

VALLEY VIEWS

Potomac
Valley
Audubon
Society

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September 2010

Berkeley Springs Birding Festival Set for September 24-26

The Third Annual Berkeley Springs Fall Birding Festival will be held in and around Berkeley Springs the weekend of September 24-26.

Most of the festival's events will be free and everyone is invited to attend.

The festival is timed to coincide with the annual fall bird migration, which should be in full swing at that time. It is the only fall birding festival being held in West Virginia.



PVAS is once again the lead sponsor of the festival. Local community sponsors include Clark's, the Country Inn, the Nature Niche, Old Oak Art Glass, Sleepy Creek Retreat, Cornelia Belton, Jane McCloud, and Jane Davis.

The festival's first events will be a free program at the Country Inn the evening of Friday, September 24. The program, which will start at 7:30 p.m., will feature West Virginia nature writer and broadcaster Dr. Scott Shalaway discussing his experiences in the Galapagos Islands.

Dr. Shalaway, who has a Ph.D. in wildlife ecology from Michigan State University, lives in Cameron, WV. His weekly nature column appears in the Pittsburgh *Post-Gazette*, the Charleston *Gazette*, the Martinsburg *News-Journal* and other newspapers in the region. He also hosts weekly nature radio shows on stations in Pittsburgh and Wheeling.

On Saturday, Dr. Shalaway will lead an 8:00 a.m. bird walk that will start at the Panorama Overlook.

At 10:00 a.m., Saturday, a free birding workshop will be held at Cacapon State Park. The workshop will be aimed at children but

Two New Grants

PVAS has been awarded two grants to better serve schools this year. One is a grant from the City of Ranson for PVAS to serve Ranson Elementary School with programs for grades K-5. These programs may take place at the school, at Yankauer, or in the new Flowing Springs Park in Ranson next to the new Home Depot. The City of Ranson has been supporting PVAS programs at the school since 2006.

The second grant is from the WV Division of Environmental Protection (WVDEP) to pilot a high school version of our Watershed Education Initiative that focuses on water quality issues. Similar to our fourth-grade Watershed Education Initiative, this program will have about seven visits throughout the school year. We're hoping to put students to work in their school greenhouses to take care of native plants. The program will conclude with a service-learning component that will allow them to plant an erosion control garden at the school using the plants they've raised throughout the spring.

Last year, several high school biology teachers who have heard about our program requested it for their classrooms. Ellen Murphy and Krystal Kennedy (watershed instructor) adapted the program and offered it upon request at Martinsburg High School last year. Based on that experience, Krystal further adapted and revised the program as part of her co-op at Shepherd University last year. The DEP grant will allow us to pilot-test this new version of the curricula more completely with up to five classrooms at five different high schools in Jefferson and Berkeley Counties in the spring. The WV DEP funded the Watershed Education Initiative for fourth graders last year as well. It will be another busy watershed year!

Fall Education Programs Are Underway

As soon as school starts in August, PVAS is back in the classroom with our environmental themed programs both at schools and at the Yankauer Preserve. Several classrooms have already booked a day for a trip to the preserve and our monthly Wee Naturalist programs have already resumed. Other schools and scouting groups have been in contact with PVAS to discuss possible environmental-themed programs later this fall.

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

President's Perch



Hello everyone:

Although *Valley Views* has been on vacation for the past two months, PVAS has not been idle. Since the beginning of June, in spite of this summer's oppressive heat, we have:

- completed another successful summer camp season at the Yankauer Nature Preserve
- successfully launched a new satellite camp at CraftWorks in southern Jefferson County and a new iteration of our digital nature photography camp for teenagers
- gotten our seventh annual evening concert series underway at Yankauer
- held a fine fundraising reception at Rusty and Cricket Morgan's beautiful home in Rippon
- helped Jane Tabb promote Jefferson County agriculture at one of her excellent Fresh Feast on the Farm dinners
- and sponsored 11 field trips that ranged in locations from the C&O Canal near Shepherdstown to Delaware's Bombay Hook Refuge on the Eastern Shore.

Now, with cooler temperatures at last on the way, we're looking forward to this fall. As usual, we've got a variety of activities scheduled. Among other things:

- we'll be resuming our school programs and our Wee Naturalist program for preschoolers
- we'll also be resuming our monthly presentations at NCTC, with the first one—a joint program with NCTC—set for September 8
- we're once again sponsoring the Berkeley Springs Fall Birding Festival, and this year's festival promises to be bigger and better than ever
- Wil Hershberger is once again leading his very popular "insect walks" for us
- we've got an interesting variety of field trips scheduled, along with two Master Naturalist workshops
- our Yankauer concerts will continue through September.

We hope you'll find something in this lineup that interests you. We can't be all things to all people but we do strive to offer a wide range of programming that helps to increase understanding and appreciation of nature among people of all ages. And of course we always welcome any suggestions you might have for new and different kinds of programming—we're always willing to give new ideas a try.

—Peter Smith

Volunteers Sought for American Conservation Film Festival

Love movies? ACFF is seeking volunteers to help make the 8th annual Festival a success by lending brains, poise, muscle, or enthusiasm in return for Festival passes, T-shirts, and other special goodies. Email info@conservationfilm.org for a list and description of volunteer opportunities (most with no experience necessary) and an application.

Fall Wee Naturalists Schedule Announced

The fall schedule for our "Wee Naturalists" program is now set.

The program is aimed at pre-school children ages 3-5. It is designed to provide regular opportunities for small children and loving adults to explore nature together safely under the guidance of an experienced PVAS instructor. Children must be accompanied by a parent, grandparent or other adult relative, or a guardian.



For this fall, program sessions will be offered at the Yankauer Nature Preserve on the third Wednesday and Thursday of each month, from August through December. Each session will last from 9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., and each month's sessions will explore a different nature theme.

For example, September's sessions will focus on insects, the focus in October will be on signs of fall, and the December theme will be "Snowflakes and Snowbirds."

To ensure that everyone receives close, personal attention, enrollment will be limited and pre-registration is required.

Families may register for one, several, or all of the monthly sessions. The fee will be \$8 per child/adult team per session for one or two sessions, and \$7 per session for three or more sessions.

The program is led by Suzi Taylor, of Sharpsburg, Maryland, a veteran PVAS camp director who has a degree in environmental education.

For more information or to register, contact Suzi at 301-432-1908 or tomandsuzi506@cs.com. Information and registration forms are also available on the PVAS website at www.potomacaudubon.org.

The program was initiated last year with support from the Eastern West Virginia Community Foundation's Two Rivers Giving Circle.

Two Master Naturalist Workshops Set for September

PVAS is offering two Master Naturalist Workshops during the September 11-12 weekend.

The workshops, which provide expert instruction on specific natural history topics, count as elective courses for individuals enrolled in the Potomac Valley Master Naturalist Program.

However, the workshops are also open on a space-available basis to anyone who is interested. Enrollment for each workshop will be limited to 20 persons. Application forms and further information are available on the PVAS website.

The specific dates and topics of the two September workshops are as follows:

Saturday September 11: West Virginia Beavers (10:00 a.m.-noon at the For Love of Children Outdoor Education Center in Jefferson County, off Mission Road past Shannondale). This session will be led by Master Naturalist Laura Clark, who has been studying beavers in the Canaan Valley area for the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources since 2009. The fee will be \$10 for Master Naturalist Program members and trainees and \$15 for members of the public. For more information, contact Wanda Miller at 304-263-7320 or PVMN54@gmail.com.

Saturday and Sunday, September 11-12: Leave No Trace Program Trainer Course. This special two-day course will also be held at the For the Love of Children Outdoor Education Center. It will start at 4:00 p.m. on the 11th, include an overnight stay that evening, and end at 3:00 p.m. on the 12th.

The Leave No Trace (LNT) program emphasizes skills and techniques essential to LNT minimum impact outdoor ethics and education. Students who complete this trainer course will become qualified LNT Trainers.

Topics covered will include the role and function of an LNT Trainer; the principles and ethics of LNT; teaching skills and techniques and student learning LNT program; the role and function of the non-profit organization LNT, Inc. Each participant will understand, demonstrate, and be able to teach minimum impact techniques for friends, family, sponsoring organization and other community groups and lead a discussion on outdoor ethics and help others explore their own personal outdoor ethic.

More information and a detailed schedule with a list of items to bring will be provided upon registration. The fee for the course is \$35 for all participants. For more information, contact Clark Dixon at dixonconsultants@aol.com.

Yankauer Concert Series Underway

PVAS is again offering a series of free outdoor concerts this summer at the Yankauer Nature Preserve.

Our Seventh Annual "Music in the Cedars" concert series began August 3 and will continue through September. The concerts are being held Tuesday evenings, with each one running from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

The concerts are held rain or shine in the Preserve's covered pavilion. There is no fee and anyone is welcome to attend.

The schedule of the remaining concerts is as follows:

- August 31: The Outpatients. Come enjoy an evening of "'Toe Tappin' Acoustic Mayhem." Three part harmonies, blazing instrumental, and all around "newgrass" jamming.
- September 7: Daryl Bryarly. Go back in time with Daryl as he performs folk, Civil War, Celtic, and original songs on the Hammered Dulcimer.
- September 14: Rolling Coyotes. A blend of country-tinged folk with diverse instrumentation and vocals describing unique places, characters and themes.
- September 21: Betty Jo and Scott Rockwell will be joined by their daughter Gena for a family trio performing songs

about love, nature, and the nature of love.

- September 28: Steve Cifala. Close out the summer season with this dynamic performer who is influenced by Rhythm & Blues, Little Feat, and Eric Clapton.

Those who attend are welcome to bring their own picnic suppers, but the preserve does not have trash pickup so everyone is asked to carry out everything they bring in.

Picnic tables will be available in the pavilion on a first-come, first-served basis. Attendees may also bring their own chairs or picnic blankets for their comfort. Please leave pets at home.

For more information, contact Kristin Alexander at pvasmail@aol.com or 304-676-3397.

"Insect Walks" Are Great Family Fun

PVAS is again sponsoring two evening "insect walks" this year, on August 28 and September 11.

Both walks will be led by local insect expert Wil Hershberger, who is coauthor of "The Songs of Insects," a book and audio CD published by Houghton-Mifflin Company.



These walks are family-oriented events that are especially popular with young children but anyone with an interest is welcome to participate. There is no fee.

However, space will be limited so those who would like to participate should make a reservation as soon as possible by contacting Peter Smith at pvsmit@frontiernet.net or 304-876-1139.

The August 28 walk will be held along the C&O Canal across from Shepherdstown. The walking group will assemble at 7:00 p.m. in the large Canal parking lot on Canal Road, three-tenths of a mile south of the Shepherdstown bridge.

The September 11 walk will be held at Cacapon State Park outside Berkeley Springs. Participants will meet at 6:30 p.m. at the entrance to the Park's Lodge.

From both locations, Hershberger will lead explorations of nearby fields and roadsides. Insects likely to be encountered include tree crickets, several species of meadow katydids, perhaps one or two species of round-winged katydids, northern true katydids, oblong-wing katydids, and perhaps some bush katydids.

Those who wish to participate should bring flashlights and be prepared to walk through high grass and weeds. Tucking pants legs into socks and spraying them with a DEET-based insect repellent is recommended.

The walks will not take place if it is raining.

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

His website can be found at www.natureimagesandsounds.com.

Join Bob Dean for Banding and Birding Trip to Dolly Sods

PVAS will sponsor a trip to the Dolly Sods Scenic Area in Grant County, West Virginia, the weekend of September 11-12.

Local birding expert Bob Dean will lead the trip and the main activity will be observing the bird banding in progress at the Allegheny Front Migration Observatory on both mornings.

The Observatory's banding station has operated annually since 1958 with a total capture of more than 230,000 birds over the years. The bulk of the captures are members of the wood warbler family, so this will be an opportunity to see many species of these birds up close.

Afternoons will be devoted to hawk watching from either the banding station or the Bear Rocks area at the north end of Dolly Sods, if weather conditions permit. If not, the group will spend the afternoons hiking in the wilderness area, birding and botanizing with an option to pick wild cranberries, blueberries, and huckleberries.

There will be no fee and anyone with an interest is welcome to participate.

Participants will rendezvous at 7:30 a.m. on Saturday the 11th at the parking area across from the Red Creek Campground, which is located about 2 miles south of the north entrance to Dolly Sods.

Participants should plan to make their own overnight accommodations in the area. Possibilities include the Red Creek Campground and other campsites maintained by the Monongahela National Forest (www.forestcamping.com/dow/eastern/moncmp.htm), Canaan Valley State Park lodge (www.canaanresort.com), Harman's North Fork Cottages (www.wvlogcabins.com) and B&Bs in and around Petersburg and Davis (www.bbonline.com/wv/Petersburg.html).

The drive time to Dolly Sods is about 2 hours and 30 minutes from the Charles Town area.

For more information, contact Bob Dean at bobdean52@gmail.com.

Plan Ahead for October 7-10 Cape May Hawk-Watching Trip

PVAS is sponsoring a hawk-watching trip to Cape May, NJ, the weekend of October 7-10. This should be a good opportunity to see large numbers of accipiters and falcons, as well as buteos.

The trip will use the resources of the New Jersey Audubon Soci-

ety and the Cape May Bird Observatory, which offer morning and afternoon bird walks and a special hawk-watching platform where one can comfortably watch the migration; naturalists will be present to help identify incoming hawks.

Anyone with an interest is welcome to come along and there will be no fee. But participants will be expected to furnish their own transportation and make their own hotel or motel reservations. The Cape May Bird Observatory website (www.birdcapemay.org) contains a list of hotels and motels which offer discounts to birders.

For more information, contact the trip leader, Sandy Sagalkin, at monsansagalkin@myactv.net or 301-432-6847.

Birding Festival (continued from page 1)

also open to beginning birders of all ages. It will be led by the Park's Naturalist, Kelly Smith, and cover such topics as identification basics, birding manners, and using guidebooks and equipment.

Saturday afternoon's activities will include a 1:00 p.m. free session on "The Joys of Backyard Birding," which will provide tips on ways to attract, identify, and enjoy a wide variety of birds in your own yard.

At 2:00 p.m., Dr. Shalaway, local naturalist Joe Gentile and others will lead a free mountaintop nature walk at the Eidolon Nature Preserve near Great Cacapon.

Saturday evening will feature two presentations at the Country Inn. At 7:00 p.m., Marcy Heacker, a forensic ornithologist with the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History, will provide a behind-the-scenes look at her work on aviation bird strikes and the search for possible remnant populations of birds thought to be extinct, such as the Ivory Billed Woodpecker.

At 8:15 p.m., Dr. Shalaway will lead an interactive session on bird identification that will be of interest to both beginning and advanced birders.

The Saturday evening event will include dessert and coffee, and a \$10 fee will be charged to help cover festival expenses. Advance tickets will be available at the Nature Niche store at 50 North Washington Street in Berkeley Springs, telephone 304-258-0992. Tickets will also be available at the Friday evening program and at the door.

The festival will wrap up the morning of Sunday, September 26, with a free 8:30 a.m. bird walk led by Dr. Shalaway at Sleepy Creek Retreat, a mountainside meadowland property south of Berkeley Springs. The property features sweeping views and a rich variety of habitats, and it will provide good opportunities to see migrating raptors, blue jays and warblers.

All of the festival events at the County Inn will be held in the Inn's Garden Room. Copies of the festival program and other materials will be available throughout the festival weekend at that location.

For more details see the PVAS website or call the Nature Niche store at the number shown above anytime during business hours.

Birdseed Sale Next Month

Order forms will be in the October *Valley Views*. The delivery date will be Saturday, November 6.

Contact Diana Mullis, dianamullis@aol.com or 304-267-3482, for more information.

Education Programs (continued from page 1)

Our fourth-grade Watershed program will be conducted in some classes this fall and several schools have inquired about extending the program for the entire year. This year-long program still emphasizes local watersheds, the Chesapeake Bay, and water quality, but it expands into helping students learn more about home water use, recycling, overpackaging, and ways to reduce lunch waste in their school's cafeteria.

Thanks to grants from the Two Rivers Giving Circle and Ecolab, PVAS will be piloting revised 2nd and 3rd grade programs this fall. Funding restrictions on transportation have made visiting Yankauer more of a challenge for some classes so our solution is to take PVAS programs into the schools! These programs combine environmentally themed activities in the classroom with a schoolyard scavenger hunt that helps students realize that nature is all around them, not just in a park or nature preserve. Each program includes a pre- and post-assessment and additional activities and resources for teachers. The programs are being piloted at Burke Street, Berkeley Heights, Tuscarora, and Winchester Avenue Elementary Schools in Berkeley County.

South Mountain Hawk Watch

PVAS will sponsor a hawk-watching trip to Maryland's Washington Monument State Park on Thursday, September 16.

Anyone with an interest is invited to participate.

The annual Broad-winged Hawk migration should be at or near its peak that week, and the Washington Monument State Park is one of the best sites in the mid-Atlantic for viewing hawks.

The Park's monument offers an excellent vantage point to watch these magnificent birds as they ride the thermals that sweep along the mountain's ridgeline.

Other species that may be seen include the Sharp-shinned Hawk, the Red-shouldered Hawk, the Red-tailed Hawk, the American Kestrel, and the Northern Harrier.

Local naturalist Dave Weesner will lead the trip and help identify the birds seen.

The Park is located four miles east of Boonsboro and 1½ miles north of Alternate Route 40 on Monument Road.

Participants will gather at 9:00 a.m. in the Park's uppermost parking lot, just below the monument. From there, the group will walk the up to the monument at the summit. The trail is not long but it is rather rough and not suitable for anyone who needs assistance.

The length of the stay at the monument will depend on how the hawk flight is going. If conditions are good, the trip leaders may stay until early afternoon. Other participants can leave whenever they wish.

Participants should bring binoculars if they have them and dress appropriately for the weather.

No pre-registration is needed for this trip, and there is no fee.

Please note that the trip will be cancelled if it is raining because hawks do not fly in such conditions.

For more information about the trip contact Peter Smith at 304-876-1139 or pvsmit@frontiernet.net.

If you'd like to learn about hawk-watching in a more systematic way, Dave Weesner is teaching a course on the subject at Hagerstown Community College the same week as our field trip. The course will include two hours of classroom instruction at HCC's Valley Mall Center the evening of Wednesday, September 15 (from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.), and a morning field trip to a location yet to be determined on Saturday, September 19. This course carries a \$35 fee.

As a follow-up to that course, Dave will also lead an all-day, College-sponsored hawk-watching trip to Hawk Mountain, in Pennsylvania on Monday, October 4. The fee for this trip will be \$30, which will include transportation in an HCC van.

For information on how to sign up for the course or the October 4 trip, contact Dave at 301-302-6376.

Have You Ever Visited a Carnivorous Plant Nursery?

If you're interested in the unusual, you won't want to miss our October 3 tour of the Botanique Carnivorous Plant Nursery in the Blue Ridge mountains north of Charlottesville, Virginia.

The tour will be free and anyone with an interest is welcome to participate.

Founded in 1982, the Boutanique nursery is an internationally recognized facility that specializes in carnivorous plants, such as the Venus' Fly Trap, Pitcher Plants, Sundews and more.

Pitcher Plants are the nursery's main focus, and it is said to contain the greatest variety of such plants in the U.S.

The nursery is focused on research and education as well as commercial sales, and it views part of its mission as helping to preserve relic plant populations and to increase public support for wildlife preservation efforts generally.

The nursery can only be visited by appointment, so this a good opportunity to see it.

Plants will be available for purchase.

Participants should plan to meet at 3:30 p.m. at the nursery, which is located at 387 Pitcher Plant Lane, Stanardsville. Directions can be found on www.mapquest.com but not on Google maps. The trip should take about 2½ hours from the Charles Town area.

For more info about the nursery go to www.pitcherplant.com.

For info about the trip, contact Kelly Heldreth at kheldreth@hotmail.com.

Camp Roundup for 2010

It was hot! It was great! Which words best describe camp this summer? Both of them! Camp was great and we had six fabulous weeks at Yankauer and two more at Cool Spring Farm in south Jefferson County. And, yes, it was hot, but we made it through! This year's sessions included *Camp Survivor*, *Earth Artists*, and *Dirt!* as well as *Out of the Nest*, *Just For Fledglings*, and *First Explorers* for preschool campers.

Two hundred forty-eight campers attended at least one week of camp, spending much of their time in the woods where it was (somewhat) cooler. The highlight of any camp week is building

"forts" in the woods and some of the structures were amazing. Yankauer forts featured multiple rooms, recreation centers, and interior decoration! At any given time, campers could also be found taking hikes, making recycled crafts, chasing butterflies, looking for insects, keeping an eye out for the black rat snake that lives in the shed, avoiding poison ivy, investigating the world while blindfolded, playing "Ranger Rick" and "Camouflage," tug-of-war, listening to "Muncha Muncha," and just exploring.

Middle school aged campers were able to choose from three sessions designed for more in-depth investigations. "Ways of the Bay" campers enjoyed an overnight adventure to Echo Hill Outdoor School on the Chesapeake Bay, then returned to Yankauer for fish dissection led by Vicki Blazer of the USGS Leetown Aquatics Lab. "Dirty Jobs" featured everything yucky, including growing mold spores, dissecting worms, and boiling bones. "Wildlife CSI" gave campers the opportunity to learn about endangered species from NCTC's Randy Robinson and forensic science from Jodi Kissner who teaches at Martinsburg High School. This session also gave campers the chance to study the effects of decomposition on several chickens which was "disgusting, but pretty cool," as one camper commented.

Our new Discovery Camp site at Cool Spring Farm in south Jefferson County provided 40 campers with a beautiful site for "Earth Artists" and "Camp Survivor." The site is more convenient for families in mid and southern Jefferson County and features fields, wetlands, woods, hiking trails, and, best of all, a stream! Parents of these campers raved about the setting and were excited that this satellite site saved them gas and time. Suzi Taylor, Melinda Phares, and Bland Campbell staffed this program. Special thanks goes to David Lilliard of CraftWorks and Linda Case who opened her farm to our campers.

Our summer camps would never be possible without volunteers who donate an hour a day, and sometimes even a week or more, to make our programs successful. Many thanks to Susan Fluharty, Sherri Cooper, Merilee Cunningham, Bland Campbell, Wanda Miller, Clark Dixon, Debbie Crouse, David Wilson, and Skylar Benedict for their time and commitment to our program. Our middle-school Counselors-in-Training, who volunteered their time after a week-long training, included Lydia McGilton, Destinee Myers, Lily Braithwaite, Carl Thomas, Daniel Pike, Miles Waldman, Emma Waldman, Maddie Hinkle, Rebecca Philips, and Baileigh Reed-Grimmett. Staff at Yankauer this summer were Christian Thomas, Robby Glenn, Krystal Kennedy, and Marybeth Grove. We'd also like to recognize and sincerely thank our generous intern sponsors, Henry and Faye Davenport, Stan and Judy Jones, Jean Neely, and Craig and Roy Winkel. These generous sponsors allow PVAS to attract excellent staff thanks to our ability to offer a competitive wage.

Digital Nature Photography Camp a Success

Seven students entering grades 9 to 12 and one adult signed up for this year's digital nature photography camp which was held in downtown Shepherdstown August 2-6. PVAS partnered with Asbury United Methodist Church who loaned PVAS its Youth Center in Shepherdstown for the camp.

Matt Poole of NCTC, who had taken the lead on the camp since its inception, has taken a new job in New England, so he was unavailable for the camp this year. Thankfully, Bruce Field, a nature photographer from Hagerstown, volunteered to take the lead this year. He was assisted by Krystal Kennedy, a recent Shepherd University graduate. Krystal is a veteran PVAS instructor of both PVAS' Watershed Program and Audubon Discovery Camp. Bruce and Krystal were a great team and put together an amazing week of photo experiences for the students. Asbury United Methodist Church even allowed us to use their van for a day so students could take photos at Antietam Battlefield and photograph raptors at Trego Mountain Sanctuary in Keedysville.

We thank Matt Poole for all of his energy over the years in developing this camp and wish him well in his new job in New England. A huge thank you also goes to Bruce Field for picking up where Matt left off and his willingness to instruct the camp as a volunteer. We thank Dina Spanomanolis of Trego Mountain Sanctuary for allowing campers to visit her wildlife rehab facility and take photos of her falconry birds. Wil Hershberger also deserves an enormous thank you for coming one afternoon to do a mini-workshop for the students on macro photography that was truly inspirational. Pastor Rudy Bropleh, Everane Bropleh, Monroe Burger, Clark Dixon, Joyce Dunmore, and Vernon Hunter of Asbury UMC were extremely helpful in making the camp a success and we thank them for their "over and above" efforts. Finally, we sincerely thank the Potomac Valley Nature Photographers for a \$500 contribution toward the camp to offset the real costs.

A selection of the students' photos will be posted in a slideshow at potomacaudubon.org shortly. You'll see evidence of all they learned with their photos of the nature in and around Shepherdstown, the C&O Canal, Antietam National Battlefield, and some of the wildlife and falconry birds from Trego Mountain Sanctuary.



Don't Miss Special September Program at NCTC!

PVAS will not present a program of its own at the National Conservation Training Center during September.

Instead, on Wednesday, September 8, we are cosponsoring with NCTC a special presentation on the past, present and future of the Chesapeake Bay.

The speaker will be author and environmentalist Ned Tillman, who was originally scheduled to present this program last February but had to cancel because of snow.

The program will be held in the Byrd Auditorium at 7:00 p.m.

Admission will be free.

Tillman is a lifelong resident of the Chesapeake Bay watershed

and an active sportsman and environmentalist.

He has enjoyed a career in the environmental industry, and now advises organizations on how to become more sustainable.

Tillman received a BA from Franklin and Marshall College and a MS from Syracuse University in earth and environmental sciences.

He has been on the staff of The Johns Hopkins University and the University of Maryland and president of Target Environmental, Columbia Technologies, and Growth Adventures.

He has served as chair of the Howard County Conservancy, the County Environmental Sustainability Board, and the Maryland Geothermal Energy Commission.

He is the author of *The Chesapeake Watershed; A Sense of Place and A Call To Action* (Alan C. Hood & Company, 2009). For more information, see the book's website at www.thechesapeakewatershed.com.

Reception at Ripon Lodge – Thanks!

It seems like a lifetime ago, but we want to acknowledge and thank Cricket and Rusty Morgan for their hospitality at their home and farm, Ripon Lodge. The event was a fundraiser for PVAS to support our youth programs, and successfully raised \$5,694 thanks to the generosity of our members and friends.

June 5 looked like it was going to be a stormy day, so the lawn party quickly became an indoor reception, thanks to our generous hosts and flexible volunteers. The weather, though warm, cooperated in the end, and Rusty was able to explain the interesting history of the farm and house to his guests and lead a tour of their renovated bank barn that is being converted to a brewery for their own beer-making operation that will use hops and barley grown right there on the farm.

In keeping with the farm theme, homemade beef barbecue and wonderful other foods were served thanks to the talented and generous planning committee: Alice Barkus, Gretchen Meadows, Diana Mullis, Deb Patthoff, and Jane Vanderhook. Many thanks also go to the day's volunteers, Susan and Joe Brookreson, Jeff Feldman, Jennifer Jones, and our servers, Molly Briggs, Jesse Schmitt, and Anya Wallace.

July "Fresh Feast on the Farm" Dinner A Big Success

The July 17, "Fresh Feast on the Farm," dinner was a big success, with all but one of the available tickets sold.

In all, more than 50 people attended the event, which was held at Bill White Grantham's Meadow Green/Aqua Green Farm on Route 51 near Middleway in southern Jefferson County.

The Fresh Feast on the Farm program was launched by Jane Tabb, of Kearneysville, in 2008,



with the help of funds from the West Virginia Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Specialty Crop Block Grant Program.

The program is intended to help promote the local food movement and agritourism in Jefferson County. It provides unique dining experiences that highlight delicious, locally produced foods served in beautiful farm settings.

Ten percent of each event's gross revenues are donated to a local non-profit organization that partners to provide volunteer wait staff (on July 17, PVAS was the partner organization). The host farm also receives ten percent. The remaining proceeds cover event and program costs.

The next Fresh Feast dinner is set for October 2 at the historic York Hill farm on Ridge Road, near Shenandoah Junction. The H. Hart Bennett Foundation, Inc., will be the partner organization. Watch the program's website at www.freshfeastonthefarm.com for details. Or contact Jane Tabb at 304-725-4325 or Vinemont@frontiernet.net.

June Annual Meeting, Election, and Volunteer Recognition

The June 11 potluck at Yankauer was well attended and certainly no one left hungry! After the meal, Wayne Braunstein held Board elections where Leigh Jenkins, Mina Goodrich, and Jane Vanderhook were re-elected to the board and Kathy Stolzenburg and Jesse Morgan were elected as new board members. With the elections complete, outgoing Board members Nancy Kirschbaum (vice president) and Susan Brookreson (member at large) were recognized for their many contributions to PVAS over the years.

Outstanding volunteers received Kingfisher Awards, presented by Kristin Alexander, Ellen Murphy, and Carolyn Thomas. Recognition was given to the following volunteers for their "over and above" service to PVAS over the 2009-2010 fiscal year: Alice Barkus, Wayne Braunstein, Debbie and John Crouse, Mark Cuccuzella, Bob Dean, Clark Dixon, Jeff Feldman, Kelly Fike, Joe Gentile, Kelly Heldreth, Wil Hershberger, Krystal Kennedy, Nancy Little, Gretchen Meadows, Wanda Miller, Diana Mullis, James & Suzi Munnis, Tim Murphy, Matt Orsie, Deb Patthoff, Dan Ruane, Sandy Sagalkin, Tom Shantz, Gary & Diane Sylvester, Jane Vanderhook, Ted Wachter, and Rodney Woods. We send all of these amazing, generous people our heartfelt thanks!

Car Donation Raises Over \$1,500

PVAS occasionally is lucky enough to have a car donated to the organization. When this happens, PVAS works with WADE (Winchester Auto Dealers Exchange) in Bunker Hill, WV. WADE will pick up the car if necessary, clean it up and sell it at one of its auctions. About a week later PVAS receives a check from WADE for the car based on the sale of the car minus some fees charged by WADE for their service.

In June, a 1999 Toyota Camry was generously donated by Keith Alexander. WADE picked up the car and sold it at auction. PVAS received a check in July for \$1,512. We sincerely thank Keith and Eva for their generous donation!

If you have a vehicle you'd like to get rid of fairly easily and have the money go to a good cause, get in touch with Kristin Alexander at pvasmail@aol.com or 304-676-3397.

Accessible Trail Work Starts in September

The Cedar Loop upgrade to a wheelchair-accessible trail will begin in earnest in September. A SCA (Student Conservation Association) crew will be coming through in September to take out the stands of ailanthus along the trail. Doing this first will prevent potential damage to the trail caused by future ailanthus control. (Trees falling on trail, etc...)

The next day is the Day of Caring when volunteers will help clean up the fallen ailanthus and, if time allows, begin other trail work by digging out some stumps that are too close to the trail, leveling out some parts of the trail, etc...

Later in September, we plan to have a week with the WVCCC when the trail will actually be installed to bring it up to ADA compliance.

The trail is being constructed with funds from the Division of Highways Recreational Trails Program. PVAS received permission to proceed on the project almost a year ago, but with the severe winter weather and the resulting damage to the pavilion floor and cedar trees, our energies were required elsewhere. We're looking forward to getting started!

Student Conservation Conference at NCTC

PVAS and Friends of NCTC partnered to offer several partial scholarships for the Student Climate and Conservation Congress (SC3) that took place in June at NCTC. Jamie Huff of Bunker Hill, Zoe Levine of Shepherdstown, Emily Yarrington of Berkeley Springs, and Nico Hobbs of Shepherdstown were the lucky recipients.

The week-long experience was sponsored by the Green Schools Alliance and NCTC, and aims to get high school students actively engaged in "greening" their schools and community. Kristin Alexander was invited to be a cohort leader this year to participate and facilitate discussions and activities.

Speakers at this year's conference included writers such as Bob Pyle and Bill McKibben, scientists such as Dr. Sylvia Earle (oceanographer) and Mamie Parker (fisheries scientist), artists like Peter Essick (photographer for National Geographic) and Ian Cheney (Filmmaker – *King Corn*) and activist Rob Watson (founding father of LEED). In addition to having access to amazing speakers, students discussed readings and lectures in cohort groups, went rafting on the Shenandoah River, caught butterflies with Bob Pyle, and explored ways to green their schools and communities.

Approximately 100 student fellows from schools across the country gathered for the Summit's second year.

Shepherd University Day of Service

Shepherd University's annual Day of Service took place on August 11. The Day of Service is part of freshman orientation at Shepherd. The idea is to have students go out into the community in small groups to learn about the community and get to know each other. Seven incoming freshmen, one upperclassman, and one in-

structor chose to come to Yankauer and worked extremely hard!

The first order of business was to line the outside of the pavilion floor with pond liner to be sure we don't have freeze/thaw destruction of our floor ever again. The students dug a trench around the pavilion and lined the trench with pond liner up to the edge of the floor. The liner will also help direct water toward the rain garden.

We had a great day. The students worked hard and fast so by 11:30 we were done with that project which was anticipated to take the entire day! They sat down for a much-deserved lunch and went for a hike to the river to help see where students were in relation to the Potomac River and Shepherdstown.

Upon returning to the pavilion, students began to trim vegetation from the entrance to the parking lot that was interfering with visibility of the road. They also took out quite a bit of autumn olive and cleared the parking lot fence of vegetation so it's easier to see. By the time the pavilion area was cleaned up from the day's jobs, it was time to head back to Shepherd for an ice cream social.

Many thanks to the students and to the Office of Service Learning for arranging this wonderful Day of Service! The day always ends with a huge feeling of accomplishment.

Day of Caring Set for September 14

This year's Day of Caring will kick off with a 7:30 a.m. breakfast at War Memorial Park in Martinsburg. From 8:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m., join us at Yankauer Preserve to work on invasive removal (like ailanthus, autumn olive and stilt grass), clean up the butterfly garden, trim the trails and parking lot, and work on the accessible trail project. Lots of work AND fun to be had by all. We'll provide a delicious hot lunch (around 12) if you provide the labor!

After a hard day's work, enjoy dinner at the Clarion in Shepherdstown from 4:30-6 p.m. where you can celebrate a day of hard work for a good cause with fellow community members. To pre-register to help, contact Tim Murphy at 304-876-8133 or timurf@comcast.net.

Watch for "Growing Native" Events

PVAS is once again planning to partner with the Potomac Conservancy to hold Growing Native seed-collection events in the Eastern Panhandle this fall.

Plans remain to be finalized but we will likely host at our Eidolon and Yankauer nature preserves, and a seed-collection kiosk will be installed at the Yankauer preserve for those who cannot attend organized events but would like to help.

Watch your email and the PVAS web page for details.

The Growing Native seed collection program is aimed at improving water quality in the Potomac River. Each year, it musters thousands of volunteers throughout the Potomac River watershed to gather native tree seeds that are donated to state tree nurseries where they are nurtured into small tree seedlings. The seedlings are then planted along streams and rivers in the Potomac watershed to help restore forests that filter pollution and run-off.

Anyone is welcome to participate, and it's easy to do. At each event, a state forester is on hand to aid with tree identification and seed-collection bags are provided.

Since the program's inception in 2001, volunteers have collected more than 150,000 pounds of seeds and helped restore hardwood forests along nearly 800 miles of streamside land.

See the program's website at www.growingnative.org for more details.

Japanese Stiltgrass Fungus Disease Spreading Throughout Region

Release: 07/22/2010

The Hur Herald: http://www.hurherald.com/cgi-bin/db_scripts/articles?Action=user_view&db=articles_hurherald&id=40557

By Forester, Russ Richardson

The fungus disease killing Japanese stiltgrass, a locally common annual weed, has been rapidly spreading through the region giving some hope that the toxic plant might someday become a pesky ditch weed instead [of] the severe ecological threat it has developed into.

Japanese stiltgrass was introduced to the US over 90 years ago and the fungus killing local stiltgrass is the first time any disease has been identified that kills the weed.

The fungus, known as Bipolaris, that infects and kills Japanese stiltgrass (*Microstegium vimineum*) was first photographed locally in 2008 and identified by researchers in Maryland, Indiana and WVU as killing Japanese stiltgrass in 2009.



Infected stiltgrass ©Hur Herald Publishing

A scientific research paper announcing the discovery of the disease was published this month in the *Journal of Plant Disease*. In the paper, Crummies Creek Tree Farm and the Calhoun County, WV area has been recognized as one of the first places widespread presence of Bipolaris fungus was infecting and killing stiltgrass.



Calhoun County infestation ©Hur Herald Publishing

In mid June 2010, researchers from Indiana University confirmed that fresh samples of stiltgrass from Calhoun County were heavily infected with the fungus. The first signs of the disease in local stiltgrass appeared as small purple lesions on blades of young stiltgrass seedlings were spotted shortly after stiltgrass seeds started to germinate in early May.

It is still not known exactly how the disease got started, how it spreads or how it affects other types of vegetation.

Interest in the Bipolaris fungus has been very high and researchers from Indiana and the US Forest Service are expected to visit the area later in the summer to look more closely at the disease.

Excitement over the potential use of the disease to control stiltgrass invasions is very high with landowners, conservationists and forester managers from as far away as New York and Virginia requesting samples of locally diseased plants and old stiltgrass

thatch to see if they can get the disease started in infestations on their own property.

National Ban on Lead-based Ammunition and Fishing Tackle Sought

The notion that lead-based ammunition and fishing tackle is harmful to the environment has been around since before the turn of the millennium. Scientific research and anecdotal evidence has been mounting, and action is taking shape. Going back to early 2000, the U.S. Army announced its intentions to change to 'green' ammunition, i.e., lead-free, tin-based standard rounds. On October 11, 2009, the governor of California signed Assembly Bill AB 962 into law which bans the use of lead-based ammunition in the ranges of the California condor.

Now, on August 3, 2010, a petition to extend a ban on the use of lead-based ammunition and fishing tackle nationwide was presented to the Environmental Protection Agency. The petition is presented under the auspices of The Toxic Substances Control Act.

Sponsored by American Bird Conservancy, Association of Avian Veterinarians, Center for Biological Diversity, Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility, and Project Gutpile; the petition lays out the current research and evidence of impact on wildlife. The executive summary wraps it up with this explanation: "In recent decades the federal government has begun to implement regulations to reduce the exposure of human beings to lead in drinking water, paint, gasoline, toys, toxic dumps, lead wheel balancing weights, and both indoor and outdoor shooting ranges. Strict recycling regulations have been imposed on disposal of lead-acid batteries. However, spent lead ammunition and lost lead fishing tackle are uncontrolled and lead remains widely encountered and distributed in the environment from these sources. The continued availability of traditional lead bullets and shot exposes any animal that preys or scavenges on targeted wildlife to lead's toxic effects."

Not unexpectedly, the actions taken and remedies sought are not without controversy. The California bill is accused of doing an end around and trampling on Second Amendment rights. Sections of the law invoke controls on the availability and sale of ammunition and thus enter the realm of gun control. To many, its scope extends beyond the apparent threat to condors and gets into issues of animal rights vs. citizen rights. In short, it imposes constraints on the traditions and practices of sport fish and game enthusiasts that go to the heart of festering attitudes and arguments.

The petition currently before the EPA is simple on its face. Regulate the use of these sources of toxicity in our environment. Protect wildlife and human kind alike. To be expected, the controversies will take their courses with the particulars of the regulations.

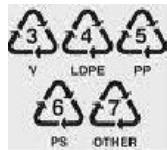
Acceptance of regulation that sticks to the issue at hand should be palatable to all. Non lead-based technologies have already been developed and implemented without sacrifice to quality or efficiency. Retailers of sporting equipment don't like the burdens of the California law (Cabela's in particular) but they aren't opposed to carrying products that add to their bottom line. Manufacturers don't seem to be phased by the petition because they have been introducing products that meet its stated intent over the course of recent years without sacrificing quality or performance. Speculation

of huge price increases of these items isn't an issue unless windfall opportunism comes to bear, which is not very likely in such a highly scrutinized situation.

To track developments and for more information, here is a list of Web sites that you may want to check out: American Bird Conservancy, <http://www.abcbirds.org/newsandreports/releases/100803.html>; Center for Biological Diversity, http://www.biological-diversity.org/news/press_releases/2010/lead-08-03-2010.html; and National Audubon Society (see Audubon Magazine, Project Gutpile), http://www.audubonmagazine.org/features0212/endangered_species.html.

Berkeley County Pilots Expanded Plastics Recycling

Plastic #3 - #7 Pilot Program Begins!!



The South Berkeley Recycling Center (SBRC) will host the county's first program for the collection of mixed plastic #3 through #7. This is a 6 month pilot program to test the public's interest and the economics associated with the collection of mixed plastic #3 through #7.

For the next 6 months only, any plastic container with a recycling symbol #3, #4, #5, #6 or #7 will be accepted at the SBRC. The plastic containers can be commingled together, placed in any plastic bag and deposited in the separate trailer marked for this collection. All plastic containers must be empty and clean of food material. Lids and caps do NOT need to be removed. Do not mix these items with the current collection of plastic #1, #2 or the plastic bag collection.

This pilot collection program will end January 31, 2011. Below is more data on the specific items acceptable.

Plastic #3 – Polyvinyl chloride (or vinyl)



Often used for window cleaners, detergent bottles, shampoo bottles, cooking oil bottles, and clear food packaging. Please look for the recycling symbol with the number 3.

Plastic #4 - Low density polyethylene



Often used for squeezable bottles and frozen food containers. Please look for the recycling symbol with the number 4.

Plastic #5 – Polypropylene



Often used for yogurt containers, syrup bottles, ketchup bottles and medicine bottles. Please look for the recycling symbol with the number 5.

Plastic #6 - Polystyrene



Often used for disposable plates, cups, meat trays, egg cartons, carry-out containers, aspirin bottles and compact disc cases. Please look for the recycling symbol with the number 6.

with the number 6.



Plastic #7 – Miscellaneous

Often used in three and five-gallon water bottles, sunglasses, DVDs, iPod, computer cases, signs and displays, certain food containers and nylon. Please look for the recycling symbol with the number 7.

For more information:

304-267-9370 Office

304-671-2925 Recycling Hotline

berkeleycountyswa@msn.com

www.berkeleycountyrecycling.com

Audubon Taps Noted Conservation and Communications Leader as New President

New York, NY - The National Audubon Society today announced that David Yarnold has been named its new President and Chief Executive Officer, giving new momentum to efforts to connect people with nature and their power to protect it. A passionate conservationist, Yarnold currently serves as Executive Director of [Environmental Defense Fund](#) and President of Environmental Defense Action Fund. Prior to that, he was a Pulitzer Prize-winning editor at the *San Jose Mercury News*....



Yarnold has been at EDF since April 2005, where he is responsible for all operations, from programs, to development and marketing/communications. He helped expand EDF's innovative corporate partnerships work, focused on EDF's international programs, particularly in China, and helped the organization grow from \$52M to \$117M in revenue. He is also President of the organization's Action Fund, its political action arm.

"Audubon's mission has never been more relevant. From the grassroots to state houses to national and regional policy, its wing-span is unparalleled," Yarnold said. "I'm excited by the opportunity to work with a nationwide network of Audubon Chapters and Audubon Centers that combine local concern, knowledge and action to equal conservation that makes a difference on a grand scale. It will be an honor to lead an organization whose name has meant 'trust' and 'conservation achievement' for more than a hundred years."

Yarnold's *San Jose Mercury News* was consistently ranked as one of America's 10 Best Newspapers. His paper was called, "America's Boldest Newspaper" by a panel of international judges. During his time in San Jose, the Mercury News was widely recognized for its commitment to diversity and for its in-depth coverage of technology. He was also one of three Pulitzer Prize finalists for editorial writing in 2005.

"For me, going to Audubon is like going home. Community-based education and action that breeds broader changes has always been engaging and rewarding for me and those are the things Audubon does best," Yarnold said.

He will assume the Presidency of Audubon on Sept 1.

In Memoriam – David Eldridge

Longtime PVAS member Dave Eldridge passed away June 1 after a valiant struggle with cancer. He died peacefully at home, surrounded by family. A memorial service was held June 12 at the Shepherdstown Presbyterian Church.

Our sincere condolences go out to his wife of 41 years, Mary Sue, and his two sons, David and Jonathan.

First as a Board member and then as a volunteer, Dave served as PVAS's membership chair for many years. As Audubon insiders know, this is one of the most difficult jobs to fill at any Audubon chapter. The work's not easy and there's nothing glamorous about it. But Dave thrived on it and he always carried out his duties faithfully, cheerfully and well.

We will miss his diligence, his kind spirit, and his good sense of humor.

Donations may be made to the David C. Eldridge Scholarship Fund via the Shepherd University Foundation, P.O. Box 5000, Shepherdstown, WV 25443.

Look for PVAS Display at Apple Butter Festival

PVAS will again have a display at this year's Apple Butter Festival in Berkeley Springs, so if you attend stop by and say hello.

The PVAS display will be located with the other conservation-related displays.

The Festival will be held October 9 & 10.

Calendar of Upcoming Events

(See www.potomacaudubon.org for updates!)

- Sep 7: "Music in the Cedars" Concert
- Sep 8: Chesapeake Bay program at NCTC
- Sep 11: Insect walk at Cacapon State Park
- Sep 11: Banding and Birding trip to Dolly Sods (possibly 9/12 also)
- Sep 11: Master Naturalist Workshop - Beavers
- Sep 11-12: Master Naturalist Workshop – Leave No Trace
- Sep 14: Day of Caring at Yankauer
- Sep 14: "Music in the Cedars" Concert
- Sep 16: Hawk-watching at Washington Monument State Park
- Sep 21: "Music in the Cedars" Concert
- Sep 24: Potomac Valley Nature Photographers Mtg.
- Sep 24-26: Berkeley Springs Fall Birding Festival
- Sep 28: "Music in the Cedars" Concert
- Oct 2: Freedom's Run
- Oct 3: Tour of Botanique carnivorous plant nursery
- Oct 7-10: Hawk-watching trip to Cape May, NJ
- Oct 9-10: Berkeley Springs Apple Butter Festival
- Oct 16: NCTC Open House
- Oct 22: Potomac Valley Nature Photographers Mtg.
- Nov 4-7: American Conservation Film Festival

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 C9ZY540Z)

Clip and mail this form to:

Membership Chair, PVAS
PO Box 578
Shepherdstown, WV 25443

Thank you for your support!



T 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 Dual membership or Local membership.



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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, 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 here 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.

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Emeritus Board Members

Jean Neely,jeaneneely@comcast.net

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PVAS Wildlife Rescue Coord: Diana Mullis.....304-267-3482