displays of unique glass pieces to brighten even the grayest of days. The Jacobs Creek watershed is rich in glass history; Mt. Pleasant alone had three glass factories residing here not so very long ago: L.E. Smith Glass, Lenox and Bryce Brothers. Until recently, there was no place to learn about the history of our local glass making operations. That all changed when a group of determined historians with a penchant for beautiful glass collaborated, communicated and made it all happen this past November! The Mt. Pleasant Glass Museum is located in the heart of the Mt. Pleasant business district in the Old Towne Shops at 537 W. Main Street. The mission of the Museum is to tell the world about Mt. Pleasant and its glass factories by engaging, educating and inspiring visitors and the community – and once you visit, you will see they are well on their way to achieving this mission!



The Museum is diminutive in size but vast in treasures. Vibrant glass of all shapes and colors will dazzle your eyes while glass-making tools and historic photos of glass-making operations will show how the beautiful pieces were crafted. When you visit, you will see many unique glass pieces that belong to JCWA members Cheryel and Don Sechrist! Cheryel and Don both volunteer their time as hosts at the Museum every week, helping people get the most out of their visit. Don worked at the Bryce Brothers glass plant for many years as a stem gatherer and can tell amazing stories of his experiences there.

Since the Museum's official opening in November of 2012, it has hosted talks on glass history and had a glass cutting demonstration in March. Plans to form a Bryce Glass Collector's Club are in the works and a Heritage Dinner series at Nino's Restaurant has begun, with the next dinner in September. The enthusiastic volunteers and board are full of great ideas, so who knows what other plans they may have up their sleeves! To keep abreast of new developments, get on the mailing list for the Museum's newsletter, The Glassblower, by sending an email to [mtpleasantglassmuseum@gmail.com](mailto:mtpleasantglassmuseum@gmail.com). Museum hours are currently Thursday through Saturday, 11:00 am to 5:00 pm and Sunday from 12:00 noon to 4:00 pm.

## Colcom Foundation Grant Ensures Continued Stream Monitoring

JCWA was recently awarded a generous \$25,000 grant from the Colcom Foundation that will allow us to monitor the health of our streams over the next two years! Just over a year ago, JCWA began a program to place in-stream monitors, called data loggers, at several locations within the watershed. These data loggers collect important water quality information that has yielded a year's worth of baseline stream quality information. Through this Colcom Foundation grant, JCWA will now be able to continue this monitoring program and detect any changes to water quality due to potential sources of stream impairment, such as industrial activity or gas well drilling. JCWA will also use the grant to purchase additional data loggers to expand our monitoring efforts by tracking the health of several more streams within the Jacobs Creek watershed.

JCWA received this grant through a partnership with our sister watershed associations, the Mountain Watershed Association and the Loyalhanna Watershed Association, who each also received \$25,000 from the Colcom Foundation. We three watershed groups are very excited about this stream monitoring program! Between the three associations, we are monitoring over 50 sites in the region and this number will continue to grow in the next two years, thanks to the Colcom Foundation. With the success of our collaboration, we three groups are exploring other joint opportunities to continue our shared vision of pristine streams in our region. Thank you, Colcom Foundation!

*JCWA Environmental Technician Matthew Marhefka downloads water quality information from an in-stream data logger to his computer.*

Visit JCWA at [www.jacobscreekwatershed.org](http://www.jacobscreekwatershed.org)

## Batty for Wetlands

*Submitted by: Kristina Tarasan, JCWA Vice President and resident bat expert*

Great blue herons, painted turtles, and bullfrogs. These are just a few of the creatures you may think of when you picture a wetland. But what about bats? If you're like me, you think of bats hanging upside down in caves and flying below tree tops at night. But believe it or not bats need wetlands too!

Wetlands provide key foraging habitats for bats. One bat can gobble up as many as 3,000 insects, including many mosquitoes, in a single night!

Nearly 1,000 species of bats are known throughout the world. Forty species of bats live in the United States, and nearly a quarter of those species inhabit Pennsylvania:

- Big Brown Bat
- Tri-Colored Bat
- Hoary Bat - (Largest Bat in PA)
- Indiana Bat - (Endangered)
- Little Brown Bat
- Northern Long Ear Bat
- Eastern Red Bat
- Silver-Haired Bat
- Small-Footed Bat - (Threatened)



Not only are bats great for keeping the insect population in check, but they are also valuable pollinators and important seed-dispersing mammals. They are the only mammals that can truly fly and are responsible for pollinating some of your favorite fruits, nuts and spices. Peaches, bananas, mangos, guavas, avocados, dates, figs, cashews, carob and cloves are just a few of the many bat-dependent plants.

Unfortunately, these unique and important mammals are under threat from a rapidly spreading disease known as White-Nose Syndrome (WNS). WNS has devastated bat populations across the eastern United States just in the past few years, killing more than 5.7 million bats since it was discovered in a single New York cave in February 2006.

Named for a cold-loving white fungus (*Geomyces destructans*) typically found on the faces and wings of infected bats, White-Nose Syndrome causes bats to awaken more often during hibernation and use up the stored fat reserves that are needed to get them through the winter. Infected bats often emerge too soon from hibernation and are often seen flying around in midwinter. These bats usually freeze or starve to death. This relentless disease keeps spreading into new areas, causing high mortality rates.

What can you do to help bats?

- Never shoot, poison or otherwise harm bats.
- Avoid maternity colonies and hibernating bats.
- Do not disturb bat habitats.
- Put up a bat house! (To learn more, visit: [www.batmanagement.com](http://www.batmanagement.com))
- Volunteer next year at JCWA's Earth Day 2014 Celebration to place additional bat boxes in the watershed.

## JCWA Holds First Earth Day Celebration



*Earth Day volunteers made sure the bats in the Jacobs Creek Wetlands have two new and decorative homes to roost in.*

On Sunday, April 21st, JCWA volunteers really did go "batty for wetlands" and celebrated Earth Day 2013 by constructing, painting and placing two large bat houses in the Jacobs Creek Environmental Education Area wetlands! A group of 26 batty folks volunteered their time on a wonderfully sunny day to help our furry, flying friends have additional housing. Ten children, including 6 Girl Scouts from Troop 53123, painted the bat boxes black (to keep the bats toasty warm inside) and then painted bat artwork on the posts, with welcoming inscriptions including "Nest Sweet Nest" and "Bats Welcome". Adult volunteers dug post holes, attached the boxes to the posts and secured the finished structures in the ground. JCWA's Vice President and resident bat aficionado Kristina Tarasan gave an interesting talk on the bats of Pennsylvania, accompanied by her canine brother Tank, dressed as Bat Dog! It was a fun and productive day that ended with yummy bat cookies and a sense of accomplishment. The Westmoreland County Parks owns and cares for the wetlands and were very supportive of JCWA's efforts. Parks workers Josh Miller and Lauren Jones even came to see the bat boxes go up!

Thanks to all the volunteers who made JCWA's first Earth Day celebrate a great success! JCWA plans to place more bat houses within the watershed next year for Earth Day, so keep checking our website and facebook page for announcements. If you can't wait an entire year to help the environment, consider joining us for the annual River Sweep cleanup at Greenlick Lake on Saturday, June 15th. Meet at 8:00 am at the main pavilion and help us remove litter before it enters our beautiful water! River Sweep t-shirts are given to all volunteers. Call 724-887-8220, ext. 3 or email to [jcwatershed@gmail.com](mailto:jcwatershed@gmail.com) for information or to register.



## Be The Change You Want To See In The World -- Gandhi

Members and volunteer efforts help the JCWA to continue our mission. Without them the strength of our voice and the power of our actions is diminished.

**Please become a MEMBER today.**  
**You'll be glad you did!**

*Yes! I want to help preserve and protect the Jacobs Creek Watershed*

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Fax \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_

### Annual Memberships

- \_\_\_ \$ 5 Student/Senior
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Make checks payable to:  
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