

THE CATALYST

SLIPPERY ROCK WATERSHED COALITION MONTHLY ACTIVITIES UPDATE

THIS MONTH'S MEETING: 7 pm on Thursday 1/12/12 at Jennings Environmental Education Center, pizza and pop provided. December's meeting was cancelled due to Student Symposium on the Environment. (Over 100 attendees!!!!!!)

Grove City Allied News

Features Article on

Service Learning Project and Student Presentations

The Saturday, November 12, 2011 edition of the **Grove City Allied News** included an excellent article by **Monica Pryts** detailing the research work and presentation of findings by students in **Dr. Helen Boylan's Advanced Laboratory** course for chemistry and biology majors interested in stream pollution and remediation. The De Sale Phase II passive treatment system in the Slippery Rock Creek Watershed in Butler County which relies on natural processes, such as wetlands, settling ponds, and limestone drains to treat the highly acidic, metal-bearing, drainage from abandoned coal mining operations, was selected to provide the "hands-on" learning opportunity.

Ten **Westminster College** chemistry/biochemistry majors presented water quality results at the November 10th meeting of the Slippery Rock Watershed Coalition (SRWC) at **Jennings Environmental Education Center (JEEC)**. Their presentations included data on how much of a certain substance such as iron or calcium was found in their samples, which were collected in the field in October and analyzed in the lab at Westminster. Their results confirmed that the DeSale Phase II passive treatment facility is functioning well, and their new data was enlightening, greatly appreciated, and vital to determining the continued performance of the 11-year old system.

The work of collecting and analyzing water samples to determine how well a passive treatment system is working often requires manpower and funding not readily available to volunteer-based organizations like the SRWC. Hence the value of the partnership between Westminster College and the SRWC! College students from Westminster have been volunteering with the SRWC for six (!) years.



"This is what we call service-learning," said Dr. Helen Boylan and mentioned how thankful she was to show her students "chemistry in action" at passive treatment sites, which have been visited by people from around the world. She also expressed her appreciation of SRWC members **Wil Taylor and Cliff Denholm**, who "have been instrumental in facilitating this service-learning project."

Wil Taylor, JEEC Manager, called the college-coalition partnership "unique, interesting, and rewarding." The SRWC is always looking for more volunteers to help out. Anyone can contribute to the effort! For more information, please contact **Cliff Denholm** at Stream Restoration Incorporated at 724-776-0161 or Wil Taylor at JEEC at 724-794-6011.

Thank you to Monica Pryts and Dr. Helen Boylan and a special **thank-you, thank-you, thank-you** to the following students for the positive, encouraging news from our watershed: **Stephen Cornich, Daniele Figueroa, Jaimie Daum, Nicole George, Sarah Welsh, Hannah Anderson, Olivia Miller, Gavin Steadman, Mark Biedka, and Kelly Cholewa.**

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Westminister College students in Dr. Helen Boylan's Advanced Laboratory class presented results from their water sampling analysis of the passive treatment system at De Sale Phase II at the November 11 meeting of the SRWC (please see article on page 1).

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Christmas Tree Recycling Available

Real Christmas trees are biodegradable, which means they can be easily reused or recycled for mulch and other purposes. Please consider recycling your tree this year! Christmas tree recycling will be available at the following locations in Butler County:

Back to Nature - 840 Mercer Road, Butler, PA 16001

Phone: Stirlings at 724-297-7921

Price per tree: Drop-off is FREE. Pickup service is available with a fee of \$10 and up, depending on the drive distance.

Date: Dec. 26, 2011—Jan. 31, 2012. There is a labeled bin at the garden center to place the trees (7 days a week).

Trees must be free of flocking and all decorations.

Seneca Landfill (compost site) - 421 Hartmann Road, Evans City, PA 16033

Phone: 724-625-9000

Price per tree: \$5.00 Fee (Cash, Check, and Credit Cards accepted)

Date: Dec. 26, 2011—Jan. 31, 2012

Time: Monday through Friday, 8 AM to 3:30 PM, Saturday 8 AM to 11 AM

Trees must be free of flocking and all decorations.

Slippery Rock Community Park—320 N. Main St., Slippery Rock, PA 16057

Phone: Slippery Rock Area Parks and Recreation at 724-794-8180

Price per tree: FREE

Date: Dec. 26, 2011—Jan. 3, 2012

Trees must be free of flocking and all decorations.

If you have any other questions about post-holiday tree collection and recycling, please call your municipality or the Butler County Dept. of Recycling & Waste Management at 724.284.5305 (email skelly@co.butler.pa.us).












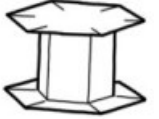
The KIDS Catalyst

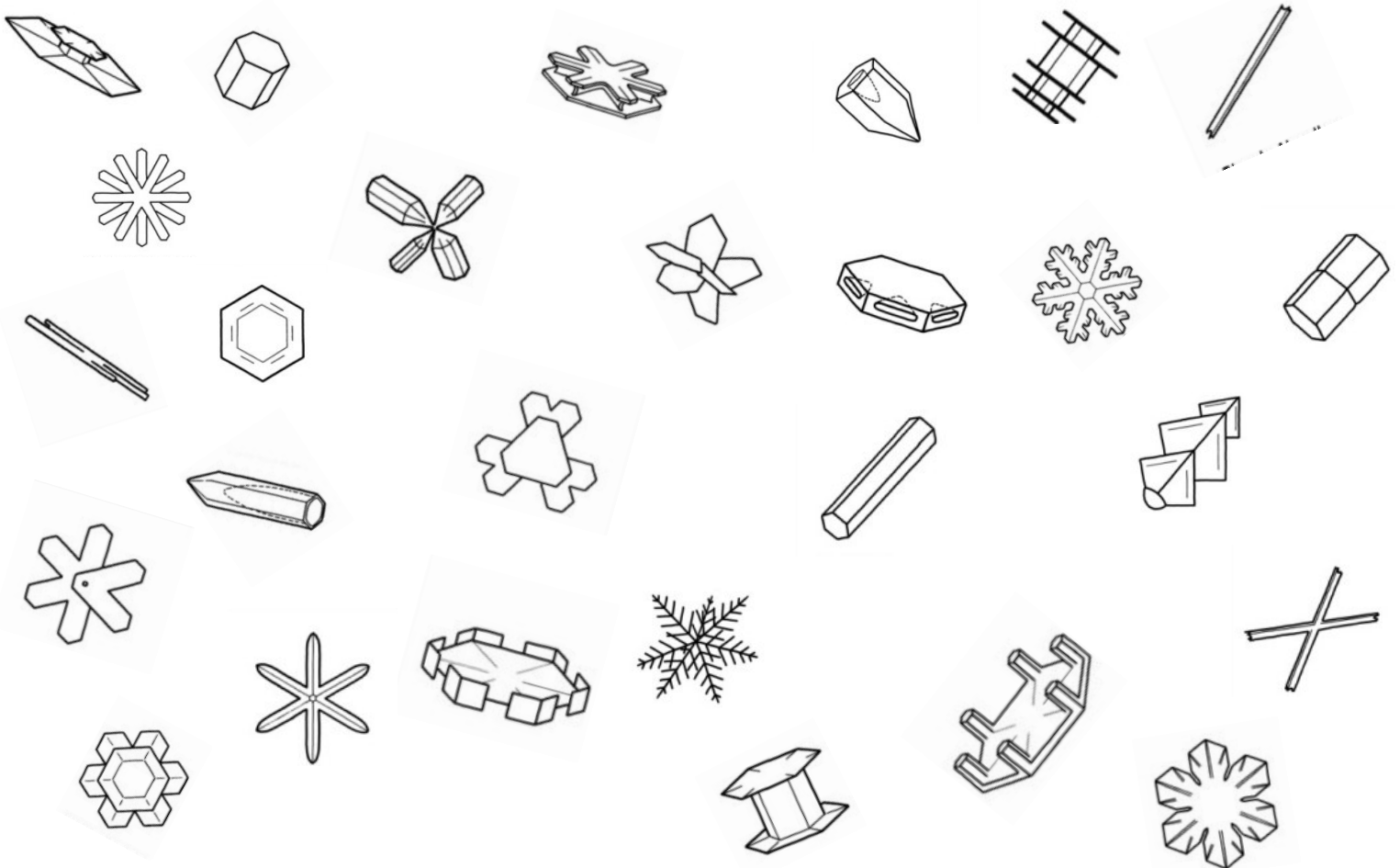
SLIPPERY ROCK WATERSHED COALITION FUN ACTIVITY



Snowflakes are Falling!

Maybe you have heard that no two snowflakes are alike! It's the truth! Snowflakes are nothing more than ice, but the forms a single flake can take are very complex. A single crystal of ice is known as a snow crystal. And one or more snow crystals stuck together make a snowflake. There are as endless possibilities for how they stick together. Falling from thousands of feet, these intricate ice crystals commonly begin as a piece of dust tumbling through the clouds. Gathering water molecules, they blossom into crystal forms in endlessly different patterns because of the constantly changing conditions of the atmosphere. There are many types of snowflake shapes. Eight of them are shown in the box below. See if you can find their matches among the snow squall of flakes falling all around at the bottom of the page! Draw a line from each snowflake in the box to its match in the snowflake storm. If you mail us your completed paper, we'll send you a free gift certificate! Happy snowflake hunting!

Radiating dendrite	Stellar dendrite	Stellar plates	Sectored plates	12-branched stars	Radiating plates	Sheaths	Capped columns
							



Name _____ Age _____ Address _____



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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PA GIS Day Focuses on Technology and Jobs



PA GIS Day was hosted by the **Commonwealth of Pennsylvania** and **Harrisburg Area Community College** on Wednesday, November 16. The event was one of many celebrating the importance of and applications of GIS (Geospatial Information Systems) all over the world. Over 20 exhibitors had displays in the exhibit hall of the college, including **Shaun Busler** (a certified GIS Professional at Stream Restoration Incorporated) with a poster of the **Slippery Rock Creek Watershed Conservation Plan**. The day's events included workshops and demonstrations, a networking mixer, Geo Challenge, and more. Area high school students attended the festivities in the morning to learn about GIS, how it affects their daily lives, and potential careers in the field. The afternoon offered sessions and workshops for GIS professionals. Several state agencies and Pennsylvania businesses demonstrated real-life applications of GIS and the tools used to create them. Topics included weather mapping, geocaching, Marcellus monitoring, PA Environmental Public Health Tracking, and more.



GIS Day 2011 events were scheduled in 48 U.S. states and 67 countries around the world! From Brazil to Mongolia, from Uganda to the Czech Republic, it was a day to celebrate the technology of GIS and help students and people of all ages understand more about its uses and potential. Shaun wishes to thank **Nicole L. Ernst, Geospatial Technology Professor**, for the invitation to attend GIS Day at the Harrisburg Area Community College (though it might have been just a little nicer celebrating at the Aruba location!)