



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

From the Ridge to the River



Fall 2011

JCWA begins innovative project with Mt. Pleasant farmers



JCWA is venturing into fresh territory this year with two new projects that are proving to be exciting, challenging and even fun! In both projects, JCWA is working with local farming families to help improve water quality in Brush Run, a tributary to Jacobs Creek. The owners of the Hutter Farm and the Zelmore Farm, both located in Mt. Pleasant Township, are partnering with JCWA to install Best Management Practices (BMPs) on their farms. These agricultural BMPs will not only benefit Brush Run, but the farmers and their livestock as well by providing the cows with clean drinking water and a safe, mud-free way to cross streams. JCWA, with the assistance of the Westmoreland Conservation District and local contractors, will complete the following projects at the Hutter and Zelmore Farms:

- 2,500 feet of stream bank regrading and stabilization
- Gutters and downspout installation on farm buildings
- 4,200 feet of stream fencing
- Vegetative buffer creation along the stream
- Spring development for livestock drinking water

All of these measures will work to ultimately decrease the amount of sediment and nutrients entering Brush Run. For example, gutters and downspouts will convey clean rain water directly to streams, bypassing areas in the barnyard where manure may be present. Stream fencing and crossings will limit where cows can enter the stream, preventing them from milling about unrestricted and releasing manure into the water. In addition, animal hooves dig deeply into the streambed, stirring up mud within the stream, while uncontrolled crossing of the stream causes stream banks to weaken and erode. All of the mud and sediment released by these actions coats the streambed, harming aquatic life. By fencing the streams and installing specially constructed stream crossings, the cows are kept out of the water and these issues are minimized.

The newly installed stream crossings will provide a hard, stable area where animals and farm equipment can cross the stream without damaging the banks or streambed. Construction of stream crossings includes grading the banks of the crossing area to provide a firm and easy access point to the stream and placing a sturdy base of stones or rocks in the stream for stability. Fencing is installed along the banks to keep the cows out of the stream and safely guide them to the stabilized crossing area. A swath of vegetation, called a riparian buffer, is encouraged to grow along the fenced stream and includes a variety of trees, shrubs and herbaceous vegetation that helps stabilize the banks and provides shading to cool the water.

In addition to improving water quality, these BMPs also benefit the cows and farmers. New springs have been developed on both farms, providing the cows clean, cool drinking water as an alternative to muddy stream water. Cows will be healthier, as they will no longer get knee-deep in mud while crossing the streams. The new stream crossings will also be a safe and easy way for farm equipment to cross the streams. So, farmers, livestock and the watershed all benefit from the agricultural BMPs being created in this exciting and innovative project!

For more information, please visit JCWA's website at www.jacobs creek watershed.org

JCWA Upcoming Events

October 23: Adopt-A-Highway. 1:00 pm at Donegal Highlands Golf Course. We will be cleaning up along Clay Pike Road near Rt. 31/Donegal. Steelers don't play until 4:05pm, so there's time to pick up litter for an hour or two! For details, call 724-887-8220, ext. 3, visit JCWA's facebook page or email jcwatershed@gmail.com.

Nov. 20: Fall Bike Ride and Food Drive. 1:30 pm at Kendi Park in Scottsdale for a fun ride. Local Boy Scout troops will be collecting non-perishable goods for food banks. No Steelers game today, so come for an enjoyable ride with us! For details, call 724-887-8220, ext. 3, visit JCWA's facebook page or email jcwatershed@gmail.com.

Nov. 22: JCWA Board meeting. 6:30 pm at the Scottsdale Borough Building.

Nov. 24: Happy Thanksgiving!

December 19: Pizza Hut Fundraiser/ Steelers on Monday night football: 11:00 am to 11:00pm at Crossroads Plaza Pizza Hut, Mt. Pleasant. Visit Pizza Hut anytime during the day, present the coupon and JCWA will receive a portion of your bill. Dine in or take home a pizza and wings to enjoy while watching the Steelers play San Francisco at 8:30pm. For coupon, visit JCWA's facebook page, jcwatershed@gmail.com or call 724-887-8220, ext. 3.

Happy Holidays!

 Visit JCWA on facebook



Greenlick Lake - A dog's paradise!

JCWA member Myia loves to bring her owners to Greenlick Lake for exercise whenever the weather permits. Whether she's cruising in a boat or fetching a ball in the water, Myia always insists on wearing her life vest to keep herself safe. Owners Edwin and Susan Zylka say that Greenlick Lake water has amazing conditioning effects and that after a dip in the lake, Myia's coat is luxuriously soft. So, bring your dog to Greenlick for exercise - and a free conditioning treatment!

JCWA thanks its new/renewing members:

Sandi Anderson

Gwen and Edward Chute

Frederick DeNorscia

Heather Fowler & Aaron McGregor

Philip Haddad

Max and Margaret House

Rachel Hoza

Mark Killar

Samuel Petrill

Myra Posner

Kristina Tarasan

Susan and Edwin Zylka



Board of Directors

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Rita Coleman
PA DEP

Heather Fowler

Fayette County Conservation District

Rob Cronauer

Westmoreland Conservation District

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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Email jcwatershed@gmail.com
www.jacobs creek watershed.org

JCWA Tour Bus

Highlighting interesting places in our watershed

Acme Dam – A Gem on the Ridge



When you take your annual fall foliage drive through the Laurel Highlands this autumn, make sure to plan a visit to picturesque Acme Dam. Located just off Route 31 in Chestnut Ridge Park, Acme Dam is one of the three original flood control projects that JCWA founders created in the early 1970's. Like its sister dams, Greenlick Lake and Bridgeport Dam, Acme Dam offers a bounty of outdoor recreation opportunities while still working to prevent flooding of the towns below the Chestnut Ridge.

Fed by the cool headwaters of Jacobs Creek, Acme Dam is an outdoor-lover's haven. Boating, birding, fishing and hiking are all options while you enjoy the brilliant autumn foliage surrounding the lake. But outdoor opportunities exist year-round at Acme Dam. The 124 acre impoundment is a wonderful venue to catch sight of migrating waterfowl in both the fall and spring. The lake shoreline is easily accessible for birding, hiking or shoreline fishing during all seasons. There is a boat launch area for electric-powered or unpowered boats, so bring your kayaks, canoes and fishing boats. If you're game for an adventure, try out a day of tube fishing on the water with JCWA's partner Acme Dam Fishing. The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission stocks channel catfish fingerlings here annually and the lake is full of bluegill, pumpkinseed, yellow perch and crappies.

JCWA hopes you plan to stop by Acme Dam this autumn to see the hidden beauty that lies serenely at the top of the Chestnut Ridge. Directions: From Rt. 982, take Rt. 31 towards Acme. Go 3.3 miles and turn right onto Acme Dam Road. The Chestnut Ridge Park entrance is ½ mile on the left. For information on Acme Dam Fishing, visit www.acmedamfishing.com.

JCWA History Corner: West Overton Village – birthplace of an industrial giant

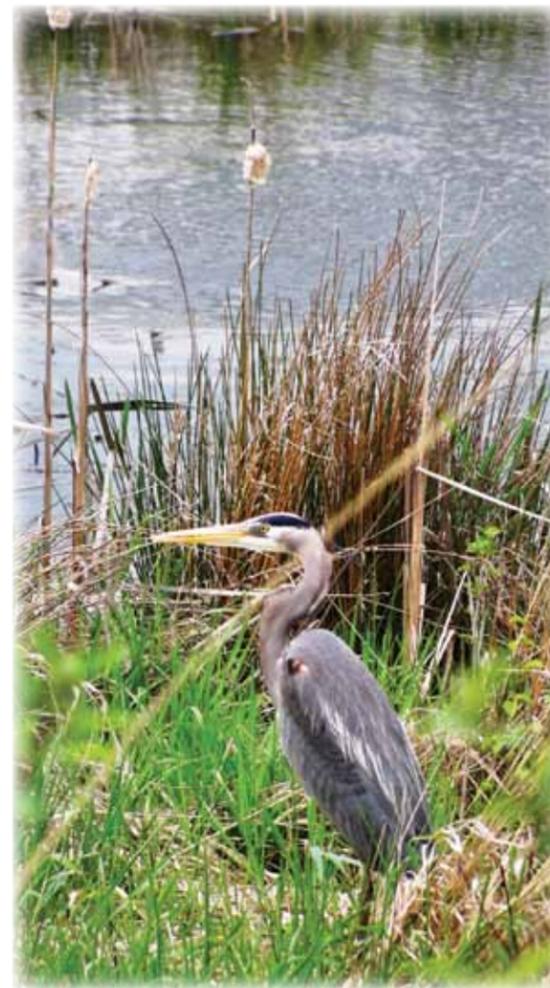
Most of us have driven along Route 819 and noticed the sturdy brick buildings of the historic West Overton Village, but what you may not know is that a famous person was born there long ago. West Overton Village is the only pre-Civil War village still standing in Pennsylvania today. It was founded in the early 1800's by Mennonites as a farming settlement, led by settler Henry Overholt. Henry's son Abraham became one of the wealthiest people in Westmoreland County, as he owned a large gristmill and the Overholt Distillery in West Overton Village. But as famous as Abraham was, his fame was quickly usurped by his

grandson. In December of 1849, Abraham's daughter gave birth to a son, Henry Clay Frick. In his youth, Henry emulated his grandfather, working for him and striving to become a successful businessman like him. At the age of 19, Henry left West Overton Village to take a job for a linen and lace wholesaler in Pittsburgh. He eventually partnered with his cousin to form Frick and Co., which supplied coal and coke to the Pittsburgh steel mills. By the age of 30, Henry had made his first million. Although he sold coke to the Andrew Carnegie Steel Company, he did not meet his future business partner in person until he was in New York on his honeymoon. Henry and Andrew, along with the new Mrs. Frick, had lunch and later formed a lasting business partnership that would have Frick as the chairman of the Carnegie Steel Company. He would later gain infamy as the hard-nosed strike breaker in the 1892 Homestead Steel strike, which would lead to an assassination attempt on his life later that year.

Henry Clay Frick and Andrew Carnegie eventually parted ways and Frick moved to New York. He died in 1919, the same year that prohibition closed down the Overholt Distillery in West Overton Village. He left the majority of his vast wealth to charitable institutions, hospitals and universities. His daughter, Helen Clay Frick, eventually purchased the buildings of West Overton Village. She founded the Westmoreland – Fayette Historical Society to maintain West Overton Village for all to visit and enjoy. For more information, visit www.westovertonvillage.org

Next issue: More on West Overton Village history.

Watershed Words: Wetlands – Where water meets land



Wetlands are areas of land saturated with water a good portion of the year and support unique plants adapted to living in very wet soil, such as cattails. Take a look at the soil in a wetland - it is a unique greenish-blue-grey color (known as "gleyed" soil) sometimes with reddish or orange patches. Wetlands are sometimes called swamps, bogs or marshes and are the connection between the land and the water. Wetlands are found all over the world on every continent except Antarctica and provide habitat for numerous plants and animals, including frogs, snakes, insects, fish and mammals. They also provide a place for migrating birds to rest and feed. In addition to all of these important uses, wetlands also help in flood protection. Wetlands absorb and slow floodwaters, often preventing downstream flooding. Wetlands also protect the health of streams by filtering out sediment and pollutants, thereby providing us with clean water.

What about mosquitoes? Concerns about mosquito problems are often raised in relation to wetlands. However, contrary to popular belief, healthy, well-functioning wetlands can actually reduce mosquito populations. Healthy wetlands provide habitat for many insects and animals including natural enemies of mosquitoes. The predators keep the mosquito population low. Mosquitoes really only become a problem in areas of standing water that do not support the beneficial predators that feed on mosquitoes, such as the water that collects in old tires.

Did you know?

*One acre of wetlands can store 1 to 1½ million gallons of water.
More than one-third of the nation's threatened and endangered species live only in wetlands.
Some medicines, such as aspirin, are produced from wetland soils and plants.
Blueberries, cranberries, mints and wild rice are produced in wetlands.*

Contributed by Kristina Tarasan, JCWA member and outreach volunteer

JCWA receives Sprout Fund Biodiversity Grant

JCWA was one of only 20 non-profit groups to receive a \$5,000 Spring Award Grant from The Sprout Fund. These grants support local biodiversity initiatives that inspire greater stewardship of the region's natural resources. Biodiversity is the variety of life on Earth and is essential to sustain living networks that provide us with health, wealth, food, fuel and vital resources. The Spring Award Grant will be used to help create a biologically diverse wetland and outdoor educational area on the Southmoreland Middle School property.

JCWA will use grant funds to enhance the basic wetland area that is planned as part of Scottdale Borough's Storm Water Project. JCWA will diversify and add additional species of plants and vegetation to the wetlands to improve biodiversity and create a more sustainable ecosystem. An interpretive trail and educational signs will be added, so the area can be used as an outdoor educational area for students for many years. Southmoreland teachers are supportive of the project and have offered insight towards the design and content of the interpretive trail-quality signs.

The Sprout Fund enriches the Pittsburgh region's vitality by engaging citizens, amplifying voices, supporting creativity and innovation, and cultivating connected communities. Sprout facilitates community-led solutions to local and regional challenges and supports efforts to create thriving, progressive, and culturally diverse communities. JCWA thanks The Sprout Fund for its generous grant for a worthwhile project. To read more about The Sprout Fund, visit www.sproutfund.org.



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
- ___ \$10 Individual
- ___ \$20 Family
- ___ \$50 Organization
- ___ \$75 Corporate

Make checks payable to:
Jacobs Creek Watershed Association
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