

# Conodoguinet Creek Watershed Association Newsletter

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April 2003

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## **Gil Freedman's President's Note**

### **Sprucing Up The Environment**

If you have a lawn you're probably looking forward to fertilizing and weeding it. You may or may not be looking forward to the mowing. How about sprucing up the environment as well as your lawn?

- Do leave your grass clippings where they fall. Don't worry if you don't have a mulching mower yet. Such mowers just make the grass particles smaller, hastening breakdown. Either way, you're helping the lawn.
- Why not eliminate fertilizer or at least reduce your use? Nitrogen is one of the greatest pollutants of our Creek and the Chesapeake Bay. Most nitrogen comes from animal wastes and fertilizer run-off.
- Why use an herbicide? What's wrong with a few pretty dandelions?

Get over the notion that you need an English formal garden lawn.

- Save money: Don't use a lawn care contractor. You'll get satisfaction out of doing it yourself.
- Let a native stand get established. It's hardier to disease and drought-resistant.
- Let's look ahead to the elimination of local ordinances that require lawn mowing. What's wrong, really, with just allowing your front yard to grow into a field of native plants and bushes? We'd eliminate the need for fertilizers and herbicides and reduce air pollution of notoriously dirty 2-stroke gas engines.
- If you play golf ask the course owner what they're doing to reduce fertilizer use and run-off.

Before sprucing up the environment, it's probably a good idea to talk things over with your neighbors. They may even join in.

## **CCWA Committee Mission Statements**

The Conodoguinet Creek Watershed Association (CCWA) is looking for individuals *like you* within the general membership to serve on one the following committees:

### **Education Grants Committee**

- To foster environmental awareness in the teachers and youth of the watershed through a series of actions including programs at schools and civic associations;
- To award environmental education grants to elementary and secondary teachers;
- To make local educators aware of grants from other sources.

Wilbur Wolf, Chair

Email: [wewjr@epix.net](mailto:wewjr@epix.net) Phone: (717) 776-5915

### **Outreach Committee**

- To provide members and communities with information about issues facing the Conodoguinet Creek Watershed and upcoming CCWA events and activities;
- To receive suggestions and input from members and the communities about issues facing the watershed as well as potential activities, projects, and program speakers;
- To represent CCWA in schools and with community organizations during events or projects in which CCWA is likely to participate;
- To develop and foster networks and partnerships with like-minded individuals, organizations, and agencies.

Holly Smith, Chair

Email: [hhosford@pa.net](mailto:hhosford@pa.net) Phone: (717) 960-9441

### **Development/Membership**

- To develop and increase membership in the Conodoguinet Creek Watershed Association;
- To network with community members to encourage their membership in the Association;
- To support the existing members by ensuring that they receive newsletters, information and other promotional materials;
- To maintain and update membership lists;
- To work with the Board to create an effective and diverse membership development program.

Kelly Meinhart & Andrew Donaldson, Co-chairs

Email: [kmeinhart@greenworks.tv](mailto:kmeinhart@greenworks.tv) Phone: (717) 761-7298

### **Website**

- To provide information to the general public regarding the Conodoguinet Creek Watershed and the issues affecting its health;
- To serve as a regularly updated source of information about Association activities, meetings, and membership;
- To serve as a forum for CCWA members. The website is the product of input from the entire CCWA membership and Board.

Christopher Woltemade, Chair

Email: [cjwolt@wharf.ship.edu](mailto:cjwolt@wharf.ship.edu) Phone: (717) 477-1143

Website: <http://www.ship.edu/~cjwolt/ccwa/>

### **Volunteer Programs**

- To plan and carry out local monitoring efforts that provide ongoing data regarding the health of this important local waterway;
- To recruit, motivate and mobilize volunteers for activities initiated by the Association;
- To provide support to and volunteers for CCWA programs and activities (like clean ups, walks and paddles);
- To maintain existing volunteer programs and create new opportunities for CCWA volunteers to help improve the quality of life in communities within the watershed.

Susan Parry, Chair

Email: [sparry@dejazzd.com](mailto:sparry@dejazzd.com) Phone: (717) 761-1659

***Please call one or all of the above committee chairs if you are able to lend your talents!***

**Program Meeting: Thursday, April 24, 2003**  
**ALLARM's "The Health of the Conodoguinet Creek"**

At this month's meeting, **The Alliance for Aquatic Resource Monitoring (ALLARM)** of Dickinson College will summarize their findings on the state of Conodoguinet Creek water quality. Since 1996, ALLARM has partnered with CCWA volunteer monitors to develop a surveillance program. Creek water temperature, dissolved oxygen, nitrate, and orthophosphate are measured monthly. On April 24<sup>th</sup>, ALLARM will be presenting data from 1996 to 2002 and interpreting it in their "Health of the Conodoguinet Creek" report.

Part of the meeting will be devoted to Association input on how we can improve the program. Our goal is to develop the most efficient and useful method of data collection and quality control possible, collaborate more closely with ALLARM in mapping, analysis, and interpretation, and utilize the results of the data to improve water quality through advocacy and other action.

**This program will be held at the Stuart Community Center (formerly the Carlisle Community Center) at 7:00 pm and is free and open to the public.** To reach the center, travel west or east on High Street to College Street (Route 74). Go north on College Street two blocks to North Street and turn west (left) on North Street. At the first street on right (Franklin Street) turn right, go two blocks and look for the center, a retired school building, at Lincoln St. on the far right corner. The parking lot is on the north or far side of the building.

**For more information about the program, contact Gil Freedman at (717) 697-2513, or visit the CCWA website at <http://www.ship.edu/~cjwolt/ccwa/>.** If you would like to get involved with monitoring, please contact Susan Parry at [sparry@dejazzd.com](mailto:sparry@dejazzd.com) or (717) 761-1659. For more information on ALLARM, visit their website at <http://www.dickinson.edu/storg/allarm/>.

**CALLING ALL VOLUNTEERS AND POTENTIAL VOLUNTEERS**

Thanks for your interest in Volunteering with the Conodoguinet Creek Watershed Association (CCWA). We have many opportunities for you to get involved at whatever level interests you. I've attached an article that was in the last member newsletter about volunteer monitoring, if that's what you're looking for. If you'd like to get involved based on the information in the newsletter, please let me know and I'll put you on our volunteer list. If you'd like to help to support the CCWA in other ways, there are many different volunteer opportunities available. **If you'd like to assist with activities related to CCWA's Monitoring Program, please contact Volunteer Coordinator Susan Parry at 717-761-1659.**

We would like your input as to how CCWA can improve our volunteer monitoring program, as well as use these results to improve the local water quality in our watershed through advocacy and action. Feel free to join us then or at any of our other meetings or activities listed on our website:

<http://www.ship.edu/~cjwolt/ccwa/meetings.html>

**\*\* Important Note: If you are an existing volunteer, and have been sending in your data each month to Christopher at Shippensburg, he has asked that you begin with your next set and send them to me instead. I will forward all results to ALLARM. Christopher has taken over website duties for CCWA and is extremely busy with that. Thanks for your cooperation on this.**

## **Volunteers Needed for Monitoring “Snapshots” on the Conodoguinet!**

The Conodoguinet Creek Watershed Association (CCWA) is looking for members as well as non-members interested in helping to plan and carry out local efforts to help with monitoring to maintain the health of this important local waterway. CCWA is expanding our efforts to include not only quarterly “snapshot” monitoring on more than 20 sites along tributary segments, but also to test after storm events to show the impacts of surface runoff on the watershed. The focus of the quarterly snapshots is look for cyclical trends and establish good baseline data.

Volunteers of all ages are needed to perform simple and fun tests in safe, accessible areas along the creek. We are preparing to launch our third annual DEP “Watershed Snapshot” event in celebration of Earth Week and groups will be testing the same locations as were done in the fall. We will meet at **9:00 AM on Saturday, April 26<sup>th</sup> at the Cumberland County Conservation District Office** (From I-81, take the College St. Exit, turn left at stop then go about 1/2 mile to a traffic light. Turn right onto Brookwood, and the office is at 43 Brookwood on the right). The teams will spend approximately 2-3 hours collecting samples (scavenger hunt style!), then spend several hours analyzing the samples collected using state-of-the-art testing equipment. If you are able to help, you can decide which part of the process interests you. **If you’d like to assist with April’s snapshot or any other activities related to CCWA’s Monitoring Program, please contact Volunteer Coordinator Susan Parry at 717-761-1659. This is a great way to get more involved in your watershed!**

Check out the CCWA website for more information on the monitoring program at: <http://www.ship.edu/~cjwolt/ccwa/>, and remember to join us for an interesting presentation on the *Health of the Conodoguinet*, based on past volunteer data results, on Thursday, April 24<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM at the Carlisle Community Center!

PS: There are also opportunities to get involved in a brand new type of monitoring- dam removals! CCWA is partnering with several groups (ALLARM, POWR, and American Rivers) to set up new protocols in local dam removal initiatives by using volunteers to record baseline data of conditions above two dams on the creek, then look at the consequential effects of the dam removals. This project has begun and will continue over the next few years, so stay tuned!

## **RECYCLING NEWS**

**By Holly Smith**

Cumberland County stands at a recycling rate of around 25%, and the Solid Waste Authority is raising the bar to 35%. Do your part and take advantage of the special recycling opportunities listed below. If you're not sure if you are recycling everything can with your municipality's curbside program, visit : <http://www.ccpa.net/solidwaste/municipaltrashrecycle.html>

### **Tire and Appliance Recycling**

**September 6, 2003** at the Newville Fairgrounds 9AM-3PM

Materials include: passenger car tires with rims removed; light truck tires with rims removed; rims with tires removed (limit 12 tires per household); clothes washers & dryers; hot water heaters; microwaves; dishwashers; dehumidifiers; air conditioners; refrigerators; freezers; stoves. Please note: No commercial/small business waste or household trash.

## **Household Hazardous Waste Collection**

**May 31, 2003** at Eagle View Middle School, Mechanicsburg 9AM-3PM

**September 27, 2003** at Big Spring High School, Newville 9AM-3PM

Materials include: several types of automotive fluids including oil, gasoline, and antifreeze; household products including oven cleaners, polishes, mercury-containing items, and lighter fluid; outdoor products including pesticides, pool chemicals, and driveway sealants; and paint products including thinners/solvents, wood preservatives, and oil based paints and stains. Also: bring your Ni-Cd, Ni-MH, Li-ion, or Pb rechargeable batteries from your laptop, digital camera, or cellular phone.

Please note: Do Not bring latex paints, explosives, medical wastes, refuse, tires, fluorescent light bulbs, or chemically treated lumber.

Package items in original containers with lids tightened and labels intact, place in a box for transport, and use newspaper as filler if needed. Oh, and no smoking!

## **Telephone Book 2003 Collection**

**April 1 - May 10** at Shippensburg Shopping Center, Shippensburg, and Carlisle Plaza Mall, Carlisle

**April 1 - August 16** at Capital City Mall, Camp Hill

**July 1 - August 16** at Hampden Center, Mechanicsburg, and Pennsboro Commons, Enola

**Year round** at Sprint Publishing & Advertising, 3 Alexandra Court, Carlisle

## **Computer & Electronics Recycling Day**

**October 11, 2003** at the Carlisle Fairgrounds 9AM -3PM (Enter via Gate 3, Rt. 34)

Materials include: personal/laptops; printers; scanners; stereos; tape/cd players; answering machines; telephones; copy and fax machines; mobile phones & pagers.

## **Compost Bin Sale**

If you always wanted a compost bin - here's your chance!

Contact the Solid Waste Authority of Cumberland County at (717) 240-6489 and order your bin by April 30th. Cost is \$12.50 each.

Order forms for compost bins and any questions regarding the above information can be directed to the Solid Waste Authority of Cumberland County, 1 Courthouse Square, Carlisle, PA 17013 (717) 240-6489 or visit their website at [www.ccpa.net/SolidWaste/](http://www.ccpa.net/SolidWaste/)

**Pick up is at the Carlisle Fairgrounds on May 10, 2003, 9AM-3PM.**

## **WINTER STONEFLIES BLITZ DOWNTOWN HARRISBURG**

**Jane Earle**

It's officially springtime, but the "winter stoneflies" were out in force through downtown Harrisburg on warm sunny days during the final week of March through the second week of April. The winter stonefly emergence is a little late- normally the peak is around the middle of March. But the very cold winter weather this year seems to have delayed them. As I rode up to the 10th floor of the Rachel Carson building a few weeks ago, I saw a stonefly on the elevator floor. I saw several stoneflies resting on the windows of the 10th floor. Spiders were catching as many as they could and wrapping them up in their webs. As I looked out the window, I could see many of the delicate fliers high over the city and the Susquehanna River.

Close observation of these stoneflies reveals their method of attracting a mate- drumming. The males tap the tip of their abdomen on a log, bridge or the ground; the females will drum back if they have not mated. Taeniopteryx males may also shake their wings as they drum. Each species has its own drumming pattern. This helps ensure that the correct males and females mate. Dr. Ken Stewart of North Texas University has studied stonefly drumming. He has recorded drumming patterns of many species of stoneflies in his laboratory using strong microphones.

Four species of Taeniopteryx and one species of Strophopteryx emerge from the Susquehanna River during March and early April. Four of these species are also found in the Conodoguinet Creek. Other peaks of stonefly emergence occur in warm water streams like the Conodoguinet Creek in late June and July. These "summer stoneflies" are usually bright yellow, brown or black, and often are attracted to outdoor lights. Look for them if you live within a mile of the creek or river or at mini-markets or gas stations with many outdoor lights. More information on stoneflies can be viewed on the North American Stonefly website at [www.mc.edu/campus/users/stark](http://www.mc.edu/campus/users/stark).

## **A Rare Night in a Dark Woods**

**By Don Seiple**

A deep darkness hugged the night. A darkness deepened by the warm mist and fog that moved in an eerie fashion through the deep forest. Our vehicles moved from the paved road onto a muddy dirt lane which led into this forest. What creatures of the night could lurk here where humans could only move with great unease and uncertainty. My driver, Eugene Wingert, brought his car to a stop beside a small and a large pool of water. These are appropriately called VERNAL PONDS- spring-like, warm, and mild. Stepping from the vehicle, life forms sprang forth to greet us from the darkness of this night. There were Spotted Salamanders, Jefferson Salamanders (a threatened species named after Thomas Jefferson), Wood Frogs (which will hopefully become the state frog), Red Spotted Newts, Spring Peepers, and much more. A cacophony of sounds emanated from a distant pond: duck like sounds, peepers peeping, and more. We could not hear one another for the high-pitched piercing sound of this place. In three days all of this would be over. This experience amazed and filled the soul with awe. So much life—I asked Gene if the Jefferson's threatened existence is a warning to us like the canary for the coal miners. "Possibly," he responded. "We just don't know." A biologist from Dickinson College is researching the Wood Frogs for their ability to survive being frozen. Do these animals hold the clue to preserving human tissue?

There is great mystery in these wetlands in this place of Cumberland County. Don't miss it.

## **ADDITIONAL MUSINGS ON AMPHIBIANS**

**Jane Earle**

As I proofread this newsletter on the evening of April 16, the night was warm, the windows open. The rolling trills of many American toads in the wetlands near my house serenaded me. The Spring peepers were singing too; but the peepers were all doing their own thing- not trying to sing in unison. How amazing the toads are- all those toads singing together, synchronized into one loud, rising trill. Then they pause- and start again a short time later. The peepers have been singing regularly for over a month now- nearly every night except for the very coldest nights. The toads save their songs for only the warm nights. They sang on a warm night a few weeks ago, but have been silent recently, until last night, when the temperature was over 60 after dark. There is indeed great mystery in our wetlands.

### **WHO ARE OUR CCWA BOARD MEMBERS AND OFFICERS?**

**(Continued from previous newsletter)**

**Holly Hosford Smith** (Board Member) holds a B.S. in science and environmental education and just finished her coursework for a Masters Degree in geoenvironmental science, both from Shippensburg University. She currently substitute teaches part-time for Cumberland Valley School District and is helping to create an interpretive trail for the Burd Run Stream and Wetlands Restoration project at Shippensburg Township Park. She is whittling away at her Masters thesis which involves justifying the need for an environmental education center at the Burd Run site. Her passion is outdoor environmental education for children and adults, and she continues her own education through programs at Audubon Pennsylvania, frequent hiking, efforts at tracking and birding, and other outdoor stuff. She is a new board member and looks forward to expanding her knowledge and helping to preserve our waterways via CCWA activities.

**Jane Earle** (Newsletter Editor) has been a Water Pollution Biologist with the PA Department of Environmental Protection since 1980, where she now works with the nonpoint source pollution section and writes watershed restoration plans and does grant management for US EPA funded projects to remediate discharges from abandoned coal mines. She has a BA from Temple University & a MS from West Virginia University. Her specialty is the ecology of stream aquatic insects, especially stoneflies, and the effects of coal mine drainage and acid deposition. She spent the first 22 years of her life in Philadelphia and previously lived in Lancaster County and South Middletown Township. She enjoys the Silver Spring Township property that she shares with her husband, 9 cats, and many kinds of wildlife. Other interests include nature study, gardening, and cooking.

**Kurt Henry** (Board Member) is the Director of Consulting & Implementation Services at Synertech, Harrisburg PA. He has a B.A. in English from Mansfield State College in PA. Kurt lives in Hampden Twp. about 150 yards upstream from the former Good Hope Mill dam. He was the former president of the Good Hope Mill Dam Association, a 501c3 nonprofit organization of local residents concerned about the dam.

**John Perry** (Board Member) has been employed as an attorney at the Gettysburg office of MidPenn Legal Services since 1999. Prior to that, he was in private practice in Carlisle for eight years. He's a 1991 graduate of Dickinson School of Law (and Penn State University). Prior to law school, he was a schoolteacher and worked at various other jobs. He is married and has a 15-year-old stepson at home, and a married stepdaughter in New Jersey. He expects to become a grandfather in May. He enjoys old cars. Last summer he and his family drove to the west coast and back in three weeks, putting about 7,000 miles on a 1976 Mercedes. John has provided legal advice for CCWA for many years.

## **UPCOMING WILDFLOWER FIELD TRIP**

**SATURDAY MORNING MAY 3**

A field trip to look for spring wildflowers along the Conodoguinet Creek near the Appalachian Trail in Middlesex Township, will be led by Melanie Wertz and Jane Earle on Saturday May 3.

Meet at 9:30 am at the park and ride area along the east side of PA Route 114, just north of the Mechanicsburg exit of I-81.

For more information call Melanie at 772-5647 or email [mwertz@state.pa.us](mailto:mwertz@state.pa.us), or Jane at [jearle@state.pa.us](mailto:jearle@state.pa.us).

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