



President's Pen

Reflections from the Creek Bank

The mission of the Darby Creek Valley Association is an all volunteer, nonprofit organization dedicated to the protection and enhancement of all the Darby Creek watershed's resources, including water, wildlife, historical sites, and the floodplain. This is how we describe ourselves on the DCVA website (DCVA.org). I am still in awe of Hurricane Sandy and its enormous power and destruction in and around our watershed. The pictures of the rising levels of Darby Creek that I saw on TV provided a very strong reminder to me of our mission and responsibility to the watershed. Our hearts go out to those directly affected by the storm.

This storm and its effects will be discussed at all levels of government for months to come. I strongly encourage all DCVA members to play a role in how local governments address issues such as storm water retention, removal of potentially dangerous obstructions in the stream that could be carried downstream. And look around your own home and community to identify any potentially dangerous situations like block storm drains, heavy tree limbs hanging directly over wires, etc. This is our mission and our responsibility as members of the Darby Creek Valley Association.

The 2013 DCVA Annual Meeting is just around the corner. The meeting will be Saturday, January 26 at the Recreation Center (CREC) at the Haverford Reserve in Havertown. The meeting will be held from 8:00 to 3:00. We are excited to have the meeting at this location. The CREC recently opened and offers state of the art facilities. The room has the latest audio visual equipment, a modern kitchen and more than enough space for everyone and posters.

This year the focus of the Annual Meeting will be on the lower section of the watershed. We will have three topics of discussion. We will receive an update of the Clearview and Folcroft Landfill superfund sites. The second speaker will be a representative from the Eastwick Community. And the third speaker will discuss the removal of dams from Darby Creek and the impacts of the removal on the stream. There will be time for you to ask the speakers questions.

We also plan to have a light lunch, as always. During and after a light lunch, you will have a chance to talk to folks who have prepared posters for the meeting. There will be posters summarizing DCVA activities this past year (stream clean up, stream watch, etc.). We also hope to have posters from local organizations and posters from students doing work in the watershed. The annual meeting is open to ALL DCVA members. I strongly urge you to attend this meeting and connect with those of us with a very common thread: the protection and enhancement of the Darby Creek Watershed.

Lastly, as you look back on 2012, reflect on how you tried to enhance life in and around our watershed. The first big step is being a member of DCVA; your dues help keep us afloat. But is that really enough? Only you can answer that. If your answer is yes, okay; please give and give some more. But if your answer is no, then pay attention; DCVA offers you many, many opportunities to get involved. There is the stream clean-up, stream watch and the insect identification workshop, the canoe ramble, helping out at community gatherings (Heritage festival, Haverford day, etc.), trails, bike paths, tree planting: and on and on. There is an activity for almost every interest. Get involved!

Mark Your Calendars

DCVA Annual Membership Meeting

January 26, 2013

8:30 AM

At the

Haverford Reserve Community and Recreation Center

Come Join Us!

Topics:

Superfund Update

Presented by: Josh Barber

Environmental Protection Agency

Eastwick Community Citizen's Network

The Darby Creek Dam Removal Project

The history, the science, the construction, the future.

Presented by: Laura Craig, Ph.D.

Associate Director, River Restoration Program,

American Rivers

Committee reports and updates on the exciting work being done by members of the DCVA

Bring your ideas and suggestions for projects and improvements in the watershed

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Looking downstream after Kent Park Dam has been removed



The newly constructed trail from Hoffman Park to Baltimore Ave



*Kent Park Dam before removal.
Note high water flow through breached area.*



View downstream after Kent Park dam removal showing construction of the Vegetated Mechanically Stabilized Earth (coconut fiber matting filled with soil) and layered "terraced" to create a more natural bank slope

Bank restoration at Kent Park (left) and Hoffman Park (right) survived "Superstorm Sandy" and the 4 foot rise in the water level. Congratulations to Princeton Hydro, American Rivers, the engineers and the men who constructed the bank restoration and stabilization. (Photos taken 10/31/12)



UPDATE: DARBY CREEK DAM REMOVAL PROJECT

(Follow up to "The Valley", Spring/Summer, 2012)

Article and Photos Prepared by: Ann Jackson

Darby, Hoffman, and Kent Park dams were identified as problem sites within an Army Corps of Engineers study assessing localized flooding problems in the communities along lower Darby Creek. American Rivers and Princeton Hydro coordinated the project using the Delaware County Storm-water Management Plan to develop hydrologic models of peak flows for various flood events and field surveys assessed the geomorphic characteristics of the stream including pebble counts and measurement of bank fill benches in stable reaches downstream and upstream. The goal of this project is to reduce localized flooding by restoring the natural ability of the free flowing creek to store flood water, reduce debris collected behind the dams, reduce safety hazards and liability issues, and reconnect and restore fragmented habitat in the lower 10.5 miles of Darby Creek with the Delaware River.

In September and October the dams at Hoffman and Kent Parks were removed. Darby Creek now flows gently through the central channel. Previously, high water flows through the breached area of the dams contributed to stream bank erosion at the Clifton Heights Swim Club and Kent Park.

Some of the Bank Stabilization and Restoration features include the following (Also see pictures):

1. Boulders and rocks from the dams were used to stabilize the bank, as boulder and rock toe protection for the vegetated mechanically stabilized earth, and as river stone to create more diversity and habitat upstream.
2. The existing impounded accumulated sediment from behind the dams was removed to the desired grade and mixed with top soil and used in the vegetated mechanically stabilized earth.
3. Vegetated mechanically stabilized earth (coconut fiber matting "wrap" filled with the impounded sediment and topsoil) was used to stabilize the bank and create a more natural bank slope along the upstream bank at each dam site. The "coconut fiber and soil wraps" were geometrically arranged in "terraced" (see NOTE) layers to create a 2:1 equivalent bank slope (a 2 feet horizontal to 1 foot vertical slope). These were seeded with grass seed and live stakes of willow red osier dogwood, etc. Eventually the root systems will hold the banks that will have a natural slope of trees and grass. The coconut fibers biodegrade in 5-7 years.

Additional work being done includes:

1. At the Hoffman Park dam site a stone wall is being constructed along the bank on the Scottdale side close to Baltimore Ave.
2. A trail is being constructed from Hoffman Park to Baltimore Ave. A trail is also being constructed in Kent Park.

Darby 12th Street dam removal has been started. A feature of bank stabilization at the Darby dam includes reuse of suitable root wads and timbers (trees) that are removed during channel grading and reconstruction. The logs and root wads will be used for root wad revetment, timber/rock J-hooks, and locked



Stonewall construction along Scottdale Road

log toe protection. Stayed tuned.

Between 2009 and 2011 the PA Fish and Boat Commission did habitat, water quality and fish surveys involving 21 intersects where they measured stream width, depth, substrate, type and quality of available cover. The types and numbers of fish at the 3 dam sites were identified. The data is in the process of being compiled.

The PA Boat and Fish Commission noted that storm-water runoff is the major cause of erosion, sediment, flooding, and poor habitat in Darby Creek. Because of these conditions, the Commission probably will NOT become involved in habitat restoration as they do in other areas in Pennsylvania. Therefore, it is important to promote programs that reduce storm-water runoff in the Darby/Cobbs Creek watersheds.

In September, before the Kent Park dam was removed, Kathryn Goddard-Doms, PhD and students collected benthic macroinvertebrate samples from above and below the dam. This is part of her ongoing study of the differences in macroinvertebrate communities above and below the dam and the effect of dam removal.

(NOTE: The word "terraced" is NOT to be mistaken for flood plain terraces. I used terraced to describe the geometrical design used to create the bank slope.)



Vegetative Buffer at Kent Park Dam

Darby Creek Presence at Haverford Township Events

Article prepared by Tim Denney

As part of the 18th Annual Haverford Township Day celebration, DCVA had a presence in the Green Zone set up on Darby Rd. This was an excellent opportunity to educate the people who strolled along Darby Rd. about the mission of DCVA and the importance of the watershed. Over 18,000 people participated in the day's many events.

The Green Zone was coordinated through the Environmental Action Committee and the Department of Parks and Recreation. Alan Samel, DCVA president, as well as other members of DCVA were on hand to spread the word and encourage new members. Other components of the Green Zone included an electric SEPTA bus, electric cars and bikes, Natural Lands Trust, PECO, valet parking for bikes and various businesses that sell solar and other alternate energy products.

Alan has encouraged our organization to reach out at community events like this along the watershed to promote DCVA and the work we are doing to preserve and protect the Darby Creek.

DCVA member Tim Denny is the coordinator of Haverford Township Day. The theme of the day was the 100th anniversary of the incorporation of Haverford Township in 1912. The Grand Marshall was Gladys Getts, a 100 year old resident who has lived in the township her entire life.



A young rider promotes alternative transportation on a 100 year old Penny Farthing bicycle as part of the Haverford Township Day celebration



Ready for action: Alan Samel, DCVA President, mans the DCVA table Haverford Heritage Festival, June 3, 2012.. He was joined by Tim Denny and Ann Jackson who also provided information about creek friendly lawn care, storm water runoff reduction, trail development.



Alan Samel, Ann Jackson (above) and Jan Marie Rushforth braved the gusty winds at Haverford Township Day on October 6, 2012.

With the posters propped and taped to the DCVA table, educational pamphlets and newsletters anchored with rocks, and macroinvertebrate samples submerged in liquid in collection pans the DCVA table survived the weather.

Alan enlightend adults and kids about the macroinvertebrates used to assess water quality. Alan and Ann also provided educational information about Stream Watch, Insect Identification, Creek Friendly Lawn Care, Trails, the Darby/Cobbs Creek Watershed Wide Clean-Up and what people can do to protect our waterways.



At the Haverford Heritage Festival, June 3, 2012, Alan Samel identify's the mayfly nymphs and other macroinvertebrates that he, Ann Jackson, enthusiastic adults and kids collected from Cobbs Creek along Karakung Drive. Alan's Stream Watch and Insect Identification programs monitor water quality in Darby Creek

Governor Printz Race and Ramble With a Twist

Article prepared by Jaclyn Rhoads

Every year, DCVA holds a canoe ramble and race along the Darby Creek in September. Typically, racers will go down the Darby Creek across the Delaware and finalize at the Governor Printz Park in Tinicum. Although year after year, competitors enjoy the trek, it has also posed some dangers to those less skilled in crossing the Delaware in competition with boats, etc. DCVA has officially changed the race course so that competitors can race along Darby Creek to the Ridley Marina, turn around the island and come back to the John Heinz Wildlife Refuge starting point.

This year welcomed a number of racers and ramblers alike. The ramblers enjoyed a paddle on the Darby Creek at the end of the John Heinz Wildlife Refuge's Cradle of Birding Festival. DCVA has a table with information about our organization as well as sign-up sheets for individuals wanting to rent a canoe and enjoy the creek at the end of the day. If you missed us this year, we will see you next year same time at the Cradle of Birding Festival.

The racers came out strong on Sunday, September 16th. A number of the same faces plus some new individuals participated this year with a total of 15 racers on canoes, kayaks and specialty boats. The following are the participants and their times of completion:

- Rockaway (Andriy) 1:09:07
- Glen Green 1:11:17
- Don M. 1:14:38
- Steve and Sue 1:16:36
- Team Awesome 1:19:04
- ED 1:20:45
- Jeff P. 1:21:45
- Brayton P. 1:28:15
- Rosemary M. 1:37:36



Jaclyn Rhoads with Governor Prinz challengers

Other individuals that participated in the fun of it included Mangelsdorf/Tybinko, Britta K., Murray and Michele. DCVA has two categories of competition – one for men and one for women, so we awarded three medals to each category. Congrats to everyone for participating!

DCVA extends a great thank you to our board members for helping, Glen Green for spreading the word about the event, and Whole Foods, Wilderness Canoes in Delaware and Residential Mold Services for their donations.

Please visit our sponsors at their websites and we look forward to seeing you next year! For more information about the canoe event, please contact;

Jaclyn Rhoads:

267-221-5274

jaclyn_rhoads@yahoo.com

DCVA Table Draws Attention at Cradle of Birding at Heinz Refuge



Macroinvertebrates, water quality, and Stream Watch peaked the curiosity of adults and kids at the Cradle of Birding Conference at the John Heinz Wildlife Refuge on Sept. 15, 2012. Ann Jackson manned the DCVA table and provided many environmentally friendly tips.



DCVA educational information about creek friendly lawn care, Stream Watch, trails, and methods that municipalities and homeowners can use to reduce stormwater run off were just some of the environmentally friendly tips given to the Cradle of Birding participants at the John Heinz Wildlife Refuge, September 15, 2012.

Bioretention Basins in Springfield Decrease Storm-water Runoff into Darby Creek

Article prepared by Ann Jackson

Ken Rapp (DCVA, STEAC), Todd McGarvey (DCVA, STEAC), and Ann Jackson (DCVA) weed and maintain the bioretention basins at the Springfield Township Administration Building. The Best Management Practices (BMP) bioretention basins were designed and constructed by Springfield Township and the Springfield Township Environmental Advisory Committee (STEAC) in 2009 2012. The basins reduce storm water runoff and non-point source pollution that flows from Springfield Township into Levis Run a tributary of Darby Creek.

It has been calculated that the BMP'S will capture, treat, and infiltrate over 93% of all annual storm water runoff.

Valley House Update An Historic Jewel at Risk

Article Prepared by: John Furth and Maya Silva

The Valley House, most likely built in the 19th century, is along the proposed Darby Creek trail, midway between Bloomfield Ave. and the Swedish Cabin. The trail passes underneath the Garrett-Bishop Ave. Bridge, past the Burnley Mansion and the Valley House and continues up the hill to the Indian Head rock, along the ridge to the, now abandoned, portion of Creek Rd and then down to the Swedish Cabin. [see Spring 2012 issue of the Valley for more on the history of the house.]

In the 2003 Update to Upper Darby Township's Comprehensive Plan, the Valley House was specifically identified as one of only a handful of "historically significant properties" in the Township. The DCVA would like to see the Valley House saved. From the outside the structure appears sound as there are no vertical cracks in the walls. Members of the DCVA have inquired about the Valley House at recent Upper Darby Township Council and Historical Commission meetings. Representatives of these governmental bodies and other Township officials have stated that the Valley House has been targeted for demolition due to a mold problem. As a result, Upper Darby Township, the current owner of the property, has already solicited and received bids for demolishing this historical home. The Chief Administrative Officer for Upper Darby, Tom Judge Jr., has indicated that the Township does not have any estimates on the cost of restoring the Valley House.



Valley House: Spring 2012

Current Runoff Volume and the Proposed Runoff and Infiltrate Volumes for one of the bioretention basin at Ridgewood Ave at Township Building (see picture) are:

Event	Existing Runoff Vol.	Proposed Infiltrated Vol.	Propose Runoff Vol.	% Infiltrated
1 year	8,026 cu ft	7,969 cu ft	57 cu ft	99%
100 yr.	33,931 cu ft	16,547 cu ft	17,384 cu ft	49%



Ken Rapp, Todd McGarvey and Ann Jackson weeding the Springfield Township Administration retention basin

In keeping with one of the goals of the Darby Creek Valley Association, to help protect the historical resources that surround the Darby Creek, members of its Board of Directors will continue to pursue information about the Township's plans for the Valley House and the facts that were considered during the decision making process to demolish it. The DCVA acknowledges that the historical properties that border the Darby Creek need to be protected and restored not only to connect us to the past but also for the future. They will serve as important reminders of why early residents of Delaware County settled so close to the Darby Creek and draw interest from history buffs and recreation seekers who will one day visit the proposed Darby Creek Stream Trail Park.

Anyone interested in becoming involved with this effort please contact us at message@dcva.org



7th Annual Delaware County Environmental Summit

Another year has gone by and the Delaware County Environmental Summit is scheduled for the 3rd Saturday in February (2/16/2013) at 8:30 AM at the Cusano Environmental Education Center in the John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge on 86th and Lindbergh in Philadelphia. The summit is a free event open to residents in Delaware County and beyond and local and state elected and appointed officials. It is a great forum for getting information on local groups, networking with others, and learning about environmental issues in the county.

If you are interested in attending, please contact Jaclyn Rhoads at 267-221-5274 or jaclyn_rhoads@yahoo.com. More details about the summit and to register can be found at <http://delcoenvironmental.tripod.com>.



Derron LeBrake, Robin Mann and Ann Jackson scooping up critters from the creek bottom

TAG update October 2012
Lower Darby Creek Area Superfund Site
Recent Activity

Prepared by Jaclyn Rhoads

On Wednesday, September 19th, DCVA attended an open house organized by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) at the Eastwick Community Center. This open house was intended to address many of the concerns held by Eastwick residents including but not limited to the Clearview Landfill, storm-water and flooding, air quality, and water quality. The meeting was well attended with approximately 70-100 people.

Each of the above issues of concern was staffed by an agency representative in addition to EPA including Philadelphia Water Department, Delaware County Planning Department, Department of Environmental Protection, and Department of Health. Material was available for all attendees, and DCVA talked with most of the agency representatives as well as some attendees. In addition, Jaclyn Rhoads, TAG manager for DCVA, was interviewed by NBC 10. You can see the coverage by visiting:

<http://www.nbcphiladelphia.com/news/local/170445216.html>

The EPA continues its progress on the Clearview Landfill and is getting closer to releasing reports on the clean-up and capping process. There are three new documents up on the LDCA web-page:

- The Removal Site Evaluation Report (discussing investigation of the Eastwick north field and the removal of PCB contaminated soil from Southern Industrial Area at Clearview)
- The Fish Tissue Sampling Results, and
- Final Remedial Investigation Addendum

These can be accessed through <http://www.epa.gov/reg3hwmd/npl/PASFN0305521.htm>

As always, you can contact Jaclyn Rhoads – TAG Manager – at 267-221-5274 or jaclyn_rhoads@yahoo.com if you would like more information about the landfill or DCVA's involvement.

Stream-Watch a Huge Success!
The Insect identification Workshop is coming up fast!

Article prepared by Alan Samel

Put it in your calendars! Put it on your refrigerator door! The DCVA Ninth Annual Insect Identification Workshop will be held Saturday December 8 at the Environmental Center at the Haverford Reserve.

The annual Stream Watch was April 21. Thanks to the small army of volunteers who helped make this a great day. It was a beautiful day to get wet! Samples were taken from five locations on Darby Creek: Bartram Park in Darby, Darby Creek Road in Havertown (downstream from the Haverford Reserve), Skunk Hollow in Radnor, the Brandywine Preserve at Waterloo Mills in Easttown, and the Swedish Cabin in Upper Darby.

The insects and bugs we collect provide a snapshot of the health of Darby Creek. This is the ninth year of intense sample collections and identifications. From this long-term sampling, a trend of the stream health at each site has been determined. Each year we compare our findings from the water quality determinations from the previous years. It's a way of getting the big picture from a lot of very small bugs! But getting into the stream and collecting the bugs is only part of the streamwatch program.

The next step will be to identify the bugs pulled from the stream. We then can identify the level of water quality for that section of the creek. The Insect Identification Workshop is scheduled for December 8 in the Environmental Center at the Haverford Reserve. The purpose of the workshop will be to identify the aquatic organisms taken in samples during the April 21 Stream Watch. The results provide an assessment of the water quality of Darby Creek at each site during that period of time will be assessed based on the organisms present during sampling. The 2011 samples showed decreases in water quality at the Swedish Cabin, Waterloo Mills, and the Skunk Hollow sites, and increase in water quality at the Havertown site, and no change at the Bartram park site.

This is not anywhere near as hard as it sounds. Yes, we use microscopes. Yes, the bugs are small. And yes, there is mud and twigs and leaves. But NO, it is not difficult. Heck, last year teenagers processed over half the samples collected! Yes, teenagers. You know, almost adults with no attention span. Those teenagers. And they did a great job. This is the eighth year for this workshop, so we are getting pretty good at it. But we need your help and participation to make this work even better. If you are interested, please contact me at alan.samel@verizon.net. Did I mention that lunch is included.....I'll try anything!

The Valley is published by DCVA (Darby Creek Valley Association), P.O. Box 732, Drexel Hill, PA, 19026. Website: www.DCVA.org. A regional citizen's organization, DCVA works to protect and enhance the Darby Creek watershed. Articles for this newsletter were written by: Ann Jackson, Jaclyn Rhodes, Alan Samel, Maya Silva, John Furth and Jamie Anderson. Photos: John Haigis, Ann Jackson, Alan Sammel. Editor: Olga Thornton

OcTrolley Fest A walk through Darby Borough History

Photos and Article by John and Jan Haigis



Allison Kruse (left) and Debbie Betzala (right) of Sharon Savings Bank. Sharon Savings sponsored the Art Contest and helped sponsor OcTrolleyFest.



Walking tour just downstream from the 12th Street Dam at the Darby Town Center Shopping Plaza and on what is a potential link for the greenway through Darby (Bartram Park to the 12th street dam, along path of the 1695 Milltrace, across Mac Dade to Buttonwood Park and the 1904 Trolley Bridge.)

For the eighth year in a row, OcTrolleyFest, a Celebration of Transportation Heritage and Community rolled through more than 367 years of history in the communities of Darby, Yeadon, Colwyn, West and Southwest Philadelphia. Sponsored by Sharon Savings Bank, GenAire Systems, Eden Cemetery, Darby Borough, and supported by Friends of the Swedish Cabin, the Darby Creek Valley Association, Darby Fire Co No, 1, and Darby Free Library, among others, OcTrolleyFest took place on two weekends, Saturday, October 6 and Saturday October 13. Highlights included an art contest for 5th graders, Dave King's "Back in the Day Photo Display", Children's Author Becky Birtha, Esther and Jessie Lites wonderful barbecue, historic displays, scarecrow making, a walking tour of historic Darby Village, a talk on the "Souls of Black Baseball", and a guided tour on a 1947 vintage PCC trolley conducted by DCVA Board member Scott Maits. "Because we still have a working trolley system that goes back to 1858, for us, every day is Trolley Day," said Jan Haigis who along with her husband coordinates the annual event, "but it was still wonderful to see old friends and meet new friends on such a lovely day."

Additional information and pictures can be found on the web site www.OcTrolleyFest.org



"Shadows from the past" Tom Smith as Darby's first Librarian, John Pearson talking to a visitor to OcTrolleyFest

2013 Darby Creek Cleanup set for Saturday April 27

Article prepared by John Haigis

The Annual Clean-up of Darby Creek and its tributaries has been a signature event for the Darby Creek Valley Association and hundreds of volunteers ever since the organization was founded in 1984. Every year, volunteers gather on the fourth (or last) Saturday in April, to remove the shopping carts, tires, soda cans, vacuum cleaners, couches, jacuzzis, lawn furniture, auto parts, and other assorted debris that somehow ends up in the creek. "One year we even found a typewriter," said Jan Haigis who after eight years is stepping down as coordinator of the annual event. "Board member Ed Silberstein has agreed to help coordinate cleanup efforts for the 2013 Cleanup on April 26, 2013. The creek is getting cleaner year by year," Haigis said. "but there are still areas that need care and attention. We need neighbors to let us know areas we have missed" In recent years, the cleanup has expanded to include additional sites on Cobbs Creek which is Darby Creek's largest tributary. "We are always looking for new volunteers and people who want to clean their part of the creek as site captains," Haigis said.

For more information or to volunteer, please contact
Volunteer Coordinator Barbarann Keffer or visit www.dcva.org



OcTrolley Fest participants enjoy trolley ride on a 1947 vintage PCCII along the route of the original 1858 horsecar through 367 years of Darby history



Ryan (XX) who portrayed abolitionist Thomas Garrett at the 12th Street Dam at OcTrolleyFest (before reconstruction)



Reconstruction at the 12th Street dam site.

IMPORTANT:
Please Review Prior to Annual Meeting

NOMINATIONS FOR THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board appointed Nominating Committee consisting of Ann Jackson, Derron LaBrake, Toni McIntosh, Alan Samel, and Fritz Thornton have conferred and are putting forth the following slate of candidates for the Board of Directors. New Board nominees are:

- Donna Adams
- Jerry Krieg
- Peter Puglionesi
- Steve Tessler.

Incumbent Board nominees are:

- Palmer Dalesandro
- Tim Denny
- John Furth
- Jan Haigis
- Ann Jackson
- Derron LaBrake
- Toni McIntosh
- Jaclyn Rhoads

Emeritus Board nominee: Andy Saul.

Anyone interested in serving on the DCVA board please contact DCVA at message@dcva.org. Additional nominees for the Board may be made in writing to the Secretary using address noted above, prior to the Annual Meeting or from the floor at the Annual Meeting. The Board may consist of 9-35 members. The Board, including the nominees listed above would consist of 29 members.

Congratulations to all of the nominees!

Backyard Buffers and Rain Barrel Workshops

*Water Management Practices that
help Protect Darby Creek*

Article Prepared by Jamie Anderson

Backyard Buffers Rainbarrel Workshop
The Pennsylvania Resources Council and the Darby Creek Valley Association presented a Backyard Buffer and Rainbarrel making workshop on October 10 at the Upper Darby Watkins Senior Center. Funding for the workshop was provided through a Growing Greener grant. The workshop, which was attended by over 40 residents, mostly from the Darby Creek Watershed area, learned the basics of watershed science and how their daily activities and home yards can negatively impact the creeks within their watershed. During the workshop, attendees learned about stormwater runoff and its detrimental impacts to streams, methods for water conservation in their homes, and new landscaping techniques that are creek friendly.

Each participant received a rain barrel made from a recycled food grade barrel to take home and install on their properties and educational literature including the book *Guide to Gardening for life in Southeastern Pennsylvania*.

There are three more workshops in the planning stage for this spring. They will be held in various communities in the Southeastern part of Delaware County. Stay tuned for more information.

For Future Workshops

Register on line by visiting www.PRC.org
or call PRC at 610-353-1555 ext. 232



Towns Join to Control Stormwater and Improve Water Quality in their Creeks

Article Prepared by Jamie Anderson

In December of 2011, four eastern Delaware County communities, Collingdale, Sharon Hill and Yeadon Boroughs and Upper Darby Township, signed an intergovernmental agreement forming the Eastern Delaware County Stormwater Collaborative with the goal of improving control of stormwater and reducing pollution by operating as a single unit. In October of 2012, two additional municipalities, Norwood Borough and Haverford Township joined the Collaborative.

The Collaborative's main focus is to jointly undertake state-mandated stormwater related activities and projects. By acting as a unit, the towns expect to improve compliance with state requirements, avoid duplication, and reduce costs.

Due to the dense development and old, sometimes crumbling piping and infrastructure, stormwater runoff is a significant problem in the Eastern part of Delaware County and is a leading cause of pollution to the Darby Creek and its tributaries.

In May of 2012, the members of the Collaborative appointed a coordinator with experience in environmental education and state programs dealing with control of stormwater runoff. The coordinator's responsibilities include overall program management, planning and coordination, budgeting, community outreach, report preparation, compilation of grant applications, and development and oversight of public educational events and projects.

The Collaborative's initial projects involve working jointly with the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission and the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society to increase tree cover in member communities. Tree coverage in urbanized areas greatly reduces stormwater runoff and improves water quality. The Collaborative is also partnering with the Pennsylvania Resources Council to implement a stormwater awareness program for elementary aged students in the member communities' public schools. Additional projects include support of DCVA's Backyard Buffers workshops and the creation of stormwater educational bookmarks for local libraries, schools, and municipal buildings.

The member communities hope to continue to forge such relationships, finding that working together as a group they are able to accomplish projects that, if working alone, would be impossible due to size and budget constraints. The Collaborative also offers an opportunity for information sharing amongst member communities.

The Eastern Delaware County Stormwater Collaborative is working hard to improve the health of Darby Creek. The communities of the Collaborative invite all boroughs and townships in the Darby Creek watershed and beyond to join the group and take advantage of these economies of scale to reduce compliance costs and improve water quality in their community.

Additional details on the Collaborative can be obtained by contacting the coordinator, Jamie Anderson at jameia98@yahoo.com or 484-326-6248.

Delaware Estuary 2012 Report

Article prepared by Fritz Thornton

Below is a summary of the health of the Delaware Estuary as reported in Volume 22, Issue 4 of *Estuary News* and it is positive! It shows that the DCVA and other like watershed associations are making progress.

1. Forests and nature areas: These are still decreasing but at a much slower rate.
2. Water use and needs: Well managed supply and demand for public even with the challenge of growing demand
3. Fresh and salt water line: management for drinking water remains good but challenged due to increasing demand
4. Pollution: Cleanest it has been since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution though not yet acceptable for fishing and swimming.
5. Reduction of contaminants: Slow but progressing
6. Better management of sediment and coastal wetlands but we still need more education and conservation efforts.
7. Critters:
 - Horseshoe Crabs: Smaller in number than in the past but growing and still the largest breeding ground in the world. Protected and not at risk.
 - Eastern Oysters: Diseases and lack of restoration funding slow progress but we continue to have good natural beds
 - Blue Crabs: Thriving due to management efforts.
 - Osprey: Have rebounded and are doing well
 - Fresh water mussels: Declining in creeks with the exception of the main stream Delaware River where they have recently been found in increasing numbers.

- Atlantic Sturgeon: Endangered but recent observations of increased spawning giving hope that protections are effective.
- American Shad: Upward trends are there but slow compared with historic numbers in spite of regional management efforts.

In summary the trend is good. We should feel good about our accomplishments as we continue our efforts as we still have a long way to go. Let's keep at it. What we do makes good things happen.

For additional information contact the Partnership for the Delaware Estuary, 1-800-445-4935

Darby Borough Avoids Major Problems due to Superstorm Sandy

Darby Borough, often flooded during major storm events, was prepared for the worst-case scenario as Superstorm Sandy approached.

The impact, however, was minimal in some part due to mitigation efforts completed prior to the storm. Those efforts included redesign of the MacDade Boulevard bridge and removal of homes immediately adjacent to the creek. Ongoing volunteer efforts, including the annual DCVA cleanup also helped. Jan Haigis, Co-Chair of the cleanup for the past eight (8) years, reported to the Daily Times on the type and amount of debris cleaned up routinely from under the bridge and streamside during the cleanup. As she noted, "the creek flowing faster is a good thing: It allows water to move more quickly through the area and get to where it needs to go."

JOIN THE DARBY CREEK VALLEY ASSOCIATION TODAY!

The Darby Creek Valley Association (DCVA) is dedicated to the protection and enhancement of all of the watershed's resources, including water, wildlife, historical sites and the floodplains. The organization's immediate goals are to prevent all forms of pollution in the Darby Creek and its tributaries, to prohibit dumping and construction on the floodplain and to expand our educational programs for all residents within the watershed. It also seeks to improve water quality and maintain a debris-free stream through clean-ups and public education. DCVA works to preserve historic properties, such as the Swedish Cabin and the Blue Bell Inn. The Association would like to set aside the more than 30 miles of valley for use as a greenway for all residents to enjoy. We need your support. Help us continue to protect the environment for ourselves and our children.

We invite you to fill in the form below, check member category, and mail form with your check to:

The Darby Creek Valley Association, P.O. Box 732, Drexel Hill PA 19026

Name: _____ Date _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

My phone is _____ email is: _____ Municipality _____

- Individual Member.....\$25.00
- Family Member.....\$35.00
- Senior Citizen or student.....\$10.00
- Corporate or Municipality.....\$50.00
- Non-Profit Group.....\$35.00
- Life Member.....\$250.00

Amount enclosed \$ _____ Please check all the items that apply above.

DCVA is a 501(c)(3) Non-Profit organization - All donations are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law

CALENDAR

- Insect Identification Workshop.....December 8, 2012
Environmental Center at the Haverford Reserve
- Annual Meeting.....January 26, 2013
Haverford Reserve Community and Recreation Center
- Environmental Summit.....3rd Saturday in February
John Heinz Wildlife Refuge
- Backyard Buffer and Rain Barrel Workshops.....Date TBD
Information at www.prc.org or call 610-353-1555 ext 232
- Stream WatchApril 20, 2013
Information at www.dcvva.org
- DCVA Annual Cleanup.....April 27, 2013
Information at www.dcvva.org
- DCVA Board Meetings.....Delaware County Peace Center, Springfield, PA
3rd Saturday, Monthly (Subject to Change)

Except where otherwise noted, please check www.dcvva.org for additional information

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Organization
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Upper Darby, PA


Davy Creek Valley Association
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Drexel Hill, PA 19026