

VALLEY VIEWS

Potomac Valley Audubon Society

Volume 30, Issue 8

May 2012

It's a Boy!

To everyone's surprise (including her own), PVAS Executive Director Kristin Alexander gave birth to a baby boy on March 25.

This was about five weeks earlier than originally expected but mother and son (and father Jeff) are doing fine. The baby's name is "J.J."

Needless to say, this has accelerated Kristin's maternity leave timetable. She'll now be on full-time maternity leave through June 30. She plans to come back on a half-time basis for the balance of the year and then resume a regular work schedule next January.

From now through June 30, please direct any questions or comments about PVAS's youth or adult education programs to our Director of Youth Programs, Ellen Murphy. For information or help with administrative matters, contact our President, Peter Smith.

Invitations to June 23 Reception Will Be Sent Soon

Here's a reminder that Bob and Tia McMillan have graciously offered to host a fundraising reception for PVAS at their beautiful modern home on Terrapin Neck the evening of Saturday, June 23.

The event will be open to PVAS members and friends. However, space will be limited and tickets will be required.

Invitations will be sent soon to everyone on PVAS's fundraising-event list. If you want to attend but are not sure if you're on that list—or if you haven't received an invitation by June 1—please contact Jane Vanderhook at janehook@frontiernet.net or 304-876-6993.

The reception will be held from 4:00-7:00 p.m. It will be held mostly outside, on the lawn and patio.



Food and beverages will be served, and musical entertainment will provide background.

Dress will be casual.

Basic tickets are \$45 per person. Those who

pay \$150 for two people will be recognized as Donors, those who pay \$250 for two will be recognized as Patrons, and those who pay \$500 or more for two will be recognized as Supporters.

Ticket costs will be tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

The McMillan's house was built in 1997 by former West Virginia Governor Gaston Caperton. Featured in many architectural publications, it is spectacularly sited along the Potomac River.

Annual Appeal Raised a Record \$34,182

Our latest annual fundraising appeal, which began in December and concluded at the beginning of April, raised a total of \$34,182.

This is \$2,586, or 8 percent, more than we raised over the 2009-2010 winter and represents a new record high.

The number of donors was down somewhat: a total of 173 families and individuals contributed, seven fewer than the year before.

The average contribution to this year's appeal was \$194.21. This is a very high figure for small organizations like ours, and it's the highest average contribution figure we've ever recorded.

These figures do not include contributions that families and individuals made to PVAS through United Way or the Combined Federal Campaign—we typically don't get any information about those contributions until late May or so.

In any case, the return from this year's appeal was a great outcome given the continuing concerns about the economy in our region, and it will go a long way in helping us sustain our programming. It's gratifying to know we have such a loyal base of support in the community.

A full list of all those who contributed is included in this newsletter.

Thanks again to all of you who have been so generous to PVAS. We appreciate your help, and you can count on us to put your contributions to good use!

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

President's Perch



Hello everyone:

One of this column's functions is to ensure that people who've made special efforts to support PVAS get the recognition they deserve.

The contents of this month's newsletter prompt several such recognitions.

First, I want to thank all of the families and individuals who contributed to last winter's annual fundraising appeal. You've pushed our annual fundraising total to a new high, and the money you've contributed will be a big help. We're fortunate to have such a strong contributor base.

Second, I want to thank all of the businesses and organizations that sponsored this year's Race for the Birds. We had more sponsors than ever before this year, and we're pleased to see so many new sponsors come on board.

Third, in a different vein, I want to thank Sandy Sagalkin and his birding committee colleagues for all the steps they've taken to strengthen our birding programs. We're much more active in that area now than we used to be (e.g., look at the many birding events we've got planned for May), and we appreciate all the careful planning and hard work that have made this possible.

Finally, I want to thank everyone who's pitched in over the past few weeks to keep things running reasonably smoothly in the wake of the unexpectedly sudden arrival of Kristin Alexander's new baby.

As you might imagine, we were faced with some loose ends at the outset. However, thanks to the efforts of staff, Board members, volunteers—and Kristin herself—we seem to have things pretty much under control by now. It's a cliché for organizations to refer to themselves as families but PVAS is still small enough and close-knit enough to have a lot of the characteristics of a family. And in this case, we've been able to pull together like a family and do what's needed to be done.

—Peter Smith

PVAS Newsletter Still Needs Help

PVAS needs an editor/publisher for the Valley Views newsletter. The current editor/publisher will publish his last issue for June 2012.

Anyone with experience in desktop publishing or an interest in print and graphics layout can master the essentials. Publication of the newsletter involves tasks that can be divided among a number of people so more than one person can share in the process. There are even some non-computer tasks for those not inclined to the technical side of things. Interested persons should contact Wayne Braunstein at wbraun@frontiernet.net to discuss this volunteer need.



Annual Meeting to be Held June 9

This year's PVAS annual meeting will be held the evening of Saturday, June 9 at the Yankauer Nature Preserve.

The evening will begin at 6:30 p.m. with a potluck supper.

Afterwards, we will recognize outstanding PVAS volunteers and the annual meeting will be called to order for the election of new directors. The slate of candidates for the election follows below.

All PVAS members are invited to attend, and children will be welcome.

For the potluck supper, please bring a dish to share. Those whose last names begin with the letters A-H are asked to bring vegetables or fruit; I-L, a dessert; M-R, a protein dish; and S-Z, a starch dish.

All are asked to bring their own dishes, flatware, and the like, so we can be environmentally conscientious. PVAS will provide water and lemonade.

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

Election of Board Members

There are thirteen board positions called for in the PVAS bylaws. Four of the positions are officers with the remainder serving as at-large members. Election of board members is staggered so that approximately one-third of the seats are up for election each year. The term of office for all board members is three years with a maximum of two consecutive terms; however, a person that serves two consecutive terms and is elected as an officer may extend their board membership/officer position by one additional term by unanimous decision of the board.

This year four current board members—Peter Smith, Wayne Braunstein, Rob Hoxton, and Georgia Jeppesen—will be leaving due to expiration of term limits. Don Briggs, now completing his first term on the board, has agreed to continue for a second term.

Two officer positions on the board will also be up for election. Peter Smith served a third term as president under a special provision of the bylaws. With his departure, Bob Reynolds, the current vice president, will stand for the position of president. A new incoming board candidate, Gary Heichel, has agreed to stand for the position of vice president.

Slate of Candidates

Board Candidates

Don Briggs (second term), At-large: Don is the administrator of the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail program. Based in Harpers Ferry, the program is partnership between the National Park Service, the states of Maryland, Virginia, and Pennsylvania, and the District of Columbia to develop a system of trails between the mouth of the Potomac and the Allegheny Highlands. Previously, Don managed technical assistance, special studies and planning projects for the National Park Service in the Mid-Atlantic States. He holds a B.S. in Natural Resources from Ohio State University and two masters from the University of Wyoming, one in American Studies and

another in Community and Regional Planning. He has also held various volunteer positions, including chair of the Public Lands Committee of the Jackson Hole Alliance for Responsible Planning and President of the Shepherdstown Elementary Association.

Sandy Sagalkin (new), At-large: Sandy has been the Chairman of the PVAS Birding Committee since its inception two years ago. During that time, he has increased the numbers of bird walks to approximately four times a month during most months of the year, initiated the Ruth Ann Dean Annual Birdathon, now in its 3rd year, and, as Chairman, oversaw the creation of the PVAS Birding Trail Map for the four county PVAS coverage area. He writes a monthly column, "View from the Eagle's Nest" that appears in the PVAS newsletter. He has recognized the need to develop in younger people, especially children, an interest in birds and bird conservation, and is working through the Birding Committee to develop more for that age group.

Sandy has been retired for four years. He practiced law for the federal government, for the State of Alaska, and in private practice, in Alaska and Washington, DC. He has served on boards of directors of Alaska environmental organizations as well as at the national level. He is married to Monda, and has two grown children, Nick and Amy.

Lou Scavnicky (new), At-large: Lou retired in 2009 from a recent six-year position as a construction project manager in the healthcare field. Previously he retired from a 25-year career with AT&T. In 1996 Lou and his wife, Jackie, bought their retirement property along the Opequon, built a home there in 2006, and moved from Maryland to Berkeley County in 2007. Lou has had conservation in his blood since he was a young adult growing up in rural, western Pennsylvania. At 21 he bought a 100-acre farm in northwestern Pennsylvania and with help planted about 5,000 trees; that started it all. He and Jackie are both Berkeley/Jefferson County Master Gardeners. Lou is a PVAS Master Naturalist, successfully completing the program in 2011 and is currently in his second term as President of the Eastern Panhandle based Opequon Creek Project Team. Lou completed his undergraduate degree in Business at the University of Pittsburgh and secured a Masters in Project Management from George Washington University in Washington. Lou is a finish carpenter building many one-of-a-kind pieces of furniture. He and Jackie are now enjoying their retirement along the Opequon with activities which include canoeing and kayaking, fishing, bicycling and gardening.

Open Position (new), At-large: TBA

Officer Candidates

Bob Reynolds, President: Bob Reynolds earned his Masters Degree from the University of California, Berkeley, and retired in 2006 after a career in Public Health specializing in community alcohol problems both in the United States and internationally. In 2003 Bob and Linda purchased riverfront property in Shepherdstown, and signed a conservation easement with the Potomac Conservancy to permanently protect the property. Since moving to Shepherdstown on a full-time basis in 2005 Bob has served as a Jefferson County Planning Commissioner and on the Board of the Shepherdstown Men's

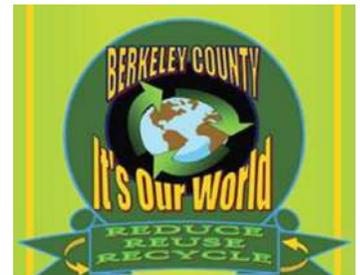
Club, and is currently serving on the Board of the Friends of the Shepherdstown Riverfront. Bob is a long term member of several national advocacy organizations, and a Life Member of the Sierra Club. Today Bob favors a pop-up trailer when camping, is an active kayaker, and cherishes the log book he wrote as a Junior Audubon Society member in the fourth grade.

Gary Heichel (new), Vice President: Gary Heichel is retired from the faculty of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, where he was Professor of Plant Physiology and Department Head of Crop Sciences for 14 years. Earlier in his career, he was a research scientist for the U. S. Department of Agriculture – Agricultural Research Service at St. Paul, Minnesota, an Adjunct Professor at the University of Minnesota, and a research scientist at the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station, New Haven. A native of Wisconsin, Gary was raised on a farm in Iowa, received his B. S. degree from Iowa State University, and received his graduate degrees from Cornell University.

Gary and his wife, Iris, moved to Berkeley County, WV, after his retirement in 2004 and reside in Whiting's Neck Farm Estates, which is located about 1 mile N and E of Yankauer Nature Preserve. Gary served as President of the Board of Whiting's Neck Farm Estates HOA (2005-2007), served as Secretary (2008-2010) and Chair (2010-current) of the Board of the Potomac Headwaters Resource Conservation & Development Region, Inc., and served on the Board of the Shepherdstown Rotary Club (2008-2012). He serves on the Signature Events & Legacy Committee of Shepherdstown's 250th Anniversary and Celebration (2010-current).

RECYCLING NEWS

Berkeley County Solid Waste Authority
304-267-9370 Office
304-671-2925 Recycling Hotline
berkeleycountyswa@msn.com
www.berkeleycountyrecycling.com



Paint Collection Event Returns to Berkeley! The Berkeley County Solid Waste Authority (BCSWA) is pleased to announce that a rare opportunity exists for Berkeley County residents to dispose of used paint. The collection event will be held, rain or shine, at the Grapevine Road Recycling Center from 9am to 4pm on Saturday, April 28, 2012. There is no cost to participate. Acceptable: Latex paint, oil based paint, stains and polyurethanes of any age, manufacture, condition or quantity are acceptable. The paint can be accepted in aerosol cans, metal or plastic paint cans. Not Acceptable: Paint brushes, drywall compound, automotive products, pesticides, bug sprays, cleaning products and similar household hazardous wastes are NOT acceptable at this event. Paint products will not be accepted from commercial businesses or waste haulers.

This event is funded by a grant from the West Virginia Solid Waste Management Board. Should you have any additional questions or comments, please contact the BCSWA at 304-267-9370 or by email at berkeleycountyswa@msn.com?

View from the Eagle's Nest

By Sandy Sagalkin

About a month ago, I got a call from Jim Jenkins, a high school science teacher who lives in Harpers Ferry, West Virginia, but who now works for the Loudoun county school system. I had met Jim in a PVAS Master Naturalist program 3 or 4 years back. Jim impressed me at the time with his great enthusiasm for bringing children to nature. We had lost touch until he called. "I have a group of boy scouts who are excited about earning a 'Bird Study' merit badge, and I thought you would be perfect for the job. Are you interested," he said. Jim didn't know it at the time, but I had been thinking about how to get more young people, children, excited about birds, so when they became adults, they might become "advocates" for birds.

Most of the birders in PVAS that I know are bird advocates as well as being "birders." Migratory birds have a hard enough time with natural obstacles, such as thunder storms, predators, and other uncertainties related to lengthy migrations or migrations over large bodies of water. Some birds migrate a thousand miles or more. What they do not need are more man-made obstacles to make their journeys more difficult, such as environmental pollution poisoning their food or water supply or the displacement of important habitats by development or unthinking placement of wind turbines.

Migratory birds need advocates to add balance to discussions about the use of our natural resources, which is why I jumped at Jim's offer. Jim is the Assistant Scoutmaster of Troop number 421 from Summit Point. The Scoutmaster is Mike Costello and the other Assistant Scoutmasters are Jeff Henry and Mike Williams. Jim invited me to their meeting at the Summit Point Methodist Church. As I was being introduced to the troop, I played the song of an American Robin on my iPhone and asked the kids what bird they thought this was. A hand shot up and one of the scouts said "robin." Right on. Then they told me about a Red-headed Woodpecker they saw at scout camp. I asked them how they knew it was a Red-headed Woodpecker instead of a Red-bellied Woodpecker, a common mistake, and again they had the answer. We talked more about birds, then took a stroll around the area in front of the church looking at the local birds. I am looking forward to working with these eager scouts and learning the subject together with them.

The scouts want Bird Study merit badges. They appear to be ready and eager to earn them. What do I want out of it? I want to see more young people come on our bird trips, especially with their parents. I want them to become bird advocates when they are adults. I can't say the Birding Committee has cornered the market of ideas on how to make this happen. If you have any ideas out there in PVAS-land, I would love to hear them. Any other scouts out there want to earn a Bird Study merit badge?

Next month we are going to celebrate International Migratory Bird Day or IMBD. IMBD is a way to educate the public on migratory birds and, hopefully, turn them into bird advocates. Our kickoff activity will be a talk by the noted author and migratory bird specialist, Scott Weidensaul. If you want to hear about the incredible journeys of these amazing animals – some weighing in at a half ounce or less – as well as the dangers they face during migration, come to the talk. It is May 2nd at NCTC at 7 pm and is open to the public.

A few additional quick items: This month we had great bird walks at NCTC (the eagles performing) and the C&O Canal near Harper's Ferry. The group had a great time watching a Louisiana Waterthrush, which for many, was a life bird. These experiences turn "birdwatchers" into "birders." We accept birder watchers of all levels of competence on our walks. Please join us.

International Migratory Bird Day Schedule Set

As has been noted previously in this newsletter, International Migratory Bird Day is celebrating its 20th anniversary this spring and this year's national theme is how each of us can help conserve birds and their habitat.

To mark the occasion, PVAS has teamed up with the National Conservation Training Center and the Washington County Bird Club (WCBC) to put together a special series of birding events during the first half of May.

The schedule of these events follows below.

All the events will be free, and anyone with an interest is invited to participate. Some events require pre-registration.

Fuller details are available on the PVAS website, and online registration is available there for events that require pre-registration.

Those who don't have Internet access can get more information or pre-register by contacting Sandy Sagalkin at monsansagalkin@myactv.net or 240-291-6465 for the PVAS events or Judith Lilga at jslilga@wildblue.net or 301-432-2276 for the WCBC events.

May 2: Special evening program at NCTC. Noted migratory bird expert and author Scott Weidensaul will discuss bird migration trends and issues. 7:00 p.m. in the Byrd Auditorium. Cosponsored by NCTC and PVAS. No pre-registration is required.

May 5: "Introduction to Birding" program at NCTC. 8:00-10:30 a.m. A brief, PVAS-sponsored overview of the subject for non-birders, people who would like to become birders, or for those who simply don't have the time to commit to PVAS's full "Birding 101" course. Space will be limited and pre-registration will be required.

May 5: "Birding Through History" at the Antietam National Battlefield. 8:00-11:00 a.m. Sponsored by the WCBC and the National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA) in cooperation with PVAS. The NPCA's Nick Lund will provide ornithological and historical commentary as participants move by both car and foot to different areas throughout the battlefield. Space is limited and pre-registration is required. Contact Judith Lilga.

May 5: Bald Eagle Watch at NCTC. 11:00 a.m.-12 noon. For parents and children ages 6 and up. Space will be limited and pre-registration will be required.

May 6: Bird walk on the C&O Canal in the Sharpsburg/Shepherdstown area. Will involve about 3 miles of level walking along the towpath. Meet at 7:00 a.m. at the large National Park Service parking lot on Canal Road, on the Maryland side of the Shepherdstown bridge, just east of the railroad trestle (not the first, small parking lot at the base of the hill). No pre-registration is required.

May 8: Bird walk at Stauffer's Marsh in Berkeley County. The Preserve is located in Back Creek Valley in Berkeley County, one-half mile south of Shanghai, on the east side of Back Creek Valley Road (County Route 7). Participants should meet in the parking area at the north end of the marsh at about 7:00 a.m. No pre-registration is required.

May 9: PVAS monthly evening program at NCTC. West Virginia Department of Natural Resources ornithologist Rich Bailey will discuss wind-power hazards to migratory birds. 7:00 p.m. in Room 151 of the Instructional West Building. No pre-registration is required.

May 10: Bird walk at Flowing Springs Park in Jefferson County. Walk will follow the headwaters of Flowing Springs Run and adjacent meadow areas. It will be approximately 2 miles in length over relatively level terrain. Meet at the park 7:00 a.m. Directions are on the birding trail map on the PVAS website or contact Sandy Sagalkin. No pre-registration is required.

May 12: May Bird Count in Washington County, MD. Sponsored by the WCBC and the Maryland Ornithological Society. Contact Judith Lilga for more information.

May 12-13: PVAS's Ruth Ann Dean Memorial Birdathon. (See separate article)

Birdathon Coming Up Soon

Here's a reminder that time is running out to register for PVAS's annual "Ruth Ann Dean Memorial Birdathon," which will be held the weekend of May 12-13.

The event is named in honor of Ruth Ann Dean, who was a founding member and ardent supporter of PVAS, a Board member in the early years, and an avid birder.

The Birdathon is open to anyone with an interest, regardless of their level of expertise or experience.

It can be a team event or a family activity. Either way, you aim to identify the highest numbers of bird species you can find anywhere within Jefferson, Berkeley, Morgan or Washington counties within any 24-consecutive-hour-period during the May 12-13 weekend.

Participants form their own teams, decide their team names and select their own leaders. If you don't have a team, and want to participate, PVAS will help you find one.

Another option is to participate individually or as a group in a "Big Sit." For the Big Sit, individuals identify, or a team identifies all birds they can see from within a 50-foot diameter circle of their choosing within the 24-consecutive-hour-period. They could choose their back porch, a circle within their backyard, or a 50 foot circle within a place they like to bird. They can invite friends and family to join them within the circle and make it a special event.

Winners of the Birdathon and Big Sit will be announced in the PVAS newsletter and on the PVAS website.

There is no entry fee, and registration is easy. Teams may consist of 2-5 participants (unless an individual registers for the Big Sit). All you have to do is get together with friends and form a team. Or you could make this a family event and enter as a family team.

To register, go to the PVAS website at www.potomacaudubon.org or contact the event coordinator, Sandy Sagalkin, at monsansagalkin@myactv.net or 240-291-6465.

Registration must be completed by May 11.

Spring Egg Hunt

Thirty preschoolers and their families descended on Yankauer Preserve, Sunday April 1st, to scramble for eggs hidden along the Cedar Loop. These eggs were painted to resemble wild bird eggs, rather than more traditional pastel colors, but it didn't seem to stop anyone from finding them. Of the approximately 400 eggs hidden, only 7 were found on "clean up!" Additional activities at the preserve pavilion included egg and spoon races, a penguin egg challenge (using huge plastic eggs between the knees), a real ostrich egg and a prehistoric "elephant bird" egg replica, a camouflage egg challenge, books about eggs to read together, and egg cookie decorating. Each child also received a special decorated egg cookie to take home.



Susan Fluharty, Wanda Miller, Mary Lynn Robinson, and Diana

Mullis provided the cookies for decorating and snacks, the Braithwaite and Crouse families helped hide the eggs, and 6th grade students from Faith Christian Academy painted many of the eggs that were hidden. Thanks to all these special folks who helped make the day a wonderful success.

School Program Update

It's been a super-charged year for our school programs, with field trips to Yankauer Preserve for some classes and visits to the classroom from PVAS staff for others. Our 4th grade Watershed Program was offered at 12 schools this year, reaching 1063 students. 663 students visited Yankauer Preserve and about 650 students participated in classroom visits. A grant from WV Division of Natural Resources funded a new program for Kindergarten, 1st, 4th, and 5th grades, reaching another 883 students. Currently, we are presenting a new Pre-kindergarten program in day care centers, funded by the 2 Rivers Giving Circle. That totals over 3250 students this year... and there are still some programs left in May!

Teachers have also begun reserving spots for spring field trips to Yankauer Nature Preserve, including schools from Washington County, Maryland. Schools interested in visiting Yankauer should contact Ellen Murphy at Ellen@PotomacAudubon.org

Wildflower Festival

This year's Wildflower Festival, held at the Yankauer Preserve for the eighth year, was graced with a beautiful day. An estimated 75 people attended the festival to enjoy wildflower walks and children's activities led by volunteers. Again this year, the trail was lined with poetry about wildflowers, spring, and nature which was written by local poets. The poetry aspect of the festival is proving to be a very popular addition. Many thanks to the many volunteers who made the festival possible, and to those who submitted poetry for the festival.

A special thanks goes out to all of the volunteers involved. Kathy Bilton led her annual “wildflower review” for walk leaders on Friday evening. Walk leaders included Sandy Bloom, Mary Duke, Bruni Haydl, Joe Metzger, Kathryn Henry and Joy Pardue. Mary Beth Ross was prepared with children’s activities which included wildflower bingo sheets, a wildflower matching game and domino game, and the opportunity to make a watercolored flower using a coffee filter. Diana Mullis provided homemade chocolate chip cookies for volunteers and festival participants. We are so fortunate to have generous, knowledgeable, dedicated, and hardy volunteers who are willing to lead walks and activities!



Camp Sessions Are Filling Up

If you are thinking about enrolling your child in a session at Audubon Discovery Camp, don’t wait! Camp sessions are filling up and several sessions are already at capacity. What child wouldn’t be interested in spending a week in the woods... and in the company of the coolest people on Earth—camp counselors!

Sessions at Yankauer Preserve include something in nature for every age! Our preschool sessions, “Out of the Nest” and “Just For Fledglings” are scheduled for the weeks of May 29 and June 4. “Out of the Nest” is designed to introduce nature to 3 and 4 year olds and a parent or other adult. “Just For Fledglings” is perfect for children who will be entering kindergarten this fall and are ready for a shorter camp without a parent attending. Both sessions are held at Yankauer Nature Preserve.

Traditional camp sessions begin on June 11, with a different theme each week. Activities at Yankauer Preserve include hands-on explorations in small groups, crafts, games, hiking, nature activities, and building forts in the woods! Two weeks of camp are also being held at the Peter Burr Farm in Bardane WV. Special weeks for older campers include adventure programs or field trips.

Online registrations for sessions is easy! A link at the www.PotomacAudubon.org mainpage will take you directly to the registration portal. A credit card is needed to complete registrations. The base price for most sessions is \$150 per camper, but fees range from \$50 up to \$300 for the teen high adventure sessions.

If you have questions about camp or the registration process, send Ellen Murphy an email at Ellen@PotomacAudubon.org or call 304-676-8739.

Writers Group Promises Active Spring!

The Potomac Valley Nature Writing Group promotes the art and appreciation of nature writing. Members meet monthly for book discussions. Upcoming selections include *Beatrix Potter: A Life in Nature* by Linda Lear, *Tinkering with Eden* by Kim Todd, and *My Summer in the Sierra* by John Muir. PVNWG welcomes new members who love reading, writing, and nature. For more information, check out the PVNWG blog at potomacvalleynaturewritinggroup.blogspot.com/ or email pvnaturewriters@gmail.com

Thanks to Race for the Birds Sponsors!

By the time you get this newsletter, this year’s April 21 Race for the Birds will be over. A full account will appear in the June issue of *Valley Views*.

Here, as we put this newsletter together in mid-April, we want to note that this year’s race has attracted a record number of sponsors (49) and give special thanks to all of them.

This year’s leading “Platinum” Level sponsor (contributing \$1,000 or more) is Hoxton Financial, Inc., the Shepherdstown-based wealth management firm.

The accompanying photo shows, from left to right, Potomac Valley Audubon Executive Director Kristin Alexander and Hoxton Financial team members Stacy Lindberg, Jessie Gleason, Leota Trainor, and Rob Hoxton.



This year’s other sponsors are as follows:

Gold Level (\$500 or more)

Martinsburg Journal, *The Observer* newspaper, Shepherd University Wellness Center, *Shepherdstown Chronicle*, *Spirit of Jefferson and Farmer’s Advocate*, Two Rivers Treads, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service National Conservation Training Center.

Silver Level (\$250 or more)

Chick-fil-A of Martinsburg; Friends of Mark Benedict; Hypno-Coffee, Coffee Roaster-Coffee Bar; Jay Boyd, DDS and C. Greg Stephen-Hussard, DDS; Jefferson Security Bank; Progressive Printing; Tom Maiden Insurance Outfitters.

Bronze Level (\$100 or more)

AC&T Co., Inc.; Associated Oral & Maxillofacial Surgeons; Bistro 112; Brown’s Tire, Towing and Auto Care Center; Budget Blinds of Martinsburg; Caribbean Islands Travel Service; Clissy Funkhouser-FunkyCPA.com; D’Accord Boutique; David Miljour, DC; Davitt McAtteer & Associates; Depot Florist; Dickinson & Wait Craft Gallery; Dr. Cathy Funk; Edward Jones Investments, Shepherdstown; Grapes and Grains Gourmet; Healthway of Martinsburg; Jean Neely; Jefferson Chiropractic Center; John A. Draper, MD; Joseph W. Brookreson; Lynne Wiseman@ERA.com, Realtor; Mellow Moods Café; Millers Electric Company, Inc.; Mountain View Solar; Nestle-Juicy Juice; Patthoff General Dentistry; Pedal and Paddle, 876-3000; Professional Sports Care and Rehab; Ray P. Vanderhook, DDS, MS; Roach Energy/ROCS; Ryan McCarthy, MD; Shepherdstown Pharmacy; Shepherdstown Sweet Shop; Ted Leslie, DDS; William F. Queen, DDS and Whitney Queen Spry, DDS.

As always, PVAS appreciates the strong community support for this event. You can express your appreciation as well by giving these businesses, organizations, and individuals a “thank you” of your own the next time you see them.

Canaan Valley Birding Trip May 26

Join veteran birder Matt Orsie for a May 26 birding trip to Canaan Valley.

The trip will involve a wonderful 10-mile drive through elevations ranging between 2,500 and 4,000 feet and focus on birds breeding at these different ranges. Likely sightings include 15-18 species of warblers, as well as other species. Some hiking on hilly terrain may be attempted but the distances will be short.

Participants should plan to travel on their own to the area on Friday, May 25, and meet the other members of the trip group at 6:00 a.m. on Saturday, May 26, in the lobby of the Canaan Valley State Park Resort lodge. The group will spend the rest of the day birding and then return home Saturday evening.

The trip will be free and open to anyone with an interest, regardless of their birding skills. But participation will be limited to just eight people and pre-registration is essential. Register online at the PVAS website or contact Matt at 304-261-5602 or wvbirder@comcast.net. The registration deadline is May 15.

Once registered, participants will be expected to make and pay for their own room reservations the night of May 25 at the Resort or some other area location (Blackwater Falls State Park and the town of Davis are nearby).

The trip will be held rain or shine. Participants should wear sturdy footwear, dress appropriately for the prevailing weather conditions, and bring along water and insect repellent.

Canaan Valley is the highest valley of its size east of the Rocky Mountains. Its climate and habitats are typical of areas much further north, and its plants and animals are unusual for the latitude, with many of them at or near the southernmost edge of their ranges. The Valley includes the Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge, which was established in 1994 to preserve the area's unique wetlands and uplands. Currently, the refuge consists of 15,245 acres.

More Local Birding Trips Set for Late May

PVAS has scheduled two local birding trips for late May.

Both trips will be free and anyone with an interest is welcome to come along, regardless of their birding skills. Binoculars will be available for anyone who needs them. No pre-registration is required.

For both trips, participants should wear sturdy footwear, dress appropriately for prevailing weather conditions, and bring along water and bug spray.

The first trip will be a bird walk at the Harpers Ferry National Historical Park's Murphy's Farm on Wednesday, May 23.

This trip will involve about 2 miles of moderate hiking, mostly through fields. Species likely to be sighted include various flycatchers, vireos and warblers; Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Scarlet Tanager, Eastern Meadowlark, Cedar Waxwing, Northern Mockingbird; and perhaps such raptors as Bald Eagles, Red-tailed, Red-Shouldered or Broad-winged Hawks.

Participants should plan to meet at 7:30 a.m. at the Harpers

Ferry National Historical Park main Visitor Center off Route 340. Please note that the Park Service will charge a fee of \$6 per vehicle to enter the Park unless you have an annual Park passes or a NPS Golden Eagle pass.

For more info contact trip leader Deb Hale at debhale72@gmail.com or 304-535-1528.

The second trip is birding trip to the Shannondale Springs Wildlife Management Area in Jefferson County on Wednesday, May 30

The 1,361-acre Shannondale Springs property is managed by the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources; it includes a mixture of forest, brush land and open fields covering rolling hills.

This trip will involve walking about two miles over mostly level ground, although some hilly, uneven terrain will be encountered.

Possible species to be sighted include Bald Eagles, Red-tailed and Red-shouldered Hawks, vultures, Great Blue Herons, migrating waterfowl, woodpeckers, Yellow-rumped Warblers, and some early spring migrants such as Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, swallows, House Wrens and Brown Thrashers.

Participants will meet at 7:00 a.m. in the parking area by the WMA's boat launch site. Directions to the meeting place can be found on the Birding Trail Map on the PVAS website. Or contact Sandy Sagalkin at 240-291-6465 or monsansagalkin@myactv.net.

May Program Will Look At Wind Power Hazards

As is noted in the article on the International Migratory Bird Day anniversary events, our May program at the National Conservation Training Center will focus on the hazards that wind-power turbines pose for migratory birds.

The program will be held at 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, May 9 in Room 151 of the Instructional West Building.

Admission is free and everyone is welcome to attend.

The speaker will be Rich Bailey, State Ornithologist with the West Virginia Department of Natural Resources.

In that position, his work is focused on the advancement of the science and public awareness of birds and their conservation in WV. Prior to his position with WVDNR, he worked for 7 years as a naturalist and park manager in Northern Virginia. In his spare time he is an avid birder, musician and climber.

He holds a master's degree in environmental science and a bachelor's in environmental anthropology.

The growth of wind-power development and its impact on birds and other wildlife has been a topic of continuing controversy in the U.S. and elsewhere.

Most recently, the March 23 release of new U.S. Department of the Interior onshore wind-power guidelines has pitted the National Audubon Society and the American Bird Conservancy against each



other.

National Audubon has hailed the new guidelines, which are voluntary, as “an important step toward bird-friendly wind development.”

The Bird Conservancy says the guidelines are “unenforceable” and “will do little to protect millions of birds from the negative impacts of wind energy.”

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service estimated in 2009 that 440,000 birds are being killed each year by wind turbines.

Yankauer Preserve Gets Invasive Plant Grant

The Potomac Headwaters Resource Conservation and Development Council has approved a \$3,000 grant to PVAS for invasive plant removal at the Yankauer Nature Preserve.

The Yankauer Preserve includes old farmlands that are being allowed to return to their natural forested state, and the property has many invasive-plant issues.

This particular grant will be used to combat the spread of *Ailanthus* trees (“Tree of Heaven”) at the Preserve.

The work to be funded by the grant will be done this year.

The PHRC&D is a nonprofit organization that focuses on natural resource conservation and economic development related to natural resources. Headquartered in Martinsburg, it operates in the eight counties of West Virginia’s greater Eastern Panhandle. It is supported by a combination of federal, state and local funds.



Ailanthus tree photo by: Great Smoky Mountains National Park Resource Management Archive, USDI National Park Service,

Bugwood.org

Look for PVAS Booth at May 12 Boonsboro Green Fest

The town of Boonsboro, Maryland, will hold its Fourth Annual Boonsboro Green Fest on Saturday, May 5. The festival will be held rain or shine in Shafer Park, which is right next to the downtown, from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Admission will be free.

Hosted by the Boonsboro Recycling Task Force, the festival is aimed at promoting conservation efforts and recycling and will feature a wide variety of vendors and exhibitors.

Items for sale will include earth-friendly products and services, vegetable and flower plants, rain barrels, compost kits, and crafts made from recycled and repurposed materials. There will be a multitude of recycling opportunities and a large clothing swap and sale.

Exhibitors will include firms that specialize in such areas as renewable energy systems, as well as PVAS and other conservation-minded organizations.

There will also be special children’s activities and food concessions, and entertainment and speakers throughout the day.

See the festival website at www.boonsborogreenfest.com for full details.

Ecotips on House Painting

ASK AUDUBON

May 24, 2007

Spring is a great time to freshen up your home with a new coat of paint. The warmer weather makes it easier to keep the windows open while working, which minimizes noxious paint smells. These odors are often caused by volatile organic compounds (VOCs), which can be dangerous to your health. Even outside the house, these VOCs are a danger as they contribute to ground level ozone. To protect yourself, observe one of the cardinal rules of the eco-conscious consumer - read the label.



Paint ingredients to avoid include benzene, formaldehyde, toluene and xylene, which are known carcinogens or neurotoxins. Some assume that water based paints are less toxic than oil-based paints, but these, too, can contain VOCs. Water-based paints can contain the suspected carcinogen acrylonitrile as well as ethylene glycol ethers, associated with lowering sperm count. Paints to look for are those labeled as no-VOC or low-VOC in compliance with limits set by California’s South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD). A list of manufacturers that comply with these standards can be found at http://www.aqmd.gov/prdas/brochures/Super-Compliant_AIM.pdf.

Home decorators no longer have to worry about lead in paint - that ingredient has been excluded for more than 25 years. It is a concern if you are remodeling a home built before 1978, as older layers of paint can contain lead. If this old paint chips or flakes, you and your family can be exposed to a health hazard. It is recommended that older homes be tested for lead paint and, if any is discovered, contract a professional to properly remove and dispose of it. For more information see <http://www.epa.gov/lead/>.

Left over paint needs to be disposed of properly, not poured down the drain, where it can enter the groundwater system. The site <http://www.earth911.org> helps you locate disposal facilities in your area. Another option is to share or donate excess supplies to neighbors or non-profits that might make use of them. The site <http://www.freecycle.org> lets you post information about items you want to give away (not just paint), so that your leftover materials can help others.

DNR Grant

PVAS has received a grant from WV Division of Natural Resources to pilot an exciting new program called "Junior Naturalists" which will allow children ages 6-9 to explore nature on one Saturday a month throughout the year. The program will allow the participants to experience unstructured, but supervised nature exploration and play in a variety of setting and habitats around the Eastern Panhandle. Each month's program will focus on a different theme that is appropriate to the time of year and habitat of the specific location. Themes may include "Habitat Hikers," "Wetland Romp," "Sky Rangers Perseids Party," "Give Chase," "Where the Wild Birds Are," and others. Each theme will be held in a different place, such as the C&O Canal, Yankauer Nature Preserve, Shannondale Springs, Eidolon Nature Preserve, or Flowing Springs Park.

Each program will be supervised by an adult and require pre-registration. Parents will drop off their kids for the three-hour program, but will be encouraged to come back at a later date to do more exploring as a family. The first program is tentatively set for August. Complete details, date, and registration information will be posted on the www.PotomacAudubon.org site as they become available.

Potomac Valley Nature Photographers

The May meeting of the Potomac Valley Nature Photographers will feature a photo review and critique session led by Tom Tsakeris.

The meeting will be held at 7:00 p.m. Friday, May 25 at the National Conservation Training Center. It will be held in Room 151 of the Instructional West Building.

Calendar of Events

For details go to www.potomacaudubon.org

- May 2, 7 pm: Joint NCTC/PVAS lecture at NCTC
- May 5, 8 am: Introduction to Birding at NCTC
- May 5, 8 am: Birding Through History, Antietam National Battlefield
- May 5, 11 am: Bald Eagle watch for parents and children (ages 6 and up), NCTC
- May 6, 10 am: Trillium walk at the Thompson Wildlife Management Area
- May 6, 7 am: Bird walk, C&O Canal (Shepherdstown area)
- May 8, 7 am: Bird walk, Stauffer's Marsh Nature Preserve
- May 9, 7 pm: PVAS program, NCTC
- May 10 7 am: Bird walk, Flowing Springs Park
- May 12-13: Third Annual Ruth Anne Dean Memorial Birdathon
- May 23, 7:30 am: Bird walk, Harpers Ferry National Park's Murphy's Farm
- May 25, 7 pm: Potomac Valley Nature Photographers mtg., NCTC
- May 26: Canaan Valley birding trip led by Matt Orsie
- May 30, 7 am: Bird walk, Shannondale Springs WMA
- June 9: Mountain Laurel walk at the Eidolon Preserve
- June 9, 6:30 pm: PVAS annual meeting, Yankauer Preserve

JOIN PVAS TODAY!

ALL of your dues will stay here to support local PVAS efforts and help us grow! And here's what you'll get:

- Access to a wide variety of PVAS programs and events for adults and children, including field trips, special events, workshops and courses, and environmental projects.
- A subscription to Valley Views, the PVAS newsletter
- E-mail alerts about events and programs of special interest
- Satisfaction of supporting conservation efforts, youth and adult nature education, individual and family recreation, and a wide array of programs in your community.

To become a local member, send in the form below and enclose a check for \$20 (\$15 for seniors and students). Make the check out to "PVAS." This fee covers membership for everyone in your household for one year.

Membership Form

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

To save postage costs, PVAS regularly sends its newsletter by e-mail. You can be assured that we do not share email addresses with anyone. If you would prefer to receive the newsletter by U.S. mail check here: ____.

Clip and mail this form to:

Membership Chair, PVAS
PO Box 578
Shepherdstown, WV 25443

Thank you for your support!

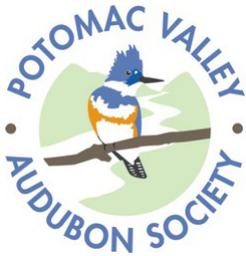


If you'd rather join the National Audubon Society:

Some people prefer National Audubon Society membership, which includes a subscription to the Society's Audubon magazine. To become a National member, go to the Society's website at www.audubon.org and click on "join." If you join National Audubon and reside in Berkeley, Jefferson or Morgan counties in West Virginia, or in Washington County Maryland, you will automatically become a member of PVAS and have access to our events, an e-mail copy of newsletter and e-mail alerts. However almost all of your dues payments will go to the National Audubon Society; only a small percentage will go to PVAS.

RED TEXT - DOT ALERT

If red text or 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 Local membership. If you are a National Audubon Society member, the National Society will notify you directly when your membership is up for renewal.



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A proud partner of the United Way of the Eastern Panhandle and the Combined Federal Campaign.

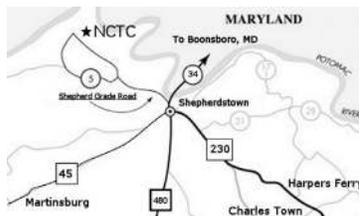


MAIL TO:

May 2012

Printed on 100% post-consumer waste recycled paper

Volume 30, Issue 8



The Potomac Valley Audubon Society meets at 7:00 p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month, September through April, at the US Fish and Wildlife Service National Conservation Training Center (NCTC), Shepherdstown, WV, in the Instructional West Building. 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 Thursday 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

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