

THE CATALYST

SLIPPERY ROCK WATERSHED COALITION MONTHLY ACTIVITIES UPDATE

THIS MONTH'S MEETING: Thursday 8/12/10 at 7 pm at Jennings Environmental Education Center, pizza and pop provided. 7/9/10 meeting attendance: D. Johnson and V. Kefeli

Lake Arthur Regatta was “Naturally” Fun for Everyone!

Saturday and Sunday, August 7th and 8th, marked the 12th Annual Regatta at Lake Arthur, and the SRWC was on-hand to enjoy the festivities! The Regatta's many South Shore events featured kids crafts and games such as making paper canoes and bug jars, water relay races, and a limbo contest! There were 2- and 4-mile canoe/kayak races, canoe and kayak rides, a freestyle canoeing exhibition, boat parade, Nautical Nature Mini-Cruises, radio-controlled boats, and much more on the water. Many attendees enjoyed cooling off in the lake, as the sky was bright blue and sunny all day. Beach-goers were treated to the launch of 4 beautiful hot air balloons, which sailed overhead and descended for a close encounter with the water before drifting away over the trees. Many businesses, organizations, and vendors selling interesting crafts, tasty treats, and more were set up in a sea of white tents at the top of the hill above the shore.



Shaun and Melissa Busler, SRWC participants, and their 3 children, **Isaac, Ben, and Cassie** (pictured to left), were Saturday Regatta attendees. They spent the first part of their day on the North Shore, where the **Moraine Preservation Fund (MPF)** (a non-profit, volunteer organization that supports Moraine State Park) had a hands-on, educational outdoor learning area for kids (and kids-at-heart). Ben and Shaun dissected an owl pellet together and had fun picking out the bones of the previously consumed mouse meals. The North Shore area is home to the Owllet Gift shop, where the Buslers enjoyed checking out the two resident barn owls who live in a room at the back of the shop. The Moraine Preservation Fund had set up a large, pre-focused binoculars stand outside the gift shop, aimed for visitors to see a mother osprey atop a wooden pole. Mother osprey was in the process of teaching her babies to fly! They also liked visiting the many organizations and vendors (like the cotton-candy seller!) and Shaun enjoyed talking with representatives from **Moraine, McConnells Mill, Jennings Commission (3MJC)** and the **Butler Outdoor Club**.



Laurie Popeck, Project Facilitator for the Slippery Rock Creek Watershed Conservation Plan, and her family (consisting of her children **Trevor and Brooke**, her parents **Bob and Lois**, her sister-law **Michelle**, and her two nephews **Geoffrey Jr. and Luke**) attended the Regatta on Sunday. As soon as they arrived on the South Shore, all the kids wanted to start the day with swimming in the lake. After a great lunch at the Moraine Market Place, they walked through all the displays and vendors at the Regatta. Brooke and Trevor love dogs, so they were sure to stop by the Butler Dog Training and Animal Response Team booths. The kids stopped by the Kid's Craft area and made a fish ornament! Then, Laurie and Michelle tried the "Kayaking Experience" for the first time and loved it! Late afternoon, everyone went on an exciting and educational Nautical Nature Mini Cruise, which was led by **Carol Bickel, Office Manager for the MPF**. While on board, the kids got to try binoculars and look for local ospreys and Great Blue Herons. The history of Moraine State Park was discussed and everyone on the boat enjoyed the cruise.

The **MPF** shared their booth space with the SRWC for both days of the event. The SRWC displayed citizen survey questionnaires, a large map of the watershed, and brochures for the **Slippery Rock Creek Watershed Conservation Plan**. We are very thankful to the MPF for sharing their booth space and for their quest to improve the quality of habitats for wildlife. We are also grateful for MPF partnering with us to raise funds for continued treatment of abandoned coal mine drainage by the sale of **locally, hand-made pottery with glazes using manganese and iron oxides recovered from environmentally-friendly treatment systems** at their **Owlet Gift Shop & Nature Center**. You can learn more about **MPF** at www.morainepreservationfund.org/.



Children's activities such as the Owl Pellet Dissection shown here were plentiful at the Lake Arthur Regatta (see article p.1) At the far right is Isaac Busler, to his left is Shaun Busler, and in the center is Ben Busler. They were carefully pulling apart the owl pellet (made of indigestible fur and bones eaten by an owl and then regurgitated) to search for recognizable mouse skulls and other bones pictured on a key provided by the Moraine Preservation Fund.

Local Student — Winner in State Competition!!!!!!!



Congratulations to area high school student **Frances Ann Tosto!** A few months ago, we shared her research and accomplishments in the science fair in a Catalyst article. Now for an update! When Frances Ann advanced to the State Competition for PJAS (**Pennsylvania Junior Academy of Science**) at Penn State University, she received a **first place (!!!)** award there. Frances completed a thorough Leaf Pack study on **Blacks Creek in the Slippery Rock Creek Watershed**, with some start-up help from the SRWC's **Cliff Denholm**. Great work, Frances Ann! PJAS is a statewide organization of junior and senior high school students designed to stimulate and promote interest in science among its members through the development of research projects and investigations. To learn more about the Leaf Pack Network and what their student studies entail, visit www.stroudcenter.org/lpn/studies.htm

Don't Forget!!! Ohio River Watershed Celebration Sets Sail Soon!!!

It's not too late to sign up for the fun! You won't want to miss the Port-of-Pittsburgh Ohio River Watershed Celebration, set for **Wednesday, September 15th!!** Come join us and "Touch the Water" on a great river-boat cruise in the Allegheny River. Everyone is welcome to attend! Hundreds are already registered to attend this worthwhile event, including environmental professionals, watershed groups, energy conservationists, government personnel, business and industry leaders, educators, and interested citizens. Participants will have ample time to network and visit over 60 watershed and energy-related displays and speak with representatives onboard the Majestic, the largest vessel in the Gateway Clipper's fleet! Highlights of the cruise will include an informative and interesting narration of points of interest passed along the riverbanks and beautiful cityscape, as well as a trip through the Highland Park Lock and Dam!

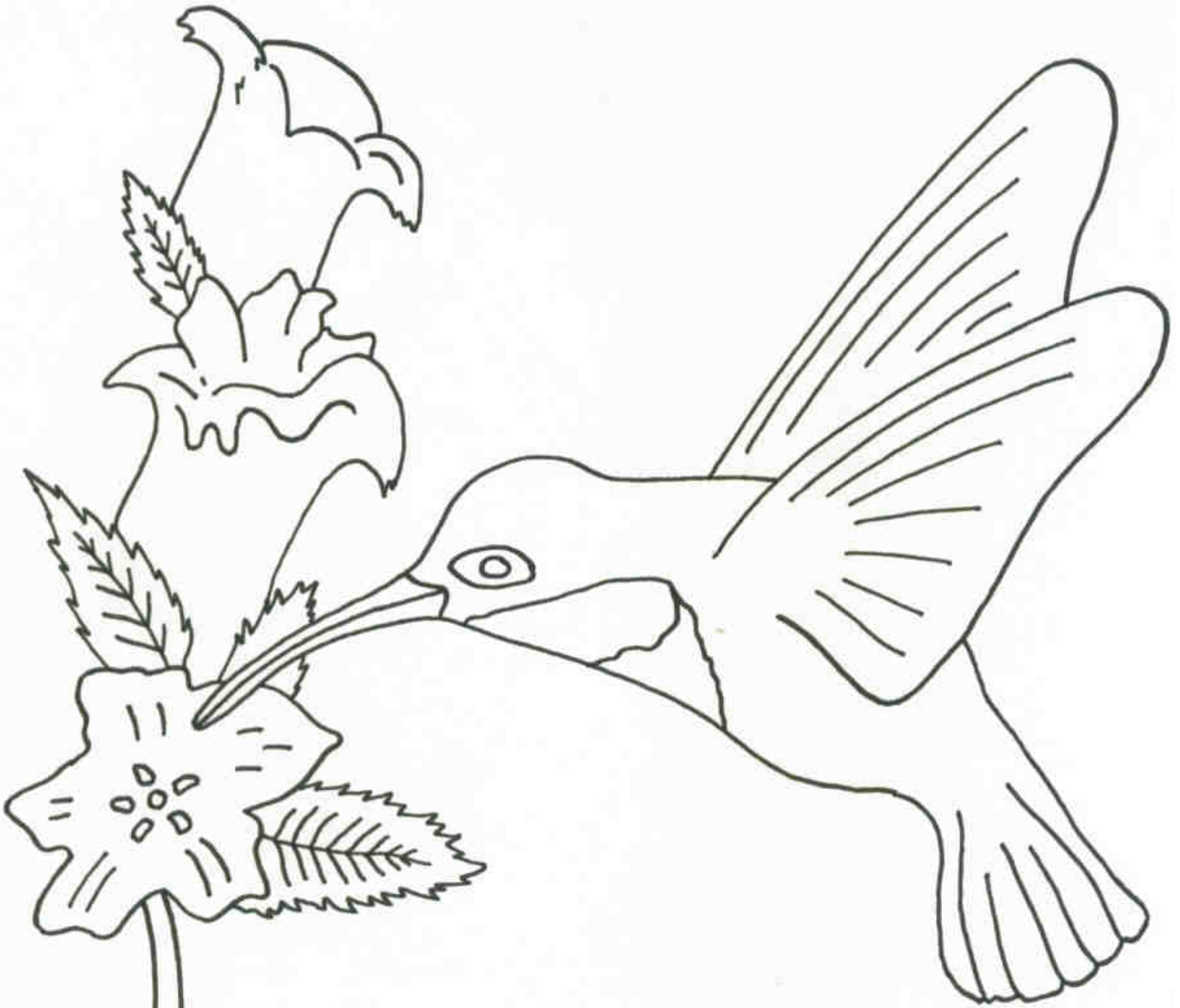
Though the student "Imagination Cruise" is full, there is still space available for the adult/professional "Networker Cruise" so please register soon! Online registration is simple and takes only a minute at www.streamrestorationinc.org/rsvp Remember boarding for each of the boats will begin at 12:30 PM and we will set sail at 1 PM sharp from the Station Square dock in Pittsburgh. To be placed on a waiting list for the Imagination Cruise, or for any other cruise-related questions or comments, please send an email to orwc@streamrestorationinc.org

The KIDS Catalyst

SLIPPERY ROCK WATERSHED COALITION FUN ACTIVITY

Hummingbird Coloring Fun!

Hummingbirds are such cool birds! They are the smallest birds in the world. They beat their wings so fast (60 to 80 times per second!) that it produces a "humming" sound from which they get their name. Talk about fast, the hummingbird heart can beat up to 1,260 beats per minute! During migration, some hummingbirds make a non-stop 500 mile flight over the Gulf of Mexico! Their eggs are the size of peas. A hummingbird has no sense of smell. They are attracted by the color red, which is why most hummingbird feeders are made this color. Many people have success attracting "hummers" to their special feeders by a simple recipe of mixing 1 part sugar with 4 parts water, boiling the mixture, and letting it cool. Pictured below is a ruby-throated hummingbird, the most common species in the eastern US. The male has an emerald green back, red throat, gray flanks, and a forked tail with no white (females have white tips, and no red at the neck). Have fun coloring the picture below, and if you mail it to us we'll send you a free gift certificate!



Name _____ Age _____ Address _____



Slippery Rock Watershed Coalition c/o Stream Restoration Incorporated
A PA Non-Profit Organization
434 Spring Street Ext.
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Bringing Knowledge Back to PA

Hello folks, my name is **Buck Neely**...well actually it's Cody, but that's a story for another time. I am the newest addition to work at BioMost, Inc. and to help out at Stream Restoration Inc. I am originally from the great Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, hailing from Shippenville, PA. Upon graduating from Keystone High School in Knox, I ventured to Erie where I attended Gannon University and participated in collegiate baseball. While at Gannon, I majored in Environmental Engineering which primarily focused on conventional drinking water and wastewater treatment. I originally chose to go to school for Environmental Engineering because I enjoy nature and knew that by attaining such an education I would obtain the knowledge to improve the environment for future generations to enjoy. Wastewater treatment is an essential aspect of what Environmental Engineers do, even though it is anything but glamorous most of the time. Naturally this aspect isn't a selling point for recruiting a lot new students. Luckily, I enjoy getting my hands dirty and grew fond of playing with wastewater.

During my time at Gannon I benefited immensely from participating in undergraduate research that explored the possibility of producing Biohydrogen Gas by feeding anaerobic bacteria wastewater from the Welch's juice factory in North-east, PA. My last two years in Erie were enhanced by earning an Environmental Health & Safety Co-Op position with General Electric Transportation Systems. This job was a great experience that familiarized me with a vast array of environmental issues and ensuring their compliance. Upon graduating from Gannon University, I joined forces with another Pennsylvania native, **Dr. Bob Nairn**. To do this I loaded everything I owned into my truck and headed to Norman, Oklahoma to pursue my Masters in Environmental Engineering at the University of Oklahoma. The program there is geared upon ecological engineering principles that can be used to treat acid mine drainages. This opportunity provided me with means to learn the techniques needed to remediate mining impacted waters; which due to growing up in the coal mining region of PA were an all too familiar part of the landscape. My graduate research dealt with the sustainable reuse of iron oxides from abandoned mine drainage discharges. I characterized iron oxides from 13 discharges (varying from low to circum-neutral pH) and evaluated the sorptive performance of mine drainage derived iron oxides in the treatment of contaminated drinking waters. My experience in Oklahoma was amazing, thanks in part to the great friends that I made while there.



Most recently I participated in the American Society of Mining Reclamation national conference in Pittsburgh, where I presented some of my Masters research findings and was awarded the honor of Best Student Oral Presentation. Following this conference, I began working at BioMost where I perform a variety of tasks ranging from engineering design work in the office to sampling, monitoring, and maintenance tasks in the field. I like the fact that I can apply my skill set so close to home, and that I can go out and get dirty in order to 'Make It Go'. Thanks Margaret and Tim for pulling me into BioMost, it's a good fit and a wonderful opportunity to gain experience.