

# THE CATALYST

## SLIPPERY ROCK WATERSHED COALITION MONTHLY ACTIVITIES UPDATE

**THIS MONTH'S MEETING:** 7 pm on Thursday 10/13/11 at Jennings Environmental Education Center, pizza and pop provided. 9/8/11 attendance: C. Denholm, M. Dunn, V. Kefeli, W. Taylor

### Highlights from the 10th Annual Ohio River Watershed Celebration

There was no better way to spend the last official day of summer for the hundreds of participants who gathered at Station Square in Pittsburgh for the 10th Annual Ohio River Watershed Celebration! September 22 brought partly sunny skies and the perfect breeze for those who went "bon voyage" on the Gateway Clipper fleet. The **Ambridge HS Drumline** was a crowd pleaser at the Station Square dock as part of the pre-cruise festivities. Moderated by **Ryan Falcone**, SW PA Comm. and Master of Ceremonies **Manny Miller**, PA DEP retired, pre-cruise speakers, such as **John Arway**, PA Fish & Boat Comm.; **Jonathan Pachter**, CONSOL Energy; **John Stefanko**, Dep. Sec., PADEP Office of Active & Abandoned Mines; **Col. William H. Graham**, US Army Corps of Engineers; and others; brought us up to date on the "State of the Ohio River Watershed". Educational displays and activities that included natural-gas powered cars (!!!) and many others provided fun on the dock and parking lot areas.

About 350 students, their parents, and teachers sailed the Monongahela, Ohio, and Allegheny Rivers aboard the Empress for the "Imagination Cruise." The Jennings Env. Ed. Center staff, led by emcee **Miranda Crotsley**, did a fantastic job keeping the kids entertained as they learned through a variety of hands-on activities. As the boat set sail, students were treated to a unique presentation by **Dale Luthringer** (Env. Ed. Specialist for Cook Forest State Park) who played the part of a French soldier dressed in the time period of the French and Indian War. He taught the students about the currency of that time, namely fur (with beaver being the most valuable), and used 10 student volunteers to make a militia outfitted with wooden muskets. Students were taught musket drills and the common French commands towards ever increasingly fast orders in operating their weaponry. Later, Dale fired live rounds from his musket from the top deck of the Empress! Students had ample chances to learn by speaking with representatives from many organizations who had fun posters and interactive displays. The "scavenger hunt" took them from one spot to another to gather information to seek the answers to a series of intriguing questions related to the theme of the ORWC. From making and sailing their own model boats at the Boy Scouts of America display, to touching a stink pot turtle and corn snake at the Pittsburgh Zoo table, to examining and identifying macroinvertebrates with folks from Consol Energy, examining historical maps and photos at the DCNR display and Fort Pitt Museum table, and much more, students had a great time while learning. Every student was given a "Learner's Log" to record their findings.

**Maggie Hall**, PADEP and **Dave Plank**, PA DEP (retired) provided an educational and entertaining narration, highlighting points of interest along the scenic cityscape of Pittsburgh's Three Rivers for the over 350 folks aboard the Majestic for the Networker Cruise. There was much to learn with over 40 (!!!) displays onboard and presentations from **Dennis Tubbs**, PA Fish & Boat Commission ("Our Rivers, Then and Now"); **Steve Forde**, Marcellus Shale Coalition; **Alan Eichler**, PA DEP Oil & Gas Mgt.; **Jonathan Pachter** and **Laural Ziemba**, CONSOL Energy, (History on the Ohio"); and **John Laughner**, PSU Extension Office. Thank you to our sponsors and our all-volunteer **ORWC Steering Committee** for this worthwhile event that is **free of charge!!** (**See back page for list of our very generous sponsors!!!**)

One of the major highlights of the cruise was the presentation of **Watershed Awards** that recognize the positive efforts and impacts of small local groups (with small budgets!) who address watershed issues. The awards were presented by **John Dawes** (Foundation for PA Watersheds), with funding provided by **Dave Hess** (former PA DEP Secretary) and an anonymous donor. The winners were:

Most Innovative

1st place: Evergreen Conservancy—\$500.00

2nd place: Buffalo Creek Watershed Association—\$250.00

Best Display

1st place: Shade Creek Watershed Association—\$500.00

2nd place: TASOW—\$250.00

Best Partnership Effort

1st place: Crooked Creek Environmental Learning Center—\$500.00

2nd place: SCRIP—\$250.00

Community Education and Outreach

1st place: Kiski Conemaugh Stream Team—\$500.00

2nd place: Cowashannock Creek Watershed Association—\$250.00

Additionally, ORWC recognizes individuals, organizations, and local government agencies that demonstrate a commitment to watershed or energy conservation with the **Environmental Awards**. This year's award winners were:

**Government** – Borough of Monaca  
**Individual Award** – Joan Jessen  
**Organization Award** – Allegheny Land Trust

**Business** — Michael Baker Jr., Inc.

Thanks goes to Anne Daymut for serving as the Coordinator for this year's Environmental Awards!



A photo montage highlighting some of the festivities from the 10th Annual Ohio River Watershed Celebration. Clockwise from the top left: the Ambridge High School Drum Line; the Majestic's crowd waves from top deck during the cruise; Dale Luthringer adds some "bang" to the student Imagination Cruise; and Cassie Busler (age 2) uses a magnifying lens to examine the macroinvertebrates at the CONSOL Energy activity table aboard the Empress.

### Teaming Up With the Rotary Club

Dr. Valentin Kefeli, soil scientist and participant of the SRWC, has been working in close association with the **Slippery Rock Rotary Club** to brainstorm ideas for the use of plants in education. In particular, the idea of using home-grown plants and fabricated soil to educate area students in "winter ecology" was found to be very appealing by the Rotarian Club (which provides fresh flowers to the Senior Center of Slippery Rock on a weekly basis). The extensive plant collection in the Living Laboratory of **Carnegie Mellon University** offers an abundance of plants for students and the opportunity to study (even in the winter)!!

The Rotarians and several student assistants brainstormed the concept of "winter ecology" paired with fabricated soil and came up with many experiments which could be conducted and studied during the winter months using the plant collection in the Living Laboratory of CMU. These ideas include studies on: chlorophyll accumulation, plant propagation, roots regeneration, plant blooming, fabricated soil as substrate for landscape rehabilitation, rhythmic of stem growth, drought resistance, special oil accumulation as a sanitary factor, photomorphogenesis, starch and insulin accumulation, and herbariums and dry plants as objects of science and art.



A local event called **Village Fest** recently afforded the SR Rotary Club and Dr. Kefeli (see photo above) the opportunity to share some ideas with the public. Held on September 10th in and around the Main Street of Slippery Rock, Village Fest is an annual, free, street festival featuring family fun, children's activities, lots of arts and crafts, unique food, over 100 vendor booths, business displays, organizational fundraisers, 5K race, contests, prizes, parade, fireworks, Farmer's Market, sporting events, and live music. Thanks to sponsorship from The Rotarians, the **Slippery Rock in Bloom** table was a part of Village Fest.



Collections of plants growing in fabricated soil were included in the display (see photo to left). Slippery Rock in Bloom is a community organization that has been "planting pride in the community for 10 years." They are involved with turf and ground cover, urban forestry, environmental awareness, heritage preservation, floral displays, and more.

The Slippery Rock Rotary booth and Slippery Rock in Bloom display drew many interested visitors throughout the festival. The Rotary Club is a worldwide service organization of more than 1.2 million business, professional, and community leaders. Members of Rotary Clubs, known as Rotarians, provide humanitarian service, encourage high ethical standards in all vocations, and help build goodwill in their communities.



# The KIDS Catalyst

## SLIPPERY ROCK WATERSHED COALITION FUN ACTIVITY



### Pumpkin Trivia Time!

Hi kids! Use the key below to find the amazing answers to the following pumpkin questions! Then decorate the pumpkin below any way you want to! If you send us your completed paper, we'll send you a free gift certificate!

- The largest pumpkin pie ever baked weighed  $\frac{\quad}{\#} \frac{\quad}{?} \frac{\quad}{<} \frac{\quad}{<}$  pounds!
- Farmers in the USA grow more than  $\frac{\quad}{\#} \frac{\quad}{!} \frac{\quad}{\%} \frac{\quad}{(} \frac{\quad}{(} \frac{\quad}{\%} \frac{\quad}{/} \frac{\quad}{\}$  pounds of pumpkin each year!
- Pumpkins are made of 90%  $\frac{\quad}{:} \frac{\quad}{\$} \frac{\quad}{^} \frac{\quad}{\sim} \frac{\quad}{+}$ .
- Around 90 to 95% of the processed pumpkins grown in the United States are grown in this state:  
 $\frac{\quad}{\%} \frac{\quad}{(} \frac{\quad}{(} \frac{\quad}{\%} \frac{\quad}{\}$  /  $\frac{\quad}{\%} \frac{\quad}{[}$
- Many years ago, pumpkins were recommended for removing  $\frac{\quad}{)} \frac{\quad}{\alpha} \frac{\quad}{\sim} \frac{\quad}{@} \frac{\quad}{x} \frac{\quad}{(} \frac{\quad}{\sim} \frac{\quad}{[}$  and  
 curing  $\frac{\quad}{[} \frac{\quad}{\}$   $\frac{\quad}{\$} \frac{\quad}{x} \frac{\quad}{\sim} \frac{\quad}{!} \frac{\quad}{\%} \frac{\quad}{^} \frac{\quad}{\sim} \frac{\quad}{[}$ .

#### CODE KEY:

? = 6	\$ = a	^ = t
* = 1	! = b	+ = r
# = 3	@ = c	: = w
< = 9	~ = e	) = f
; = 7	% = i	x = k
- = 2	( = l	z = b
	/ = o	\alpha = r
	[ = s	} = n

Name \_\_\_\_\_

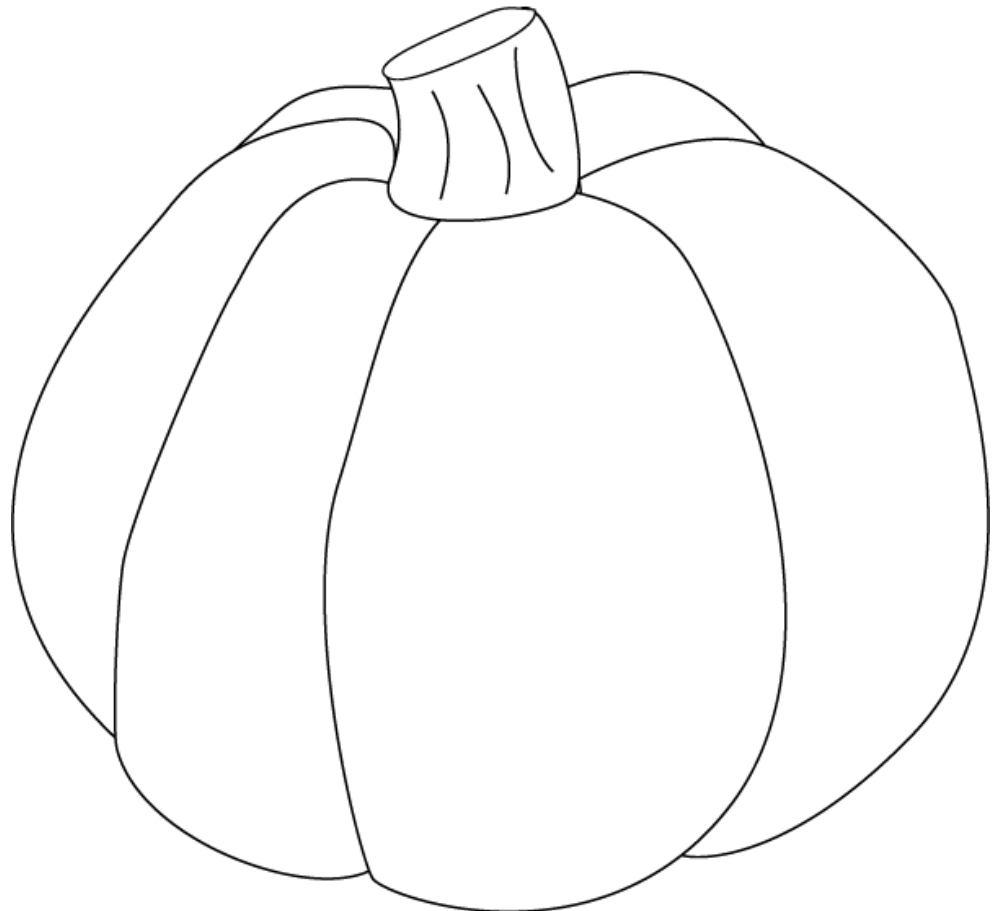
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Age \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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Slippery Rock Watershed Coalition c/o Stream Restoration Incorporated  
 A PA Non-Profit Organization  
 434 Spring Street Ext.  
 Mars, PA 16046

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