



A View from "The Edge"

"If one way is better than another, that you may be sure, is nature's way." Aristotle

Editors
Mary Ellen Bard
Jocelyn A. Sauter

2012 Family Days

The 12th Annual Family Days sponsored by the Cambria County Conservation District was held on July 24th and 25th at Disaster's Edge in the 1889 Park, St. Michael, PA. As always, our program runs rain or shine and the few showers we had on Tuesday certainly didn't dampen the fun! We want to thank our wonderful presenters and all of the children, parents, grandparents, and everyone in between. All of you helped to make this year another great success. We appreciate the time you took to give us your feedback. We received so many wonderful ideas and suggestions and we can't wait to start planning next year's event!

Day One *"Awesome, wonderful, hands-on, informative! Thank you!"*

Energy in Motion: The Drake Well Museum's Mobile Energy Education Training Unit (MEET-U) traveled to Family Days to spread awareness of energy creation and usage. On the first day, the MEET-U team educated children and adults on renewable energy sources. They talked about how the sun, wind, and water provide energy and how the energy is captured and used. Everyone was able to tour their Energy Mobile and see their interactive displays. One family really enjoyed this program, saying, "The renewable energy program was full of great information!"



Pollinator Putt-Putt: This new spin on mini-golf was a major fan favorite! Penn State Department of Agriculture loaned us the unique educational tool, which taught our mini-golfers all about pollinators. As they moved from hole to hole, each person learned what a pollinator is, why pollinators are important, and how we can protect them while getting rid of unwanted pests. When they weren't golfing, the children made unique Bee Flower Holders. We had many families tell us that the putt-putt activity was their favorite!

Ready to Rifle: The PA Game Commission joined us again this year, this time with their air rifles in tow. First, everyone learned how to safely handle and use the air rifles. Safety first is a must! Then, using air rifles provided by the Game Commission, everyone took turns practicing their shooting skills from a sitting position. Many of you said you wished you had more time at this activity. Time sure does fly when you're having fun!



Butterfly Guy: Nationally recognized butterfly specialist, Rick Mikula, was the presenter for our special program on the first day. He shared his vast knowledge of butterflies with us in a very unique way. Rick had everyone in fits of giggles as he donned articles of clothing that transformed him into a giant butterfly. We learned all about the life cycle of a butterfly, the markings that set butterflies apart from one another, and how we can catch and care for our very own butterfly friends. The highlight of the program was when Rick brought out live butterflies for everyone to see.

(Cont'd on pg. 6)

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Special Dates to Remember	
Sep 2-8:	Cambria County Fair
Sep 3:	Office Closed, Holiday
Sep 6:	Board Meeting, 10 am
Oct 5:	Board Meeting, 11 am & Legislative Lunch, 12:15 pm
Oct 30:	Breakfast Meeting, 7:30 am
Nov 1:	Board Meeting, 10 am
Nov 12, 22, 23:	Office Closed, Holidays

Meet the Board

*Each issue we'll introduce you to the wonderful people who serve the Conservation District.
Today, meet our*

Directors and Associate Directors

Robert Schweitzer Associate Director

Bob Schweitzer worked as a District Forester with the Bureau of Forestry and through his work he has been associated with the conservation districts in the counties where he has served. Bob retired in 2007 and in 2008 he became an Associate Director for the Cambria County Conservation District at the request of Robb Piper, District Manager.

Bob serves as a Board Member for the Allegheny Mountains Woodland Association and the PA Forest Fire Museum Association. He is also a member of the Society of American Foresters, Western Gateway Chapter. He serves as a Grand Knight on the Ebensburg Council 522, Knights of Columbus. Bob graduated with a B.S. in Forestry from the University of Maine. He received his Masters of Forestry from the School of Forestry at Yale University. Schweitzer served in the Corps of Engineers in the U.S. Army from 1961-63. He and his wife, Arlene, have four grown children and eight grandchildren.

William Gleason Barbin Associate Director

Bill Barbin's commitment to District goals and values was the motivating factor behind his decision to join the Conservation District's Board of Directors in the mid-1990's. Bill served as a Public Director for one term and has been an Associate Director for the District since.

Mr. Barbin is a partner at the Johnstown firm of Gleason, Barbin & Markovitz LLP. He received his B.A. from Rice University in Houston, Texas in 1976 and his J.D. from the University of Toledo School of Law in 1978. Attorney Barbin has been admitted to Pennsylvania, State and Federal Courts since 1979. He practices primarily in the field of municipal law representing Local Municipalities and Municipal Authorities in Cambria and Somerset Counties.

Keep Cambria County Beautiful

FALL TIRE & APPLIANCE COLLECTION (DATE) 2012



FALL COLLECTION DATES AND LOCATIONS (8:00 am to 1:00 pm):

Sept. 8, 2012—Tunnelhill Borough: Tunnelhill Borough Municipal Building located at 808 Portage St.

Sept. 15, 2012—Cambria Township: 184 Municipal Road, Ebensburg, PA 15931

Sept. 22, 2012—Summerhill Township— Take Rt. 869 East to Beaverdale, left onto Irvin St. Township building on left.

TIRE AND APPLIANCE COLLECTION FEES

Passenger & Lt. Truck Tires*

Off Rim: \$1.00

On Rim: \$2.00

Household Appliances

Freon Containing: \$12.00

Non-Freon Containing: FREE

*Call our office at 472-2120 for pricing on large tires.

AmeriCorps and Intern Comings and Goings

In August, the Conservation District said good-bye to one of our AmeriCorps members, Stephen Balamuta. Steve worked as our Land Resource Specialist. He assisted with and coordinated many important District projects and events including the semi-annual tire and appliance collections, stream restoration projects, and No-Till Drill rentals. We wish Steve the best of luck as he moves forward in his career.

The District welcomes back two AmeriCorps members for another term. Nathan Marsh will continue his work as the Environmental Education Specialist working with Jackie Ritko to coordinate and direct education programs for local schools and organizations. Nathan is also responsible for monitoring the dataloggers in Cambria and Somerset Counties. Jocelyn Sauter, the Communications Specialist, is also returning. In addition to handling media coverage and the publication of the quarterly newsletters and Annual Report, Jocelyn assists with the coordination of events such as Family Days, the Legislative Luncheon, and the Annual Picnic. Everyone at the District is excited to have both of them return for another year of work!

The Conservation District extends sincere congratulations to Stephen, Nathan, and Jocelyn for completing a full one-year term of service with AmeriCorps. They each put in 1700 (or more) hours of service through the Conservation District and participation in AmeriCorps sponsored activities, such as CPR Certification and volunteer efforts.

This summer, we were lucky enough to have three interns choose to work with the District. Ashley Orlosky, an Environmental Sciences major at University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown; Brittany Fabin, a Soil Sciences major at Penn State University; and Joseph Young, a Geology major at University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown, were instrumental in the success of many of our summer projects and events. In addition to helping with the execution of general office duties, Ashley, Brittany, and Joe assisted with events such as Family Days, the Chest Creek Stream Restoration Project, and painting the bathrooms at Disaster's Edge. We wish them much success as they work toward finishing their education!

Conservation District Picnic



On Thursday, August 2, the District hosted our annual picnic at Disaster's Edge Environmental Education Center in the 1889 Park in St. Michael, PA. The weather was warm, the sun was shining, and the company was great. Staff, Directors, Associate Directors and their families came to enjoy lovely conversation and delicious food catered by Sassy Sisters of Portage. We were also joined by President Commissioner Lengenfelder, Director Commissioner Chernisky, Department of Agriculture Western PA Regional Director James Kennedy, Chris Koop, a representative from the office of Congressman Critz, NRCS and DEP Staff, and members of the Adams-Croyle Township Recreation Authority.

Everyone in attendance had the opportunity to explore the nature trails and visit the Miner's Museum. An informational display and power point presentation about our current issue, the Golden-winged Warbler, was available for everyone to view in our educational facility.

Thank you to everyone who helped to make our picnic an enjoyable evening! A special thank you is extended to the 2012 Dairy Princess, Olivia Mullen. After delivering an informative presentation about dairy cows, she and her parents dished up frosty bowls of ice cream sundaes for a refreshing dessert!

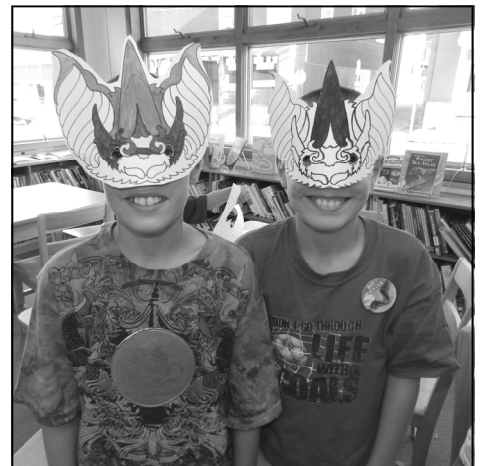
Dream Big—READ!

This Summer, the Cambria County Library System participated in the 2012 Collaborative Summer Library Program, “Dream Big – READ!” Dream Big is a high-quality summer reading program designed to prepare children for early success by developing their early language skills through a combination of reading, educational programs, and hands-on activities.

Jackie Ritko, Conservation District Resource Conservation Supervisor, was invited to Lilly and Nanty Glo Libraries to present an environmental program that tied into the theme of “Dream Big.” Since most of us do our dreaming at night, Jackie decided to highlight bats, creatures of the night.

The program started off with a game that allowed the children to showcase their bat knowledge. Some of the questions were pretty easy, such as, “True or false – All bats are vampires and drink blood?” However, other questions were more advanced, “How do bats find their prey?” The answer: echolocation. We were surprised by how many children really knew their bat facts! Did YOU know that bats are not blind, they play a huge role in pollination, and their main food sources are insects and fruit?

After the game, the children designed their very own bat masks. They let their creative juices flow and made colorful creations. Once the masks were ready to wear, the children were excited to model their artwork!



Come Visit Us!



**Come check out the District's booth at the
CAMBRIA COUNTY FAIR
September 2 to 8, 2012 "Always Labor Day Week"**

Learn about the Golden-winged Warbler and how you can prevent it from becoming extinct.

Register to win a Wildlife Box!

Get information on upcoming Conservation District events.

Kids can play a fun, educational game!

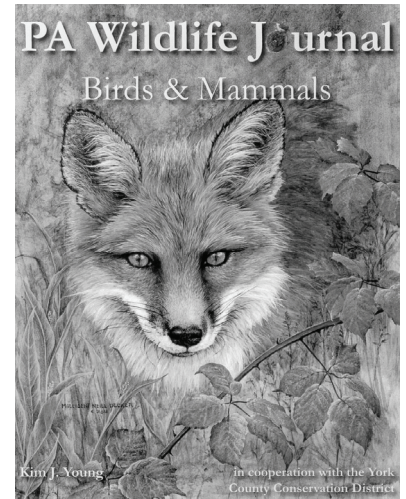
Learn about manure management and your regulatory requirements on the use of manure.

PA Wildlife Journal

The **PA Wildlife Journal** is a 300-page reference book on Pennsylvania's birds and mammals. It is highlighted with professional artwork and photographs and features illustrations from hundreds of students across Pennsylvania and the United States.

This beautiful book will be available for purchase at our booth at the Cambria County Fair. You can also order your very own copy by calling our office at 472-2120. The cost is \$30, plus sales tax. Additional shipping charges apply if home delivery is requested.

A percentage of the proceeds will benefit the environmental education programs of the Cambria County Conservation District.



Environmental Programs



In School Programs—\$1.00/person
Programs at Disaster's Edge—\$.50/person

The District offers Environmental Education programs for area Schools, Scouts Troops, and Clubs at a minimal cost. Programs can be brought to you or you can come to our Environmental Education Center in St. Michael. Here is a sampling of the education curriculum currently being offered.

Who's Clues – Students will learn to use their senses to explore the outdoors by listening and looking for clues (tracks, scat, nests, and burrows) that the animals leave behind. (Edge)

4.3 Environmental Health; 4.6 Ecosystems and their Interactions; 4.7 Threatened, Endangered and Extinct Species; 4.8 Humans & the Environment.

Amphibians & Reptiles – Students will be introduced to the life cycle of local amphibians and reptiles; and learn how they survive the long cold winters in Pennsylvania. Live animals are featured. (Edge or Classroom)

4.1 Watersheds & Wetlands; 4.3 Environmental Health; 4.5 Integrated Pest Management; 4.6 Ecosystems and their Interactions; 4.7 Threatened, Endangered and Extinct Species.

Wetland Ecology—Students tour a local wetland as they learn about the characteristics and function of wetlands and the important role they play for wildlife and humans. (Edge)

4.1 Watersheds & Wetlands; 4.2 Renewable and nonrenewable Resources; 4.3 Environmental Health; 4.6 Ecosystems and their Interactions

Birds of a Feather— We'll investigate bird habitats, adaptations, and the mysteries of migration. (Edge or in classroom).

4.3 Environmental Health; 4.6 Ecosystems and their Interactions; 4.7 Threatened, Endangered and Extinct Species, 4.8 Humans and the Environment.

Go Green with Trees—Students learn the effects of trees on the ecosystem, learn how to identify tree species, and determine the stage of succession of a woodland or forest. (Edge).

4.2 Renewable and nonrenewable Resources; 4.3 Environmental Health; 4.4 Agriculture and Society; 4.6 Ecosystems and their Interactions; 4.7 Threatened, Endangered and Extinct Species; 4.8 Humans and the Environment.

Seeds & Frogs—Students investigate the life cycles of plants and animals, recycle a plastic bottle to create a miniature terrarium, and observe the various stages of tadpole development (Edge or Classroom)

4.1 Watershed & Wetlands; 4.3 Environmental Health; 4.4 Agriculture and Society; 4.6 Ecosystems and their Interactions; 4.7 Threatened, Endangered and Extinct Species.

Dirt...you got to Dig It—Students learn the secrets of soil composition, percolation and the effects these qualities play on the local ecosystem. (Edge or outdoor classroom area at school).

4.3 Environmental Health; 4.4 Agriculture and society; 4.6 Ecosystems and their Interactions; 4.8 Humans and the Environment.

NOTE: We can design a program which fits your needs, and is aligned with PDE Environment & Ecology Standards. All activities are geared toward the age and skill level of our participants. Please call our Education staff for more information.

District Office (814) 472-2120

Disaster's Edge (814) 495-4380 or 243-5069

Family Days (cont.)

Day Two

"We love it every year!"

Energy in Motion: MEET-U was back again with more information on energy consumption. On day two, we learned about non-renewable energy sources, such as oil, coal, and gasoline. The MEET-U team made sure everyone understood that these resources are non-renewable because once they are gone, they're gone. The kids got to smell the oil in a fractured piece of shale. They all made a silly face at the less than pleasant smell, until the MEET-U team jokingly told them that was the smell of money!



What's in your Water: This interactive station allowed children to become a part of the water treatment process. Using a water model and fun props including cocoa, food coloring, and spray bottles, everyone saw firsthand how rain, river, ground, and waste water are all treated. If only real sewage smelled like hot chocolate! They learned how runoff can contaminate our drinking water and what can be done to prevent this. Finally, after a short walk along the nature trail, everyone had the opportunity to search the stream water for macroinvertebrates that would indicate the quality of the water.

Warbler What: Emily Bellush, an Indiana University of Pennsylvania graduate student, gave an informative presentation on the Golden-winged Warbler, a bird in danger of becoming extinct. Emily taught us about the bird's appearance and habit, what is threatening their survival, and how they are being tracked and monitored. Everyone especially enjoyed learning how much they weigh – as much as 10 m&m's to be exact! After the presentation, children were invited to create their own feathered friends in a paint/color by number craft.



Wild World of Animals: Our final program of Family Days left many people saying they couldn't wait to come back next year. Emily from Wild World of Animals amazed the crowd with her entourage of insects, birds, amphibians, reptiles, and mammals. We saw 14 animals, including an Albino Burmese Python, a Legless Lizard, an Emperor Scorpion, a Japanese Snow Monkey, and the show-stopping African Lion! A few lucky children were invited to touch the amphibians and reptiles and pose for a picture.

"We had a great Family Day!"



We are so appreciative to all presenters and volunteers for sharing their time and expertise, helping to make Family Days the fun-filled, affordable, and educational event it has become. We want to thank the 2012 Dairy Princess, Olivia Mullen, for stopping by both days to meet the campers and give them a delicious ice cream treat! Thank you to our District Staff, AmeriCorps members, Interns, and volunteers for making these two days the best days of summer. This year, Family Days was partially funded by the League of Women Voters of Pennsylvania Citizen Education Fund under a grant from the PA Department of Environmental Protection for Drinking Water Source Water Protection administered by the US Environmental Protection Agency. We especially want to thank the following businesses for their generous donations:



Check out our Facebook page to see more Family Days pictures!

Chest Creek Stream Restoration Project, Phase III

In the Summer of 2010, the planning process for the Chest Creek Stream Restoration Project, Phase III was started. This past June, the project was completed after nearly two years of planning, grant proposals, and implementation.

Chest Creek Phase III was a continuation of Phase I and Phase II stream improvements, with trout habitat improvement and flood control at its main core. The stream is located in a man-made flood control area, which created an unsuitable habitat for aquatic life. The wide-bed construction of the channel caused the water to remain warm and allowed for sediment pollutants to be deposited in the stream, diminishing the fish population and quality of habitat.

During Phase I and Phase II, the wide channel was constructed into a narrow, low-flow meandering channel. The newly formed channel allowed the sediment to move through the flood control project area and kept the water cooler, thus improving the water quality and aquatic life habitat. Inserting specially designed habitat structures created habitat for the fish, improved oxygen levels, and stabilized the eroding bank.

The goal of the Chest Creek Phase III project was to continue the improvements made by Phases I & II on the final 4,000 feet of the stream. The modifications included:

- Lowering ten sediment/gravel bars in the stream channel. Material from the channel was excavated to increase flood control and improve the low-flow channel.
- Placing 25 fish habitat devices along the stream edge. In order to stabilize the stream beds and bank while improving habitat at the same time, the PA Fish & Boat Commission designed stone deflectors, log-faced stone deflectors, multi-log deflectors, single-log deflectors, and modified mud seals.



Before: Phase III improvements have not begun.

Chest Creek Phase III would not have been possible without the financial and physical assistance of many cooperating agencies. The project was funded through grant monies and donations in the amount of \$86,883, received from:

- \$50,000 DEP Flood Protection Growing Greener Grant;
- \$31,103 DEP Growing Greener Grant;
- \$2,000 Community Foundation for the Alleghenies Grant through the Foundation for PA Watersheds ;
- \$1,000 Dominion Grant through the Western PA Conservancy;
- \$2,780 in donations from the Park Avenue Pub in Patton, Fraternal Order of the Eagles, Chest Creek Watershed Alliance, Cambria County Commissioners, and Conservation District Clean Water Fund.

In addition to the grant monies received, the man hours devoted by our many partners were crucial to the completion of Chest Creek Phase III. We offer a special thank you to the PA Fish & Boat Commission, USDA NRCS, DEP Waterways and Engineering, PACD Growing Greener of Somerset, Patton Borough, Steven Krieger Excavating, District Staff, AmeriCorps Members, and Interns.



In Progress: log deflectors being placed in stream.



After: Phase III installation of habitat devices and stream bank stabilization have been completed.



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401 Candlelight Drive
Suite 229
Ebensburg, PA 15931

Phone: (814) 472-2120
Fax: (814) 472-0686
Email: cccd@co.cambria.pa.us

- *If you wish to be added or removed from our mailing list, please contact the Cambria County Conservation District office at (814) 472-2120.*
- *If you would like to help conserve resources and receive your newsletter via email, send your email address to jsauter@co.cambria.pa.us*
- *Help us get the word out—"like" us on Facebook and ask your friends to do the same!*

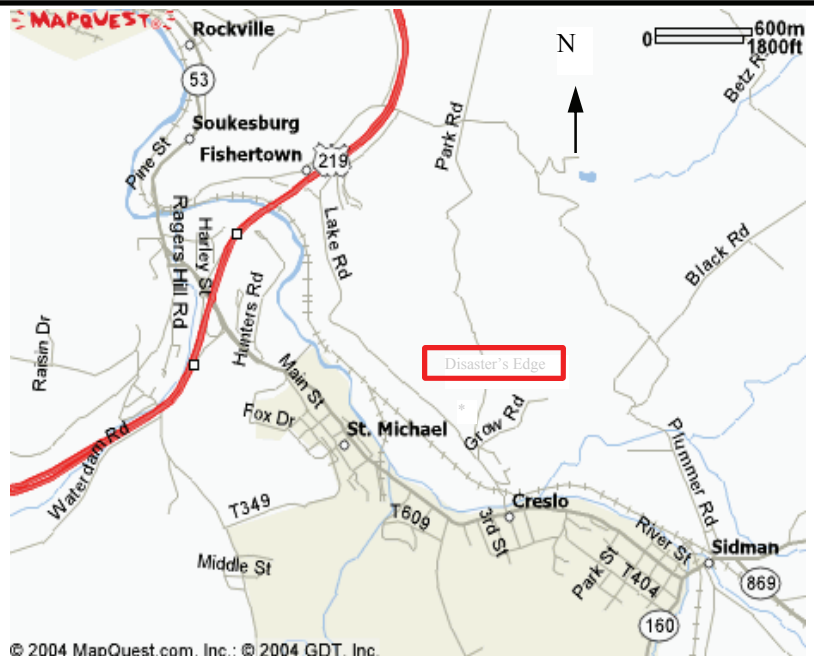
www.co.cambria.pa.us/conservation
and
 Find us on
Facebook

Where is Disaster's Edge Environmental Education Center?

Take Route 219 North/South to the Sidman/St. Michael exit. At the bottom of the ramp, turn onto Route 869 toward Sidman and the Johnstown Flood National Memorial. Travel approximately 3 miles. Turn left onto Lake Road, traveling over the bridge then over the railroad tracks and entering the 1889 Park. Disaster's Edge Environmental Education Center will be on the right across from the baseball field and the coal miners museum.

Call Jackie Ritko at the Cambria County Conservation District Office to schedule programs or to discuss events.

**138 Park Road
St. Michael, PA 15951**



© 2004 MapQuest.com, Inc.; © 2004 GDT, Inc.
Road Map to The Disasters Edge Environmental Education Center.

Mission Statement

The Cambria County Conservation District educates and assists the public through programs, projects, and leadership in the stewardship of natural resources to sustain and enhance the quality of life.