



President's Pen

Reflections from the Creek Bank

As the newly elected co-presidents of DCVA, we approach this coming year with a mixture of excitement and trepidation, knowing that care and concern for our natural environment is more important than ever, and knowing the challenges we all face are equally as great. Development pressure and economic realities are just two of them. 2010 is particularly significant because it marks the Centennial of the first section of the Darby Creek Greenway built by Arthur Shrigley and the Natural History Club of Lansdowne in 1910. A newspaper article at that time called Darby Creek "A beautiful winding stream with pretty shade trees on either side and its scenery is unsurpassed in Pennsylvania." 100 years later that is still largely true.

DCVA was chartered 25 years ago to support, encourage and promote the conservation, protection, restoration, and prudent management of the natural, recreational, scenic, and historic resources of the Darby Creek Watershed. The watershed cuts across municipal boundaries and so does DCVA. We became involved in DCVA in order to participate in the Annual Cleanup when we were working with the Blue Bell Inn on Cobbs Creek in the late 1980's. We remember standing in Philadelphia County and looking across Cobbs Creek to Darby, Delaware County, and also on the other side of the street to Colwyn, Delaware County. We could see three municipalities that did not talk with each other as much as they might....and the creek was largely unimpressed. The fact is, we are all in this together and are all interconnected.

After 25 years, DCVA is still an all-volunteer organization and one of its glories is that its Board of Directors is a working Board, with a very impressive collection of skills, knowledge, and experience which can be a valuable informational resource for all 31 municipalities across the Watershed. For example, DCVA can help find trees for planting, and can provide information about stream buffers, rain barrels, rain gardens and good conservation practices. There also may be ways that participation in the Cleanup Placemap can help municipalities meet their MS4 requirements for education and public outreach. We can also partner with other organizations to expand our impact. In the words of the African proverb, "If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together."

Your help is needed on this journey.

DCVA has many different roles it can play: advocate, convener, steward, coordinator, educator, and more. Stay tuned because it will be an interesting year.

John and Jan Haigis

26th Annual Darby Creek/Cobbs Creek Cleanup, Saturday April 24.

"It's a big watershed...somebody's gotta clean it.."

Volunteers are needed to help clean the creeks and tributaries that flow like ribbons of green beauty through 77 square miles, 31 municipalities and four counties from Tredyffrin to Tinicum. On Saturday, April 24, volunteers will again gather to clean up the accumulated tires, shopping carts and other debris from the creek we all share. "This is the 26th year for the cleanup," said 2010 Cleanup Chair from Upper Darby Barbarann Keffer. "A few sites will be doing it the week before like at the Heinz Refuge but throughout the watershed, no matter what day, it's a chance to make a difference and have a lot of fun."

The DCVA cleanup began in 1984 when stalwart volunteers who live along the "Crick" were able to look beyond the litter and trash to see the beauty and potential of this beautiful area. "They organized a cleanup on the last Saturday in April, and it has really taken off," Keffer said. More and more sites were added and last year the Cleanup was in more than 30 individual sites up and down Darby Creek, Cobbs Creek, the Muckinpatens, Naylors Run, and other feeder streams. "We're always looking for more sites to expand the scope of the Clean-Up," Keffer continued. "People really care about the Creek and are beginning to realize what a treasure we have in our own backyard."

People who know of an area of the Creek that needs cleaning are asked to become Captains and organize a cleanup crew for that area. "DCVA can help with publicity, t-shirts, bags and gloves, but the work itself is done by literally hundreds of volunteers who love the creek," Keffer said. "It truly is a labor of love." For information about the 2010 Cleanup email Barbarann Keffer barbarann.keffer@yahoo.com or visit www.dcv.org

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Old Rocks – New Trees

Prepared by Clyde Hunt

So you are having a problem with cars or trucks jumping the curb and damaging recently planted trees? Maybe it was just a lawnmower that came too close to the trees you are trying to establish in your yard. In both cases, the trees suffer! You want to give the trees a bit more protection than a sturdy stake might afford. Even a five inch tree is no match for a ton and a half vehicle traveling 30 miles an hour. A large mower can remove enough bark from a young tree to weaken it for life, if it does not cut it completely. Give your trees a better chance, plant a couple of 100 to 200 pound rocks a few feet from the tree's stump. These rocks should be about as heavy as the root ball and two to three feet in diameter. Pick attractive or ancient rocks with lots of character, ones that have weathered many freezing winters and have not split apart.

'Plant' the rocks six to ten inches deep into the soil at the edge of the root mass. Leave about 18 to 30 inches of rock exposed. That should be enough to warn drivers or mower operators that a substantial obstacle is ahead before they wound the tree. Alert drivers will successfully avoid these rocks. Sleepy drivers will wake up when the air bags go off.

Small trees benefit from these nearby rocks all year long. Winter snows collect behind the rocks. Snow will melt to provide more moisture. The old rocks also provide winter shade at the base of the young tree stems preventing early unseasonable growth of the cambium and possible frost damage. The summer sun warms the rocks, which drives moisture down into the soil. At night as the rocks cool they release heat to the sky and soil. Soil moisture again condenses back on the bottoms of the cooler rocks, ready to be driven off again by the next day's sun.

Urban sites are difficult places for trees to grow. They are held hostage between the curb and the sidewalk. Let's give trees some extra care and rocks to provide the opportunity to reach their potential size and shape sooner!



Jan Marie Rushforth and Jan Haigis presenting Toni McIntosh the Blue Ribbon Silver Spatula Award at the annual meeting

Photos by Charles Ford

DCVA Annual Meeting

New Co-Presidents John and Jan Haigis elected.

The DCVA annual meeting was held January 30, 2010 and enjoyed good attendance in spite of the damp and cold. Perhaps it was the wonderful lunch provided by Toni McIntosh honored by Jan Haigis for her hostess achievements during the meeting.

Outgoing President Jan Marie Rushforth thanked everyone for their hard work during her tenure which included the DCVA 25th Anniversary Luncheon and map project which under Robin Mann required a full year of significant team work. DCVA is blessed with many talented and hard working board members who organize good projects and events. DCVA advocated for well considered concerns. She acknowledged Joe and Ann Ackerman as the face of DCVA in Haverford Township; Olga Thornton (video/newsletter), Dick Carroll (treasurer), Clyde Hunt and Barbarann Keffer (tree planting) and many more. Guest speaker Harold Finigan, former staff assistant to Congressman Bob Edgar, spoke on our energy future. His discussion provided meaningful insight into our energy reserves and prompted us all to go home and turn down our thermostats, use public transportation, and walk and bike more.

New and continuing board members were elected. We welcome new board members, Ann Jackson, Tree Tender in Springfield, Palmer Dalesandro, a creek protector in Devon and Joe Yorke, Past President Ridley Park Borough Council. The continuing board members are Tim Denny, John Furth, Toni McIntosh, Jaclyn Rhoads and Andy Saul. John Furth was awarded the 2010 Ribbon of Green Award.

At the Board session following the meeting, John and Jan Haigis accepted the role of Co-Presidents. We welcome John and Jan and look forward to their creativity and spirited leadership.



Guest speaker Harold Finigan sharing his insights on the energy crisis

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: John Furth, Barbarann Keffer, Jaclyn Rhodes, Alan Samel, John and Jan Haigis, Jan Marie Rushforth, Editor: Olga Thornton

Put it on Your Calendar: Saturday April 17 StreamWatch

Prepared by Alan Samel



It may be cold, blustery and dormant in the watershed, but maybe not. In the stream there is still a lot of activity, albeit at a slower pace, going on. There are loads of critters just waiting for the first signs of Spring. One sunny day, one day with temperatures in the fifties, and before you know it, the stoneflies are emerging, the mayflies are emerging, crayfish and frogs are starting to come out of their winter dormancy. And they all tell us something important about Darby Creek.

And DCVA is learning from what we see in and around the stream. On Saturday, April 17, we will take samples from five locations on Darby Creek: Bartram Park in Darby, Darby Creek Road in Havertown (downstream from the state hospital grounds), Skunk Hollow in Radnor, the Brandywine Preserve at Waterloo Mills in Easttown, and the Swedish cabin site. This will be our seventh year of taking samples and assessing the streamside buffer zones, but none of this is possible without your help.

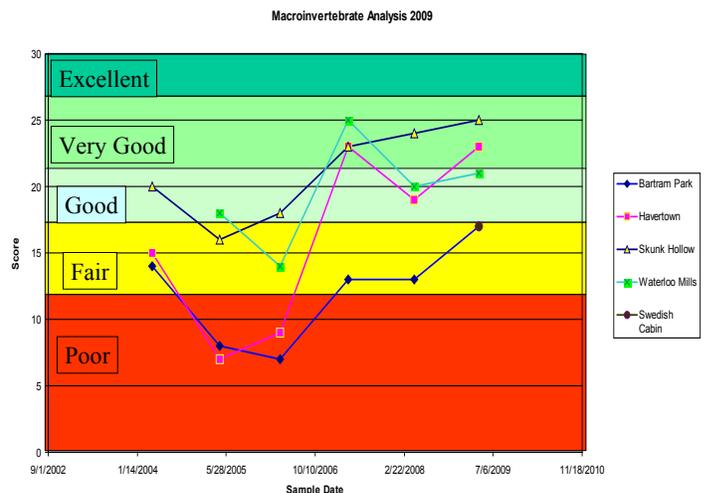
Every year we have volunteers from DCVA take part in this fun event. This is a great chance to meet others with the same keen interest in the watershed and in our local environment. It's also a lot of fun. It is a great chance to get in the water and help take samples of the stream critters, take water quality measurements (pH, dissolved oxygen, etc.), and take a look at the surrounding environment that is needed to protect the stream. So pull up your waders and join us!

At the end of the day, we have sampled from five sites, taken water quality measurements, and assessed the surroundings. Then what? Then, in the Fall, we have our annual insect identification workshop. At the workshop, we take the samples taken in April, pour everything out and have a have a game of find the critter. Every critter has its own story to tell about the quality of the stream at that particular site. For example, the simple, little mayfly is very sensitive to stressors. If we have some in our sample, we learned that the water quality at that site is pretty good. In fact, it's pretty darn good! If we have samples without mayflies or other sensitive critters, we learned that the water quality at that site might be less than we had hoped for. At the end of the day, we have a good idea of the water quality at each site along the creek.

The chart provides the data from the six years of sampling at Bartram Park in Darby, Darby Creek Road in Havertown (downstream from the state hospital grounds), Skunk Hollow in Radnor, the Brandywine Preserve at Waterloo Mills in Easttown, and the first sampling point for

the Swedish cabin site in Upper Darby. In 2009, the water quality at Bartram Park, the most downstream site sampled, and the Swedish cabin site were found to have a 'Fair' water quality rating. The Bartram Park assessment of fair is the same as it was the previous year. As previously mentioned, this is the first year for the Swedish cabin site. The Brandywine Conservancy site was found to have a 'Good' water quality rating, the same as the previous year. The Radnor and Haverford sites were found to have a 'Very Good' quality rating, the highest rating of any of our sampling sites. The Radnor assessment of Very Good is the same as the previous year. The Haverford assessment is higher than the assessment from the previous year. A "Fair" assessment means that the insects identified were either in the tolerant or facultative category. Fair indicates that a stream location is stressed either by pollutants, changes to the surroundings around the stream, or by changes to the stream itself. A "Good" assessment indicates that, in addition to the tolerant and facultative insects identified, some sensitive species were also identified. Good means that the stream conditions at that site are such that it can provide adequate habitat and environmental conditions for some sensitive species; but there is room for improvement. A "Very Good" assessment means that there are quite a few sensitive species in that part of the stream. The stream can provide a suitable habitat for sensitive species of stream critters, including some of the more sensitive fish species such as trout.

So come out and join us Saturday April 17 for a day full of fun and a day full of painless education!





Celebrating 25 Years of Connecting and Protecting in the Darby Creek Watershed

By chair, Robin Mann



DCVA Founders with Bob Edgar and Jan Marie Rushforth and John and Jan Haigis who sang a special song they wrote for and about the founders:
 Row 2: Bob Edgar, Bill Fransch, Jack Kesling, Rosemary Kesling, Grace Flinterman, John Haigis, Clyde Hunt, Bob Doherty, Bob Shaner
 Row 1: Joe Ackerman, Anne Ackerman, Jan Marie Rushforth, Jan Haigis, Gila Hunt, John Furth

DCVA held a 25th Anniversary Luncheon on November 15, 2009, culminating a year of events celebrating the organization's twenty five years of "protecting and connecting in the Darby Creek watershed." The event drew 130 members and friends of DCVA to McCall's Golf and Country Club in Upper Darby. On behalf of DCVA, President Jan Marie Rushforth presented awards to several significant and longtime contributors to the organization and the watershed, including:

- John and Jan Haigis who received the Ribbon of Green Award for expanding and improving upon the DCVA's annual Darby Creek cleanup;
- Family of the late Grace Russell Wheeler which was presented with a Darby Creek Steward Award, for preserving 37 acres of her land along the Darby and Ithan Creeks in perpetuity;
- Clyde and Gila Hunt who received the Lifetime Service Award;
- Karen Holm who received the Public Service Award, in recognition of her personal efforts as well as service in her role with the Delaware County Planning Department to improve the quality of life in the watershed.

DCVA is grateful to the many sponsors of the anniversary event. Thanks to their generosity, the organization netted over \$3,200, to be put towards building our watershed protection and educational programs. DCVA is grateful, as well, for the skillful guidance of event planner Gari Weilbacher -- a key ingredient to the success of the event.

DCVA welcomed back longtime friend The Reverend Dr. Bob Edgar to deliver the luncheon address. Dr. Edgar reminisced about his early years enjoying the natural world in and around Darby Creek, and expressed appreciation for all DCVA has done to preserve and protect the watershed. He exhorted the gathering to "redouble" its efforts on behalf of the watershed and the wider environment in the coming years. He noted, "You are called upon to be a steward of a fragile planet. You have walked far together, but there is still a ways to go."

Guests were treated to a photo retrospective with creek scenes and shots of DCVA members in action through the years, devotedly prepared by Olga Thornton and her team of volunteers.

A new Darby Creek Watershed Map was unveiled and complimentary copies were provided to the luncheon attendees. The map depicting a selection of some of the significant historical assets and open spaces in the watershed was assembled by DCVA volunteers working with watershed specialist and GIS consultant Jamie Anderson and designer Amy Pollack. Funding for the map was provided by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission and individual friends of DCVA.



DCVA 2009 Board with Guest Speaker Bob Edgar
 Row 3: Tim Denny, Fritz Thornton, Dick Carroll, Clyde Hunt, John Haigis, Carl DuPoldt, Alan Samel
 Row 2: Roberta Shaner, Katherine Goddard-Doms, John Furth, Bob Edgar, Toni McIntosh, Rosemary Kesling, Jaclyn Rhoads, Andy Saul, Anne Ackerman, Bob Shaner, Robin Mann, Joe Ackerman, Scott Maits
 Row 1: Barbarann Keffer, Jan Marie Rushforth, Jan Haigis



John and Jan Haigis, 2009 Ribbon of Green Awardees, preparing to share their DCVA Songs



*Jan Marie Rushforth with members of Grace Wheeler's Family who accepted the DCVA Stewardship Award given posthumously to Ms. Wheeler.
Jan Marie Rushforth, Grace Sharples Cooke, Martha Sharples, William Daniels, M. Terry Cooke, Bob Edgar*



Karen Holm Delaware County Planning Department, as she received the DCVA Public Service Award

Mary Furth examines the new DCVA map given to all attendees



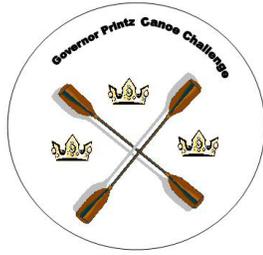
Bob Edgar reminiscing about his early years enjoying the natural world



Jan Marie Rushforth thanking Rob Graff of DVRPC, for their financial sponsorship of the DCVA Map



Gila and Clyde Hunt as they receive their Lifetime Achievement Award



Governor Printz Canoe/Kayak Challenge and Ramble

Prepared by Jaclyn Rhoads

DCVA held another successful Governor Printz Canoe/Kayak Challenge and Ramble this September. If you missed the event, don't worry we will have another one on September 19th, 2010 where you can either leisurely canoe down the Darby Creek or compete in a race to Governor Printz Park. If you attended this year's event, thank you for your participation and we hope you will join us again next year.

Congratulations to this year's race winners: the first five to get to Governor Printz were (times in minutes):

1st Bill Wenrich:	44.58
2nd Vadim/Jesse Lishceuk:	46.15
3rd Glenn Green:	46.46
4th Nikkita Alshayer :	46.55
5th Chip Coward:	47.08

DCVA would also like to thank this year's sponsors:

- Trader Joe's in Media, PA: www.traderjoes.com
- Carl DuPoldt and Green Building Solutions & Supplies: 610-458-7993, www.greenbuildingss.com
- Body-Mind Wellness, 610-583-8928
www.shaklee.net/bodymindwellness
- Residential Mold Services: 484-494-3090,
www.residentialmoldservices.com

And thanks to John Heinz Wildlife Refuge for their assistance and especially Jared Klein – former refuge officer at John Heinz who has since moved to California.

Again, a big thank you to all who participated. This event helps to raise awareness about the Darby Creek and why it is so important to protect our waterbodies.



*Jaclyn Rhoads
Coordinator of the Gov-
ernor Printz Challenge
and co-leader of the TAG
Committee*

Technical Assistance Grant (TAG) Update

In 2005, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued a Technical Assistance Grant (TAG) to the Darby Creek Valley Association (DCVA) to allow DCVA to hire an independent environmental consultant to help the organization, and the public, understand and comment on studies and possible remedial actions regarding closed Superfund landfills in the Lower Darby Creek Area (LDCA). EPA is the lead agency at the Clearview Landfill and is conducting the combined Remedial Investigation (RI) and Feasibility Study (FS) (RI/FS). During the RI, data including comprehensive environmental sampling of the soil, groundwater, surface water, stream sediments, landfill seeps, and air is collected to characterize site conditions, determine the nature of the waste in the landfill, and assess risk to human health and the environment. The FS is the mechanism for the development, screening, and detailed evaluation of alternative remedial actions. When the RI/FS Reports are available, DCVA's TAG advisor will review the reports on behalf of the DCVA and help the group provide informed comments to EPA during the comment periods. DCVA's primary Environmental Consultant in this work is Mary Rooney, P.E. of EnviroAce, Inc.

The DCVA team coordinating this effort includes Co-Chairs Dr. Jaclyn Rhoads and Scott Maits, along with John Furth, Jan Marie Rushforth, Andy Saul and Dick Carroll. The team has met with members of the community, started to build community awareness, become familiar with the terrain, and is preparing for the work ahead.

EPA expects the RI/FS for the Clearview Landfill to be completed by the end of March, 2010, with the Proposed Plan Public Comment Period of 30 days to start June 1, 2010. A Final Record of Decision is expected by the end of August, 2010. Remedial Design is expected to start in November, 2010 and be completed by May of 2011. The Remedial Action Work Plan is expected to be completed by December 2011 with On-site Remedial Action Mobilization to begin in January 2012.

Interested members of DCVA and members of communities affected by the Lower Darby Creek Area Superfund Site may volunteer to participate in TAG activities. For more information about the TAG, contact Jaclyn Rhoads: (610) 532-5105, jaclyn_rhoads@yahoo.com or Scott Maits: (215) 758-4751, CityActivist1@yahoo.com

Darby Creek Stream Valley Park Master Plan:

View the plan online at <http://www.co.delaware.pa.us/planning/environmental/openspace.html>

A greenway the length of Darby Creek has been the hope and goal of the Darby Creek Valley Association since its founding in 1984. The vision of the DCVA for the entire Darby Creek system is the ultimate re-establishment of as much as possible of the original, forested riparian greenway that protected the waters of the creek and nourished the flora and fauna of the watershed for so long. In March 1987, the Delaware County Planning Department commissioned a plan for a park and trail along the Darby Creek corridor called the Darby Creek Stream Valley Park Master Plan. In 2004, DCVA issued its Darby Creek Watershed Conservation Plan encouraging the concept of a Darby Creek greenway. More recently, the County Planning Department obtained a grant to update the 1987 plan and retained the Urban Research and Development Corporation (URDC) of Bethlehem, PA to prepare that update. According to the County web site, "this watershed-specific greenway plan is a prototype document that will serve as a model for future development of an additional greenway plan encompassing the remainder of the County."

The cornerstone of the 1987 plan was a trail along Darby Creek from the Lower Swedish Cabin downstream to Bartram Park near 12th Street in Darby Borough. The scope of the study area has now been extended—upstream to Addingham and downstream to Pine Street in Darby Borough.

The updated version of the plan was publicly unveiled on January 20, 2010. Planning Department Director John Pickett, Environmental Planning Director Karen Holm, and the County's Executive Director Marianne Grace introduced Phillip Hunsberger of Urban Research and Development whose firm

prepared the master plan update. Hunsberger described a greenway as a linear corridor of open space that may or may not have a trail. He added that hubs would be designated along the greenway, citing Hoffman Park in Lansdowne as one potential hub. According to Hunsberger, there are conservation greenways, trail-based greenways and road-based greenways. He presented a plan for a 5.1-mile multiple-use trail linking segments already in public ownership. The proposed trail could require 7-9 bridges depending on the route chosen.

The dominant feature of the park study corridor is the peaceful, meandering Darby Creek with its many picturesque, steeply sloping banks. Steep slopes pose challenges to builders and, for the most part, have protected the corridor from development. The corridor includes nine parks – varying from highly developed, active recreation (Hoffman Park) to undeveloped (Shrigley Park). Implementation of the plan will require the cooperative efforts of Delaware County, the municipalities, various "Friends" groups, and area residents. The plan also recognizes that implementation depends on available funding.

The plan was only available to the public a few days before the meeting. At the meeting Jan Rushforth, spoke for the Darby Creek Valley Association, noting that DCVA's membership would need time to study the plan and offer constructive comments.

The plan can be found online at: <http://www.co.delaware.pa.us/planning/environmental/openspace.html>

For comparison, the [DCVA Watershed Conservation Plan](#) can be found on the DCVA web site at <http://www.dcv.org/wcp.html>

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 on Cobbs Creek. 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 according to the law

CALENDAR

- Healing the Watershed - Free Rain Barrel and Rain Garden Workshops for DELCO Residents:
Brian J. Vadino, VadinoB@co.delaware.pa.us Tuesday, March 9th 7PM
- Discovering Carbon Footprint: radnor.conservancy@comcast.net Tuesday, March 9th 7PM
- Springfield Twp Enviro Advisory Com. Rainwater Awareness:
Springfield Municipal Bldg., ajackson@verizon.net Saturday March 20th 9 - noon
- EAC Conference: Abington Friends School, josh.hilbert@gmail.com Saturday April 10th 9 - 2PM
- Stream Watch: www.dcv.org or alan.samel@verizon.net Saturday, April 17th 9AM start
- DCVA 26th Annual Darby/Cobbs Watershed-Wide Cleanup:
Barbarann Keffer, barbarann.keffer@yahoo.com or visit www.dcv.org Saturday, April 24th 9am to 1pm
- Dream of Darby Creek Greenway - a Centennial Celebration - the Work Continues:
At the 20th Century Club, 84 South Lansdowne Avenue, Lansdowne, PA
www.dcv.org or email rushforth@comcast.net Saturday, May 1st, 10am - Noon
- Arbor Day: www.TheGrangeEstate.com Sunday, April 25: 1-4 pm
- DCVA Governor Printz Canoe Challenge and Ramble:
Jaclyn_Rhoads@yahoo.com Sunday, September 19th
- Haverford Township Historical Society Heritage Festival: Karakung Drive:..... Saturday, June 6, 11-4
- DCVA Insect Identification Workshop: www.dcv.org or alan.samel@verizon.net October, Date TBD

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