VALLEY VIEWS

Potomac Valley Audubon Society

Volume 24, Issue 9

June 2006

News From Yankauer

Watershed Wrap-up

Another great season of the Watershed Education Initiative has come to an end. Late May and early June saw the students planting rain gardens at the schools to prevent erosion and improve water quality of the schools' watersheds. A special thank you goes to Carolyn Thomas for donating LOTS of plants for this year's rain gardens, as well as helping to install several gardens. Thanks also to Kata Rishel of the Freshwater Institute for her help with planning and planting this year's gardens and to Susan Brookreson for helping to install the gardens as well.

As another "watershed" year wraps up, we'd like to recognize Bill and Bonnie Stubblefield, the Isaac Walton League and the Shepherdstown Wastewater Treatment Plant for providing the students with memorable and educational field trip sites again this year. An enormous thank you also goes to Amy Mason, Watershed Instructor, for the time, talent and professionalism she brought to the job. Amy will be working at Potomack Intermediate School as a fifth grade teacher next year. Congratulations, Amy! We look forward to working with you and your students in the future.

Audubon Discovery Camp is filling fast! Go to www.potomacaudubon.org to register today!

Amazing Adaptations

On April 27th, two classrooms from Potomack Intermediate School came to Yankauer to try out our brand new 3rd grade program. The program went very smoothly thanks to the stellar efforts of volunteers Susan Brookreson, Melissa Bruggeman, Kitty Clark, and Pete Kinyon. The program was developed last summer in partnership with teachers Lynn Fornwalt and

(Yankauer cont'd column 2)



Photo by Kate Bale

Meet the Challenge – Grow our Endowment

The Bank of Charles Town has agreed to donate $500 towards our environmental education endowment if PVAS members and friends can match their contribution. The $5,000 endowment was established in 2002 through the Eastern West Virginia Community Foundation's "Spirit of the Panhandle" award to Jean Neely for outstanding volunteer service. The endowment has grown to nearly $9,000 since it was established thanks to a similar challenge grant from The Bank of Charles Town last year and several generous donors who matched the bank's funds. Help us meet this year's challenge and make a gift that will literally "keep on giving" for years to come. Contributions can be made by sending a contribution to "PVAS," and mail to PO Box 578, Shepherdstown, WV 25443. Be sure to write "endowment fund" on the memo line so we know your intention. All funds will be invested in the endowment and the interest generated in future years will be put towards PVAS' environmental education programs. Thank you in advance for your contribution!

(Yankauer from column 1)

Johnna Exline as part of a professional development course offered by PVAS through WVU. As part of the course, these same teachers bring their students to test and evaluate the activities they developed as part of the course. Now that it has been tested, the program will be officially offered to other 3rd grade classrooms next year.

Record-Breaking Week

The week of May 1st may have been a record breaking week in terms of numbers of programs. *Thanks to volunteers and partnerships, we were able to provide 17 programs in six days!* Between the Watershed program, Science Olympiad, a Girl Scout program and a visit from Park School in Baltimore, we saw over 600 children in six days. A tremendous thank you goes to Carolyn Thomas and her environmental education class for teaching a station at the Science Olympiad, and to Susan Brookreson, Pete Kinyon, Nancy Kirshbaum, and Amy Mason for filling in the rest of the instructor roles.

(Yankauer cont'd page 2)

(Yankauer from page 1)

Wildflower Festival

In spite of the rainy day, good spirited volunteers and a few brave visitors participated in this year's wildflower festival. A heart-felt thank you goes to walk leaders Kathy Bilton. Melissa Bruggeman, Kathryn Henry, Wil Hershberger, and Julie Laing. Other gracious volunteers who showed up in spite of the weather included Shelley Aikens (artist); Daryl Bryarly (musician); Diana Gaviria and Diana Mullis (set-up and food); Annie Sabatos, Pete Kinyon and Joey Niks (children's activities); Kitty Clark, Eva Olsson, and Colleen Tracey (dancers). Thank you also to Terry Tucker for volunteering to provide music, even though she could not attend due to the weather. The number of volunteers roughly equaled the number of visitors, but thanks to the good-natured crew, the day was quite enjoyable. Thank you for being there, and for bringing your positive attitudes.

Reminder: Valley Views will not be published in July or August. Look for the next issue in September 2006.

Also remember there are no monthly meetings scheduled during June, July or August. Check the website www.potomacaudubon.org or the September newsletter for events.

New Officers and Board Elected

PVAS held its annual meeting May 20 at the Yankauer Nature Preserve. The meeting's formal program included the election of the following new officers and board members:

Officers—

Peter Smith, President; Nancy Kirschbaum, Vice President; Jane Vanderhook, Treasurer. (Current Secretary Fiona Harrison has one year left in her term.)

At-Large Board Members (9 seats)—Wayne Braunstein, Susan Brookreson, Clark Dixon, Rob Hoxton, Georgia Jeppesen, Carolyn Thomas, Christine Wolf. (Current board member Dave Eldridge has one year left in his current term.)

Biographies of the new officers and board members were included in the May issue of Valley Views.

President's Perch



Hi Everyone—

It's hard to believe, but this will be my last President's Perch ... I have been president for 3 years. Where did the time go? I want to thank all of you for electing me and for being such good supporters of me and of PVAS. I have asked many favors of people and received lots of help at every turn. Thank you! I also want to give a special thanks to those who have served on the Board with me ... I could not have done it without you!! And special thanks is also due to Reorganization Committee ... I really think that the new Board structure will help us to achieve the evolving goals of our ever changing organization. As a founding member of PVAS, it is amazing to look back at our beginnings and see how far we have come! I hope that each of you see in PVAS many things that you find interesting and inspiring ... AND that you will contribute a little (or a lot) of your time and expertise to help us continue the programs, events and educational opportunities that we can provide to enrich the quality of life in our community.

My personal philosophy is that it is important to put some of my time, money and energy into the things that I believe in, and PVAS has provided me the opportunity to contribute to many of those things in ways that I could not do by myself. When people come together for a common cause, it is amazing what can be done! For example: those pretty WV license plates with the Rose-breasted Grosbeak provide needed dollars to the WV Wildlife Program every time the tag is renewed, and Audubon Chapters in WV did that. The Yankauer Nature Preserve, and all of the educational programs going on there, is another good example of what can be done. If you are reading this, you are a part of making good things happen. Thank you, and let's continue doing good things for ourselves and our community.

If you're interested in finding current events during the summer, check our website or you can subscribe to our "Head's-Up" email list if you would like to receive updates as they come along. Just send me an email at dianamullis@aol.com and I'll have you added to the mailing list.

Though I won't be President any more, I'm not going anywhere, so I look forward to seeing you at PVAS events and around town. Thank you again for electing me, and for supporting me as President and PVAS. Now let's get out there and enjoy a wonderful summer! Many thanks!

Diana Mullis

PVAS Works to Bring WV Master Naturalist Training Program to Area

PVAS has begun discussions with state officials and others about sponsoring local training for individuals who wish to participate in the West Virginia Master Naturalist program. This training could be offered as early as this fall.

One of the first in the nation, the West Virginia Master Naturalist program is patterned after the 33-year-old Master Gardener Program. It is aimed at allowing individuals to increase their understanding and appreciation of the natural world while helping their communities and the environment. Participants receive classroom and field training in a broad range of topics in the fields of natural history and environmental education. Those who complete 64 hours of training and 30 hours of volunteer work are certified as Master Naturalists.

Once certified, these individuals help construct and maintain nature trails, lead interpretive walks at state parks, assist biologists with research, and give presentations to school children and other groups.

West Virginia's Master Naturalist program is a project of the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources, the West Virginia University Extension Service, the Canaan Valley Institute, Davis and Elkins College, and the West Virginia Division of Tourism.

Potomac Valley Nature Photographers (PVNP)

Upcoming Monthly Meetings

• Friday, June 23rd,7:00 PM at NCTC. Robert Tope, Managing Editor of Nature's Best magazine will deliver a presentation about how to prepare for a photographic competition (e.g., what judges look for and how to increase your chances of winning).

• Friday, July 28th, 7:00 PM at NCTC. Wil Hershberger will provide a practical "nuts and bolts" presentation about how to prepare and present photographic prints for photo competition.

• Friday, August 18th, 7:00 PM at NCTC. Tony Sweet will provide a free, one hour program about his unique approach to photography. Tony Sweet was recently named by Nikon as one of their Legends Behind the Lens. He will conduct a day-long seminar in the Robert Byrd Auditorium at the National Conservation Training Center in Shepherdstown on the following day, Saturday, August 19, from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM. Tickets for this day-long event are $90 for PVNP members and $100 for nonmembers. The seminar should appeal to beginner, intermediate, and advanced photographers alike. It will include sessions on compositional technique, the equipment he uses, and digital workflow tips and techniques. He'll show and provide both the creative and technical details behind many of his beautiful images. The seminar will conclude with a critique of images that have been submitted by attendees, along with a question and answer session.

If you're interested in purchasing tickets for this event, please contact Matt Poole at mpoole62@adelphia.net at your earliest convenience to let him know you want to purchase tickets; and send a check for the appropriate amount to PVNP, P.O. 863, Shepherdstown, WV, 25443. Checks should be made payable to the Potomac Valley Nature Photographers.

To see some of Tony's spectacular work, and to learn more about him, please visit his web site at http://www.tonysweet.com/.

Upcoming PVNP "Photo Safari" Field Trips

• Saturday, May 27 at Cacapon State Park (near Berkeley Springs). Hike the Ridge Trail with PVNP member, Pete Kinyon, in search of photographic opportunities. Meet Pete at the park's nature center at 8:30 AM that morning. Contact Pete at gnomepete@hotmail.com if you have questions about the outing.

• Saturday, June 17 outing to Big Meadows at Shenandoah National Park in Northern Virginia. Wil and Donna Hershberger will meet folks at the south parking lot at Big Meadows on Saturday morning at 5:30AM for sunrise shooting. They will later switch to longer lenses and go after the megafauna (e.g., whitetail deer) in the meadow. Mornings are often dewy, so please wear appropriate footwear and clothing so you don't get soaking wet. If people are interested in carpooling they can use the PVNP web site forums to post their wishes and to make arrangements. If you want to join the group later in the morning, please do. It should be obvious where the group is as you can see the entire meadow from the road. Please let us know if you are planning on coming to this event so that we can watch for you; we don't want to leave anyone behind. Visit the Potomac Valley Nature Photographers web site at http://www.potomacvalleynaturephotographers.org for news and scheduling updates.

Potomac Arts Festival Update

As you know, the Potomac Arts Festival is scheduled to run November 3 – 5, 2006. It is important to note that the Arts Festival has the potential to be a large fundraiser for our organization. Sandy Sponaugle and Mary Dubay have made great strides in planning this 2nd annual event. We would like to extend our great appreciation to Rhonda Smith and Jean Woods, who lent their expertise and time to jury our artist applications. Congratulatory letters and artists contracts have been sent and we hope to have a list of participating artists posted on our website by mid-summer. At this point in time, we are soliciting sponsors to support this event, and ultimately support our environmental education programs. If you are interested in sponsoring the Potomac Arts Festival, or if you know someone who might be, please visit our web site at www.PotomacArtsFestival.org.

RED DOT ALERT Please note that a red dot on your mailing label may mean your membership has expired and this could be the last PVAS newsletter you receive. Please renew using the form below.



JOIN PVAS TODAY

When you join PVAS, you automatically become a member of the National Audubon Society. Your membership includes:

- One year (six issues) of award-winning Audubon Magazine
- Eight issues of Valley Views, PVAS's newsletter of field trips, programs, and local issues
- Advance notice of all PVAS events

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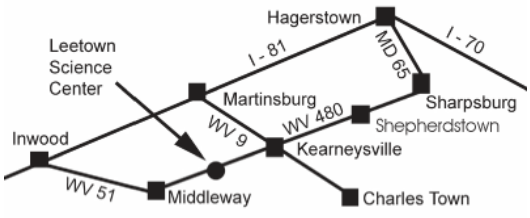
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The Potomac Valley Audubon Society meets at 7:30 p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month, September through April, in the auditorium at the USGS Leetown Science Center, Leetown/Kearneysville, WV. Programs are free and open to the public. For additional information about PVAS or its programs and activities, please call any of the board members listed here or see http://potomacaudubon.org. PVAS serves the Eastern Panhandle of West Virginia and neighboring Washington County, Maryland.

PVAS BOARD

The PVAS Board meets the first Wednesday of the month (Sept.-June) at Shepherd College, Snyder Hall, Room 317, 7PM. These meetings are open to all PVAS members.

PVAS Officers and Board Members

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PVAS Wildlife Rescue Coord: Diana Mullis ..... 304-267-3482 & 304-724-4500(day)