

Grants Help the Fulfill WVWA's Mission

The Watershed Association's good working relationship with the Rohm and Haas Company of Spring House has resulted in grants to WVWA's Environmental Education program over the years. Last year, Rohm and Haas approved a grant that makes it possible for Judith Gratz, Director of Environmental Education, to develop new components of both the "Wetlands and Watersheds" and the "Integrated Pest Management" programs for the 2005-2006 academic year.

Studying Wetlands

Wetlands have been called the kidneys and lungs of water bodies because they remove suspended sediment and pollutants and add oxygen to the water. They help reduce flooding during storm events and reduce erosion along the banks of streams, rivers, lakes, and bays. They provide habitat for many living things, including some endangered plant and animal species.

Not all schools are fortunate enough to have a wetland existing on their properties, but Lower Gwynedd Elementary School does. The Rohm and Haas grant will allow Judith to help the teachers, students, and parents of the school district to develop a study area at that wetland.

Integrated Pest Management in Action

The same grant has also made it possible for the Integrated Pest

Continued on page 3

Annual Members' Meeting to Change in '06

This year's annual meeting will be brand new; In a different month, in a new venue. So mark it on your calendar and plan to attend And don't forget to bring a friend.



Get there any way you can

The meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 15, 2006 at 5:30 PM. The location will be the Ambler Movie Theater.

We will serve hors d'oeuvres, light fare, libations, and desserts. You will have the opportunity to see and hear about the strides WVWA has made during 2005 and some of our goals for the future.

Look for your invitation in the mail.

Take Note of Another Change at WVWA

Each staff members have new e-mail address:

- Bob Adams:** bob@wvwa.org
- Carol DeLancey:** carol@wvwa.org
- David Froehlich:** david@wvwa.org
- Judith Gratz, Chris Brennan Hagy, Veronica Harris:** judith@wvwa.org
- Lisa Hansell:** lisa@wvwa.org
- Kay Kenney:** kay@wvwa.org
- Donna Middleton:** donna@wvwa.org
- Dennis Pennington:** dennis@wvwa.org



Hmmm – My New Year's Resolution is to use less paper by sending e-mails when possible. I hope everyone sends me a current e-mail address to info@wvwa.org



INSIDE	
Special Events	p. 2
Girl Scout Project	p. 3
Natural History Article	p. 4
Calendar	Insert
Volunteering	Insert

Special Events

Those Who Walk for the Wissahickon Walk for a Healthier Environment

On Sunday, October 2, hikers of all ages set out for the 9th annual Walk for the Wissahickon. Over forty hikers took the 21 mile Green Ribbon Challenge and walked from North Wales to the Canoe Club on the Schuylkill River. Many of the hikers got to experience the newly opened County Trail through the lower part of Fort Washington State Park.

Top Pledge Earners

Kudos to the top pledge earners. Our top prize, dinner for two at the Valley Green Inn and a \$100 gift certificate to Eastern Mountain Sports in Montgomeryville, goes to David Bower. David Fernley took second prize - a catered dinner for six from Lower Gwynedd's newest in-home caterer, Canapé. Our other top pledge earners include: Ellen Glenidinning, Robert Gottschalk, Sharon Rankin, Nancy Smith, Tony Wells and Ted Wood, Jr. Many thanks to all of our hikers who worked to collect pledges.

Corporate Sponsors

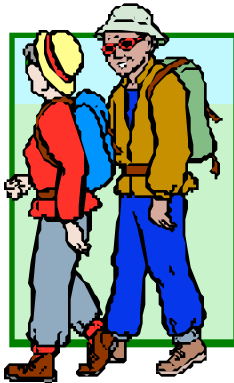
Our sincere thanks to our Corporate Sponsors. Their contributions provide funding for many of WVWA's ongoing programs. The Presenting Sponsor was **McNeil**

Consumer and Specialty Pharmaceuticals located in Fort Washington. McNeil hosts a hearty group of hikers!

Environmental Sponsors

Environmental Sponsors

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- Montgomery Newspapers

Assistance From

Many thanks the following who helped this event succeed

- Ambler Police
- Germantown Academy
- Lower Gwynedd Township
- Morris Arboretum
- North Penn Volunteer Fire Department
- Philadelphia Canoe Club
- Upper Gwynedd Township
- Whitemarsh Police Department
- Whole Foods Market

Prize Donations

A huge thank you to those who contributed prizes

- Ambler Theater
- Blue Bell Inn
- Canapé
- Cin Cin
- Coleman's of Normandy Farm
- Iron Hill Brewery
- Joseph Ambler Inn
- McNally's of Chestnut Hill
- Washington House of Sellersville
- William Penn Inn
- Valley Green Inn

Save the Date: Sunday, October 1, 2006 Walk for the Wissahickon

You can give the special gift of an educational program to a youngster you love. WVWA has many choices of programs from which to choose.

Two favorite programs can go into the school's auditorium or into the classroom. One is "The Water All Around You", a fifty minute auditorium program designed to engage and entertain elementary school children while teaching them about the importance of water and watersheds in their daily lives. This

GIVE THE GIFT OF EDUCATION

is done through songs, audience participation, discussion and performance by an entertainer who is also an environmental educator.

The other is a live animal program presented by "The Turtle Lady" - the name earned by Kathy Lacey, an environmental educator who takes turtles and other animals to schools for teaching purposes. Her programs, "NOA" for "Nature, Order & Adaptations", can be presented in the classroom or auditorium. They contain experiences designed to teach, challenge, and sup-

challenge, and support students in acquiring respect for, and understanding of animals and the laws of nature.

Parents, Grandparents, Aunts and Uncles - if you would like further information about these and other programs that you can purchase as a gift for a child, please call Judith Gratz, Director of Environmental Education at (215) 646-8866 Ext.13.

Girl Scout Project Benefits WVWA *by Judith Gratz*

Natalie Bates e-mailed me last winter to ask if she could do a project for us for Scouts. My answer was ready: sit-upons! We had been using the same ones for 20 years, and they were in sad condition. So, with waterproof fabric, lanyard material, and a sharp hole punch, Natalie took on the not so easy task of making sit-upons.



Chris Brennan Hagy (L.), Natalie Bates (center), and Judith Gratz (R.) hold the sit-upons that Natalie made.

Natalie completed this challenging project during the summer and presented them to us at camp - a great time for them to arrive! Natalie, they are beautiful, practical, especially with the metal rings for hanging them up, and will give us many years of use. Thank you so very much. We, who have known you since you were a young child, are so proud of you!

"There is a sufficiency in the world for man's need but not for man's greed."

Mohandas K. Gandhi

Grants from page 1

Management (IPM), program to expand to include field studies for middle school students at Pennypack Farm, the Community Supported Agriculture organic farm in Horscham. During the trip, students will be introduced to the concept of sustainable agriculture, and see how IPM is utilized. The farm staff will demonstrate various planting and cultivating techniques as well as their use of beneficial organisms. Teachers will follow up the farm field trip with a lesson on how students can apply IPM in their school and homes.

A New Digital Projector

The 2005 grant from Rohm and Haas also included funds to purchase a lightweight, digital projector that will help WVWA do a better job of community outreach and education.

In 2003, Rohm and Haas was instrumental in making it possible for WVWA to receive a new laptop computer through the Npower technology program. Watershed Association staff have used the laptop to create presentations, which are digitally projected on a large screen. Coupled with the new digital projector, WVWA now has the means to communicate more effectively.

Many thanks to our friends at Rohm and Haas!

Corporate Donors Benefit EE Program Through EITC

In 2001, the legislature of the Commonwealth of PA passed Act 4, which amended the Public School Code to provide for the establishment of the Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC), administered by the Dept. of Community and Economic Development. Under Act 4, *businesses that make contributions to "approved" educational improvement organizations can receive tax credits from the Commonwealth equal to 75% of their contributions to the "approved" organiza-*

tions, up to \$100,000 per year.

The Watershed Association is an approved educational improvement organization for its programs for teacher training and for children with special needs. In 2005 we received gifts from **Aqua Pennsylvania** and from **Movers Specialty Services** totaling \$10,500 for those programs. We are very grateful for this generous support.

We encourage other business owners who are interested in making gifts to WVWA through the EITC initiative to contact Donna Middleton at 215-646-8866, X. 16.



Unrestricted Grants

Unrestricted grants that can be used at the discretion of the Board are few and far between, which is why WVWA is so grateful for two recent grants.

The Forrest C. Lattner Foundation granted WVWA \$100,000 in memory of Forrest C. and Frances H. Lattner, the parents of Susan Lattner Lloyd.

The Board of Commissioners of Montgomery County has appropriated \$10,000 for the Watershed Association for 2006.

These grants will be used by WVWA to protect open space in the Wissahickon Valley, to enhance water quality in the Wissahickon Creek, and to educate people of all ages about environmental concerns.

The Wissahickon Creek's Biggest Water Quality Problem and What You Can Do

Nonpoint source pollution – pollution that does not come out of a pipe - **is the biggest problem for the Wissahickon Creek.** And *you* can help make a difference. In fact, *everyone* can help with this one because whatever we do on the land impacts our waterways. Water coming off the land goes either directly to a body of water or through a storm drain system into a body of water such as a stream, river, lake, and, in our area, the Wissahickon Creek. The water does *not* go to the wastewater treatment facility. Only wastewater from sinks, showers and toilets goes through a sanitary sewer system to be treated.

Here are a few suggestions of things you can do to reduce the Wissahickon's woes.

Check for oil leaks from your cars. If you're not sure there's a leak, put a large piece of cardboard under the engine area. If you have a leak, take the car to be repaired, and

absorb the oil with kitty litter or a commercial product.

Another car tip: Use a commercial car wash that treats and recycles its wastewater. Or wash your car on the grass so water filters through the ground.

Always scoop after your dog.



State law requires that dog owners clean up after their pets, and for good reason. Besides being a public nuisance, pet waste is a measurable source of pollution in the water sup-

ply. According to The Partnership for the Delaware Estuary, "dog waste contributed as much as 12 % of the total bacteria in some areas. In addition to contaminating water sources with disease-causing bacteria, animal waste nutrients promote algae blooms and other excessive plant growth that chokes waterways, and robs the water of vital oxygen once plant materials begin to decay." Remember, you can drop the waste into a toilet, or throw away the whole bag. It's a great idea, and it's the law!

Equestrians will be pleased to know that WVWA ceates and maintains woody buffers along the Wissahickon Creek and as many of its tributaries as we protect. The buffers stop, hold, filter and cleanse runoff water. This reduces the impact of waste from horse.

WVWA thanks you for your support in taking care of the Creek. Read about Serve the Preserve & Creek Cleanup in the calendar.

Weekend Calendar For January - May 2006 (Please call to preregister your group)

Animal Tracks

Sunday, January 8, 2006, 2 PM
Many animals in our area stay active all winter. We will take a walk in the woods and along the creek to try to find animal tracks, homes and food.

Ages 5 and up. Members \$2; Non-members \$4 per child

Bird Seed Pick Up

Saturday, February 11, 9 AM to 1:30 PM

Pick up your preordered bird seed. If you have not received a flyer see our website or call the office.



Reptile Rendezvous

Sunday, February 19, 2006, 2 PM
Meet the snake and turtles that live in our museum. We will take them out for everyone to see up close and touch. You will learn about these interesting animals and the adaptations which help them to survive. Ages 5 and up.

Members \$2; Nonmembers \$4



Maple Sugaring Festival

- Scout Day: Saturday, March 4, 2006 from 11 AM to 3 PM
- Public Day: Sunday, March 5, 2006 from 11 AM to 3 PM
- Snow Date: Saturday, March 11, 2006 from 11 AM to 3 PM

The whole family will enjoy learning how maple syrup and other maple products are made from the sap of maple trees. Participate in the process and have a taste of the finished product on a waffle. While you're here, buy treats and gifts and a cookbook of recipes made with maple syrup and maple sugar, take part in a scavenger hunt in the woods, and many other activities included in your admission fee. \$5 per person ages 5 and up.

Spring Mini Camp

Sunday, March 19, 10AM to 2PM
Sign up your child for this "it's almost spring" camp; experience. We'll spend lots of time outdoors (weather permitting) looking for signs of spring, animal tracks and much more. \$20 per person ages 5 to 10 years.

Earth Day Family Walk

Sunday, April 23, 2006, 2:00 PM
Celebrate Earth Day by taking a walk to learn about and enjoy one of the wild places in our area. On our hike we will stop to notice the diversity of plants and animals that live near us. All ages. Members \$2; Non-members \$4.

Creek Creatures - 2 dates:

- Sunday, May 21, 2 PM &
- Sunday, June 11, 2 PM



Wade into the cool water of the Wissahickon Creek to discover the amazing animals that live there. We will collect insects, crayfish, and fish and then view them on a special television. Wear water shoes or sneakers that can get wet. Ages 5 and up. Members \$2; Nonmembers \$4 per child.



Children's Birthday Parties at WVWA Birthdays celebrated at WVWA are fun and a unique environmental experience. Parties are held all year on Sundays from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm and 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm. For one hour, our naturalist will lead the children in an outdoor program. In case of bad weather, there will be indoor activities. The other hour is spent in the second floor party area eating, playing games, opening presents, etc. Call for available dates and pricing.

An Invitation to Retired People

The Wissahickon Valley Watershed offers a wide variety of opportunities for retirees to learn how to use their knowledge and skills in working with school children who attend the WVWA educational programs. We provide training and the greatest benefit of all: the ability to educate the younger generation about protecting the environment. The programs we teach are fun, hands-on, and help students of all talents to succeed.

The WVWA cordially invites you to observe any one of, or all, the following lessons. Please join us for breakfast or lunch and discussion following the lesson.

- "Maple Sugaring" on Friday, February 10, 2006 from 9:30 to 11:15 a.m, Lunch after.
- "Insect Detectives: Experiences With Integrated Pest Management" on Tuesday, April 25, Breakfast at 8:30, Class from 9:45 to 11:45 a.m.
- Preschool Program - "Creek Peek" on Wednesday, May 11 from 9:45 to 11:15 a.m. Lunch after.

For further information and reservations, please call Judith Gratz, Environmental Education Director at 215-646-8866, Ext.13.

VOLUNTEER TRAINING & CONTINUING EDUCATION

Volunteer Training for Maple Sugaring Monday, January 30, Noon to 3:00 PM

Bring a brown bag lunch, meet other volunteers, and learn how to teach about the mystery of the maple tree. We will tap the trees at that time. We teach maple sugaring to visiting groups during the month of February through the first week of March. We ask for a commitment of one 2-hour class per week. Dress warmly: we will be outdoors for about 45 minutes.

Volunteer Training for Insect Detectives Tuesday, April 18, 9:30 AM to Noon

We teach all the third grade students of the Cheltenham Township School District in a delightful program about insects. Come train to help the students find and research an insect and determine whether or not it is considered a pest.

Volunteer Training for Wetlands & Watersheds Thursday, March 30, 9 AM to Noon

We teach all the third and fourth grade students of the Hatboro-Horsham School District on the grounds of their own nature center. Come prepared to carpool to that site where we can walk through the lessons for both grades.

Volunteer Appreciation Program Monday, June 5, 9:30 AM to 2:30 PM. Save the date.

Details about this event will be announced in the near future.