

THE CATALYST

SLIPPERY ROCK WATERSHED COALITION MONTHLY ACTIVITIES UPDATE

NEXT MEETING: 7 pm on 3/13/13 at Jennings Environmental Education Center, pizza and pop provided. 2/14/13 meeting attendance: C. Denholm, M. Dunn, V. Kefeli, B. Kuban, W. Taylor, F. VanAtta

Slippery Rock Experiences an Early Bloom in 2013!

It might still technically be winter in Pennsylvania, but Slippery Rock is already blooming thanks to SRWC's soil scientist **Dr. Valentin Kefeli**!! Dr. Kefeli has a unique mobile display of plants that are grown in fabricated soil. Many of the plants, which were grown from cuttings of plants from **Phipps Conservatory**, are potted in **Clean Creek Products** (CCP) pots. CCP (www.cleancreek.org) recovers iron and manganese from abandoned mine drainage treatment systems for local handmade pottery, which uses recovered material in the ceramic glazes. Purchases of this "green technology" glazed pottery will contribute to CCP's continued efforts to support the efforts of watershed groups to treat AMD and keep our streams and rivers clean.



Principal **W. Herbert Basham** checks out the mobile plant display at Slippery Rock Elementary School.

Working with the **First National Bank of Slippery Rock** and the **Slippery Rock Rotary Club**, groups of plants have been on display at the **First National Bank** in downtown Slippery Rock, **Carnegie Mellon University**, and at **Slippery Rock Elementary School**. Inside Slippery Rock Elementary School, the plant displays are located in both the teachers' lounge and the library. Dr. Kefeli has provided some of his papers and books to accompany the plants to provide an opportunity for those interested to learn about fabricated soil (which also uses material recovered from passive systems) and his other research in botany and winter ecology. No doubt Dr. Kefeli's "winter collection" of plants are bringing about warm thoughts of spring coming just around the corner!



Dr. Valentin Kefeli poses with SR Elementary School librarian **Gerri Allen** in front of several plants now on display at the school.

Earth Day Special on Clean Creek Products!

For the entire month of April, customers ordering items from Clean Creek Products will enjoy **FREE SHIPPING!** Enter code **EARTHDAY13** at checkout. No exclusions! Lots of great unique gift ideas for Mother's Day! Visit www.cleancreek.org for an incredible selection of beautiful jewelry, tableware, vases, bowls, mugs, ornaments, wildlife replicas, and much more!



Shaun Busler from the SRWC made a visit to **Penn Christian Academy's Boy Scouts of America Pack 0017** on March 15th. Shaun holds a poster of the Erico Bridge Restoration Area, part of his talk about AMD and the work of the SRWC (see article below).

Boy Scouts Learn About AMD

Boy Scouts of America, Pack 0017 of Butler, PA, enjoyed a visit from the SRWC's **Shaun Busler** at their March 15 meeting. Led by **Donna Fike**, **ScoutReach** is a scouting program with weekly meetings, offered to boys in first grade and up at **Penn Christian Academy**. Shaun was asked to visit the school to speak to the pack about his career as a biologist, and specifically about the work of the SRWC. Shaun taught the boys about abandoned mine drainage, including Pennsylvania's mining history, current AMD problems, and the options that exist for cleaning the many miles of streams adversely impacted (see *Photo of the Month*).

Shaun gave a cool demonstration on AMD pollution using a bottle of AMD stream water and bleach. The AMD water appeared completely clear to the scouts, who thought it was clean water. Shaun poured some of the AMD water into a clear, glass flask. He added the bleach to the water in the glass bowl, then the "oohs" and "aahs" came as the iron precipitated out right before everyone's eyes! The boys were able to see visible orange specks of iron appear in the water! When the bleach, a.k.a. sodium hypochlorite, was added to the stream water, the iron "fell out" due to the pH increase. Shaun used this visual as a simple example of chemical treatment of AMD, which uses alkaline chemicals, then went on to explain how the SRWC uses passive treatment (rather than chemical) to clean the streams.

Shaun shared field posters with the scouts, which illustrated stream sites impacted by AMD that the SRWC has worked to restore through passive treatment systems. He also showed pictures of wetlands on these sites, and explained their use and importance as good habitat and water purifiers. Shaun also discussed macroinvertebrates and how their presence in a stream can be one indicator of a healthy water habitat since they don't like living in an iron-orange-coated environment.

The scouts were also able to do hands-on water testing using iron and pH test kits and a pH probe. Shaun brought water from a site, located in northern Butler County near the county line with Venango County. Bio-Most, Inc. is in the process of designing a treatment system for the site, and the scouts were able to test its untreated water. The boys' results showed a pH of under 4.5 and significant iron content of over 10 mg/l.

Pack 0017, which includes Shaun's 9-year old son, Isaac, was a fun and captive audience, full of energy and questions! Shaun enjoyed his time visiting and hopes some of the scouts might consider pursuing a career in an environmental field one day.



The KIDS Catalyst

SLIPPERY ROCK WATERSHED COALITION FUN ACTIVITY



April Fool's Day Fun

April Fool's Day is just around the corner, and we decided to have a little mixed-up fun with you in this activity. The sentences below are all wrong and ridiculous! Your job is to replace the underlined word by unscrambling the letters after each sentence. If you can fix all of the sentences to make sense, mail us your finished paper! We'll send you a free gift certificate — no joke!

1. It's easy and important to recycle things like soda cans, glass, plastic bottles, and siblings.

pasrwpnees _____

2. Always throw your trash into a coffee can.

_____ gegbara

3. Backyard birds enjoy eating treats like sunflower seeds, nuts, raisins, sliced apples, and chocolate.

ronc _____

4. Some of the fish caught most often in the streams of Pennsylvania include: rainbow trout, brown trout, northern pike, smallmouth bass, brook trout, and barracuda.

_____ pchre

5. Bats are beneficial to people in many ways, including eating up to 1000 hamburgers in just 1 hour!

tenicss _____

6. Streams affected by abandoned mine drainage have orange water and orange stained rocks, a result of pumpkins dissolved in the stream.

_____ onri

7. Arbor Day is celebrated the last Friday in April, when people are encouraged to care for or plant onions.

_____ etesr

8. As the saying goes, "April jokes bring May flowers!"

_____ owehrss



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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Reminder to Sign-Up for Free Datashed Training!!!

Limited space remains! If you are considering attending a **FREE** training session on Datashed (www.datashed.org), please register soon! Free training workshops are being offered for those who are interested in learning how to use Datashed. Datashed is a free, interactive, online tool used to store, manage, and access data gathered from passive treatment systems throughout Pennsylvania. Datashed is useful for the storing, tracking, sharing, and analysis of watershed and passive treatment system data. Watershed groups, professionals, volunteers, educators, students, industry, and government agencies can all use Datashed to share and study their own or others' water monitoring data. The Datashed web-site also allows users to store electronic copies of documents such as construction drawings and photos that can be used for education/outreach.

It is not too late to sign up for one of the two April training sessions! Each session will begin at 10 AM and end by 4 PM with a 1-hour lunch break (lunch is on your own). There will be additional time available to discuss the specific questions of participants, who are encouraged to bring their own laptop if possible. When registering for a workshop, please let us know if you will or will not be bringing your own laptop so we can plan accordingly.

The remaining Datashed workshops are scheduled for April:

April 12, 2013 at the office of the Eastern PA Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation (EPCAMR), in Ashley, PA (near Wilkes-Barre). Please register by April 8th.

April 19, 2013 at the field station of Westminster College, in New Wilmington, PA. Please register by April 15th.

We strongly encourage you to register if you plan to attend! Space is limited. To register, please contact **Cliff Denholm** of **Stream Restoration Inc.** at **724-776-0161** or email **sri@streamrestorationinc.org**.

Datashed is made possible through a partnership with the following organizations: **241 Computer Services, BioMost, Inc., EPCAMR, EPA Watershed Initiative, Foundation for Pennsylvania Watersheds, PA DEP, Stream Restoration Incorporated, and WPCAMR.**