



Penns Valley Conservation Association

www.pennsvalley.net

Winter 2012



PVCA's Energy Fair—All You Need to Know in One Afternoon

--by Mary Carol Frier--

On October 22, PVCA held its first energy Fair in the High School Cafeteria. Displays of solar, biomass and geothermal vendors, financial institutions and energy “help” organizations assisted approximately 60 Fair-goers in understanding their energy options. Bus tours took Fair-goers to the new Penns Valley School District's biomass-fired heating plant. Next, they visited the Williams' Cooke Tavern 10 KW solar array near Spring Mills. Finally, they toured the Yanaks' combination solar thermal and photovoltaic arrays in Millheim. Frank Migneco, Senior Energy Specialist for SEDA-COG, gave a short presentation on saving energy in the home. Jackie Bonomo, Organic Gardener, spoke of the benefits of growing food locally. The Green Drake Gallery of Millheim displayed several art works from its current show on our local agricultural heritage.

The Fair demonstrated that solar, biomass and geothermal-based energy is used successfully

Continued on p. 3

Forest Stewardship and Valley Strategy Presented at PVCA Fall Meeting

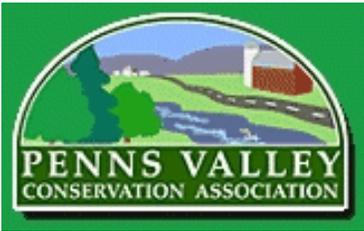
--by Jim Zubler--

The Membership assembled for the Annual Meeting of the Penns Valley Conservation Association on Thursday, November 10, 2011 electing members to the Board of Directors, hearing a recap of a busy year, and plans for the organization going forward.

President Jim Zubler thanked the membership for their energy and efforts in raising \$8,067 through the Riversongs Celebration and raffles, that was matched with a \$5,000 contribution from an anonymous member for a total of \$13,067 supporting initiatives encouraging “new monies” to flow into the organization. Additionally Jim gave an update on the status of the Environmental Education Program and reflected upon the work of the Center for Watershed Stewardship, PA Department of Environmental Protection, PVCA, and other partners working with private landowners and farmers on a variety of habitat improvement endeavors. The Center for Watershed Stewardship had a display at the meeting highlighting their work in the Valley and unveiled a new initiative for Muddy Creek in 2012. Jim ended the look back at 2011 with an overview of the Sustainable Living Workshops, stream and highway clean-ups, Crickfest, Penns Valley Learning Garden, and the recently held Renewable Energy and Conservation Fair.

Jim introduced the “Impact Map”, a strategy guiding how we intend to make an “impact” in the Valley over the next three to five years. Jim

Continued on p. 4



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Board of Directors

President: Jim Zubler,
Gregg Twp.

Treasurer: Barb Lange,
Penn Twp.

Secretary: Lisa Marshall,
Penn Twp.

Tim Bowser, Penn Twp.

Mary Carol Frier, Potter Twp.

Ann Glaser, Potter Twp.

George Kelly, Penn Twp.

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Bill Wolfe, Haines Twp.

Committees

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Watershed: George Kelly, Chair

Community Outreach:
Chair—open

Education: Chair—open

Newsletter Editor

Nell Hanssen

Webmaster: Charlie Boyer

Database Manager

Judith Fordham

Bookkeeper

Karen Yanak

President's Column

--by Jim Zubler--

Happy New Year!

Closing out a busy 2011 heralds the beginning of what promises to be an active 2012 for the Penns Valley Conservation Association. Last year saw the organization involved in an internal evaluation of its structure, capabilities, and intended outcomes while maintaining active participation in on the farm improvements, Valley events, and continued educational outreach to local residents and young residents in training.

The outgrowth of this internal soul searching resulted in the unveiling of our "Impact Map"(see p. 3), a three to five year strategy guiding how we intend to "make an impact" in the Valley and Watershed. Embodied in five succinct goals with supporting tactics, the Impact Map is an ambitious undertaking and will require the participation and support of an active membership to realize the outcomes associated with these strategies.

At the Annual Meeting in Fall 2011, we invited members to take a participatory role in its implementation by joining standing Committees, special task oriented functions, or for those regular and especially valued volunteers, simply recommitting themselves to the work at hand.

The most exciting (and at the same time most challenging) part of the Strategy outlines the need for an Executive Director to guide the implementation of these ambitious goals, objectives and tactics. The target date to have this person in place is July 2012 and in the interim the Board is pursuing a number of cooperative arrangements to instruct students in a diverse curriculum of environmental education while fulfilling the deliverables contained in our grant stream.

Our intention will be to maintain our cooperative work with farmers, business, and private property owners to improve stream and natural habitat, instruct students in diverse

PVCA's Mission and Vision

PVCA serves as a steward for the natural & cultural communities in the Upper Penns Creek Watershed. We seek to preserve and honor the agricultural roots of Penns Valley by protecting and conserving its waters, farmlands, forests, and rural heritage.

PVCA envisions an engaged community, where growth is balanced with support for healthy natural systems that foster the local economy. Our Valley has dark night skies, clear streams, healthy forests, prosperous farms, and local jobs.

President's Column, continued from p. 2

environmental education, and deliver quality programs and events for our members and general public. This may require some adjustment in how we have traditionally delivered our instruction but our aim is to work to improve our outcomes.

Thank you for being a good steward of the Valley.

--Jim

Slow Money Update



The Slow Money committee helped Millheim organize its very successful, first-ever Mainstreet Millheim holiday sales weekend in early December, with 14 businesses participating. Thanks to all who made the event a success!

Our January meeting featured planning for 2012. Ideas include:

◆ *Updating our business directory, Find It Here for 2012-13;*

◆ *Helping Abbatoir Associates, a custom butcher shop in Spring Mills, get off the ground;*

◆ *Raising money through calendar sales to start a micro-finance fund;*

◆ *Bring Penn State's Small Business Development Center out here to do a workshop to help small businesses take their business to the next level.*

We continue to meet the 3rd Tuesday of every month—come out and add your ideas to the mix!

Contact Lisa with questions or to get involved: lisa@smartworkco.com

Renewable Energy Fair, Continued from p. 1

right here in Penns Valley. Solar on every south-facing roof and/or yard is not just for California; it can help stem the awful thirst we have for fossil fuels. After all, the widespread use of renewable energy is an excellent strategy to improve our water and air quality, while allowing for community growth.

We would like to have another Energy Fair so we can continue to spread the good news about renewable energy options.

Your comments and suggestions are most welcome. Please email Mary Carol Frier at mcfrier@yahoo.com.

Save the Date for PVCA's Annual Stream Bank Cleanup!

Saturday, April 21st

Location and other details To Be Determined.

**Help PVCA keep our beautiful
creeks clean and free from
debris! If you'd like to
participate, or help us to organize
this event, contact:
info@pennsvalley.net**

The Penns Valley Conservation Association through its Environmental Education Program provides instruction to students in each of the five district schools, utilizing the Penns Valley Environmental Center, the 30 acre Muddy Paws Marsh Wetlands Education Center in Gregg Township and other locations.

Early Successional Forest Wildlife Habitat Initiative Moving Ahead!

--by Lysle Sherwin--

The collaborative initiative of the PVCA Watershed Committee and the Penn State Center for Watershed Stewardship (CWS) begun last spring in the Muddy Creek watershed (Georges Valley) has progressed steadily over recent months. A tour of candidate and active wildlife management locations in Georges Valley and landowner meetings by Pennsylvania Game Commission and US Fish and Wildlife Service wildlife biologists took place in October. Recognizing Georges Valleys' excellent potential for successful management of early successional ("young forest") habitats and the unique approach of neighboring individual private landowners collectively working in partnerships with various local, state, and federal conservation agencies, the national Wildlife Management Institute (WMI) has joined the collaborative effort. A very informative, non-technical WMI publication on woodcock management was included in a December project update and information packet mailing to landowners prepared by CWS students. In addition, the Georges Valley initiative is being included on the WMI-sponsored website www.timberdoodle.org produced by Chuck Fergus, Centre County native and conservation writer, under the link "Appalachian Mountains Early Successional Forest".

The project steering committee is currently contacting landowners wanting to implement "early action" habitat projects on their land in 2012 such as riparian buffer plantings this spring and invasive, non-native plant (autumn olive, multiflora, honeysuckle) mowing to prepare planting sites for high habitat value native shrub species. Priority sites are small, unshaded tributaries to Muddy Creek where habitat plantings along streams would also serve to mitigate high summer water temperatures impacting wild trout populations. A good example is the Harter Road segment downstream to the confluence with Penns Creek. Temperature monitoring data collected



PGC Biologists tour sites in George's Valley.

here in July 2011 by CWS students recorded a peak water temperature of 87 degrees F on July 22 and a timespan of 67 hours when stream temperatures over three days continuously exceeded the threshold (76 degrees F) for stress and potential mortality of brown trout.

One landowner in the Harter Road segment with frontage on two tributaries has agreed to planting of shrub buffers this spring and prospects are good for other projects there and elsewhere in Muddy Creek watershed supported by PVCA and other funding sources.

An opportunity for watershed landowners to learn more about the early forest succession project and resources and technical expertise available to assist landowners will be upcoming at the March 22 PVCA Public Meeting,

Interested landowners are encouraged to contact Watershed Committee chair George Kelly gkelly4@verizon.net; 814-349-1234 or Lysle Sherwin lss9@psu.edu; 814 865-5736

PVCA's Winter Meeting

**Thursday, March 22nd, 7PM
At the PV High School Cafeteria**

***Early Successional Forest Public
Information Meeting***

*With presenters from the PA Game
Commission, the NRCS, and the Wildlife
Management Institute.*

Thank You, Congratulations, and Requests!

First, an Omission...

In the last newsletter we failed to add **John Mangan** to our list of Crickfest Sponsors. We apologize for this omission. John lives in Julian and has always been a supporter of PVCA; each year he creates a new Crickfest design for tee shirts that are sold at the festival. John covers the expense of the shirts and printing and donates the profits to PVCA. John's love of nature and his honoring of Mother Earth are reflected in his designs. Thank you John and for your participation and additions to the community effort at Crickfest!

And Congratulations!

PVCA members John and Catherine Smith were recently awarded the Historic Preservation Award from the Centre County Historical Society for their work at Chicory Lane Farm where they have lived for over 37 years. John and Catherine have participated in several PVCA projects on their land and have created a beautiful website describing the history and habitats of the farm. Check it out at www.chicorylane.com

Your Input is Needed!

Fellow PVCA members, we are coordinating our spring "Sustainable Living Workshop" and need your input. We have done several of these workshops in the past few years, including

- ~ rain barrels,
- ~ cold frames,
- ~ composting

and now we would like ideas for your specific needs to become a more involved sustainable community member. We can repeat any that have been done previously if the interest is there, or do a new one that would serve your needs. Please respond by emailing PVCA. Thank you for your continued commitment to our community and its environment.

Got an idea for us? Email it to infor@pennsvalley.net



Yes! I would like to join PVCA and help to preserve and protect our beautiful Valley. Enclosed is my tax-deductible membership dues.

- \$25 Single/Family
 \$50 Supporter
 \$100 Benefactor
 \$150 Patron
 \$250 Steward
 \$500 Conservationist
 \$10 Senior or Student
Gift Membership \$ _____

(please provide your name and gift recipient's name below)

We like to thank our members and donors in our newsletter.

Name(s) to list in the newsletter: _____

I/We prefer to remain anonymous

Name _____

Business _____

Mailing Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Please make checks payable to "PVCA"

Thank You for Your Support!

PO Box 165 Aaronsburg, PA 16820 www.pennsvalley.net

Hey, I want to do more! My area of interest is: (check all that apply)

- Computer/website Membership
- Wetland Restoration Publicity
- Watershed Protection Crickfest
- Community Outreach/Education
- Local Foods Fundraising

PVCA may share its mailing list with like-minded organizations. Please check here if you do not want your name shared.

PVCA Fall Meeting, Continued from p. 1

related that the Board spent the past year working with the Institute for Conservation Leadership to devise the strategy following our mission and vision intending to influence five key areas as illustrated on p. 7 of this newsletter. After presenting the planning outline, Jim asked the membership for questions or comments on the Plan. Members offered a suggestion to consider including protection of soils and air in the organization's mission/vision statement. Additionally, it was suggested that we ramp-up our advocacy of conservation issues of potential impact to the Valley. Jim stated that these efforts are contained in several of the goals in order to effectively advance the strategy in the Watershed. In conclusion, Jim prodded the membership to take an active role in implementing the Strategy, and presented them with opportunities to sign-up or participate on Committees and through other volunteer initiatives.

Following this discussion, Jim introduced the evening's speaker Jim Finley, Extension Specialist at the Penn State School of Forest Resources who discussed the state of our forests in Pennsylvania. Mr. Finley related that there are over 16 million acres of forest covering 58% of the state. Mr. Finley noted that the majority of this acreage is in private hands with the average forest owner holding just over 16 acres. Jim stated that the two main issues confronting the management of these resources concern parcelization, or the division of large contiguous tracts into smaller pieces, and fragmentation, or the conversion of forests to non-forest uses. He outlined strategies that can be employed to help stem this deleterious effect including cooperative approaches encouraging neighbors to work with one another to enhance these natural areas. Mr. Finley closed his talk by taking questions from the membership and presenting a copy of "The Woods In Your Backyard" to PVCA that will be circulated to interested members. As a token of our appreciation, we presented Jim with a copy of Doug Macneal's book "A Penns Creek Companion".

Jim Finley, Extension Specialist at the Penn State School of Forest Resources gave an overview on Pennsylvania's forests at PVCA's fall meeting.

The meeting also featured PVCA Annual elections. Tim Bowser and George Kelly will continue another term of service on the Board of Directors – we thank them for agreeing to carry on. The meeting was followed by the traditional dessert potluck and socializing to round out the evening. Special thanks are extended to those behind the scenes volunteers who make arrangements for meetings, print ballots and other pieces, and help with take down of exhibits, tents, chairs or whatever else needs to get away at the conclusion of our many festivities, meetings or events.

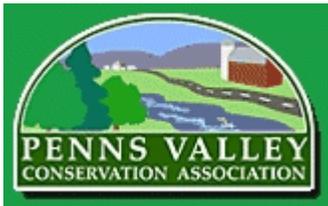
Would you like to help PVCA implement ideas and strategies for the conservation of our natural resources? Contact us at info@pennsvalley.net



Penns Valley Conservation Association
Impact Map
November 10, 2011

PVCA’s desired impact: PVCA seeks to foster a local sense of community within the Watershed where improvement is encouraged and is shaped by maintaining water quality, sound environmental planning, and the Valley’s rural heritage. (See article on previous page.)

Goals	Strategies	Tactics
1. Educated and inspired community that actively supports PVCA’s mission and vision.	Continue education and outreach in the schools and community through the Community Outreach Committee and the environmental education activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) School and community based environmental education programs b) Support for Penns Valley Learning Garden c) Celebratory events, such as Crickfest d) HS Senior scholarship for Environmental Stewardship
2. Local, county and state elected and appointed officials supporting PVCA’s mission and goals	Encourage participation and discussion of environmental issues in municipal forums	<p>Suggested projects include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Meet the Candidates with Valley environmental focus b) Monitor municipal agendas c) Sponsor educational workshops for elected and appointed officials
3. Maintain drinkable* and fishable and swimmable* quality water in surface and ground water sources *legal terms	Continue existing efforts of the Watershed Committee and move to greater cooperation with like-minded environmental, government, and agricultural organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Continue to identify opportunities for water quality improvements in the Watershed and muster resources for such efforts either directly or indirectly b) Coordinate organizations to increase impact and decrease overlap c) Research and support possible “Wild Area” designation for parts of the Watershed
4. Encourage supports for local businesses and small farms that result in job creation with environmentally sound practices	Grow/increase this activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Continue to facilitate business education and resources to promote healthy food, local businesses and small farms b) Update business directory c) Promotional events for local businesses, such as the Renewable Energy and Conservation Fair
5. Foster stronger organizational development of PVCA	Hire an Executive Director to facilitate on-going efforts, develop new activities and support committees in initiating new programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Write job description b) Determine budget c) Identify Hiring Committee d) Advertise for qualified candidates e) Interview candidates f) Make decision in late spring with hiring by 6/30/2012



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Join Us For PVCA's Winter Meeting

Early Successional Forest Public Information Meeting
Thursday, March 22nd ~ 7PM
PVHS Cafeteria

Join us for a panel discussion of the early successional forest wildlife habitat project in George's Valley, and opportunities for landowners throughout the upper Penns Creek Watershed to participate in similar habitat work.

Presenters will include:

- ~Lisa Williams, PA Game Commission lead woodcock biologist**
- ~Mario Giazon, PGC wildlife diversity biologist**
- ~Scott Heckman, USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service**
- ~Dave Putnam of the Wildlife Management Institute**

The presentation will be preceded by PVCA's business meeting and followed by our usual dessert potluck.

