

Celebrating

# 25 Potomac Valley Audubon Society VALLEY VIEWS

Years

Volume 26, Issue 2

October 2007

## PVAS Gets Major Education Grant

The state of West Virginia has awarded PVAS a major grant to help us expand our educational programming in local schools and encourage students to create service projects to protect our local watersheds.

The grant, which totals \$42,500, is funded by the Project FLOW (Future Leaders of Watersheds) program of the West Virginia Commission for National and Community Service. We were one of only five grantees for this cycle of the grant.

This FLOW grant will enable us to offer our 4th Grade "Watershed Education Initiative" instructional program in more schools and to provide reinforcement of concepts to 5th-Graders in schools where we are already involved.

PVAS launched the Watershed Education Initiative in 2002 with a grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

The program is designed to teach 4th Grade students about the importance of protecting water resources, especially those that eventually impact the Chesapeake Bay, and ground water in the Eastern Panhandle.

It includes 10 hours of programming led by a trained PVAS instructor over seven sessions in the spring. Each of these sessions has a different theme related to watershed protection and all of them involve students in hands-on activities, such as water-quality testing on the Potomac River and Opequon Creek and the planning and execution of a water-quality improvement project on the grounds of their school.

Last spring, PVAS offered the program in five elementary schools in Berkeley and Jefferson counties, reaching approximately 550 students in all.

Until now, funding constraints have kept PVAS from offering the Watershed Education Initiative program at additional schools. The schools that sign up for the program

pay PVAS \$175 per classroom per year but that fee covers only a portion of the actual cost and the donations and grant funds that PVAS has been using to make up the difference have been limited.

The new Project FLOW grant will be used, in part, to hire additional instructors who will be able to offer this 4th Grade program to additional schools in the Panhandle including Morgan County.

It will also be used to provide a new program of 5th Grade instruction that will include a field experience related to Potomac River erosion concerns. Students will be able to observe and analyze shoreline land uses that affect water quality, take a close look at the efforts of local watershed associations to help protect the Potomac River and its tributaries from erosion and pollution, and learn

*Grant continued on page 5, column 1*

### Big Turnout for Day of Caring At Yankauer

An impressive 75 volunteers pitched in to work at

our Yankauer Nature Preserve on September 11 for United Way's annual Day of Caring.

In spite of the rainy day, volunteers enthusiastically tackled their jobs including mulching trails, pulling stilt grass, cleaning up the



parking lot, tightening bolts on the benches, and weeding and adding to the butterfly garden.

By lunch, three dumptruck loads of mulch (which

*Day of Caring continued on page 3, column 2*

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

## Nature Photographer to Address PVAS' October Meeting

Our October membership meeting will feature a presentation by Maryland nature photographer **Middleton Evans**, who will discuss and show images from his latest book "Rhapsody in Blue, A Celebration of North American Waterbirds."

The program is free and anyone is welcome to attend.

The meeting will be held at 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, October 10, at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service National Conservation Training Center on Shepherd Grade Road, just north of Shepherdstown. It will be held in the small auditorium (Room 160) of the Center's Instructional West Building.

A native of Baltimore, Evans published his first book, a profile of the state of Maryland entitled "Maryland in Focus," in 1988. After publishing a profile of the city of Baltimore in 1992, he began concentrating on nature photography and published "Maryland's Great Outdoors" in 1996.

His latest book on waterbirds, which was published this summer by Ravenwood Press, is the culmination of a five-year effort that involved 38 trips all over North America, from Alaska to Mexico.

In all, it profiles some 180 species of waterbirds.

His website address is [www.ravenwoodpress.com](http://www.ravenwoodpress.com).

## Washington County Bird Club Plans Trips

The Washington County (MD) Bird Club, which has an active birding field trip program, welcomes PVAS members to join them on their field trips.

Currently, the Club has the following two trips planned for October:

**Thursday, October 4**—Morning walk along the C&O Canal in the Williamsport area. Meet at 7:15 a.m. at the Park and Ride lot just below the Department of Motor Vehicles office on Route 65 near Interstate 70 or at 7:30 a.m. at the Cushwa Basin parking area. Contact trip leader Linda Field at 301-797-6189 to attend.

You are invited to the  
Potomac Valley Audubon Society's 3rd Annual

## Potomac Arts Festival Preview Party



Join the Celebration of Nature and the Arts  
for this special sneak preview fundraiser

**Friday, November 2, 2007**

at the  
National Conservation Training Center  
Shepherd Grade Road  
Shepherdstown, West Virginia

**5:30–8:30 p.m.**

Join the exhibiting artists for a special preview of the  
festival,  
a silent auction with original pieces  
created by the artists, live music, food and drink

**Please RSVP by October 15, 2007**

For more information:  
call 304-676-3397

email: [artfestival@potomacaudubon.org](mailto:artfestival@potomacaudubon.org)  
visit [www.PotomacArtsFestival.org](http://www.PotomacArtsFestival.org)

## PVAS Sponsoring Wil Hershberger Talk at Cacapon State Park

PVAS will sponsor a special talk about the songs of insects at Cacapon State Park in Morgan County the evening of Friday, October 12.

The speaker will be local insect expert Wil Hershberger, who is coauthor of “The Songs of Insects,” a new book and audio CD published last spring by Houghton-Mifflin Company.

The program will be held in the Daniel Morgan Room of the park’s Lodge starting at 7:00 p.m.

Admission will be free and anyone with an interest is welcome to attend.

Hershberger, who lives in Hedgesville, has been a naturalist all his life.

He has been photographing and recording the natural world for more than a decade and his work has been published in magazines, calendars, and books.

His recordings of insects, birds, and frogs are archived at the Macaulay Library of Natural Sounds at the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology.

His website can be found at [www.natureimagesandsounds.com](http://www.natureimagesandsounds.com).

Now that PVAS has established a presence in Morgan County with the new Eidolon Nature Preserve, we hope to offer more programming of this kind there.

County residents who have suggestions for possible future speakers—or for the kinds of speakers they would like to hear—should contact Nancy Kirschbaum at 304-876-6881 or [nancyk500@comcast.net](mailto:nancyk500@comcast.net).

## PVAS 3d Annual Potomac Arts Festival November 2-4

Plan to join us for the third annual Potomac Arts Festival November 2 – 4, 2007. The “Celebration of Nature and the Arts” will be held at the beautiful campus of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service’s National Conservation Training Center (NCTC). The juried arts festival features 43 artists from all over the United States. A sampling of the works of the many fine artists and master craftsmen include watercolors from the studio of Jocelyn Beatty of West Middlesex, Pennsylvania, bronze sculptures from the studio of Paul Rhymer of Point of Rocks, MD and nature photography by our own Wil Hershberger. The arts festival will run in tandem with the fourth annual American Conservation Film Festival. The film festival has more than 20 films planned for viewing. Please visit their website ([www.conservationfilm.org](http://www.conservationfilm.org)) for a complete list and schedule.

An exciting sneak preview and silent auction will take place Friday evening November 2 from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. You are invited to join the exhibiting artists for a private viewing of their artwork, a silent auction with original pieces created by the artists, live music, food and drink. For tickets and additional information, please call 304-676-3397.

The festival will be open to the public, free of charge, Saturday November 3 from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and

Sunday November 4 from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Proceeds from the festival will be used to support PVAS environmental education for children and adults, including summer camps, workshops, field trips and programs for school and day-care centers.

**Volunteers are needed!**  
Please contact Nancy Kirschbaum at  
[nancyk500@comcast.net](mailto:nancyk500@comcast.net) or 304-876-6881

*Day of Caring from Page 1*  
is a lot of mulch!) had been spread and the tired crew sat down for a delicious hot lunch provided by Diana Mullis, Jane Vanderhook and Gretchen Meadows. Materials donated for the day included mulch from Cam Tabb, and ceiling fans by L.D.H. Electrical Contractors.

Organizations and groups represented as volunteers included the National Conservation Training Center, Blue Ridge Community and Technical College, Master Gardeners, Sir Speedy Printing, Hedgesville High School’s student government, the Veterans Administration, and PVAS members and friends.

All worked extremely hard and the results showed at the end of the day. A very special thank you also goes to Alice Barkus for coordinating the day.



Hello Everyone—

Elsewhere in this newsletter you'll find a story about a major new grant that's going to help us expand our efforts to educate local school children about the importance of protecting water resources.

These school programs of ours are especially timely and relevant because water-resource protection is a front-burner issue in the Eastern Panhandle at the present time.

As we all know, the region is experiencing tremendous population growth, with most new families moving into high-density subdivisions.

And the implications for water supplies and water quality are profound.

Throughout the Panhandle, officials are rightly concerned about over-extraction of groundwater supplies.

In Berkeley and Jefferson counties, there's an additional concern: the limestone geology that predominates makes water supplies especially vulnerable to surface pollution and contamination from inadequate or failing sewage-treatment facilities and septic systems.

To make matters worse, many of the region's new residents are disconnected from the communities around them and have little or no understanding of these kinds of problems.

Still worse, a significant number of long-time residents also don't understand or don't care.

PVAS's school programs aren't going to solve any of this on their own, of course.

When you look at the big picture, they represent only a small step and they're only one of many steps being taken throughout the area to approach these problems.

But that's usually how big public problems get worked out—incrementally over time and by means of the efforts of many different agencies, organizations, and individuals.

Hopefully, that's what will happen in this case because our future quality of life depends on it.

## Birdseed Orders Due October 15

It's that time of year again—  
Your birdseed order form is enclosed

Please note the **delivery day is November 10**  
(the second Saturday in November).

Volunteers are needed to assist with the distribution at Gower's Feeds in Williamsport, MD and Ranson, WV. Additional volunteers are needed at the NEW Berkeley Springs distribution location: Hunter's Hardware Warehouse which is located at their Union Street parking lot.

### Birdseed Questions:

**Call Diana Mullis at 304-267-3482**

## Sign Up Early for Owl-banding Trips!

PVAS is sponsoring two special nighttime field trips this fall to watch an expert catch, band, and release migrating owls on South Mountain, in Washington County, MD.

The trips will be held on Saturday, October 27 and Saturday, November 3. They will start at about 8:30 p.m. and last until about 10:30 p.m.

These trips have long been a favorite for whole families, and interested members of the public are invited to participate.

The expert who will conduct the banding is Steve Huy, who has been banding owls on the mountain for many years as part of Project OwlNet.

The owls he will be banding are the Northern Saw-whet Owl, the smallest owl in eastern North America. Visits to his banding site offer a unique opportunity to see these birds up close and learn about their life history.

Pre-registration is essential because space for each trip is limited to 20 persons.

To pre-register for the trips and to get more information contact Carolyn Thomas at 304-267-3115 or webethomas@aol.com.

These trips involve a walk over uneven ground and they are therefore not recommended for anyone who needs assistance.

Participants should bring a flashlight and be sure to dress warmly.

The trips will be cancelled if it is raining.

*Grant continued from page 1, column 2*  
 from the West Virginia Master Gardeners about caring for the Erosion Control and Rain Gardens they planted as 4th Graders on their own school property.

A large component of the grant is “service learning” that will encourage students to take the information they learn in both the 4th and 5th Grade components and create service projects that will positively affect local watersheds. Such student-designed projects might involve only their local school, but classes will be encouraged to consider ways they might also impact their closest watershed by working with partner groups.

Partners for this grant include the West Virginia Master Gardeners, the Opequon Creek Project Team, the Jefferson County Watershed Coalition, the Potomac Headwaters Resource Conservation and Development Council, Cacapon Institute, and the Girl Scouts.

## Teacher Training Workshop

Ellen Murpy participated in a course at NCTC regarding best practices in developing teacher workshops. This hands-on course included an actual mini-workshop for local teachers about wetlands that the participants planned and conducted. PVAS was contracted to prepare the course participants for this experience by orienting them to NCTC’s campus and teaching resources. This course will help Ellen prepare future workshops to serve local teachers.

## Insect Walk a Success



Our September 7 “Insect Walk” along the C&O Canal near Shepherdstown was a big success. More than 30 people showed up, including 10 children, to learn firsthand about insect songs from our own expert on the subject, Wil Hershberger.

### 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:

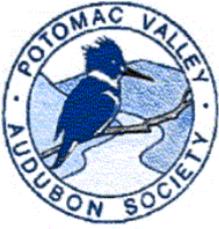
Membership Chair, PVAS  
 PO Box 578  
 Shepherdstown, WV 25443

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

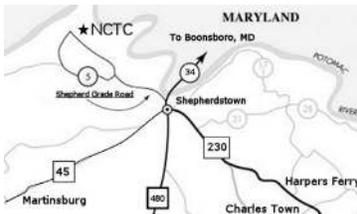


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The Potomac Valley Audubon Society meets at 7:00 p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month, September through April, at the US Fish and Wildlife Service National Conservation Training Center (NCTC), Shepherdstown, WV. Programs are free and open to 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 304 876-1139 .....pvsmith@frontiernet.net
- Vice President: Nancy Kirschbaum ..... nancyk500@comcast.net
- Secretary: Mina Goodrich ..... larrymina@peoplepc.com
- Treasurer: Jane Vanderhook ..... 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
- Rob Hoxton ..... rhoxtan@hoxtonfinancial.com
- Leigh Jenkins ..... jenkinsleigh@hotmail.com
- Georgia Jeppesen ..... georgia\_jeppesen@comcast.net
- Carolyn Thomas ..... webethomas@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@comcast.net

**Special Contacts**

- Executive Director: Kristin Alexander 304 676-3397 .....kaemail730@aol.com
- Web Master: Kathy Bilton ..... kathy@fred.net
- PVAS Wildlife Rescue Coord: Diana Mullis ..... 304-267-3482