

# CHARTIERS CREEK

## WATERSHED ASSOCIATION

Vol. 8, #3 SUMMER, 2010

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### SUMMER PROJECT: MONITORING FOR BACTERIA IN CHARTIERS CREEK WATERSHED

Again this summer, the Chartiers Creek Watershed Association will take part in DEP's Citizen Volunteer Bacteria Monitoring Study. This year's sampling began on June 7 and will continue weekly through August 9.

Four sites in the watershed are being checked for fecal coliform bacteria. Locations include one site each on Georges Run and Chartiers Run, and two sites on Little Chartiers Creek.

The samples are delivered to the Environmental Services Laboratories in Van Voohris for analysis.

ChCWA members who will take the samples include: Carrilee Hemington, Virginia McAnulty, Barbara Rosensteel, Marie Brigham, Jean Bear, Donna Riggle, Ellen Mavrigh and Ashley Szfraniec. Laurie Popeck and Joan Jessen deliver the samples to the lab.

**REMINDER: This newsletter—in color—is now available by email. Please send email address to: [joanjessen159@gmail.com](mailto:joanjessen159@gmail.com).**

***Email saves money for the Association!***

### YOU'RE INVITED! COME TO THE ChCWA DISPLAY AT THE WASHINGTON COUNTY FAIR

The 2010 Washington County Fair will be held at the Fair Grounds in Arden from Saturday, August 14 through Sunday, August 21. The theme for 2010 is "Proud of Our Heritage, Envisioning the Future."

As is our custom, the Chartiers Creek Watershed Association will be at the Fair throughout the week. Our display will be set up with that of the Washington County Conservation District, along with other watershed groups in the Washington County Watershed Alliance.

This year the ChCWA display will feature information and demonstrations about water quality monitoring in our streams. The schedule for demonstrations is not yet available. Please check our website in August (or at the display) for the scheduled times.

### CALENDAR

#### JUNE

6, 14, 21, 28 — Bacteriological Monitoring

#### JULY

6, 12, 19, 26 — Bacteriological Monitoring  
7 — ChCWA monthly meeting, 7:30 pm

#### AUGUST

2, 9 — Bacteriological Monitoring  
11 — ChCWA monthly meeting, 7:30 pm  
14-21 — Washington County Fair

#### SEPTEMBER

8 — ChCWA monthly meeting, 7:30 pm

ChCWA regular monthly meetings: 2nd Wed., 7 p.m., (7:30 pm April-Sept.) Cooper-Hinds Building, Meadowlands.

## LOOKING AHEAD: PROJECTS TO RESTORE STREAMBANK BUFFERS

Over the years, many sections of streams in the Chartiers Creek Watershed have suffered from deterioration of the typical natural plantings that had protected the banks from erosion. The result: collapsed streambanks that allowed deep meanders in the stream, cutting into productive and valuable land areas.

Recently, several members of the Chartiers Creek Watershed Association escorted Eric Chapman and Alysha Trexler, of the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, on a tour of possible sites for streambank plantings. Included were two sites on Catfish Creek and one along Little Chartiers Creek.

The Catfish Creek sites have already been identified in the Catfish Creek Assessment, recently completed by Skelley and Loy, Inc., as locations for stormwater detention facilities to help prevent flooding in Washington City. Washington has funds for the stormwater detention facilities from the Army Corps of Engineers, the Washington County Gaming Funds and the Washington County Redevelopment Authority. Chapman suggested that it would be possible to add riparian buffers to the already-planned stormwater detention projects.

Another possible site for streambank restoration is the ballfield area behind 84 Lumber World Headquarters along Little Chartiers Creek. Part of this site is a wetland mitigation project that was completed by 84 Lumber under orders from DEP. According to Chapman, this area has a very high potential for creating an outstanding wetland and riparian buffer for the community with the cooperation of the landowner. It could be developed as an educational and passive recreational area.

The Chartiers Creek Watershed Association is one of several groups selected this year to receive technical assistance from Western Pennsylvania Conservancy.

## SPRING, 2010 WATER QUALITY MONITORING

The Association's customary Spring water quality monitoring began on a February day in April at Site #1, on Houston Run in Houston behind the Family Dollar store. This site had always indicated very good water quality and thus had been dropped from the regular schedule in order to conduct tests at other locations.

Now, testing at this site is again being done so as to monitor the effects of natural gas drilling upstream. Once again, the test results were fair-to-good with a variety of macroinvertebrate species identified. They included: midges, planarias, fingernail clams, crayfish, threadworms, as well as caddisfly, crane fly, and riffle beetle larvae—and one flathead mayfly nymph.

On another day, testing was completed at Station #4, which is located on Chartiers Creek next to Scotty's on Rt. 18. Again, chemical tests were run and macroinvertebrates collected. A number of species were identified—fingernail clams, freshwater mussels, riffle beetles, and a variety of larvae. The testing indicated good water quality.

The testing at Station #2, on Chartiers Creek at the ballpark in Houston told a different story. The results of chemical tests were not unusual, but the macro count indicated poor water quality. Present was a large concentration of tubifex worms and threadworms. Midge larvae and a leech, a species tolerant of poor water quality, also were found. Limpets, fingernail clams, and freshwater mussels were found but all were dead.

The final testing was done at Station #3 on Little Chartiers Creek at Linden Creek and Linden Roads. Macro counts seemed to indicate a slight decrease in water quality as this location usually features more of the sensitive macros and fewer that are tolerant of poor water quality.

Jean Bear again organized the monitoring. Assisting were: Laurie Popeck, Barbara Rosensteel and Joan Jessen. The team also welcomed help from two student volunteers from Chatham College, Leah Cass and Gabrielle Batard.

## SAVE CANONSBURG LAKE ITEMS NOW ON SALE AT MEALS ON WHEELS

The Save Canonsburg Lake committee now has a stock of its products available at the Meals on Wheels of Peters Township facility above the fire department at 245 East McMurray Road in McMurray. These items are embroidered with the heron logo

The income from these sales will go to the ongoing fundraising for the work needed to keep Canonsburg Lake from filling in entirely.



**CAPS—\$15**  
Adjustable headband  
Colors: Lt. Gray, Tan  
or Black

Those interested in supporting the effort to save the lake are welcome to view and purchase the items there between 8:00 a.m. and noon every weekday morning.

There are many items for sale T-shirts, caps, fleece blankets, and totes – that would make great gifts for Dads and Sons and Mothers and Daughters.

Specialty and monogrammed items may also be ordered.



**BLANKET PACKS—\$30**  
Fleece inside,  
waterproof outside

Arrangements can be made to see the products at other times in the day.

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** *While at the facility, visitors should check out the volunteer opportunities at Meals on Wheels. Especially needed are more drivers in the Canonsburg area. Call Susan Ruether at 724-969-1000 at Meals on Wheels for more information.*

## NEW MONITORING EQUIPMENT

The Chartiers Creek Watershed Association has ordered two new meters to enhance its water monitoring program.

The handheld meters will measure total dissolved solids (TDS) in a stream, along with its pH (a measure of acidity or alkalinity), temperature and salinity.

The meters operate by batteries and are very convenient to use. They will be a particularly useful check for any increases in total dissolved solids due to Marcellus Shale operations.

## WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS: The Mavrigh Family

Some of our readers will recognize the family name from Pedal Power 2009, the bike trip to Washington, D.C. which raised funds to help save Canonsburg Lake.

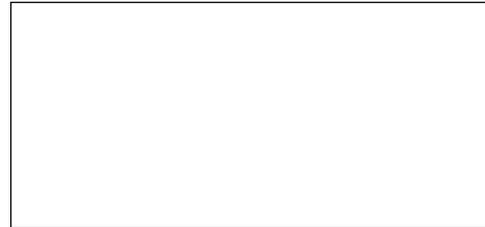
Two of the bikers were Angela and Catherine Mavrigh who were joined on the venture by Shannon and Erin Hannigan. All were then 4th and 5th grade students at McMurray Elementary School.

**CHARTIERS CREEK**  
  
**WATERSHED  
ASSOCIATION**

100 West Beau Street, Suite 105  
Washington, PA 15301



**ASHLEY SZAFRANIEC**  
**Taking water sample**  
**for bacteriological**  
**monitoring**



**We're on the Web**  
[www.upperchartierscreek.org](http://www.upperchartierscreek.org)

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**ADDRESS CORRECTION?**

Send to: Joan Jessen, editor  
159 Canterbury Lane, McMurray, PA 15317;  
or email: [joanjessen159@gmail.com](mailto:joanjessen159@gmail.com).

**Chartiers Creek Watershed Association**

**Purpose:** to enhance, protect and develop the ecosystem of the upper Chartiers Creek Watershed in Washington County, PA

**Membership:** open to anyone who lives in the watershed, as well as individuals, businesses and organizations that own property or are actively involved within the boundaries of the watershed.

**Please join us! Annual Dues:** Individual, \$10; Family, \$15; Organization, \$50

*MAIL THIS FORM WITH YOUR CHECK TO:*

Chartiers Creek Watershed Association  
Joan Jessen, treasurer  
159 Canterbury Lane, McMurray, PA 15301

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel.: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_