



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

Winter 2014

From the Ridge to the River



Winter 2014

Onward into an Exciting and Productive 2014!

Who can believe it's already 2014 and we're halfway through the winter? Time moves so quickly when you are busy and boy was JCWA busy in 2013! Some of the highlights of the past year include:

Education: JCWA had 2 new educational firsts this year. JCWA gave out its first environmental scholarship to Lauren Virgin of Southmoreland High School, who used it for her studies at Washington and Jefferson College. JCWA also began a partnership with Mt. Pleasant Jr. High School, helping to start their first Trout in the Classroom Program this fall. Trout eggs were nurtured by the students and in the spring, the young trout will be released into the Jacobs Creek watershed. What a fun way to learn!



Young volunteers paint bat boxes at JCWA's first Earth Day celebration.

Projects: JCWA completed three watershed improvement projects this year:

- **The Shupe Run Stream Bank Restoration Project** restored 2,000 feet of severely eroded stream bank along Shupe Run in Willows Park, Mt. Pleasant. We also created 2,000 feet of riparian buffers along the bank and planted 275 trees.
- **The Scottdale Firemen's Club Project** installed numerous storm water control measures in the Firemen's Club parking lot to reduce damaging storm water flows to Little Sherrick Run. We created a rain garden, bio swale, underground storage and a green parking area.
- **The Scottdale Green Streets Design Project** was completed this fall, designing beautiful and functional storm water controls for the business district of Scottdale.

Stream monitoring: We assessed 12 stream sections to determine what effects our projects have on the overall health of the streams and macro invertebrates that live in them.

Events: We held our first Earth Day celebration this year, placing two bat boxes at the Jacobs Creek Wetlands Area, complete with a visit from Bat Dog to make it even more special! We also participated in the Scottdale Fall Festival Parade and Mt. Pleasant Glass and Ethnic Festival Parade this year while riding in the cool, baby blue Volkswagen Beetle donated by the Tarasan family!

And after all of that, we're not slowing down in 2014! On our slate is:

- Begin construction of the Scottdale Green Streets Project along Pittsburgh Street, Spring Street, Graft Alley and Constitution Way.
- Restore and stabilize over 1,000 feet of eroded stream bank and create riparian plantings along Jacobs Creek near Everson.
- Design storm water control/green infrastructure projects at the Southmoreland High School and in downtown Mt. Pleasant.
- Expand our stream monitoring program by adding two additional sites for in-stream data loggers.
- Expand our education programs to include the Bullsken Elementary School.

Thanks to our members, volunteers, partners and donors who made all of this work possible. We value your support, and with your continued help, look forward to another productive year in 2014!

Visit JCWA at www.jacobs creek watershed.org



JCWA member Ryan Dzurko helps the environment at JCWA's November 2013 Adopt a Highway Cleanup!



JCWA Upcoming Events

March 21: FCCD Tree Sale orders due. Call the Fayette County Conservation District for order forms at 724-438-4497. Pick up dates are April 4th and 5th at the Fayette County Fairgrounds.

April 5: Adopt a Highway Cleanup along Clay Pike Road. Meet at 8:15 am in the Donegal Highlands Golf Course parking lot, near the entrance gate. Gloves, bags and reflective vests provided, as well as water and light snacks. Directions: Take Rt. 31 and turn onto Clay Pike Road across from Brady's Restaurant. Take first left into Donegal Highlands Golf Course.

April 27: Earth Day Bat-tastic Celebration. Meet at 1:30 pm at the Bridgeport Dam to construct and place bat boxes. A talk on the importance of bats, a visit from Bat Dog and refreshments will be on the agenda. Email jcwatershed@gmail.com or call 724-887-8220, ext. 3 for more information.

Happy Spring!

JCWA thanks its new/renewing members:

Elle and Jack Crislip Family

Homer McLean

Ken and Barb Miller Family

Rose Miller

Mt. Pleasant Polish Falcons

Municipal Authority of Westmoreland County

Laura and Bill Nowakowski Family

Patricia Patterson

Carolyn Porter

Cheryl and Don Sechrist Family

Summerill Tube Corporation, Penn State Specialty Metals

John Surmacz

TNT Embroidery

Westmoreland Conservation District

Lisa and Barry Whoric Family

Nancy Wood



Board of Directors

Michael Barrick, *President*
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Patricia Miller, *Executive Director*

Associates

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

P.O. Box 1071
Mt. Pleasant, PA 15666
Phone (724) 887-8220, ext. 3
Fax (724) 887-0195
Email jcwatershed@gmail.com
www.jacobscreekwatershed.org
www.facebook.com/jacobscreekwatershed

Think Spring!



Spring flowers popping up at last spring's Adopt a Highway cleanup.

Has all of this cold weather made you a little stir crazy? Had enough of listening to wind chill factors and school delays? Get out of the winter doldrums by planning for spring - and let JCWA help. We have springtime activities to plan for that are guaranteed to help get you through the next few months until the warmer, sunnier days return. Consider participating in the following events:

Spring Tree Sale – Fayette County Conservation District: March 21st. Get a head start on your spring gardening work by ordering some fruit trees, native trees, shrubbery, concord grapes and blueberries from the Fayette County Conservation District's annual Spring Tree Sale! Order by March 21st and pick up your green treasures on April 4th or 5th. If you really want to help out, come help us sort and bundle up the trees for the sale on Thursday April 3rd at the Fayette County Fairgrounds. The Conservation District makes it a fun day and they really appreciate all volunteers! For an order form, please call 724-438-4497.

Spring Adopt a Highway Cleanup – April 5th. Get out of bed a little early on Saturday April 5th and help us pick up litter along Clay Pike Road – it's a guarantee that you'll feel a sense of accomplishment the rest of the day! It only takes about an hour to really make a difference. JCWA will have all you need – you just bring the energy. Gloves, bags and reflective vests are provided by PENNDOT and JCWA supplements these with water, snacks and JCWA swag. Meet at 8:15 am in the parking lot of the Donegal Highlands Golf Course to lend a hand for a cleaner environment.

Earth Day Bat-tastic Event – April 27th: Join us on a spring Sunday afternoon to make, paint and erect bat boxes to place at the Bridgeport Dam. We had such a great time creating these bat homes last year at the Jacobs Creek Wetlands that we decided to do it again – this year at Bridgeport Dam! Come paint the boxes black (to retain heat for our flying, furry friends), decorate the posts with bat-tastic stencils and sayings and hear a great talk about the importance of bats. Hearty volunteers are also needed to dig holes and erect poles that hold the completed bat homes. Refreshments will be provided and we hope to have another appearance from Bat Dog this year! Meet at 1:30 pm at the Bridgeport Dam for a satisfying way to celebrate Earth Day 2014.

Remember to wake up your teen and hustle them out the door for these events – our volunteer events count towards community service credits and we'll sign any forms for scouts or school group to verify that your child participated.

So, enjoy the snowbirds and flurries this winter, but plan ahead to have a fun and fruitful spring with JCWA!

JCWA History Corner: Downhill skiing in the watershed!

If you lived in the Jacobs Creek watershed in the 1960s and early 1970s, you might have been one of the lucky ones to experience the short venture into downhill skiing here, at the Bear Rock Ski area! The Bear Rocks Community that lies on the western descent of the Chestnut Ridge just off of 3 Mile Hill



on Rt. 31, was actually initially developed as a ski resort. An old flier from the resort boasted that Bear Rocks Ski area had a new, modern double chair lift with wooden seats, extensive snow making equipment and a new lodge. Home sites near the new slopes were offered, as well as a private fishing lake and other amenities. Unfortunately for us today, the resort closed in the early 1970s. The lodge eventually burned down and much of the ski slope area was developed into home sites. Today, the Bear Rocks Community remains as a scenic, wooded residential area that still gets plenty of snow for sledding and snowball fights – just not for downhill skiing!

Visit JCWA at www.jacobscreekwatershed.org

Watershed Words: Tire recycling

Why would tire recycling be a watershed word? Well, if you have ever been to one of JCWA's clean ups, you would understand why. Tires are *everywhere* and they always seem to end up along streams and in the water. No matter where JCWA has a cleanup, we always find numerous tires. Back in the 1970s, tires were sometimes intentionally placed in lakes because they were thought to be good for fish habitat. We know now that they are better left to their on-road duties or being recycled into other products, as they can degrade over time and release petro chemicals into the water.



JCWA volunteers load tires for proper disposal at JCWA's tire cleanup along Creek Road.

In addition to being an ugly eyesore, tires are also detrimental if left on the ground. If placed in piles and allowed to collect rainwater, tires can provide large breeding grounds for mosquitos and rodents. They can easily catch fire and release hazardous compounds into the air and the ground. Proper disposal of used tires is critical to the health of people, the water and the overall environment.

We all need to make sure that when we get our tires changed, the used tires are properly recycled or disposed. Recycled tires have many uses. They can be used for tire-derived fuels, retreaded and used again, or converted into ground rubber and used for recycled rubber products or rubber-modified asphalt.

If you know of any piles of tires in the area, please let JCWA know so we can work on removing them before they become a serious problem. In the past, JCWA has participated in Westmoreland Cleanways annual Fugitive Tire Roundup and we hope to participate again. Westmoreland Cleanways organizes the Roundup every April, with tire disposal companies taking the collected tires free of charge for proper disposal. In fact, for the 2012 Roundup, JCWA removed over 125 tires from Jacobs Creek along Creek Road! For more information or to report piles of tires, contact JCWA or Westmoreland Cleanways at www.westmorelandcleanways.org.

JCWA receives 2013 Watershed Mini Grant

For the 5th consecutive year, JCWA was one of 29 non-profit organizations to receive a Watershed Mini Grant from the Dominion Foundation and the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy! This year, JCWA received a \$1,000 grant for some much-needed outreach supplies to replace our aging display materials. We have put this money to good use, as you can see from the photo to the right. This grant allowed us to purchase the new display board, the JCWA table banner, the see-through litter decomposition container, a roll-up banner and other items. These colorful and educational items will make us more visible at events which will help us better spread the word about JCWA's watershed activities.



JCWA Vice President Kristina at the newly revitalized JCWA booth at the Scottdale Picnic in the Park.

Financial support for this project is provided by the Dominion Foundation which is dedicated to the economic, physical and social health of the communities served by Dominion companies. The grant program was administered by Western Pennsylvania Conservancy in commitment to its core mission of conserving Pennsylvania's diverse ecosystems through science-based strategy, leadership and collaboration. JCWA greatly appreciates the ongoing support of these two groups that help us achieve our mission to preserve, protect and restore the Jacobs Creek watershed.



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

Make checks payable to:
Jacobs Creek Watershed Association
P.O. Box 1071
Mt. Pleasant, PA 15666
Phone (724) 887-8220, ext. 3