

Celebrating
25 Potomac Valley Audubon Society
Years
VALLEY VIEWS

Volume 25, Issue 8

May 2007

PVAS Celebrates 25th Anniversary June 2!

Help celebrate our 25th birthday with a party at our Yankauer Nature Preserve on June 2 at 6:00 p.m.

There will be festive decorations, a fabulous forest setting, awards, a bonfire, a delicious dinner and stories to share.

Everything (dinner with beverage and dessert, all utensils, plates, cups etc.) will be provided for you. The only thing required is an **RSVP by May 19** so we can let our caterer know how many to prepare for.

The menu will include pulled pork sandwiches, grilled portobello sandwiches, vegetarian baked beans, cole slaw and birthday cake. There will be no charge for the meal.

Look through your archives and bring photos and other PVAS memorabilia to post on our interactive time line. Musicians are welcome to bring their instruments and jam.

Please contact Susan Brookreson at 304-263-2823 or brookre@earthlink.net to RSVP and/or to volunteer to help with set up on June 2.

Annual Appeal Yields More Than \$26,500

The final total from our annual fundraising appeal, which began December 15 and concluded March 31, was \$26,724.44. That's \$1,724.44, or nearly 7 percent, over our stated goal of \$25,000 and more than twice the amount we've raised in any previous appeal.

A full list of all those who contributed, along with a list of others who made other cash or in-kind contributions over the last 12 months, is included in this newsletter as a special insert.

Thanks again to all of you who have been so generous to PVAS. We appreciate all your support!

Special Thanks

A special thanks goes to Sharon Stephan for designing our 25th Anniversary Masthead and logo.

Eidolon Formal Opening Set for May 19

PVAS and The Nature Conservancy will formally open the new Eidolon Nature Preserve in Morgan County on Saturday, May 19.

Scheduled events include a 10 a.m. ceremony at the preserve gate and an open house on the property until 4 p.m. These events will take place rain or shine.

During the open house period, light refreshments will be served and docents will be present to show visitors around the property and answer questions.

Anyone with an interest is invited to attend the 10 a.m. ceremony and/or the open house.

The 354-acre Eidolon Preserve straddles the summit and both sides of Sideling Hill, about 10 miles west of Berkeley Springs in Morgan County.

Directions to it can be found on the PVAS website at www.potomacaudubon.org.

The establishment of the preserve was announced last November. It was willed to the Conservancy by its longtime owner, Marguerite Zapoleon. It is being co-managed by the Conservancy and PVAS.

For more information about the May 19 opening, contact Peter Smith at 304-876-1139 or pvsmith@frontiernet.net.

Cape May Trip Set for May 12-13

Our annual spring field trip to Cape May, New Jersey, is set for the weekend of May 12-13.

The spring migration will be in full swing by that time, and shorebirds and songbirds should be abundant.

Anyone with an interest is welcome to participate.

Participants will be expected to make their own travel arrangements to and from Cape May, although carpooling space should be available. They will also be expected to make and pay for their own motel reservations.

For more information about all these matters (including carpooling and places to stay in Cape May) and/or to register for the trip contact Dave Myles at 304-876-3804 or dkmyles@comcast.net before May 10.

Potomac Valley Audubon Society is people dedicated to preserving, restoring, and enjoying the natural world through education and action.

Master Naturalist Classes Get Underway

PVAS's new Potomac Valley Master Naturalist Program (PVMNP) got underway the weekend of April 14-15 with an initial round of classes at Cacapon State Park in Morgan County.

Topics covered during this first weekend included an introduction to the program, General Ecology, Amphibians and Reptiles, Birds, and Wildflowers and Weeds.



From now on, there will be one full Saturday day of classes each month through September, and two full Saturdays of classes during October.

The locations of the classes will alternate between Cacapon State Park and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's National Conservation Training Center (NCTC) in Jefferson County.

This year's PVMNP training will wrap up with a final day of classes at NCTC on October 27.

All 20 of the available class slots for this year's training have been filled.

Since applications for the program are being considered on a first-come, first-served basis, those who applied too late to be admitted this year have automatically been put at the top of the waiting list for next year. That waiting list already has a lot of names on it so those who would like to enroll in next year's training should be sure to apply quickly when the application period begins early next year. The exact timing of the application period will be announced later.

To get further information contact PVAS at 304-676-3397 or pvasmail@aol.com.

An earlier issue of *Valley Views* noted that PVAS members and supporters Tom and Sandra D'Onofrio had donated a \$300 scholarship to cover the full cost of a deserving individual's participation in the program.

In the end, the D'Onofrios were so impressed by two of the individuals who applied for this scholarship that they decided to donate two \$300 scholarships so both those individuals could participate.

Many thanks to the D'Onofrios for their wonderful generosity.

The PVMNP is a local chapter of the State of West Virginia's Master Naturalist Program, which is one of the first in the nation.

The program is aimed at allowing individuals to increase their understanding and appreciation of the natural world while helping their communities and the environment.

More information is available on the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources web page at www.wvdnr.gov/wvnm/index.shtm.

May Meeting Will Feature Special Family Program

Our May meeting will feature a special, family-oriented program on raptors and other birds of prey, presented by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources.

The meeting will be held at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, May 9, at the Yankauer Nature Preserve north of Shepherdstown.

The program, entitled "Wings and Things," is part of a series of Maryland DNR programs intended to give adults and children alike the opportunity to see live wildlife up close and personal.

A Maryland state naturalist will present a variety of birds, discuss their natural histories and habitats and the current threats they face, and tell the story of how each bird was brought into the state's care.

All of the birds used in the program are injured birds that have been rehabilitated but cannot be released back to the wild, either because their injuries make them unable to survive or because they have become too imprinted on humans.

The program is free and anyone is welcome to attend.

To get to the preserve from Shepherdstown, take route 480 north towards Sharpsburg. Just past the Shepherd football field, turn left on Shepherd Grade Road. Drive 1.7 miles and turn left on Scrabble Road. Stay on Scrabble Road for 4 miles (the road turns left at 1.9 miles) through Scrabble, and then turn right on Whiting's Neck Road. The Preserve is 1/2 mile on the right.

From Martinsburg, go north on Route 11. One mile past the Berkeley Plaza, turn right onto Berkeley Station Road Drive 6.3 miles (after 3 miles the road becomes Scrabble Road) then turn left on to Whiting's Neck Road. The Preserve is 1/2 mile on the right.

For more information contact Peter Smith at 304-876-1139 or pvasmith@frontiernet.net.

Sign Up Now To Join WVEC Email List

The West Virginia Environmental Council, which promotes environmental protection in West Virginia, invites PVAS members to join their email list.



To sign up, go to their website at www.wvecouncil.org and click on the "Take Action" icon. You'll receive timely Action Alerts and G.R.E.E.N. Legislative Updates (weekly during the state legislature's regular session) and G.R.E.E.N. newsletters several times throughout the year.

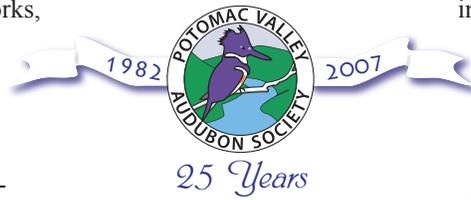
The WVEC website also includes a calendar of upcoming events statewide and a comprehensive archive of back issues of their alerts, updates and newsletters.

CORRECTION

In last month's *Valley Views*, the article on page 5 entitled "Preview of the Anniversary Issue" contained an error in the spelling of Jean Neely's name. We offer sincere apologies for this gaffe.

PVAS Is 25 Years Young

It may have been 20 years ago today that Sgt. Pepper taught the band to play; but PVAS celebrates its 25th anniversary this year and it's still teaching conservation, ecology, and the wonders of nature. Mix that in with having fun, doing good works, and taking a proactive stance on making the world a little bit better place than it might otherwise have been and you've got 25 years of PVAS.



Quoting Jean Neely in the April 1982 newsletter, PVAS ...

is not just a group of 'bird watchers.' As you know, it [NAS] was originally formed from citizens concerned about the needless slaughter of egrets in Florida so that their plumes could be used to adorn ladies hats. ...

We now have the opportunity—and the responsibility—to uphold the Audubon cause in our local communities and all four counties we represent. ...

We are also a recreational club. People want to have a good time in the outdoors; talking, seeing and interacting in appreciation of our natural surroundings and creatures—the area of mutual interest drawing us together.

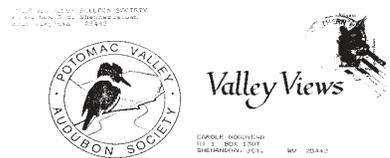
Truly, not much has changed since these words were written except the list of dates, events, achievements, and fun that has taken place along the way. An effort was started this year to put together a history of PVAS. As you might imagine, it has turned out to be much more than we can summarize in this little article; but here are some highlights and recollections from some founding and long time members:

- January 26, 1982 – after a year of organizing activities, founding members vote the go ahead to petition NAS for a chapter charter
- March 1, 1982 – The National Audubon Society approves a provisional chapter charter for PVAS

WE EXIST!!

POTOMAC VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY CHAPTER CHARTER PRESENTED BY POMEROY
 ...alt Pomero, President of the Mid-Atlantic Region of the National Audubon Society made a surprise visit to our March 30 meeting. He presented our official charter as the Potomac Valley Audubon Society. Accepting in behalf of us all was Ben Schley, our Vice President. Walt recently took over as President of the Mid-Atlantic Region from Ed Brighter who has been transferred by Audubon to a Western Region. We understood that this is "back home" for Ed. Alan Riggers will soon join Walt on the staff. He said that we should see a lot of them because we are very close to their headquarters in Camp, Pennsylvania. Walt reminded us that this is the "Year of the Eagle" and presented us with a large poster with a beautiful bald eagle pictured thereupon. He brought us news of upcoming events which we list elsewhere in the newsletter. He also brought two boxes of cider and assorted cookies which were consumed with pleasure by the 30 or so members who attended the meeting.

- June 1982 – Valley Views is established as the official PVAS newsletter and the belted kingfisher is chosen for the chapter logo



- Spring and Summer, 1982 – PVAS participates in a successful campaign to establish a 35,000-acre Cranberry Wilderness Area in the Monongehela National Forest in West Virginia [Recollection by Jean Neely, 'For me, the two that stand out in the environmental/conservation arena are: the direct impact of PVAS on the Congressional debate re the Cranberry Wilderness in the very early years of our existence. If it had not been for Ben Schley and me visiting with

Cleve Benedict in M'burg (he was the Congressman from this district then), it may never have seen the light of day. It was amazing, looking back now.']

- September 10, 1982 – The Martinsburg News reports that PVAS now has "more than 100 members..."
- 1985 – Involved in a multi-year effort, PVAS contributed to the culmination of the reintroduction of osprey at Sleepy Creek. [Susan Brookreson recalls, 'We stayed in a very small mouse infested trailer by the river. It was a very successful program. The osprey that now nest in Sleepy Creek are (or were) direct descendants of that hacking. ...One night during the hacking while camped by the river it poured rain so hard that DNR came in the middle of the night and told us to move to higher ground as the river was rising fast. I had my 2 little girls with me at the time, Jean was there and evacuated also. What an adventure!' Susan also designed the official "Team Osprey '85" t-shirt.]
- Summer 1994 – PVAS signs an agreement with The Nature Conservancy to co-manage the Conservancy's 104-acre Yankauer Nature Preserve
- October 22, 1994 – PVAS plays a significant role in establishing the Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge [Recollection by Jean Neely, second of her two standout events, 'Sen. Byrd insisted that it be the 500th NWR, instead of some place in Arkansas! I was there for the dedication.' A very important event for PVAS because it was on the list of recollections for everyone that contributed, including Susan Brookreson, Diana Mullis, and Kathryn Henry]
- October 16, 2006 – PVAS signs an agreement with The Nature Conservancy to co-manage a new Conservancy property Morgan County, Eidolon Nature Preserve
- Somewhere in the middle – Susan remembers one very special general meeting that sort of says it all, 'This just popped into my head. We had a program once about bats, a very good program. The lady presenter took the first bat out for us to look at from under her arm pit (or there abouts)! She was wearing the bats, they were under her clothes. She said they were very safe and warm there. At the end of the program she had chocolate bats for sale. I swear Wayne, I am not making this up.'

For PVAS the past 25 years have been hard work, good fun, comradery, and dedication to mission. It's been glorious and we've got every right to proudly celebrate the past, and to herald it as the beginning of our next adventure. Congratulations PVAS!!!



Hello everyone:

As is noted elsewhere in this issue of *Valley Views*, we're currently gearing up to celebrate PVAS's 25th Anniversary on June 2.

PVAS has changed a lot since it was founded in 1982 but one of its main (and best) characteristics remains the same: we're not afraid to try new things.

You'll find at least two current manifestations of this spirit in this newsletter.

First, note the article about our plans to formally open our new Eidolon Nature Preserve in Morgan County on May 19.

No matter how you slice it, Eidolon represents a major new undertaking for PVAS.

Administratively, it more than quadruples the amount of land we co-manage for The Nature Conservancy and thus greatly expands the scope and complexity of our land management responsibilities.

Geographically, Eidolon is expanding our focus in a big way. Morgan County has always been part of our membership area but we've never been much of a presence there. That's not true anymore. Now, we've got a real responsibility to make this new preserve an important natural asset for people of Morgan County as well as the region as a whole.

From a programmatic perspective, Eidolon gives us a chance to offer new kinds of educational experiences. The geology, flora and fauna of Eidolon's mountain habitats are very different from those of the valley habitats at our Yankauer Nature Preserve in Berkeley County.

We've already put a lot of work into Eidolon, and there's a lot more to come. But there's no doubt it will all be worth it.

Thanks to all those who have helped so far, including Bill Belton, Tim Murphy, Joe Dent, Rebecca MacLeod of the Potomac Headwaters RC&D, Kelly Smith at Cacapon State Park, Judy Webb and others with the Morgan County Ecology Coalition, the Virginia Tech team that's helping us with the management plan for the property (and much more), and our partners at The Nature Conservancy.

And thanks to the management of the Panorama at the Peak restaurant and The Country Inn in Berkeley Springs, for providing us with meeting space.

You'll also find an article in this newsletter about the new Master Naturalist classes we're now offering.

This is a terrific new program that should be a real benefit to the community.

Its mission is to train individuals in the fundamentals of natural history, nature interpretation and teaching, and its goals are twofold: to foster greater appreciation for the importance of good environmental stewardship and to build a corps of highly qualified volunteers who can help state and local government, schools, and nongovernmental organizations with research, outdoor recreation development, and environmental education and protection.

We're delighted to be able to offer this kind of training, and special thanks are due to PVAS board member Clark Dixon and local naturalist Cheryl Jennings for taking charge of this effort and getting it up and running. Thanks, too, to the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources for its help and support.

—Peter Smith

Science Olympiad in May!

This year's Jefferson County Science Olympiad will take place May 21-25 at the National Conservation Training Center.

This annual event brings all Jefferson County 6th graders to the Center to participate in a variety of hands-on science activities from fisheries science to bird banding to health issues.

This year, PVAS will be presenting a station on the NCTC Eagles (we hope they lay another set of eggs soon!) and our new Potomac Valley Master Naturalists group will also have a station.

By that time, the Master Naturalists will have just completed a session on nature interpretation and environmental education, so they will have the opportunity to put their skills to use at their very own station using a planned activity or something of their own creation.

Birding 101

Twenty-two interested folks signed up for Birding 101 again this year. The course is in its 20th year and is being taught by long-time members and volunteers Wil Hershberger and Bob Dean with Matt Orsie lending his expertise as well. All are phenomenal birders and PVAS is so lucky to have them teach this course again this year. The course consists of four evening seminars and three field trips to highlight a variety of species and their different habitats.



*Amazed and Astonished
New Birders*

Audubon Discovery Camp Update

Have you registered your child for one of the exciting sessions at the Audubon Discovery Camp at Yankauer this summer? If you are still thinking about it, don't wait because sessions are filling quickly! Before Easter, three of the full week sessions, as well as the new preschool program, Just For Fledglings, were filled. At publication time for Valley Views, there were still a few openings in It's Great To Be Gross, The First Campers, and Watchers In The Woods. Some campers this year will be able to attend a week on scholarship thanks to the annual birdseed sale and the generosity of donors who have provided all or part of the fee. Some of these scholarship winners will be announced in next month's Valley Views.

Junior Counselors, ages 14-17, are unpaid staff who attend a week (or more!) at no charge by working as staff assistants. You can download a copy of the Junior Counselor application at www.potomacaudubon.org.

Plastic bottle caps from soda and water bottles are still needed for a camp program. They can be dropped off at Yankauer during the first week in June.

Yankauer Cleanup

Lots of helping hands helped prepare the preserve for the April 21 Wildflower/Earth Day Festival. Danny and Michelle Carter cut and cleared the cedars from the trails and pavilion area after the last heavy snowfall damage. The NCTC Employee's Association spent an afternoon helping to clean the pavilion and flower garden in preparation for the festival, and Eldon Winston led some members of the group in an effort to rid Autumn Olive from part of the preserve. Thank you all for your help!

Fourth-Grade Watershed Program

Our new Children's Program Director, Ellen Murphy, has been spending much of her time this spring helping fourth graders in Berkeley and Jefferson Counties learn about watersheds and their importance for our environment. Each class participates in 7 sessions that include a service project at the individual schools. During the two weeks before Easter, Ellen was assisted by super-trooper volunteers Susan Brookreson, Nancy Kirschbaum, and Linda Grubb, who spent much of each day helping the students participate in a field trip to the Potomac River and a sewage treatment plant. With the assistance of the Izaak Walton League of Berkeley County, the fourth graders were able to perform water quality tests on the Potomac River (dissolved oxygen, pH, and temperature), complete a streambank assessment, and search the riverbanks for macroinvertebrates such as crayfish and stonefly larva. The field trip was highlighted in the Martinsburg Journal and The Shepherdstown Chronicle in early April. Over 550 students are participating in the program this year. A special thank you goes to the staff at the Berkeley County and Shepherdstown Sewage Treatment Plants for providing tours of their facilities as part of the field trip, and to Bill and Bonnie Stubblefield for allowing the students access to their property to collect critters.



Testing pH

Next, students will be learning how those critters fit in the larger food web and how water pollution impacts not just those insects, snails and crayfish they found, but other plants and animals in the food web as well. The program wraps up in May with a tour of the school grounds where students search for signs of human impact, then decide on an action plan to correct those issues. This year, "rain gardens" are funded through a grant from the National Audubon Society. The goal of the gardens is to have students participate in improving the health of their watershed with one simple action – a fitting conclusion to the watershed program.

Calendar of Events

- May 9, 6:30p.m.–“Wings and Things” (Raptor Presentation) at Yankauer
- May 19, 10a.m.-4 p.m.–Eidolon Preserve Open House
- May 21-25–Jefferson County Science Olympiad
- May 27–Rachel Carson’s 100th Birthday
- June 2: 6 p.m.–PVAS’ 25th Anniversary Celebration at Yankauer
- June 4-8–“Just for Fledgelings” camp for preschoolers
- June 11–Summer Camp Sessions Begin!
- June 24–PVAS member event at Cacapon State Park

JOIN PVAS TODAY!

We now offer two kinds of memberships:

1. PVAS Local Membership

Here's what you get:

- Access to a wide variety of PVAS programs and events for adults and children.
- Discounts for selected chapter activities, like children's summer camps.
- A subscription to PVAS's newsletter and e-mail alerts about events and programs of special interest.
- ALL your dues stay here to support local PVAS efforts!

To become a local member: Enclose a check for \$20 (\$15 for seniors and students). Please make check out to "PVAS." This fee covers membership for everyone in your household for one year.

2. Dual Membership with National Audubon

You get all the benefits of PVAS membership plus membership in the National Audubon Society, which includes a subscription to *Audubon* magazine. If you select this option, almost all of your dues will go to National Audubon. To obtain a dual membership, enclose a check for \$20 if you are joining NAS for the first time or \$35 to renew an existing NAS membership (\$15 in either case for seniors and students). Make check out to "National Audubon Society."

Membership Form

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____ State: ____ Zip code: _____
 Phone (optional): _____
 E-mail: (optional): _____

Membership Type (check one):

PVAS Local Membership _____
 (For PVAS local membership, check the box following if you do NOT want PVAS to share your contact information with National Audubon: _____)

Dual Membership with National Audubon _____

I'd like to get *Valley Views* by e-mail _____ US mail _____ (check one)

.....(Audubon chapter code Y54; source code 79N7)

Clip and mail this form to:

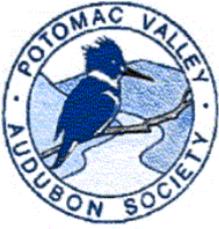
Membership Chair, PVAS
 PO Box 578
 Shepherdstown, WV 25443

Thank you for your support!



RED DOT ALERT

● If a red dot appears on your mailing label, your membership may have expired and this could be your last issue of Valley Views. Take action to renew your Dual membership or Local membership.



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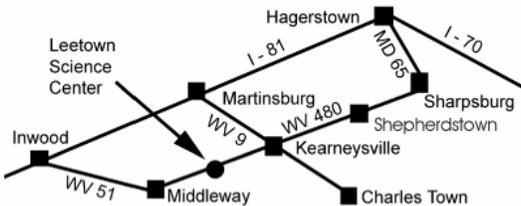


MAIL TO:

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Volume 25, Issue 8



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, Letown/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 her or see <http://www.potomacaudubon.org>. PVAS serves the Eastern Panhandle of West Virginia and neighboring Washington County, Maryland.

PVAS BOARD
 The PVAS Board meets every other month on the first Wednesday of the month (Sept.-June). Meeting location will be announced prior to meetings. These meetings are open to all PVAS members.

PVAS Officers and Board Members

- President: Peter Smith 304 876-1139pvsmith@frontiernet.net
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- Web Master: Kathy Biltonkathy@fred.net
- PVAS Wildlife Rescue Coord: Diana Mullis304-267-3482 & 304 724-4520(day)