

Warrington Township Environmental Advisory Council Accomplishments (WEAC) 2009 and 2010

Adopt – A- Road

In 2009 the following roads were adopted: Georges Lane, by Mr. Ernie Montella, Sr.; Valley Square Road by Maggie Moo's Ice Cream; Herblew Road and Longview Roads by Ms. Jacqueline Koenig "Family of Wm J. Atkins"; Elbow Lane by the Rubin Family (Mrs. Lori Rubin); and Paul Valley Road by the Buxmont Unitarian Universalist Fellowship.

In 2010, three more roadways were adopted through this program. Mr. Ernie Montella, Jr., adopted Dapple Drive, Central Bucks South Environmental Club adopted Kelly Road between Bristol Road and Route 611, and Mr. Bob Williamson and the Men of Hidden Court have applied to adopt the Hidden Meadows Development. This application, which includes Hidden Court, Wheatsheaf Lane and Cobblestone East and West, is pending approval by the Board of Supervisors. This brings the number of adopted roadways to fourteen.

Bucks Beautiful Garden Fair

WEAC members created and staffed an exhibit at the 18th annual Bucks Beautiful Garden and Home Show on March 20-22, 2009. The exhibit showpiece was a working rain barrel. The booth was complimented by an exhibit depicting a Rain Garden the WEAC created in Igoe Porter Welings (IPW) Park, and an enviroscape model that attracted considerable interest. In addition, a pond frame was filled with plants and compost. Educational materials were also distributed. Brochures entitled "Five Easy Steps to Assemble a Rain Barrel", "Rain Garden" and "Little Neshaminy Watershed" along with Healthy Yard informational sheets were handed out to interested individuals. After all of the rain barrel brochures were distributed, the volunteers collected four (4) pages of e-mail addresses. Those on this list were sent e-mails that referred them to the WEAC's website to view an article on the "Five Easy Steps to Assemble a Rain Barrel".

Clean Energy Campaign

Over the past 2 years, over two hundred (200) residents and the Township began using Clean Wind Energy as a source of power. Because of these commitments, the Township successfully participated in the Pennsylvania Clean Energy Communities Campaign. As a result, the Township was awarded a solar panel worth \$10,000 that was installed on the Township building in November, 2009. The 1.0-kilowatt solar photovoltaic (PV) system was awarded by the Pennsylvania Clean Energy Communities Campaign. Smart Power presented the WEAC with a permanent sign congratulating the Township on fulfilling its commitment to Clean Energy. This sign is on permanent display at the Township building. The Pennsylvania Clean Energy Communities Campaign, includes TRF's Sustainable Development Fund, Smart Power (the Washington, D.C., nonprofit managing the campaign), Community Energy, PECO, the Clean Air Council, Warrington Township, 19 other communities in southeastern Pennsylvania and other organizations. The Campaign's website is <http://communities.trfund.com>.

Earth Day of Community Service

On April 18, 2009, the WEAC held its 8th annual Earth Day event at Twin Oaks Park. Over 150 people participated in the event. Food, plants and other supplies were donated by many local businesses. The participants cleaned litter from local roadways, from around the Bradford Dam, and from the parks. Many Girl Scout, Daisy, Brownie, and Boy Scout troops installed plants at IPW and Twin Oaks Parks and assisted in cleanups. Scout troops labeled storm drains and distributed pamphlets educating residents about protecting the watershed from non-point source pollution. The Central Bucks West German Honor Society built rain barrels and cleaned up trash. Nine (9) rain barrels built on Earth Day were given out to Warrington Township residents. The Central Bucks Environmental Club assisted master gardener, Karen Murphy, and members of the Buxmont Unitarian Fellowship in the installation of native plants in the detention basin located near the Buxmont Unitarian Fellowship along the Little Neshaminy Creek. The plants will aid in the filtration of storm water pollutants and help to ease flooding downstream. An interpretive educational sign was installed and dedicated at the rain garden, which was built at IPW Park in 2006. This sign explains how Rain Gardens work and their advantages. Fred Suffian, Chairperson of the Warrington Township Environmental Advisory Council, dedicated the new interpretive sign. The labor to install the sign was provided by the students from the Central Bucks German Honor Society.

On April 24, 2010, the WEAC held its 9th annual Earth Day event at Twin Oaks Park and at the Warrington Township building. Over 150 people participated. Once again, food, plants and other supplies were donated by local businesses. The day began at the Township building with a ribbon cutting ceremony for the solar panel which was installed on the Township building in November, 2009, as a result of the Township's successful Clean Energy Campaign. The Central Bucks South Environmental Group, under the direction of Master Gardener, Steve Johnson, planted the Detention Basin in front of the Township Building. The Guinea Lane Detention Basin was planted as well. These basins are part of the WEAC's Growing Greener Grant.

At Twin Oaks Park, thirteen (13) Rain Barrels were assembled, the Rain Garden was weeded and a trash clean up was completed by the Central Bucks German Honor Society. Flowers were planted in the Park by various Girl Scout, Brownie and Daisy Troops. A Cub Scout Troop completed a cleanup of the Bradford Dam. With the help of Americorps Vistas, as well as Boy Scout Troops and the Central Bucks German Honor Society, six neighborhoods were labeled with Storm Drains.

Another large project undertaken by the WEAC was the construction of a Butterfly Garden, located adjacent the Parks and Recreation building in IPW Park. This garden was prepared in advance of Earth Day by placing newspaper and coffee grounds in specified locations. Once the grass decomposed, the garden was ready for planting on Earth Day. Under the direction of Master Gardener Erica Rothstein, the proper plants and design were established. All of the perennials were donated. Local Girl Scout Troops planted these perennials, which will attract Butterflies and Hummingbirds to the garden. This Butterfly Garden is located adjacent to the WEAC's Rain Garden.

Growing Greener Grant-Naturalizing Detention Basins

In 2006, the WEAC applied and was awarded a grant for \$100,000 to retrofit two detention basins in Warrington Township. The intent of this project was to retrofit these basins and create naturalized basins through the use of selected native vegetation and micro-topography. The WEAC selected two sites for these basins. One is located in front of the Township building and the other along Guinea Lane. These basins, as designed by Land Studies Inc., will provide increased water quality treatment while maintaining peak flow controls. With increased detention time and storage, the basins should allow for stormwater infiltration which should reduce the sediment and nutrient load to the Little Neshaminy Creek. Increased stormwater infiltration from the retrofit will help to maintain basic stream function, preserve existing base flows, and improve water quality. These basins are also visually appealing. Warrington Township Public Works Staff did the construction activities, and the Central Bucks Environmental Club and the German Honor Society planted the basin during Earth Day, 2010.

Healthy Yards

As part of the Water Resources Education Network (WREN) grant from the League of Woman Voters, awarded to the WEAC, the following Healthy Yard actions were completed:

- Volunteers from The Buxmont Unitarian Fellowship, assisted by students from the Central Bucks South Environmental Club, planted a detention basin with native trees and shrubs on the Buxmont site.
- Development and installation of a weather resistant educational sign was installed at the Buxmont Unitarian Fellowship.
- Under an arrangement with MS Services, 25 homeowner "Healthy Yard" evaluations were completed for residents within Warrington Township.
- Eight elementary school classrooms in Warrington Township, Pennsylvania, participated in the Healthy Yards Poster Contest. Participating classes within these schools were introduced to the poster contest through a Healthy Yards educational presentation in January, 2009. This presentation was given by Americorps VISTA volunteers. The topics covered included storm water runoff, water pollution, and healthy yard maintenance. Following the Healthy Yards presentation, representatives introduced students to the "Healthy Yards Poster Contest" and its guidelines. The winning poster was created by Miss Sydney Leonard, a sixth grader at Mill Creek Elementary School. Miss Leonard was presented with an award and a \$25.00 gift certificate during the May 6, 2009, EAC meeting. Her poster was put on display in the Warrington Township building and was submitted to the LINK, the Township newsletter.

Rain Barrels

As part of a Water Resources Education Network (WREN) grant, the EAC procured materials and built rain barrels, which were distributed to township residents during Earth Day 2009 and 2010 at Twin Oaks Park. Because township residents expressed a continuing interest in rain barrels, the EAC purchased more materials and built more rain

barrels for Warrington Day, 2009 and 2010 which were held at Valley Square. A total of approximately 40 rain barrels were made and distributed in 2009. A total of approximately 30 rain barrels have been sold to date, in 2010.

As part of the Youth Service America, the WEAC applied for a grant entitled "Disney Friends for Change Grant." In March 2010; we were awarded a \$425.00 grant. This grant money is to be used to purchase rain barrels and supplies so that we may continue this program. The WEAC is offering rain barrels to the public, year round, at our cost of \$25.00 for each barrel and \$15.00 for each diverter.

Warrington's 275th Anniversary

The WEAC's booth at Valley Square was a busy place during Warrington's 275th Anniversary celebration on May 2, 2009. Displays at the WEAC's booth included the enviroscape, a working rain barrel, information on clean energy, and rain barrel construction. The kids loved the enviroscape and many were mesmerized by the water flowing into the rain barrel. Environmentally themed coloring books were given to the kids along with earth-related bracelets. The WEAC also gave away tote bags, energy related refrigerator magnets, and brochures. Eighteen full color posters of our Earth Day sponsors were on display.

Warrington Day 2009

Once again, the WEAC's booth at Valley Square on Warrington Day, September 12, 2009, was a very busy place, as it had been during the 275th Anniversary celebration. The large color posters of the Earth Day sponsors were highlighted along with a solar panel display, and a rain barrel complete with running water. The event was well attended and all the educational handouts, including literature about rain barrels and watershed maintenance, were distributed within the first few hours. The rain barrel assembly and the enviroscape demonstration, which drew in many interested people, continued throughout the day.

Summer Internships

In the summer of 2009, the WEAC retained a summer intern to perform a natural resource/tree inventory of the Township. All of the data the intern collected was incorporated into the Township's ARCview Geographic Information System (GIS) data system.

In the summer of 2010, student interns and community volunteers inventoried street trees and open space throughout the Township. The inventory is being entered into ARCview. In addition, these data can be integrated with other Township GIS data. The data collected includes tree height, diameter, species and condition. As of August 2010, approximately three neighborhoods containing over 900 trees have been identified.