President’s Pen:

View from the Creek Bank

This was a busy spring and summer! 37 tons of Darby Creek trash went over Delaware County’s scales. Another 7,000 pounds was picked up locally. Total: 81,000 pounds of “stuff” was pulled from the creek and its banks by 400 volunteers in one day. That’s a record, and it has brought us back to where we would have been before Hurricane Floyd.

We have a consultant for our Rivers Conservation Grant (see article on page 2), a new web page, a new date for our annual dinner and some changes in our personnel.

We owe a great deal of thanks to Helen Berger who stepped in as treasurer when we needed her. She did a tremendous job under tough conditions and with never enough time. Many many thanks Helen.

We depend on people such as Helen for this all volunteer group. Consequently we are always looking for new members who want to contribute their talents to keeping Darby Creek Valley clean and green.

—Continued on page 12

At 14th Annual Awards Dinner October 21st
DCNR Grant Will Be Focus of Speaker

The 14th annual dinner at which we award the Bob Doherty Ribbon of Green Award will be held Saturday October 21st at Charlotte’s Restaurant, 3207 West Chester Pike in Newtown Square. Cocktail hour will begin at 5:30 p.m. with a buffet dinner following at 6 p.m.

Our speaker will be Terry Hough, a planner in the Grants Management Division of the Bureau of Recreation and Conservation with DCNR, and the Grant Coordinator for the Darby Creek Valley Association’s Rivers Conservation Grant.

Terry is originally from Schuylkill County PA and earned his Master’s degree in Urban and Regional Planning from the University of Pennsylvania. An environmental planner since 1992, Terry started as a rivers coordinator with the Pennsylvania Scenic Rivers Program in Pennsylvania DEP. He coordinated the first rivers conservation conference in Pennsylvania. That conference led to the establishment of the Pennsylvania Rivers Conservation Program in 1994 and the Coldwater Heritage Partnerships Program in 1997. Terry assisted in the development of the Pennsylvania Rivers Conservation Grants Program and was assigned as our coordinator soon after we were awarded the grant in May of 1998. He will discuss the philosophy behind the Pennsylvania Rivers Conservation Program and how this grant program can benefit the Darby Creek Watershed.

Watch your mail for your invitation to the dinner. This affair is both a fundraiser and our largest social function. We look forward to seeing members and friends.

Remember: Deadline for ads for the banquet program book is September 29th. Help DCVA with an ad!

Plan to Attend DCEN Conference October 28

The Delaware County Environmental Network will hold its annual conference on Saturday October 28, 2000, 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Springfield Township Building, 50 Powell Road, Springfield. Featured speakers will be Andrew Reilly, member of Delaware County Council, and John Pickett, director of the Delaware County Planning Department.

Representatives from DCEN organizations are encouraged to report on their projects and current events. DCVA, a founding member of DCEN, will participate. Registration fee is $10; students, free. Please call Monica Starr at 610 892-9484 for more information.

First Public Participation Meeting for Grant Scheduled

The first public participation meeting for the Darby Creek Rivers Conservation Grant will be held Monday October 30, 2000, 7 to 9 p.m., at the Springfield Township municipal building, 50 Powell Road, Springfield. The purpose of the meeting is to obtain public input into how to protect, restore and enhance the Darby-Cobs watershed. The meeting is sponsored by the Darby-Cobs Watershed Partnership, which includes the Darby Creek Valley Association. For more information call the Partnership at 215 563-0250 or the DCVA Hotline at 610 789-1814.

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**Status of Darby Creek Watershed Rivers Conservation Grant**

Our advisory team is in place and we have selected our consultant and are now ready to implement the scope of work for the grant. We will meet with municipal officials at 8:30 a.m. for breakfast at the historic Grange Estate on Tuesday, October 10. Our consultant will address the role of our 31 municipalities and four counties as we develop the conservation plan.

On Monday, October 30, we will hold our first Public Participation Forum at which time residents within the watershed will have the opportunity for their input. The “grassroots” input is key to the development of the grant as the role people of all ages in the watershed, as stewards of our watersheds, will determine the long range implications of the grant. All residents are the stakeholders, and the Darby-Cobbs partnership sets this aspect as primary.

**DCVA Board Chooses Cahill Associates As Consultants for the DCNR Grant**

The consultant for DCVA’s Rivers Conservation Grant is Cahill Associates, an environmental consulting firm specializing in water resources management, environmental planning, and sustainable site design. Cahill has been performing environmental studies and water resources projects throughout the United States since 1974. The firm is committed to managing and sustaining our valuable land and water resources while meeting the ever-more demanding needs of society. Cahill has long recognized the interconnection of water related issues—stormwater, groundwater, wastewater, flood control, water supply—and the need to manage our water resources on a watershed basis. As a firm, Cahill is committed to a sustainable watershed management approach in all its water resource projects.

**Darby-Cobbs Watershed Partnership Releases Watershed Status Report**

The Darby-Cobbs Watershed Partnership announced the release of an extensive Darby-Cobbs Watershed Status Report. The results of the report were made public during two water sampling events conducted by area students. Students from the School District of Philadelphia conducted water sampling experiments in the Cobbs Creek on September 19, 2000, hosted by the Cobbs Creek Community Environmental Education Center; students from William Penn School District did their testing in Darby Creek on Wednesday, September 20, hosted by DCVA.

The raw data and scientific information used for the research, publication and dissemination of the Darby-Cobbs Watershed Status Report was culled from three comprehensive Technical Memoranda produced by the Philadelphia Water Department’s Office of Watersheds, as a result of monitoring data collected during 1999.

The City of Philadelphia Water Department, the Cobbs Creek Community Environment Education Center, and the DCVA are just three of the agencies included in the Darby-Cobbs Partnership, whose regional membership is shared by groups based in Philadelphia and Delaware County. Also among its membership are the Delaware County Planning Department, the John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge at Tinicum and the Delaware Bay Estuary Project, Fairmount Park Commission’s Natural Lands Restoration and Environmental Education Program, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, and various municipalities in Delaware County. Facilitation and technical assistance for the development of the Partnership was spearheaded by the Pennsylvania Environmental Council.

The Darby-Cobbs Watershed report includes a brief history of the watershed and answers many questions, including the following: Exactly what is a watershed? How do the terms “swimmable,” “fishable,” and “drinkable” relate to the Darby Creek and Cobbs Creek? Are the creeks safe for children to play in? Why do so many basements in this watershed flood every time there is a heavy rainstorm? What are the local, state and federal governments doing to improve water quality? Who cares enough to protect our natural water resources? What can an individual do to impact positive change?

The report is available at the Partnership website: www.darby-cobbs.org. Copies will be available at your local library by mid-October.

**Wish List**

DCVA would like to back up all of its documents on the DCVA computer. To do this thoroughly, however, we first need to upgrade the software on the computer. If anyone can donate the following programs to DCVA, please call Olga Thornton at (610) 789-1814: Office 2000, PageMaker 6.5, Photoshop, Adobe Acrobat. We also need some cords and cables and a computer “whiz” (meaning any member or friend with more technical computer knowledge than we have) to help us accomplish this task.

**DCVA Welcomes New Members**

**New Individual or Family Members:**
- Louis & Michele Cordivari, Broomall
- Earl M. & Emilie T. Forte, Devon
- Paul Kelley, Havertown
- Vivian J. Leimseider, Glenolden
- Kenneth & Jeanne LeSage, Lansdowne
- Michael McCollum, Drexel Hill
- Cynthia Moses, Bryn Mawr

**New Organization Member:**
- Norwood Historical Society
Urban Forestry Grant Trees Planted in Area Devastated by Aftermath of Floyd

Hurricane Floyd, which swept through the Darby Creek Valley September 16, 1999, caused a lot of damage along Darby Creek. The cleanup after Floyd, though necessary, in some places increased the devastation, as large vehicles had to be brought down to the stream’s edge to clear trees and debris from the creek.

On September 16, 2000, eight (8) trees that were given to the Darby Creek Valley Association as part of an Urban Forestry Grant were planted across Darby Creek from the area where homes on Rolling Road were destroyed by the storm. Tractors had been brought in to that area to clear a large tree and other debris that were clogging the stream following the storm. The tractor had flattened all vegetation in an area about 30 feet by 50 feet.

Clyde Hunt, left, and Fritz Thornton carried the trees over the berm behind Idle Hour Tennis Club and about a quarter of a mile into the wooded area that lines Darby Creek between Township Line Road and Burmont Road. The trees were planted and can be recognized by the tubes and stakes that surround them. These tubes will protect the trees as they grow from deer, who like to rub their antlers on tree bark, and other potential natural and/or man made threats.

Interested in helping with our streambank stabilization projects? Call Clyde Hunt at 610 446-9333.

Local Students to Study Darby Creek Using Computers

Students at Penn Wood West Junior High School in Darby will be studying ecology using computers via a grant from the William Penn Foundation. Awarded to computer teacher George Ambrose, the study will focus on ecology issues with an emphasis on Darby Creek. “So much of our local history has been influenced by the creek—and what Man has done, or not done, to it,” Ambrose said. “Larger issues like global warming, over-development and invasive species can be learned by studying the local ecosystem,” he added.

Part of the study will include use of the LEAF PACK project developed by Stroud Water Research Center. Ambrose participated in a week-long training program for this study this summer.

The data students collect will be stored in the computer and shared with other students via the Internet. Students will also participate in the planning and implementation of the new “John Bartram Park” in Darby that will be built where houses once stood prior to the onslaught of Hurricane Floyd. “Many of our students were directly affected by Floyd and our school was used as a Red Cross shelter,” Ambrose pointed out. “This class will include units on watersheds and flood plains, but these concepts will be more relevant to the students because of this recent disaster.”

Mr. Ambrose has worked with Bill Frasch on the DCVA streambank restoration project. He hopes that students will volunteer their efforts to other creek-related projects as a result of this course.

Have trees will travel!!

After an excellent growing season, DCVA has 15 additional tall seedlings for streambank planting this fall or next spring. These riparian species are ready for planting, staking and support with plastic growth tubes. If you have an open area along our creeks, please see Fritz Thornton or Clyde Hunt to plant these this fall or next spring. Trees ready for planting include dogwoods, Buttonbush, red maples and large-toothed aspen.

Toolkit for Planting Available

The Pennsylvania Stream Releaf initiative is designed to help communities, watershed groups, farmers and citizens plant trees along stream banks. Because these stream buffers help prevent nonpoint source pollution runoff, the initiative is being incorporated into our DCVA educational program.

The program offers a toolkit that provides step-by-step instructions on how to plant trees and shrubs, what species to plant in specific areas, strategies for organizing groups to participate and contacts for more information. To contact the Stream Releaf program, call 877-PA GREEN.

Free Composting Workshops Offered

PA DEP and the Penn State Cooperative Extension offices are offering free backyard composting workshops throughout the state. These composting workshops are part of the state’s effort to meet its 35% recycling goal and reduce the amount of waste going into landfills.

The Delaware County Extension will hold its workshops on September 30, October 7, 14, and 21 at the Garrett Williamson Farm on Bishop Hollow Road in Newtown Square. The workshops run from 9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m. The first 150 county residents to register and complete the course will receive a free composting bin.

For information about the workshops, call the Delaware County Extension office at 610 690-2655. For information about composting, visit DEP’s website at www.dep.state.pa.us. To watch Stephen Green, a composting expert with Pennsylvania Resources Council, build a compost bin, visit www.GreenWorksChannel.org.
DCVA Cosponsors Stormwater Management Talks

DCVA and Delaware Riverkeeper Network sponsored two talks on Stormwater Runoff: Understanding and Solutions. The meetings, held September 19th in Havertown and September 26th in Prospect Park, discussed the latest engineering techniques and common sense practices that can preserve well water supplies, prevent downstream flooding, and protect aquatic habitats. The talks were given by Michelle Adams, P.E., of Cahill & Associates, West Chester.

Municipal officials, engineers, and concerned citizens came to the sessions to learn what can be done to prevent some of the destruction caused by new housing and business development. The talks and slide shows showed them how Stormwater Best Management Practices can help restore health to streams and improve the quality of the environment.

Community Conservation Partnerships
Program Grant Funds Available

The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) is accepting applications for grants for planning, acquisition, development, and technical assistance projects. Several funding sources have been combined to provide these grants: Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund, Growing Greener, and Pennsylvania Recreational Trails Program. Municipalities, municipal agencies, authorized organizations and pre-qualified land trust organizations may apply.

To obtain a copy of the new grant application manual and forms, go to www.dcnr.state.pa.us/grants.htm on the web. The deadline for applications is November 3, 2000.

2000 DCVA CLEANUP:
Snapshot from Radnor Township

DCVA volunteers in Radnor Township cleaned up two major sections of the Darby Creek watershed.

Led by DCVA member Lynn Yeakel, a section of Little Darby Creek that runs along Radnor’s Little Darby Creek Trail was scoured clean at the morning session with the help of scout leader Bob Miccolis, members of Girl Scout Troop 170 (led by Phyllis Defilice) and Main Line Unitarian Church, and Radnor School Board member Charles Madden with students from Wayne and Ithan elementary schools.

At noon, and led by DCVA member and Radnor Township commissioner Dave Cannan, the group then moved on to Clem Macrone Park in Garret Hill and met up with annual participants Ali (age 6) and Davis (age 8) Bare. It didn’t take long for the section of Valley Run in the park to be thoroughly cleaned of trash.

Since starting this annual cleanup of Darby Creek in Radnor 5 years ago, the above loyal volunteers agreed that there has been a noticeable improvement of the creek in their cleanup areas. This can be attributed to the steadfast dedication of these community members taking the time to keep our waterways litter-free. DCVA appreciates all the volunteers in Radnor Township and all along the creek who participate in our annual cleanup of Darby Creek and its tributaries.

DCVA has a new web address: www.dcva.org. Current newsletters as well as previous issues are available, along with other information about the organization. Check it out the next time you are browsing the Internet!
Another successful fish derby was held last May at Saw Mill Park in Radnor Township.

Radnor and Tredyffrin police departments, annual co-sponsors, in association with the Chester Valley Sportmens’ Association and DCVA, made sure there was plenty of stocked trout, bait, hot dogs and sodas and a generous number of prizes.

The day was made even more special because of recent improvements to the park under the careful supervision of Radnor Township's Construction Manager, Burt Grossman. In addition to the perimeter of the park now being lined with shade trees, children or adults who require the use of a wheelchair can now use an asphalt trail to get from the handicapped parking area down to Darby Creek.

And last year's fish habitat improvements, installed with manpower provided by the tournament’s sponsors and under the careful supervision of Karl Lutz of the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, have made this section of Darby Creek a very special fishing spot.

The 2000 event, held for the first time in Canada, was sponsored by the Canadian and Nova Scotia Forestry Association and the Canon Corporation. For information about the Envirothon, call the Delaware County Conservation District at 610 892-9484.

New this year was the video taping of all the events by cable public access producers Chip Layfield and John Haines Sr. for their show “Round ‘Bout Radnor.” This gave cable viewers the opportunity to understand that this wonderful fish derby happens because of a yearlong effort by a dedicated group of volunteers. A highlight of the video is a top-notch demonstration on how to gut a fish by 10 year old Matt Spiller.

Make a note to sign up early for this fish derby next May. Because this event is so much fun, tickets go fast. Don’t be left out!
Fall 2000 6 The Valley

Fall & Early Winter Activities in the Darby Creek Watershed

In Haverford Township:

The 6th annual Haverford Township Day will be held October 7, 2000, in Havertown. This year’s theme is “Hometown, Haverford Township.” The day will celebrate the township’s past, present and future, as well as a sense of togetherness in the community.

The day will begin with a parade at 10:30 a.m. and end approximately 4 p.m. A flea market, craft makers and food vendors will be part of the annual event. Special activities for children and live entertainment will be highlights. Nonprofit organizations, including Darby Creek Valley Association, will have tables with information about their groups.

At the Swedish Cabin:

The Friends of the Swedish Cabin invite the public to 2 events: the 6th annual Cabin Crafts and Friendship Day on Saturday, October 14, 2000, and the annual Trim-a-Swedish-Christmas Tree Party on Sunday, December 3, 2000. Both of these events will be held on the grounds of the Swedish Cabin, #9 Creek Road, Drexel Hill, PA.

At Cabin Crafts and Friendship Day, from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m., the Friends will illustrate the life and work of the early settlers and their Indian friends, the Lenni-Lenape. Colonial crafts people will be on hand to demonstrate their skills and show their tools. Refreshments will be available during the day and a Swedish colonial lunch will be served from 11 a.m. until 2 p.m. Admission is $1.00 donation; children under twelve are free. The rain date is Sunday, October 15th.

From 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. on December 3rd, young and old, members and non-members, are invited to help decorate the “julgran” (Christmas Tree), listen to seasonal music, enjoy holiday goodies by the fire and see the Ol’ Cabin in holiday dress. The event is free.

For additional information about either of these events or to get directions to the Swedish Cabin, leave your name and phone number at (610) 623-1650.

At the Grange Estate:

The Grange Estate will hold its annual fall festival on Sunday, October 15th, from 1 to 4 p.m. Open to the public; the festival is free.

The Grange is showcasing designers in the 19th century farmhouse. The special tours will be held October 19-22 and 26-29, and November 2-5, 2000. On Thursdays and Fridays the hours are 10-3; on Saturdays and Sundays, they are noon until 4 p.m. Admission is $10.00.

For more information, call the Grange Hotline at (610) 446-4958.

In Darby Borough:

On Saturday, October 14, 2000, the Darby Borough Historical and Preservation Society will celebrate by having a Darby Homecoming 2000.” This celebration, which will recognize the 318 year history of the municipality, is a commitment to the rebirth of the borough. The theme is “You can come home again.”

A parade in the morning will be followed by family reunions and picnics. At 2 p.m. a ceremony will present the Society’s Citizen Award to people who have contributed to a better quality of life for Darby citizens. Malcolm Poindexter of KYW will emcee the ceremony. Local organizations will portray historical Darby figures throughout the day. The public is invited to celebrate with Darby residents and friends.

Haverford State Hospital Environmental Update

By Jan Marie Rushforth, Secretary for Haverford Authority Consulting Task Force

Where is Haverford State Hospital and why is preservation important?

The site is approximately 212 acres; 60 acres are developed. It contains 150 acres of undeveloped woods, a meadow, wetlands and streams, including the two largest undeveloped stream basins of the Darby Creek watershed. There are 2 large old growth forests. There is a Pennsylvania endangered plant in the meadow—not seen since the 1930’s. Conservationists have identified 54 species of trees and 43 species of birds.

What is being done to preserve the site?

The site is the last large open tract of green open space and land in Haverford Township and one of the few left in Delaware County. Environmental and civic groups and citizens are working together to protect this parcel from development. In 1999, the Haverford Township Authority requested help from the Governor’s Commission to acquire, restore and preserve the site. On September 14, 1999, the Authority created the Haverford State Hospital Consulting Task Force to assist it. This work is ongoing.

An Update on Progress focusing on some of the environmental issues:

1) The Pennsylvania Department of General Services owns the property and works on an adaptation resolution soon. It wishes to do this during Governor Ridge’s administration which ends in January of 2002. Each year, the state spends $300,000 for security and maintenance (lawn cutting, etc.)

2) A Master Plan for use of the site is being created. The Task Force wrote the application for a $40,000 state planning grant. The township received a $50,000 Keystone Matching Grant through State Senator Tilghman. This will be matched locally to hire a planner to develop the Master Plan. The Scope of Work was also initially written by Task Force members. The Scope was submitted to the State and, we await the State’s response. The Township hopes to hire a Conservation Planner soon. A Master Plan should be completed during Fall 2000.

3) A Phase II Environmental Audit is under

--Continued on page 12
Boardwalk Re-opened at Merry Place

On Wednesday, August 2, 2000, DCVA President Fritz Thornton cut the ribbon to re-open the handicapped accessible fishing pier at Merry Place in Glendale Park in Havertown, as part of the 20th Annual Life. Be In It. Day celebration. Fritz cut the ribbon to open the boardwalk initially in May 1998. Unfortunately Hurricane Floyd went through Glendale Park with a fury in September 1999, flooding the park with six feet of water. The 200 foot boardwalk and the fishing pier were ripped from their foundations and deposited in various locations along Darby Creek. Floyd also washed away much of the top-soil, the sand volleyball courts, the plants and flowers in the perennial gardens, the gazebo benches and the wood carpeting on the trail.

The original boardwalk, made of wood, was built by volunteer contractors with supplies and materials either donated, or purchased with money from contributors, including DCVA. The purpose of the boardwalk is to make the beauty and wonder of Darby Creek available to as many people as possible. The new boardwalk, constructed with recycled plastic, consists of twelve foot sections, which will separate in the event of another flood. (In theory we won’t see another flood like Floyd for at least another 100 years.) Recycled plastic costs about twice as much as wood, but it is guaranteed for 50 years. Of the $42,000 cost, FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Administration) paid $32,000, with the remainder coming from Merry Place funds.

“Merry Place” originated with a letter sent to Tim Denny, Director of Parks and Recreation, in 1995 asking if there were any funds available for playground equipment for children with special needs. As there were no funds available, the Friends of Merry Place set out to raise money. Over time the vision grew to create a place where people of all ages and abilities could gather and feel welcome. Because nature and water are things we all enjoy, Glendale Park seemed the ideal location for this unique project. Tim Denny, a member of DCVA, met with Fritz and other officers of DCVA to discuss the idea and gain their support. Since 1996 the “Friends” have raised over $170,000 through corporate and individual contributions and numerous special events. Skilled and unskilled volunteers contributed almost all the labor. Floyd destroyed approximately $120,000 worth of work and materials; FEMA allocated almost $95,000 for reconstruction.

Although there is still much left to be done at Merry Place, people of all sizes can once again wheel, walk or ride down to fish, gaze or just enjoy sitting by the flowing waters of Darby Creek, our “ribbon of beauty.”
Heinz Refuge Continues Recovery from Oil Spill

Over seven months have passed since the discovery of an oil leak from a Sunoco pipeline in the John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge at Tinicum. The spill led to a rapid and harsh influx of people and equipment that exacerbated the damage from the leak itself. Cleanup began immediately, but the project is still not complete.

The 24-inch pipeline, which sprung the leak in a miter joint, was replaced shortly after the discovery of the leak but not until an estimated 190,000 gallons of crude had leaked in and around a section of the impoundment. Over the course of the pumping and recovery phase of the clean-up, approximately 174,000 gallons of oil were recovered. Sunoco has said that the additional lost oil was either soaked up by absorbent materials, pulled out within soil removed from the site, or evaporated.

Sunoco is now replacing a section each of 23 and 24-inch pipeline. Though these did not leak, Sunoco decided to replace the two additional sections as their outer coatings may have been compromised when oil pooled around them. This pipeline work should be completed by the beginning of October. The next phase will be to regrade and landscape the impacted area. Once that is done, work will start to remove the approximately 7,000 tons of stone deposited on the Haul Road as ballast for the trucks and equipment that moved to and from the spill site.

As spring arrived, an assessment of damage to wildlife began. A few fish, a muskrat, and some frogs were casualties. About two dozen turtles were taken to Tri-State Bird Rescue and Research in Newark, Delaware to be cleaned and rehabilitated. These were then transferred to Drexel University where they were outfitted with radio transmitters and returned to the refuge. They are being studied to learn about the long term effects of oil on turtles and also to learn more about the overall population of turtles in the area. They were joined by additional turtles serving as controls in the experiments.

Dr. James Spotila from Drexel is directing the study with two graduate students and a group of undergraduate students. This is the first long term study ever done on turtles impacted by an oil spill. The project is being funded by Sunoco.

Although the spill was devastating, most players agree that Sunoco responded as well as could be expected under the circumstances. When asked about any mitigation or enhancement projects at the Refuge to help bring the area back to pre-spill conditions, Sunoco spokesman, John McCann, said that projects would depend on environmental approval of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service which administers the Refuge and the U.S. EPA. He pointed out that various scenarios were possible including restoration of the 500 foot boardwalk which was destroyed by Hurricane Floyd and/or helping with completion of the Cusano Environmental Education Center.

The refuge is a tough and resilient little chunk of wildlife habitat and a living outdoor classroom that is critical to the survival of some of the last vestiges of wildlife left in our urban setting. The area is one of the few places left on the Eastern Seaboard where migrating waterfowl and songbirds can stop to rest and refuel. As a rare freshwater tidal marsh, it is the most urbanized refuge in the nation and the largest wetland of its kind in Pennsylvania.

Refuge Rebuilds

Canoe Launch

As we have passed the one year anniversary of Hurricane Floyd, some progress has been made to repair damage at the Refuge. Although the popular 500 foot boardwalk which spanned a section of the 140 acre impoundment has not been replaced (it is possible that money to repair the boardwalk may eventually come from Sunoco as part of the restitution from the oil spill), Dike Road and the canoe launch have been rebuilt by refuge staff and volunteers. Funds for the repairs came from the Refuge’s annual maintenance budget.
The Cusano Environmental Education Center (CEEC) is nearing completion at the John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge. The scaled back project that was originally scheduled to be completed in the spring of 2000 is now expected to open before the end of the year.

The CEEC is expected to open before the end of 2000. The Cusano Environmental Education Center at the Heinz Refuge. — Photo by Bill Buchanan

The CEEC, which up to this point has been funded with non-tax dollars, has dropped some components of its original plans. Most notable is the loss of the administrative wing which would have provided office space for refuge staff members. The Refuge will continue to lease office space, as it has done for the past 25 years, off-site, at International Plaza by the airport. Other components, which may have to be sacrificed as well, include the observation tower which would give visitors a bird’s eye view of the refuge, various security components and landscaping elements.

There is still hope that the CEEC can be completed as originally designed through federal funding—but to this point both the House and Senate Committees for Interior Appropriations have failed to include the Tinicum funding request in their budget recommendations. The good news is that the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation decided not to compromise the “public’s space”—the Visitor Center/Exhibit Wing and Environmental Education facility, while it searches for monies for the rest of the project.

The center is being built as a showcase for “green building” technology. Recycled tires were used for flooring and wood harvested from sustainably managed forests were used in the structure. To increase energy efficiency, extensive use of natural light and geothermal heating and cooling was used. A small sewage-treatment plant using native grasses to filter wastewater will allow the center to bypass the local sewer hookup most of the time. Some beams for floors and walls have been recycled from 60-year-old booms used by loggers in Oregon and other beams have been made from compressed wood scraps.

The CEEC is expected to draw additional visitors to the Refuge and renew interest in protecting and restoring this freshwater tidal marshland—the largest remaining freshwater tidal marshland in Pennsylvania.

The Pennsylvania Organization for Watersheds and Rivers (POWR) and the Environmental Fund for Pennsylvania are teaming up to create a new resource for anyone interested in watershed protection: a newsletter and webcast called “Watershed Weekly.” Each week Watershed Weekly will highlight successful watershed protection efforts around the state, a calendar of workshops and other events, ideas and suggestions on citizen water monitoring and other topics.

You can read Watershed Weekly by going online through a special website—www.WatershedWeekly.org or you can have it e-mailed directly to you by signing up online at the website. Printed copies of Watershed Weekly will be mailed as part of Environmental Protection UPDATE. To get on the postal mailing list, write: EP Update, P.O. Box 2063, Harrisburg PA 17105-2063. Watershed Weekly is funded by Pennsylvania’s Growing Greener Program.
Governor Ridge Promotes “Growing Smarter” Land Use Policies

Growing Smarter Forum to be held October 11

On June 22nd Governor Ridge signed historic anti-sprawl legislation which gives municipalities some powers to control development. The legislation encourages communities to plan together by giving them the authority to establish growth areas and by making it easier for those who plan together to win state funding. Municipalities that plan together are exempt from the “every use” requirement—a burdensome law that had subjected communities to developers’ lawsuits (or threats of lawsuits) if every possible type of development was not provided for in the municipality.

The new laws enable municipalities to protect natural and historic resources and agricultural land through zoning; authorize municipalities to share impact fees paid by developers to fund roads and other infrastructure; authorizes traditional neighborhood developments (village-like walkable communities that mix a variety of uses on one site); and encourages municipalities to make sure their zoning is consistent with their growth plans and those of neighboring communities.

Now municipalities must be convinced to take advantage of the changes in the law. Even though the legislation encourages cooperation, it does not mandate it. And some local officials are skeptical—and even opposed—to regional planning. Governor Ridge is working to educate communities about the benefits of the new laws.

The Governor supports the anti-sprawl legislation; he promotes it as part of his “Growing Smarter” land-use policies. On August 29th he released an interagency report that directs all state agencies to implement plans that promote sound land use. **He also announced that his Center for Local Government Services will lead more than 50 “Growing Smarter Forums” to educate residents about sound land use and to receive public feedback about his programs. One of these forums will be in Delaware County:** on October 11, at the Ramada Inn Chadds Ford, 1110 Baltimore Pike, in Glen Mills. The workshop will be held from 7 to 9 p.m. with registration starting at 6:30 p.m.

On September 1st, DEP Secretary James M. Seif announced that in accordance with Governor Ridge’s “Growing Smarter” land-use initiative, DEP will now require applicants for nearly 80 types of air, water, waste and mining permits to answer questions to determine whether the project will conflict with comprehensive plans and zoning ordinances adopted by counties and local governments. This policy will affect permit applications reviewed by DEP for new buildings and infrastructure—transportation, water, stormwater, energy and communication services. “DEP also will look at the positive benefits of projects, like whether they redevelop existing properties such as brownfields that will save green space or restore the environment,” Seif said. “In addition, DEP will review projects to determine if they support locally designated growth areas, zoning ordinances adopted jointly by municipalities and farmland—Continued on page 11

Green Space Alliance Reports on Region’s Open Space Preservation

The Green Space Alliance has released its annual Open Space Report Card. This year’s report card, which measures how much land has been protected each year, represents the 10th year for which the Alliance has collected data. The results show that land preservation efforts in 1999 increased the amount of protected land by about 8000 acres, making 1999 a banner year for conservation in Southeastern Pennsylvania.

Unfortunately, the acres saved were not in Delaware or Philadelphia Counties. Bucks, Chester, and Montgomery Counties, the 3 counties in the region that have open space programs adopted after successful ballot initiatives, accounted for almost all of the acreage protected. In Delaware County a total of only 175 acres was protected—none by County, state or federal programs, 2 acres by a municipality (Radnor Township), and the rest by nonprofit organizations (168 acres by Brandywine Conservancy, 4 acres by the Lower Merion Conservancy, and 1 acre by the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia.) 13.39 acres were protected in Philadelphia, all by nonprofit organizations.

The report also compares how much land was protected to regional goals established by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission’s GreenPlan for Southeastern Pennsylvania. DVRPC’s goal is to protect 21,000 acres per year until 2020. The results show that the amount of land protected in 1999 was less than half of the amount that DVRPC feels needs to be protected in order to preserve rural landscapes and provide connected corridors of open space for conservation and recreation. From 1990 through 1999, a total of 55,461 acres has been protected in the 5 county Philadelphia area. By 2020 DVRPC would like to see an additional 230,000 acres conserved for open space and an additional 360,000 acres protected for farming.

The Green Space Alliance, a project of the Pennsylvania Environmental Council, works to protect functioning ecological, recreational and economic systems in Southeastern Pennsylvania. The systems require substantial acres of connected protected open space to allow for the regulation of water, the provision of trails, the support of farming and tourism and the provision of other important open space benefits. For more information about the Alliance or for complete report card data, call 215 563-0250.

Note: One of the goals of the DCNR Conservation Grant for the Darby Creek watershed is to identify land which should be preserved. Over the next few months municipalities and residents within the watershed will be asked to identify such tracts to be included in a comprehensive inventory for the watershed. If you know of properties that should be included in the list, call the DCVA Hotline at (610) 789-1814.
Darby-Cobbs Watershed Partnership Offers Teachers’ Workshops

The Darby-Cobbs Watershed Partnership is offering a program on watershed topics for middle and high school teachers. The goal of the program is to educate teachers on the basics of watershed management with an emphasis on particularly important local issues. In addition to scientific and technical topics, the program will cover public policy issues and local initiatives that are underway in their watershed. The instructors will be watershed management professionals and scientists from a range of disciplines.

The five half-day Saturday sessions will be scheduled throughout the school year. Each of the first four sessions will focus on one major watershed topic: watershed management, storm water management, water quality and ecological restoration. The fifth session will be devoted to helping teachers develop a field or service project that can contribute to local watershed improvement activities.

The first session will be December 2, 2000, at the John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge. Teachers who are interested in registering for the program should call the Pennsylvania Environmental Council at 215 563-0250 or email asmith@pecphila.org.

DCVA’s Historic Sites Included in Delaware County Historical Society’s Passport to History Program

Throughout this summer, students from across Delaware County participated in the Delaware County Historical Society’s Passport to History Program. The Society created the educational program to encourage fourth and fifth grade school students and their families to visit and enjoy some of the exciting historical sites here in Delaware County. The Passports, which are distributed to students through their schools, are designed to entice students to visit some of the 43 historical sites in Delaware County without cost. Students participating were encouraged to visit a minimum of 5 sites before September 15th. All students who gathered at least five stamps in their passport will receive a certificate and Passport to History pin at a ceremony in their school.

The program this summer was a pilot program which is currently being evaluated. Initial reaction, however, has been that the program was a success, and the Historical Society has begun plans to expand the program next year. It is looking for input of ideas and time. If you are interested in helping to bring this beneficial program to all 4th and 5th grade students in the county, please call Barbara Kelley at (610) 892-1011.

Norwood Residents Are Working to Save the Morton Mortonson House

For the past two years, the Norwood Historical Society has been working diligently to increase awareness of the historic Morton Mortonson House and exploring avenues for its restoration. The House, which has recently been added to the National Register of Historic Places, is located near the confluence of Darby and Muckinipattus Creeks. It was built between 1730 and 1760 by Morton Morton.

The house was originally built as a well proportioned two-story brick building with a one-story kitchen wing attached. The house has some unusual features as well as rich interior moldings and a second floor balcony. It is the oldest surviving building in Norwood Borough and one of the oldest in Delaware County. Norwood Borough Council has obtained Community Development Block Grant funding to perform a professional needs assessment on the property which is now being done.

The Norwood Historical Society is facing a vital task: raising an estimated $150,000 for needed repairs, upkeep and restoration of its historic treasure. Volunteers are needed to help plan and run events, raise funds, write grants and do research.

To contribute or to let the Society know how you can help, contact Martin Shields at 610 583-8775 or make a contribution payable to Norwood Historical Society and send it to the Society in care of Borough Hall, Norwood PA 19074.

Grants Available for Historical Programs

The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission is offering a series of free workshops this fall on historical and museum grants programs. The workshop in our area will be held October 18th in Philadelphia. It will offer an introduction to the commission’s new strategic plans for preserving Pennsylvania’s heritage, an overview of the commission’s grant programs and electronic application process, new funding opportunities and the types of programs eligible for grants.

Grants are available for a wide range of historical and museum activities and programs, including strategic planning, collections care, oral histories, curriculum-based and university research projects, minority history, heritage tourism, heritage celebrations, and school/nonprofit partnerships. Local governments can take advantage of the grants for reusing and rehabilitating historic buildings, planning for historic preservation, preparing location-preservation ordinances, and maintaining local government archives and records.

For details, call the Pennsylvania Federation of Museums and Historical Organizations at (717) 787-1902.

Grower Smarter

Continued from page 10

...protection programs.” Applicants will be required to expand the notices they now give the county and municipality hosting their project to specifically ask for comments on potential conflicts with local land-use plans and zoning ordinances. Under the “Grower Smarter!” initiative, DEP has the option of denying a permit application that conflicts with local land-use ordinances or attaching a special condition to the permit to minimize or overcome a conflict.

For more information about the Growing Smarter Forums, contact the Governor’s Center for Local Government Services at 1-888-223-6837. For general information on DEP’s new land-use review procedures, including a fact sheet, a list of permits affected and a complete copy of the new policy, visit DEP’s website: www.dep.state.pa.us.
Haverford State Hospital Site, continued from page 6:

consideration. A Phase II would do an in-depth investigation including sampling and testing to determine exactly what environmental hazards are on the property and to assess clean up costs. Through the Phase I Environmental Audit, there is knowledge of asbestos, PCB’s, lead, radon, oil tanks, landfill, etc. Doing a Phase II Environmental Audit is supported by the Task Force and the Township Environmental Advisory Committee. Peter Puglionesi, a Task Force member, is in the process of writing a grant application to the State to seek 75% funding for this environmental study. The cost estimate for the Phase II is between $40-50,000. The Haverford Township Commissioners have so far deferred funding the study.

4) Some have expressed more interest in increasing the Township tax base than in preserving green space. In response, the Consulting Task Force has created a sub-committee to research the tax ratable issue.

5) Research of funding sources. The Task Force has done extensive research and held discussions with state agencies, conservancies, conservation trusts and foundations. The timing for this project is enhanced with Governor Ridge’s Growing Greener initiative and “anti-sprawl” concerns. State agencies have funds to support recreation and open space preservation. We anticipate help with funding for green space preservation, watershed protection, and hopefully environmental clean up and demolition costs. A unified front of broad public and political support for the Master Plan will be critical to Haverford Township’s sales job to the state.

6) Watershed evaluation, repair, protection and education: Dr. Joe Martin has written a 2nd report “Restoration of the Ecological Connection between the North Brook at the site and the Darby Creek Watershed.” He identifies an oversight in the construction of the Blue Route which prevents wildlife in Darby Creek from traveling upstream.

7) An initial stream/aquatic analysis has been done by Dr. Steven Tessler.

8) The HSH site includes an almost self-contained, first-order stream watershed. DEP has direct interest in watersheds and has funds to evaluate, plan, protect, manage and teach about Pennsylvania’s watersheds. This will be pursued.

Conclusions—what you can do:

Letter campaign: Write letters to Haverford Township Commissioners asking for preservation of the existing woods and meadow at the site. Send them in care of township manager, Tom Bannar, 2325 Darby Road, Havertown PA 19083, fax 610 446-3930. Please fax a copy of your letter to Henry Faragalli, at 4008 Darby Road, Bryn Mawr, PA 19010 at fax (610) 525-1915.

Make a donation to: (1) Haverford Township “Neighborhood Park and Recreation Fund” designated for the site, Code 1178067, Haverford Township, 2325 Darby Road, Havertown, PA 19083, call (610) 446-9403; or

(2) “Haverford State Hospital Conservation Fund,” Haverford Civic Council, PO Box 1072, Havertown PA 19083.

Letters or suggestions in response to this article can be written to Henry Faragalli or to Haverford Civic Council Hotline at 610 853-8998. See the Task Force website at http://www.Ecofront.com. Lawrence A. Feinberg has invited interested people with e-mail to contact him for current newspaper articles and meeting announcements about the site. You can phone Larry at 610 896-3680 with your e-mail address or you can contact him at tiginc@bellatlantic.net or Lfeinberg@TheLocalGroup.com.

Please help Preserve the Green at the Haverford State Hospital site!

Lynn Yeakel and Greg Vitali Field Residents’ Thoughts on Future of State Hospital Site

State Senate candidate and DCVA member Lynn Yeakel (D) and State Representative Greg Vitali (D, 166th District) hosted over 150 residents of Haverford Township at an open forum in August at the Haverford Library to discuss the future of the Haverford State Hospital site.

After the forum Yeakel noted, “the resounding message that I heard tonight was that the open space should be preserved to be enjoyed by the residents through walking and bike trails.”

These preferences for use of the site would be encompassed by State Representative Greg Vitali’s “Plan D” for the site.

Check future editions of the DCVA newsletters to follow the latest discussions and decisions regarding the future of this important parcel of open space in the Darby Creek watershed.

President’s Pen
Continued from page 1:

Through computer linked communications we are gaining new interest from the younger generation (from where I stand – that’s almost everybody) who get their information this way. Even I have been dragged into the modern age of technology. In our house we have two (2) computers, a Fax Machine, color printer, and two (2) phone lines used mostly for DCVA business. Via Email we can contact whomever we need to, easier and cheaper than traditional ways. Our three (3) way telephone message center saves time and money also. What a wonderful world!
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 floodplain. 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 _____________
Telephone ___________________________ Your Municipality ______________
Representative (if organization member) _____________________________________

Type of Membership:  
- Individual Member $10.00  
- Student Member $5.00  
- Family Member $15.00  
- Organization Member $20.00  
- Senior Citizen $5.00  
- Life Member $100.00

To support the many DCVA projects, I would like to make a contribution of $ ______ in addition to my dues.

DCEN members invite everyone to their annual conference October 28. (See page 1)

Left to right: Monica Starr, Delaware County Conservation District; Fritz Thornton, DCVA; Charles Madden, Delaware County Parks Department; Bill Miehle, DCVA; Keith Baker, DCEN; Andy Saul, Delaware County Institute of Science; Rosemary Kesling, PRC; Bill Brainerd, DCEN; Tom Reeves, Valley Forge Audubon Society. — Photograph by Tom Reeves

UPCOMING CONFERENCES:


November 3-5, 2000: PAEE Conference 2000: Environmental Education from the Inside Out. Sheraton Hotel Station Square, Pittsburgh. Sponsored by the Pennsylvania Alliance for Environmental Education. More information is available at mjtech98@earthlink.net or write Margaret Tokarsky, P.O. Box 222, Westmoreland City, PA 15692.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Saturday, October 7, 2000</td>
<td>Haverford Township Day, Havertown</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 7-15, 2000</td>
<td>National Wildlife Refuge Week Activities at the John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge at Tinicum. 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. throughout the week</td>
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<td>Wednesday, October 11, 2000</td>
<td>Grower Smarter Forum, 7-9 p.m. Ramada Inn Chadds Ford in Glen Mills</td>
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<td>Saturday, October 14, 2000</td>
<td>Cabin Crafts and Friendship Day, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m., Swedish Cabin, Upper Darby</td>
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<td>Saturday, October 14, 2000</td>
<td>Darby Homecoming 2000. Main Street, Darby</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday, October 15, 2000</td>
<td>Annual Fall Festival at the Grange Estate, 1-4 p.m. Havertown</td>
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<td>October 19-22, 26-29, &amp;</td>
<td>Showcase Designers in the 19th Century Farmhouse at the Grange Estate. November 2-5  Thursdays &amp; Fridays, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.; Saturdays &amp; Sundays, 12 - 4 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Saturday, October 21, 2000</td>
<td>DCVA Board Meeting, 9 a.m. Marple Friends Peace Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>Saturday, October 21, 2000</td>
<td>DCVA Annual Awards Dinner, 5:30 p.m. Charlotte’s Restaurant, Newtown Square</td>
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<td>Monday, October 30, 2000</td>
<td>Rivers Conservation Grant Public Participation Meeting, 7-9 p.m. Springfield Township Municipal Building, Springfield</td>
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<td>Saturday, November 18, 2000</td>
<td>DCVA Board Meeting, 9 a.m. Marple Friends Peace Center</td>
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<td>Sunday, December 3, 2000</td>
<td>Trim-a-Swedish-Christmas Tree Party, 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. Swedish Cabin, Upper Darby</td>
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<tr>
<td>Saturday, December 16, 2000</td>
<td>DCVA Board Meeting, 9 a.m. Marple Friends Peace Center</td>
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Darby Creek Valley Association  
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