

THE CATALYST

SLIPPERY ROCK WATERSHED COALITION MONTHLY ACTIVITIES UPDATE

THIS MONTH'S MEETING: Thursday 5/12/11 at Jennings Environmental Education Center, pizza and pop provided. 4/14/11 meeting attendance: J. Belgraden, E. Best, C. Denholm, M. Dunn, V. Kefeli, B. Page, S. Smith, W. Taylor

NCECA Conference 2011

By Laurie Popeck, Director of Outreach for Clean Creek Products

The **National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts (NCECA)** 45th annual conference was held at the Tampa Convention Center in Florida from March 30-April 2. This year was even more exciting for **Clean Creek Products (CCP)** because we became an official member of the **NCECA Green Task Force (GTF)!!!** The NCECA GTF focuses on supporting and celebrating organizations that are promoting and encouraging "green" practices within the ceramic industry.

I attended the conference and shared the GTF booth with several other members. **Ben Hunter**, an artist from the **Ohio Valley Creative Energy Center**, is working with his local landfill in Louisville to convert its methane gas to fuel for their center and kilns. **Ben Culbertson**, from **Shippensburg University**, created a biodiesel burner for kilns and is experimenting with different glaze formulas. **Clean Creek Products** contributed to the display by providing samples of recovered iron and manganese oxides from our abandoned mine drainage treatment systems to interested artists. In addition, attendees were provided with an opportunity to watch a short documentary about CCP directed by **Andy McAllister** of the **Western Pennsylvania Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation (WPCAMR)**. Lots of artists were excited about the CCP samples and everyone loved the movie and pottery items! One of the highlights was the appreciation expressed by the attendees when learning that a portion of all proceeds from the sale of CCP pottery is donated to watershed groups!!!



The first night at the Conference Center featured work by installation artists. Lots of unique artwork was on display and guests were also given the chance to network with other attendees. The NCECA Keynote Speaker was bestselling novelist and journalist **Carl Hiaasen**, who spoke to a "packed house" on Wednesday night.



Friday was the busiest day of the conference! The GTF sponsored a panel discussion by three "green" artists, called "*Green Issues in Ceramics*", which was facilitated by **Robert Harrison**, who initiated the GTF four years ago. Also participating was **Ilana Crispi**, an artist from San Francisco, CA who focuses on "sustainable ceramics". Part of her artwork includes bricks created from recycled materials. **Peter Chartrand**, involved with "Potters for Peace", discussed his adventures in third world countries and how different practices are incorporated to help local artists. **Lee Akins**, from New Mexico, built a combination greenhouse and studio. Each artist provided information about their practices and answered questions from the audience, which included inquiries about how to be more sustainable, breaking barriers to encourage others to be as passionate about being "green", recycling broken bisque-fired items, and recycling/reusing glazes. The four days literally "flew by". The positive response to our CCP effort was overwhelming and I'm looking forward to helping the GTF and maybe even leading a discussion of how to use CCP recovered metal oxides in pottery glazes at the 2012 conference in Seattle!



The West Virginia Greenworks Tour visited Jennings Environmental Education Center and the newly renovated Macoskey Center for Sustainable Systems at Slippery Rock University.

Future Entrepreneurs Visit Jennings, SRU

WV Greenworks conducted a tour of the **Macoskey Center at Slippery Rock University** and the passive treatment system at **Jennings Environmental Education Center (JEEC)** as part of their **Edison.21 Project** on Saturday, March 26. Edison.21 is a mentoring program designed to ignite a new generation of entrepreneurs, with a focus on innovation for sustainability. Young men and women ages 18-21 were chosen to participate in the 6-month program, with the goal of cultivating creative thinkers capable of developing cutting-edge concepts. **Sarah Halstead Boland**, the executive director of WV Greenworks, arranged for the participants to first visit some of Pittsburgh's best-known examples of commercial and residential high performance, adaptive reuse, and neighborhood revitalization projects. Said Sarah, "These types of projects helped redefine Pittsburgh, making it easier to attract and retain creative talent, and grow new opportunities. Emphasis on sustainability and resource management has proven to be good for business." This first tour day included dinner at the Fairmont Hotel followed by a tour of the Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens.

The second day, Saturday, included a tour of Sota Construction Services, Inc. projects such as Riverside Mews, the South Hills High School adaptive reuse project, and the urban biophilic pavilion located atop a nineteenth century row house. Edison.21 team members then traveled to meet Slippery Rock University faculty and tour the **Macoskey Center for Sustainable Systems**, which promotes sustainability at SRU and in the community through educational events, workshops, and programs; physical demonstration of sustainable technologies and systems; and supporting sustainability-focused academic initiatives and research. Edison.21 participants also visited JEEC, where **Shaun Busler** of the SRWC led a tour of the passive treatment site and associated wetlands area. Shaun discussed the effects historical mining has had on the area and explained how passive treatment has been used in an innovative way not only to clean water impacted by AMD but also to restore habitat. Shaun enjoyed the chance to interact with the young adults and appreciated the good questions they asked. On Sunday, the last day of the tour, the group visited Fallingwater, the rural mountain residence designed in 1935 by Frank Lloyd Wright, one of the world's best-known architects.

We applaud the goal of innovative entrepreneurship in the Edison.21 project and hope all of the young adults who are part of the program are inspired by what they learn and will contribute their own valuable ideas on sustainability in the future!



The KIDS Catalyst

SLIPPERY ROCK WATERSHED COALITION FUN ACTIVITY



April Showers Bring May Flowers

April sure brought a lot of rain to the Slippery Rock Creek Watershed! Hopefully that means May will be filled with the blooms of many beautiful springtime flowers! Look for the flowers listed below, circle them, and send us your paper. Then we'll send you a free gift certificate in the mail!

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| azalea | geranium | orchid |
| begonia | hyacinth | phlox |
| cherry blossom | iris | petunia |
| crocus | lily | rose |
| daffodil | lilac | tulip |

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Slippery Rock Watershed Coalition c/o Stream Restoration Incorporated
A PA Non-Profit Organization
434 Spring Street Ext.
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Slippery Rock Creek Watershed Conservation Plan Update

The draft version of the Slippery Rock Creek Watershed Conservation Plan is completed!!! The final report will be available online and public meetings will be held in June with time and locations to be announced soon! Please check out our website for additional details:

<http://www.streamrestorationinc.org/srwcpsrwcps.php>

Westminster College Student Monitors the De Sale Phase 1 Passive System



Once again, on April 15, 2011, **Westminster College** students from **Dr. Helen Boylan's** Advanced Laboratory class have participated in a collaborative effort with the Slippery Rock Watershed Coalition to monitor passive treatment systems within our watershed. The project provides the students with a practical hands-on experience that allows them the opportunity to not only apply what they have learned through classroom and laboratory instruction to a "real world" application, but also gain a better understanding of an important environmental issue such as abandoned mine drainage and environmentally-friendly methods of addressing the problem. This year, the students conducted monitoring at the De Sale Phase 1 passive system. The students split into two groups to work with **Wil Taylor** of the **Jennings Environmental Education Center** and **Cliff Denholm** of **Stream Restoration Incorporated** to conduct water quality monitoring of each passive component. In addition, students from the Biochemistry class collected samples to investigate what microorganisms are present at various steps in the treatment process.

Westminster College Students to Present Findings at the May SRWC Meeting

The Westminster College students will be presenting the results of their study of the De Sale Phase 1 Passive System at the **May 12, 2011** Slippery Rock Watershed Coalition meeting at **7PM** at the **Jennings Environmental Education Center**.

PLEASE COME OUT TO SUPPORT THE STUDENTS!!!