

VALLEY VIEWS

**Potomac
Valley
Audubon
Society**

Volume 25, Issue 3

November 2006

SPECIAL MAIL INSERT
***Ballot to Modify PVAS Constitution
and Bylaws Enclosed!***

PVAS Constitution and Bylaws

Included in this issue of Valley Views is a summary of proposed changes to the PVAS constitution and bylaws and a ballot for voting on those changes. PVAS members are encouraged to review the summary (and/or the full details posted on the PVAS website) and to return their ballots before the end of the year.

The proposed changes are needed, in part, to respond to external circumstances, such as the National Audubon Society's new dues policies. National Audubon now keeps almost all the proceeds from the dues payments it receives, giving almost nothing back to local chapters. As a result, many local Audubon chapters have begun to offer local memberships, so that individuals can choose to direct all their dues to local efforts. PVAS needs to revise its bylaws to incorporate this local-membership option.

We also need to be mindful of evolving national standards for good practices among nonprofit organizations. Nonprofits are under increasing pressure from Congress and others to tighten their operating procedures and be more accountable. In light of this, it seems prudent to adopt new bylaws provisions to deal with such matters as conflicts of interest and removal of officers and directors.

Technological change is another issue. PVAS's current bylaws, which are some 24 years old, make no provision for the board or executive committee to use email or teleconferencing to conduct business, or to use email or the PVAS website to communicate with the membership. Clearly, these sections of the bylaws need to be revised.

Last but not least, the proposed constitution and bylaws changes are also needed to ensure that the constitution and bylaws conform to the new organizational structure that the PVAS board and membership adopted last spring.

The new organizational structure was adopted because PVAS has grown dramatically in size and scope in recent years. Specifically: Our budget has mushroomed as the programs and services we deliver have increased, most notably our education and nature preserve management programs. We now have a full-time Yankauer program director, part-time contract employees to provide our children's summer discovery camp and other programs, and interns that work on conservation and education programs.

Our old organizational structure did not envision this kind of complexity and it was not designed to cope with it. Our new one is, and it's now time to formalize the new structure in constitution and bylaws language.

PVAS to Manage New Preserve

The September issue of Valley Views reported that PVAS and The Nature Conservancy (TNC) were in the process of making arrangements for PVAS to handle the day-to-day management of TNC's Eidolon Nature Preserve in Morgan County. Those arrangements were finalized October 16 with the signing of a formal management agreement. Thus, PVAS now co-manages not one but two TNC properties: Eidolon and the Yankauer Nature Preserve in Berkeley County.



- New Preserve continues on page 2, top column 2

November Program and Field Trips

- Nov. 8 - Gen'l Mtg. "Wolves of Yellowstone"
- Nov. 12 - Bird Banding
- Nov. 18 - Water Fowl Trip

--see page 4 for details

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

PRESIDENT'S PERCH

Hello, everyone:

This month, I want to direct your attention to two items in this newsletter.

First, I hope you will read the item about the Eidolon Nature Preserve and, when you do, remember that PVAS's involvement in this exciting new venture is due almost entirely to the tireless efforts of longtime PVAS member and Board member emeritus Bill Belton.

Bill, who has lived near the Eidolon property for decades, knew Mrs. Zapoleon, and was aware of her intention to bequeath the property to The Nature Conservancy. He long ago recognized the opportunities for PVAS from that situation, and over the years he has worked assiduously to make sure that those opportunities were realized—in no small part by constantly prodding an often distracted and sometimes reluctant PVAS Board to keep focused on the project.

So there are at least two morals to be drawn from all this. One is that hard work still matters. Another is that, even in this postmodern era, individuals can still make a difference.

Second, I hope you will review, sign, and return the ballot concerning the proposed changes to PVAS's constitution and bylaws.

I know this is dreary, technical stuff but it's one of those eat-your-spinach things that organizations have to confront from time to time.

A fairly detailed rationale for the proposed changes is given elsewhere in the newsletter. The bottom line is that PVAS is changing, the world around us is changing, and we need to revise our constitution and bylaws to reflect those changes or we will increasingly become dysfunctional and irrelevant.

That's a harsh way to state it but it's true.

If anyone disagrees or has questions I hope they will contact me; I will be happy to respond as best I can.

In the end, one-tenth of our members will have to approve the proposed constitution and bylaws changes before they can take effect. That translates into some fifty or so people. Please take the time to be one of them. This is a relatively easy way for YOU to make a difference.

—Peter Smith

Endowment Challenge Met

As you may remember, several years ago Jean Neely was awarded the Volunteer Service Award by the Eastern West Virginia Community Foundation. With that award came an endowment of \$5,000 to benefit the organization of her choice. We are honored that she chose PVAS to be the recipient. For the second year in a row, the Bank of Charles Town agreed to match \$500 of donations raised by PVAS thus doubling the contribution value to \$1,000 for 2006. A heartfelt thank you goes to the following donors whose contributions enabled us to take advantage of this year's challenge: Susan Brookreson, David Eldridge, Diana Mullis, Jean Neely, Matt and Laura Eaton Poole, Peter Smith, Jane Vanderhook, and an anonymous donor. A special thank you goes to the Bank of Charles Town for its contribution, and the Eastern West Virginia Community Foundation for arranging the challenge.

-New Preserve continued from page 1

The Eidolon preserve is located a few miles west of Berkeley Springs. As this newsletter has noted previously, it is a very different kind of property from Yankauer, encompassing about 355 mostly wooded acres along the summit and east side of Sideling Hill. The preserve includes abundant wildlife, several miles of already-developed walking trails and commanding views of the surrounding countryside.

It was recently bequeathed to TNC by Marguerite Zapoleon who, with her late husband, Louis, purchased the land in 1945. The Zapoleons used and cherished the property as a weekend and summer retreat for many years. They named it Eidolon after phantom women of Greek mythology who were created by Zeus from mist and light. Translated from the Greek, the word means something like "image of the ideal."

It was Mrs. Zapoleon's wish that after her death the property would continue to help others appreciate and understand nature. To help fulfill this wish, PVAS over time hopes to work with the Morgan County community to provide educational programming at Eidolon.

In the meantime, the preserve will be open to individuals and small groups. Directions to it are or shortly will be posted on the PVAS website. If you plan to make a visit, please park outside the gated entrance and proceed into the preserve on foot.

Now that the management agreement is signed, the next big step for PVAS and TNC will be the joint development of a detailed plan for managing the preserve. This task is expected to take many months and, among other things, an inventory of the flora and fauna on the property will have to be undertaken. Other steps to be taken in the near term will include some survey work, trail clean up and mapping, and publishing a trail map to facilitate visits.

A good number of people from Morgan County and elsewhere have already volunteered to help with these or future projects at Eidolon. If you would like to help or get more information, please contact Peter Smith at 304-876-1139 or pvsmit@frontiernet.net.

Remember United Way - CFC Fund Drives

We want to remind PVAS members that the annual fundraising campaigns of the United Way of the Eastern Panhandle and the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) are underway.



Their campaigns will last through December 15.

PVAS receives substantial funding from United Way and CFC each year and encourages its members to give generously to these organizations.

CFC is, of course, the mechanism for federal employees to contribute to their local United Way. PVAS members who are federal employees can designate PVAS as the recipient of all or part of their CFC contribution by entering PVAS's CFC number (5222) on the CFC form that they file with their employing agency.

If you have any questions about this, please contact Kristin Alexander at pvasmail@aol.com or 304-229-9771.

Master Naturalist Program Seeking Volunteers

Following the September decision to launch a local Master Naturalist Program chapter under PVAS's auspices (see October Valley Views), PVAS board member Clark Dixon and local naturalist Cheryl Jennings have agreed to co-chair the program effort. A coordinating committee has also been formalized and initial planning is now getting underway. The current goal is to have a local chapter up and running next year, perhaps as early as the spring.

Patterned after the 33-year-old Master Gardener Program, the Master Naturalist Program allows individuals to increase their knowledge of the natural world and encourages them to put that knowledge to work by assisting their communities. Participants receive extensive classroom and field training in a broad range of topics in the fields of natural history and environmental education. Once certified, these individuals help their communities in various ways, such as constructing and maintaining nature trails, assisting scientists with research, and giving presentations to school children and other groups.



Those who would like to become involved in putting this program together are encouraged to do so. In particular, we are looking for individuals interested in filling the following positions:

Treasurer: Responsible for all funds collected related to program activities; purchases for program operations; makes bank deposits; submits monthly financial reports to PVAS Treasurer, etc.

Recorder: Records minutes from committee meetings and other official proceedings related to the Master Naturalist Program.

Record Keeper/Registrar: Keeps records of program activities, participants' class registration/participation and volunteer hours.

Logistics Coordinator: Participates in the planning of and identifying the needs for all classes and field trips; responsible for seeing to the details of classes and field trips.

If you would like to volunteer for any of these positions or help in some other way, please contact Clark Dixon at 304-725-9634 or dixonconsultants@aol.com.

West Virginia's Master Naturalist Program is one of the first in the nation. It is coordinated by the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources.

Seeking Spring Intern/Instructors!

In preparation for our watershed and other school programs in the spring, we are once again seeking motivated students or recent graduates in Environmental Studies, Science Education, Elementary Education, or Recreation. The positions are January through the first week in June. The weekly schedule and responsibilities vary, so anyone interested should contact Kristin Alexander at 304-676-3397 to talk about the details. Please spread the word! Program volunteers will be needed too!

Don't Miss the Second Annual Potomac Arts Festival!

This year, the gymnasium of the National Conservation Training Center will be filled with art from around the country. The artists will be selling pottery, jewelry, painting, photography, furniture and so much more!



- Friday, November 3 is the Private Preview and Reception (\$40/person – for advance ticket purchasers)
- Saturday, November 4 from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. the Festival will be free and open to the public.
- Sunday, November 5 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. the Festival will be free and open to the public.
- Several art education activities for children have been planned and will run from 12 p.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday.

There will be a snack station available inside the gymnasium on Saturday from 10 to 11 a.m. and again from 2:30 to 4 p.m. On Sunday, the snack station will be available from 1:30 p.m. to 3 p.m. Lunch will be available in the Cafeteria from 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. both days.

Sponsors for this year's festival include:

Jefferson Security Bank



Premier Bank

City National Bank

National Conservation Training Center

Eden Design

For a complete list of all Festival activities and artists, please visit www.PotomacArtsFestival.org

So, be there, have fun, and do something good for PVAS!

School Programs Report

Ten educators gathered at NCTC on September 27 to discuss the future of PVAS school programs. Kristin Alexander gave a brief overview of the school programs and the challenges of full implementation due to limited staff and other resources. The group held a very productive brainstorming session about how to make the programs sustainable; including how to garner the schools' commitments for participation and funding for the programs. Individuals from the group will continue to work on various aspects of promoting the programs to the schools to broaden the reach and impact of the programs.



November Meeting Will Focus on Wolves

Local writer and naturalist Ilona Popper will be the featured speaker at PVAS's November meeting.



She will discuss wolf behavior and current research on wolves, focusing in particular on the wolves of Yellowstone Park. Wolves were reintroduced there in 1995.

The meeting will be held at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, November 8, in the auditorium of the U.S.

Geological Survey's Leetown Science Center, 11649 Leetown Road (County Route 1), Kearneysville.

Ms. Popper is a Shepherdstown writer and poet who has watched wolves in Yellowstone National Park and studied at Yellowstone Institute for four years. She has given talks about wolves for the National Conservation Training Center, and for the Martinsburg and Shepherdstown Public Libraries.

She has written about wolves, barred owls, bears, and local wildlife.



Improvements at Yankauer

September saw the final installation of bumpers in the Yankauer parking lot and new directional trail signs in the Preserve. These projects were made possible from a grant from the West Virginia Division of Highways.



The final component of the project, new interpretive trail signs, will be completed and placed before the end of the year. Go take a hike and check out the progress! The jobs were completed thanks to the following volunteers: Satch Alwin, Susan Brookreson, Dan Cogswell, Jeff Feldman, Jean Neely, Chris Robinson, George Snyder, Diane and Gary Sylvester, and Rodney Woods.



Thank You Pack 42!

Pack 42 generously helped mulch the new habitat garden at Yankauer and the remainder of the Cedar Loop on Sunday, Oct 15th.

Thanks also goes Susan Brookreson and Carolyn Thomas for leading the pack's volunteer efforts at the Preserve.

Families Invited To Bird-Banding Demonstration

PVAS will hold its 15th annual bird-banding demonstration in Hedgesville, on Sunday, November 12.

The event will be hosted by PVAS bird-banding expert Bob Dean at his Hedgesville residence from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

This is an enjoyable and educational family event and children are welcome. Refreshments will be provided. The event is held outdoors, so those planning to attend should dress accordingly. It will be cancelled if there is bad weather.

Directions are as follows:

From I-81 north or south — take Exit 20, and follow route 901 west for about 2 miles to the first stop sign. Turn left and go 0.2 miles to Harlan Springs Road. (just beyond church). Turn left on Harlan Springs and go 0.7 miles to Limestone Lane. (across from stone spring house and pond). Turn right on Limestone and go 0.3 miles to parking sign in field below house.

From Route 9 west of Hedgesville — at the James Rumsey Technical Institute (just east of Hedgesville High School) turn left onto Cumbo Road. Go 1.1 miles to the first stop sign and turn left onto Harlan Springs Road. Go 1.25 miles on Harlan Springs to Limestone Lane. Turn left on Limestone and go 0.3 miles to parking sign in field below house.

For more information contact Nancy Kirschbaum at 304-876-6881 or nancyk500@adelphia.net.

Waterfowl Trip Set for November 18

PVAS is sponsoring a tour of prime late-season bird watching sites in Jefferson and Berkeley counties on Saturday, November 18.

The tour will be led by local bird expert Matt Orsie, and will focus on waterfowl.

Birds likely to be sighted include grebes, cormorants, and a wide variety of ducks.

Sites to be visited will likely include Lake Shannondale, the Shenandoah River, Stauffer's Marsh and, if time permits, Sleepy Creek Lake.

The tour should be instructive for both experienced and novice birders and anyone with an interest is invited to participate.

Participants will meet at 7:00 a.m. in front of the Martin's supermarket in the Jefferson Crossing shopping center off Route 340 just south of Charles Town. From there, carpools will be formed to keep the number of vehicles required for the tour to a minimum.

Novice birders are advised to be sure to dress warmly, wear shoes that will keep their feet warm and dry, and bring binoculars and field guides if they have them.

For more information contact Nancy Kirschbaum at 304-876-6881.

Environmental Concern Not an Obvious Risk

In these days of enlightened living, there are some unforeseen consequences to actions that may seem otherwise inconsequential. One of those issues is the disposal of drugs of all types. Seemingly small and harmless amounts of these exotic chemical compounds can pose a threat to wildlife and the natural environment if not disposed of properly. The following is taken from "How Should I Dispose of OTC or Rx Medications?" - Submitted to "Ask Audubon" on the Audubon Newswire, October 12, 2006 by Nancy D. of Putnam, New York

Both prescription counter drugs - of as hazardous priate facilities. The www.earth911.org search by zip code ous waste disposal cal pharmacies and scription medicine grams, where they will collect and dispose of the medicines for you.



and over-the-should be disposed waste at the approw e b s i t e will allow you to for nearby hazard-centers. Some lo-hospitals have pre-take-back programs, where they will collect and dispose of the medicines for you.

Throwing over-the-counter or prescription medicines into the trash or toilet can damage the environment. These substances are not filtered by sewage treatment plants and can harm the bacteria used by the treatment plants to kill hazardous microorganisms. A recent U.S. Geological Survey found pharmaceutical contaminants in U.S. lakes and streams, including nonprescription drugs in 81 percent of the water bodies tested, antibiotics in 48 percent, and other prescription drugs in 32 percent. These drugs pose a threat to birds and other wildlife that rely on these water sources, and cause risks to us as well.



Potomac Valley Nature Photographers

Because of the holiday season, the Potomac Valley Nature Photographers will combine its November and December meetings into a single meeting on Friday, December 1. That meeting will be held at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's National Conservation Training Center near Shepherdstown. Its program has not yet been announced.



The group's program for its first meeting of 2007, on January 26, will be the showing of a National Geographic Society film entitled "The Photographers." The film follows some of the Society's top photographers in the field, exploring their philosophies of photography as well as the hardships they face.

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 (\$15 for seniors and students) or \$35 to renew an existing NAS membership. 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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A proud partner of the United Way of the Eastern Panhandle and the Combined Federal Campaign.



MAIL TO:

November 2006

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Volume 25, Issue 3



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 Easter Panhandle of West Virginia and neighboring Washington County, Maryland.

PVASBOARD
 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 304 876-1139 | pvsmit@frontiernet.net |
| Vice President: | Nancy Kirschbaum | nancyk500@adelphia.net |
| Secretary: | Fiona Harrison | h_f_harrison@yahoo.com |
| Treasurer: | Jane Vanderhook 304 876-6993 | janehook@frontiernet.net |
| Board Development: | Wayne Braunstein 304 728-7181 | wbraun@frontiernet.net |
| Board Members-at-Large: | Alice Barkus | abarkus@hughes.net |
| | Susan Brookreson | brookre@earthlink.net |
| | Clark Dixon | dixonconsultants@aol.com |
| | David Eldridge 304 876-2337 | deldridge@citlink.net |
| | Rob Hoxton | rhoxt@hoxtonfinancial.com |
| | Georgia Jeppesen | georgia_jeppesen@adelphia.net |
| | Carolyn Thomas | webthomas@aol.com |
| | Christine Wolf | chriswolfathome@yahoo.com |

Ex Officio Board Members

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|
| Diana Mullis 304 267-3482 | dianamullis@aol.com |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|

Emeritus Board Members

- | | |
|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Bill Belton | wbelton@hughes.net |
| Jean Neely | jeaneely@adelphia.net |

Special Contacts

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Director of Yankauer: | Kristin Alexander 304 229-9771 | kaemail730@aol.com |
| Web Master: | Kathy Bilton | kathy@fred.net |
| PVAS Wildlife Rescue Coord: | Diana Mullis | 304-267-3482 & 304 724-4500(day) |