



Shenango River Watchers, Inc.

SPRING 2008 NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 21

BOARD

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Sick of being stuck at home with nothing to do this winter? Well, Shenango River Watchers, Inc. invites you and yours to attend our Sixth Annual Banquet on March 29, 2008 at the Shenango Valley Civic Center in downtown Sharon. The doors open at 5:30 p.m. for an hour and half social. During that time

raffle and Chinese Auction tickets maybe purchased and Silent Auction bids placed. There will also be a cash bar available. At 7:00 p.m., dinner will be served and the program will begin. As always, the Environmental Scholarship and Friend of the River awards will be handed out during the banquet. The dinner buffet will consist of tossed salad, top beef, rigatoni, baked chicken, meatballs, oven parslid potatoes, green beans, mixed vegetables, cole slaw, rolls & butter.

This year's Chinese and Silent Auctions are shaping up to be the best ones yet! Among the Chinese Auction items will be the annual favorite – Dinner for a Week along with signed books by Trapper John, a stationary basket, movie tickets, a certificate for two Pirate tickets, four passes to a Mahoning Valley Scrap-

Banquet 2008 You're Invited

pers game, styling products gift baskets, fishing items, gardening items, a variety of prints, a month long gym membership to a local fitness center, and varied golf items. In the Silent Auction you will find a miniature crystal Greek god temple and a miniature crystal castle donated by LP Bruno's Jewelers, a Buhl Farm throw donated by Michaelene's

Day Spa, 96 retaining wall blocks donated by Sidley Sand & Gravel, and a 2001 bronze collectors set of Christmas ornaments of the Twelve Days of Christmas donated by Wendell August Forge.

50/50 raffle tickets are \$1 a piece and banquet tickets are \$25 a piece for adults and children over 10 years of age (for children 10 and under, tickets are \$15). To purchase raffle or banquet tickets or to make a donation, please call the Shenango River Watchers office at 724-342-5453. Leave your name and phone number and your call will be returned.

See you there!

UPCOMING EVENTS FOR 2008

SHENANGO RIVER WATCHER EVENTS
MARCH 29th - Sixth Annual Banquet;
Shenango Valley Civic Center

APRIL 19th - Clean Up; SRW will be doing cleanups in Sharon and Greenville; sign up locations and times TBD; call the SRW office

MAY 24th - Tire Recycling Event

JUNE 21st - Ohio River Sweep Clean-up

JULY - Canoe Trip (date TBD)

AUGUST 9th - Clean-up

SEPTEMBER 1st - Buhl Day and Funnel Cake Booth

SEPT. 13th - Waterfowl Expo

SEPT. 21st - Munnell Run Farm Day

SEPT. 27th - Annual Members' Picnic

OTHER EVENTS OF INTEREST

April 5th - Linesville Hatchery Open House

April 24th - Polk Center's Earth Day 2008

May 24th & June 6th - PA Fish For Free

Call the SRW Office for further details on any of these events.

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Shenango River Clean-up and Water Trail Vision

By Hugh Clark, SRW Board Member

On a lovely warm and sunny day a few Septembers ago, my nephew and I decided to take a leisurely kayak float down the Shenango from the dam at Pymatuning State Park to Riverside Park in Greenville. What we thought would be a few hours of paddling with a couple of cold drinks turned into an aquatic version of the Bataan Death March! Shortly after launching at the dam, and well before getting to the Hwy. 322 bridge over the river in Jamestown (all of a third of a mile), we encountered a large tree lying over and in the river, bank to bank. We pushed through the branches, and proceeded. Shortly after passing under Hwy. 322, and just past the sunken boat, abandoned refrigerator, and sunken dock, we encountered another tree. And another. And so on. I stopped counting at about 15.

We portaged, spilled, pushed through again and again. Nephew Mike had a blast, repeatedly paddling full bore at slightly submerged limbs, making it over a few times, and going swimming most of the time. I, on the other hand, being more highly evolved (and quite a bit older), simply accepted the inevitable with grace and equanimity. I executed the first half of an Eskimo Roll, bailed out, surfaced, and push/pulled the kayak through the tree.

We arrived at Riverside Park well past the estimated arrival time, cell phones and Steeler hats adripping. Ultimately, the wives were contacted and asked to rally to us with cold beers, Whoppers, and Ibuprofen.

Some months later enter the Jamestown Lions. Lion's International, the governing body of the Lions Clubs, asked each local club to allocate some their service efforts to one with an environmental character. Appraised of our experience on the river, the club decided to pursue a clean up of the river from Pymatuning Park to Greenville. It seemed a perfect match of answering our directive from Lions International, helping the local and regional economies with enhanced tourism from paddle crafters, and protecting our local communities from flooding, boating dangers, and bettering water quality (The Shenango is Greenville's primary source of domestic water).

As we considered the magnitude of the challenge, it was clear that this would require more than 20 or 30 somewhat portly and "senior" Lions belly deep in the river with chainsaws. Many of the trees were huge. What to do with the slash, stumps, and trunks? How to remove them from the river, how to get access to private property, what were the issues with the Fish and Boat Commission? On and on.

Encouragingly, we found a considerable depth of community support. Many locals remember canoe races on the river, duck hunting from boats, fishing from canoes. Others remember flooding from damned up fallen trees. Greenville wrestles with low water levels in the summer, exacerbated by silting from reduced flow velocity. Boy Scouts were excited about working on the project. Fishing clubs similarly. Paddlecraft clubs offered to help. Other Lion's Clubs, notably Greenville, offered assistance. The professionals who managed the State Park were enthusiastic about the project. The Corps of Engineers was encouraging.



Given the magnitude of the cleanup, plus an expanded vision to include the river in the Pennsylvania Water Trail System, we determined to pursue grants to do much of the "heavy lifting" commercially. After talking to the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), the Department Community and Economic Development (DCED), Fish and Boat Commission, Corps of Engineers, Pennsylvania Environmental Council (PEC), and others, we became convinced that the project was feasible. However, DCNR staff indicated that we would need to be a 501c3 non-profit status (Lions are) and have a basic conservation orientation to the organization (Lion's don't). It was then suggested we align ourselves with a conservation-oriented organization, hopefully with them agreeing to be the nominal sponsor of the plan for the purpose of grant applications. DCNR pointed us to the Shenango River Watchers as a possible ally.

To that end, we contacted SRW's President Jennifer Barborak. We were warmly received and a partnership evolved. The relationship has become much more than River Watchers being a passive sponsor. This project simply could not have been accomplished without your help. It is in all regards now an equal effort between SRW and the Lions.

The present status of the clean-up/Water Trail project looks like this. With the expert assistance of Jen Barborak and SRW board members, plus the prominence and credibility that SRW has with DCNR, we have been formally approved for two grants. One grant is \$5,000 from DCED (the money has been provided and is in the SRW bank account) to be part of the grantees 50% match to the DCNR grant of \$11,000. The DCNR grant is formally approved and we are awaiting their contract. This money will be used to fund a feasibility study, first step in the DCNR process.

For the feasibility grant, we are funding our half as follows: DCED grant, \$5,000; Jamestown Lions, \$2,500; Greenville Lions, \$2,500; and Shenango River Watchers, \$1,000. A total of \$11,000 matching the DCNR's \$11,000.

It should be noted that our local political representatives have been hugely instrumental in getting the DCNR and DCED funding approved. There are more calls on available funds than there are dollars to serve them. State Representatives Michelle Brooks and Mark Longiotti, and State Senator Bob Robbins, went to bat for us big time. They worked together and really came through for their constituents and us. We owe them a debt of gratitude for their help.

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The feasibility study will cover many bases. It will call for several community meetings to measure community support (or resistance) for a Water Trail; meetings with Shenango River stakeholders such as Fish and Boat Commission, Corps of Engineers, local water districts, relevant political support, borough/town/township support, and so on.

The feasibility study will evaluate the physical hurdles—how many trees to be removed, how to remove them without damaging streambed ecology, and identify other wildlife issues such as nesting eagles, otter dens, and the like. A survey of the river, from kayak or canoe, will be done to locate and quantify the trees to be removed, other major trash objects, and who knows what else.

The study will develop a methodology to accomplish the task, and provide a cost estimate for the accomplishment of the task. A committee of Lions and River Watchers are about to begin work with DCNR on developing a formal scope or work and Request for Proposal. This will be submitted and advertised to environmental firms with skills and experience building feasibility studies. Along with professional credentials, we will be looking for the best combination of credibility with DCNR and local agencies, and cost effectiveness.

The feasibility study will then be provided to DCNR as a base document for a second DCNR grant to actually do the work. DCNR

may fund a 50% matching grant for the implementation of the grant request, assuming they find it supportable in the first place.

To match the final and certainly much larger DCNR grant, we can match with cash, limited “in kind” contributions, and grants from other state, federal or private grantors. We expect the most challenging part of the clean up to be done commercially. However, volunteers providing in kind contributions will be needed to augment the commercial effort by perhaps trimming removed trees, providing hauling with trucks and some heavy equipment, contact with local landowners, and a variety of other tasks. Others such as Boy Scouts may cruise the river in canoes and boats to remove tires and the like.

The Water Trail part of the project entails the development of a brochure/map consistent with DCNR standards, a canoe launch at Pymatuning State Park, likely other launch/take out site before the downstream Shenango Reservoir, site graphics and signage, and on going care for the modest structures required (mostly the canoe launches).

The feasibility study should be done late this summer or early fall; we will then prepare a second DCNR grant, submitting it sometime in 2009. Assuming all goes well, we’d expect to do the work maybe in late 2009 or certainly 2010. Sharpen your chainsaws!

Repeal Day Beer Tasting Benefits SRW



On December 5th 2007, over two hundred people gathered to celebrate Repeal Day for the first time in the Shenango Valley since 1933. Repeal Day, the anniversary of the repeal of the 18th amendment to our constitution, marks the glorious end of a 13 yearlong ban on the manufacture, sale, and transport of alcoholic beverages in the United States. The event was a beer taste benefit held at Sharon’s Chestnut

Street Café and featured some fifty craft beers to sample food, live jazz, and a silent auction. Best of all, the event organizers, the Brotherhood of Appreciating Repeal Day (B.O.A.R.D.) selected the River Watchers to be the beneficiaries of the proceeds. The event raised \$3,000 for the River Watchers.

The Brotherhood of Appreciating Repeal Day is a loosely affiliated fraternal organization founded by a small group of friends who enjoyed good beer and good times with higher a goal to make Repeal Day an annual celebration with a noble cause. The group’s monthly meetings serve as a social outing as well as an operational meeting, often times less of the latter. The idea is to have fun while promoting the objectives according to the founding resolution, “to

fuel the ongoing appreciation, respect, and passion for quality beer and to celebrate, as its high-water mark, the annual observance of Repeal Day in this fair Shenango Valley, western Pennsylvania, and eastern Ohio.” By making the event a benefit, the group would raise funds and awareness for worthy community organizations. The B.O.A.R.D. chose the River Watchers since good beer requires clean water!

The response to the event was overwhelmingly positive. The Chestnut was packed pretty tight, but no one appeared to mind as the environment was festive. The progressive live jazz music of “Stretch” filled the air. The food was served upstairs which offered party goers the opportunity to participate in some other activities. There they could take a chance on a silent auction basket, learn more about the Riverwatchers, or apply for membership. Sharon Mayor Bob Lucas issued a proclamation declaring the day as the “Brotherhood of Appreciating Repeal Day” in Sharon. Representatives from M&M Beer, Erme’s, Vecenie, and Glenwood distributors, as well as the Penn, Yuengling, Erie, North Country, Great Lakes, and Voodoo Brewing Companies were personally on hand to pour and discuss the beers being sampled. All the beer products were gratefully donated.

The coverage by the Herald included an entertainment feature as well as a front page color photo the day after the event. WFMJ featured the event on the morning show which offered segments on the event, the beers, as well as Tom Amundsen speaking on behalf of the River Watchers. Members of B.O.A.R.D. had to be at Chestnut Street Café at 4:45am for the filming of the live program.

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Memberships

New Members

Russell Adkins
Mary "Babs" Davis
John Eaton
Missa Eaton
James Hughes
John F. Keaveny
Eugenia McConnell
John McConnell
Murphy McConnell
Riley McConnell
Shannon McConnell
William G. McConnell
Larry & Janet McCright
Florence M. Mitchell
Mona Morton
Katherine Ryan
Robert Samios
Janet Sirochman
Joe Sirochman

New Business Members

DJ's Greenhouse
Nittany Coatings, Inc.
Roberts Landscape
Company

Membership Renewals

Rod Alexander
Bill Amundsen
Inge Amundsen
Joseph Baldwin
Nick & Melissa Baron
Brian Bearer
Ann M. Becker
Bill Bell
Vere Bellian

Nancy Bergey
Ernie Bernice
Arleen Bianco
Ray Bianco
Ruth E. Booth
Jane Buckley
Edward Buczo
Dana Christy
Joan Christy
William Clowes
Katherine A. David
Morgan V. Diefenderfer
Carl Difeo
Vivian Evans
Angela M. Fiore
Doug & Deb Fitzgerald
Therese Gallagher
Anna Mary Hoovler
Dennis Hoovler
Erin Hricik
Frank Hricik
Don Hunter
Frank Jovenall
Jan Keller
Jami & Jenny King
Karen Kosheba
Caroline Krochka
Stella Lazor
Bob Liptak
Mark Longietti
Jerri Manos
Rosemary Mardersteck
Trip McBride
Edward McCullough
John McGinty
Kenneth Mild
Marilyn Morris

Alec Moyer
Emma Moyer
Marcia Moyer
Stewart Moyer
Walter Phillips
David Roshala
Bobby Rosian
Kathleen Rueberger
Sam Sirochman
Richard Slater
Janet Smith
Marjorie Stadtmiller
Phil Steele
Matt Stefanak
Leon Stein
Shirley Stein
Renee Stigliano
Swogger-Pinchof Family
James Tokar
Janet Verone
Janet Wendy Warner
Lee Weber
William Welsh
Emily Williams
Jenna Williams
Jordan Williams
Jonathon Williams
Mark Williams
Nadine Williams
John Williams
Toni Williams
Zak Williams
James Winner
Pat Woodings
Sam Woodings
Jack Wormley
Bill Witt

Sarah Witt
Lori Zikovich

Business Memberships

Renewals

Flynn's Tire & Automotive
Kurtanich Engineers &
Associates, Inc.
League of Women
Voters, Lawrence County
Mehler Insurance Agency, Inc.
Sharon Custom Metal Forming
Staul's Water Technology
Sharon Regional Health Systems

Continuous Supporters

Copyland
Duferco Farrell Corp.
Ann & Mike Kotyk
Lenbil's
MK Landscape Supply
Niko & Lou's Coney Island
Surf724

Thank you to all our
members, old and new,
for your continued support
of the efforts and goals of
SRW.

It is your belief in our vision
that fuels this organization.

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The Repeal Day 2008 will mark the 75th anniversary of the repeal. Plans are underway to make it the best yet with proceeds again supporting the River Watchers. It will be a Friday, so mark your calendar for December 5th! More details to follow, so for more information check out the Repeal Day blog at www.repealday.blogspot.com or email repealday@gmail.com.

**MANY, MANY THANKS TO THE
BROTHERHOOD OF
APPRECIATING REPEAL DAY
FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTION
& GENEROSITY
TO SHENANGO RIVER WATCHERS, INC.**

Assessing Greenville Surface Water

Since January, SRW Board Member Joyce Cuff has been engaged in a study of the circumstances leading up to the boil water alert issued for the Greenville area in November of 2007. The purpose of the study, requested by the Greenville Water Authority, is to assess practices and procedures with a view to preventing such alerts in the future. As an offshoot of this effort, Dr. Cuff's microbiology students at Thiel College are assessing points along the Shenango River, the Little Shenango, and Crooked Creek all upstream from the water intake point in order to locate the major sources of microbial pollution and to compare the results with those of studies conducted several years ago.



Research Projects

Dr. Shane V. Smith (Vice-president, Shenango River Watchers), Dr. Felicia P. Armstrong, Dr. Dawna Cerney, Dr. Thomas Diggins, Paul Robinette, and Michael Hamilton of Youngstown State University (YSU) are currently working in cooperation with Shenango River Watchers on 3 research projects on the Shenango River.

The first project is an initial survey which will be used as a baseline to monitor the future health and quality of the Shenango River in the remediated (cleaned up) area of the former Westinghouse Electric Corporation Superfund site. Water analyses were completed and macroinvertebrates were collected from this area and are being analyzed. Sediment samples will be collected and analyzed this spring and summer for the same section of the river. The majority of this water quality survey is being conducted by Paul Robinette as part of his Master of Science degree in Environmental Studies for the Department of Geological and Environmental Sciences at YSU. Paul's research is partially funded through an internship with Shenango River Watchers.

The second project is to conduct a survey of walleye spawning habitat in the Shenango River north of the Shenango Lake to Greenville. The majority of this habitat survey is being conducted by Michael Hamilton as part of his Master of Science degree in Environmental Studies for the Department of Geological and Environmental Sciences at YSU.

The third research project will be to develop a Geographic Information System database and map of the Shenango River Watershed to serve as a clearinghouse for past, current, and future projects conducted on the river by groups such as Shenango River Watchers and Youngstown State University.

SRW is excited about the newly formed partnership with YSU.

Act 167 Stormwater Management Plan

Recently, Mercer County has started to develop their Act 167 Stormwater Management Plan. The plan is very important to everyone in the county because it will determine stormwater problems throughout the county and suggest solutions to the problems. Although not a requirement by the state at this time, it may soon be required to have a Stormwater Management Plan. Mercer County is stepping up to the plate to develop their own plan before it is mandated for the county to accept a cookie cutter plan that may not be specifically geared towards issues in our area. Shenango River Watchers was recently asked to provide their input into the plan. President, Jennifer Barborak, attended one of the planning sessions conducted specifically for agencies and non-profits. We are currently responding to a questionnaire that asks if we know of any areas in the county where stormwater/runoff is an issue. If you would like to provide your input into the plan on behalf of SRW, please email your thoughts to shenangoriver@hotmail.com and we will include them in our survey.

Some specific items we would like to know:

- Do you know of any areas where excessive runoff becomes an issue after heavy rain events?
- Have you ever noticed any streams that are flowing full of sediment after hard rains?
- Have you noticed any areas where a pipe flowing into a stream or the river has scoured away the bank?
- Have you seen any streams where the banks are undercut and eroded?
- Any areas where water lays on the roadway or in fields, etc.
- Anything else about stormwater/runoff that you have noticed in Mercer County.

Please submit your responses as soon as possible. Thank you.

Membership Form

Yes, I would like to support Shenango River Watchers!

I have enclosed my donation of:

- _____ \$10 Individual Membership
- _____ \$20 Individual Membership (\$10) w/T-shirt (\$10)
(Please choose size)
- _____ \$25.00 Business/Organization Membership
- _____ \$35.00 Business/Organization Membership(\$25)
w/T-shirt (\$10) (Please choose size)
- _____ Other

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

I want to help with:

- Clean Up Days
- Watershed Research Committee
- Financial Planning
- Fundraising
- Newsletter
- Water Testing
- Food Preparation for Clean Up Days

_____ Yes, send me a t-shirt. I've enclosed a donation (\$10 for each shirt) and have picked my size below!

Size selection:

__ Small __Medium __ Large __ Extra Large



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**SRW
Sixth Annual Banquet
March 29, 2008
Come join us!!**

Updating The Grants:

In spring, 2007, Shenango River Watchers, Inc. sponsored a grant application for the Lawrence County Conservation District for a stream restoration project on Deer Creek. The Community Foundation for the Alleghenies, former Western PA Watershed Program, recently awarded funding in the amount of \$15,000 for this project. The Deer Creek project proposes the design and implementation of natural stream design techniques to reduce the amount of nutrients entering the stream, decrease erosion and sediment deposition, and restore the stream system to its natural condition. Deer Creek is a tributary to the Shenango River and the watershed is located primarily in Pulaski Township, Lawrence County with the headwaters extending northwest into Mercer County and the State of Ohio. The project is a cooperative effort between the Rolling Hills Golf Course, Pulaski Township, Fish and Boat Commission, Conservation District, Wallace and Panther, and SRW.

DCNR Grant awarded for the "Can Opener Statue area in Downtown Sharon": in conjunction with the Sharon Beautification Commission, the plan has been formed to remove trees, planting of native species including redbud trees, lilac bushes, firebushes and daylilies, restoring the brick along the river walkway, removal of benches, new soil and edging around the statue itself and new fencing at the bank edge.

DCNR Grant awarded for Bicentennial Park and the river's edge: an initial kickoff meeting was held with the Sharon Beautification Commission, SRW Board Members Don Clowes and Del Williams as well as HHSDR (awarded the bid for the feasibility study). HHSDR brought up possibilities of coordinating the efforts with the bridge replacements scheduled for the Budd Street and Connelly Blvd. bridges as well as looking into razing the burnt structure on Budd Street. Mandatory public meeting have been scheduled including March 11th for the residents of Connelly Manor and Riverview Apts.; March 13th a work session with Sharon City Council at 6:30 in the City Building; and March 31st with the Greater Sharon Assoc at 3:30 at Career Link. Also the survey is nearly complete by Kurtanich Engineering (weather permitting).

