



# WSWA Newsletter

Volume 3, Issue 1

## WSWA Awarded 3 Grants for 2014

WSWA submitted 3 grant applications in 2013 and was awarded all 3 of them, proving the written word is a mighty weapon, especially when Kate Lehman is wielding the pen. Kate wrote our two grants and was part of a team on the third.

The Greenway Cemetery, located above 522, contributes excess sedimentation into the Run due to uncontrolled stormwater runoff, disturbed land, and gravel & dirt roads. Consequently, the need to address the issues caused by the cemetery was a prime target for just the right grant. WSWA partnered with the Town of Bath and the Greenway Cemetery Board to submit a small watershed grant to the **National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF)** for improved stormwater management at Greenway. Green BMPs will mitigate erosion and runoff from the cemetery into the yards and parking lots of nearby residents and businesses as well as into Warm Springs Run. The objective of the grant is to store, treat and infiltrate stormwater through the use of rain gardens, planting more trees and improving conditions on the steep gravel roads in the cemetery.

Competition for NFWF grants is fierce so it required just the right teaming arrangement, excellent grant writing talent, and a unique application name to get noticed. Matthew Pennington from Region 9, Elizabeth Skinner, Town of Bath Council member who represented the Greenway Cemetery Board and Kate wrote the grant and called it **Pushing Up Daisies**. It was a winner from the start. The \$50,000 grant was awarded on October 9<sup>th</sup> and will be administered by the Town of Bath.

In October we were also awarded a \$3,000.00 grant by the **Two Rivers Giving Circle** to erect educational kiosks in the area of the Widmyer wetlands. We have reported on the progress of WSWA and Eastern Panhandle Conservation District efforts throughout 2013 to transform public attitudes surrounding the wetlands near the Widmyer Elementary School and the high school track.

To help reinforce the importance of the wetlands, WSWA needed funds for two additional educational kiosks to augment the four kiosks that EPCD had funding to procure. The expectation is that the kiosks can educate people on the historic nature of wetlands, how wetlands help control stormwater runoff, and their importance to native flora and fauna. The Two Rivers Giving Circle operates as a donor-advised fund of the Eastern WV Community Foundation and focuses on conservation and historic preservation.

The third and final grant awarded to WSWA was a **Stream Partners Grant** awarded on November 20<sup>th</sup> by the WVDEP, WVDNR, WV Division of Forestry, and WV Conservation District. The \$5,000.00 grant will be used to plant trees so to improve the riparian buffer on 3 adjacent lots of privately owned land south of Morgan Square. The funds will also be used to erect 6 36'x48' signs on either side of 522 near our tree planting to illustrate the importance of trees in helping to control flooding. Lastly, WSWA will use the funds to hire a graphic artist to design WSWA t-shirts and a new logo to help make the Run and our watershed association more visible to the public.



Kate Lehman, Mayor Susan Webster and Matt Pennington receiving NFWF grant.

## Quarterly Highlights

-  **Post Gasoline Spill Update** – Norman Dean reported that the post-gasoline spill monitoring conducted at 3 sites on November 4th showed disappointing results. Our control site, located just south of Earth Dog Café, was much worse than last monitored in 2012. While there is no way to prove it, Norman believes that the dredging done upstream in November of 2012 just after we established this area as a control site had a negative impact. The Earth Dog site is now the same as the area affected by the gasoline spill. While the site just behind Coldwell Banker shows minimal improvement, the Yellow Run site is much worse. Norman recommended that we do testing at Widmyer early in 2014. If conditions there are unchanged we will have more proof that the problems at Earth Dog are caused by the dredging at the high school (see Newsletter Jan-Mar 2013 for details).
-  **Town of Bath Communi-tree planting** - On November 5th, WSWA members, town workers, Council members and Master Gardeners helped to plant 24 shrubs around Town Hall.
-  **QAPP Progress** - On December 12, Stan Oaks and Kate Lehman traveled to Cacapon Institute to meet with Neil Gillies, Frank Rodgers and Tim Craddock to finalize the Quality Assurance Project Plan for monitoring fecal coliform bacteria in the Run. We are awaiting approval of the plan from various agencies, including the EPA. Because our QAPP is modeled on that approved for SCWA's program to monitor fecal coliform bacteria, we anticipate approval for our plan, too. Whether or not to craft a QAPP for monitoring for sediment in the Run is currently under consideration by the Board of Directors.
-  **Facebook Users Up** – Tyler Orr reported that the number of Facebook users is up, although the number of “likes” is down. The initial purpose of the FB page was to direct more people to the WSWA website. While that goal was not initially realized, there are now “teasers” in the FB page that direct people to the website. Website hits were up 40% in November 2013 and up 240% compared to 2012. Thanks to Tyler for his efforts at keeping us technically relevant.

## President's Perspective *by Kate Lehman*

The Warm Springs Watershed Association has been remarkably successful in obtaining grants to help us achieve our mission of protecting, restoring and preserving the Run. In the process, something equally important has happened: we have formed vital partnerships with other groups that are also concerned with the health and well-being of our streams, rivers, bays and oceans.

For example: WSWA is a member of West Virginia Rivers Coalition, whose goals are to safeguard water quality, reduce industrial pollution, protect headwaters, keep medicine out of our waters, and advocate clean water policy on a state and national level. WVRC was one of the major voices to address the recent industrial chemical spill into the Elk River. In the week following the spill, WVRC staff worked directly with lawmakers to ensure that proposals emerging from the legislature create real change. In my experience, this is work that is too large for WSWA members to tackle in isolation: we need WVRC, and they need us.

Closer to home, WSWA has partnered with regional, town and county officials as well as with civic organizations such as Streetscapes, the Chamber of Commerce and others to apply for a large grant designed to further green streets, green jobs and green towns in Morgan County. Any project funded by a grant of this magnitude would be a daunting challenge for a group of volunteers such as WSWA to complete. However, as a partner we can do our part.

Forming partnerships to improve county, state and national waterways has an additional and crucial value: by working together we are reminded of the central message of any form of environmental work. We are all part of an interdependent web of existence: everything anyone does makes a difference – for good or ill – everywhere throughout the web. While our individual efforts make a difference, together we can do so much more.

There is much work before WSWA members in the coming year. It is good to know that we have many partners to help us achieve our mission.

---

## Watershed Celebration Day

The 15<sup>th</sup> annual Watershed Celebration Day took place on November 2, 2013, at the Cacapon State Park Lodge. Watersheds from all over the state attended to hear presentations from various watershed groups, to have a fine lunch, and to witness the recognition of the hard work of the state watershed associations. Jennifer Pauer and the Regional Coordinators presented awards to 9 watersheds and one individual. Tim Craddock, Director of the WVDEP Nonpoint Source Program, presented the WSWA with the Margaret Meade Award. The award comes with praise for our efforts and a check for \$100!

Though we did not win watershed of the year for a second year, a fellow Eastern Panhandle group did keep the honor close to home. The Opequon Creek Project Team took home the coveted award.

Both Kate and Tyler Orr made presentations at the banquet. Kate spoke about the value of our Comprehensive Plan in helping to establish priorities for our work. Tyler gave a well received presentation on social networking and efforts made to increase awareness of our association through social media.

The day completed with tours of projects competed in the Warm Springs and Sleepy Creek watersheds.

### Margaret Meade Award

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed people can change the world. **Warm Springs Run Watershed Association** like no other epitomizes this through their partnerships, activities and accomplishments with citizens, civic groups, local, regional, state and federal governments. Using all these partners and many more the group promotes and works towards their goals; help people understand, protect, improve and enjoy their Run.



WSWA receiving \$100 check for Margaret Meade Award.

---

## Invasive Plants Conference

On December 3<sup>rd</sup>, the Potomac Watershed Partnership (PWP) sponsored an information exchange in Front Royal, VA, on Invasive Species: Successful Efforts & Promising Research. Morgan County residents concerned about invasive species made up a good percentage of the participants at this conference. PWP is a collaborative effort among federal, state and local partners to restore the health of the land and waters of the Potomac River Basin, thereby enhancing the quality of life and overall health of the Chesapeake Bay.

Speakers addressed various innovative methods to manage invasive pests, ranging from aerial surveying and monitoring, to using goats in targeted areas, to training a large cadre of volunteers to work in public lands. On a more systemic level, one speaker addressed the process by which Maryland has enacted a law banning the sale of ornamental plants that are known to be invasive. What became a law was conceived by an elementary school child who wondered why nurseries are still allowed to sell such plants to gardeners. Copies of the presentations can be found at [www.potomacpartnership.org](http://www.potomacpartnership.org).

### Calendar of Events

- February 5 Combined Jan/Feb Board of Directors Meeting, 5:00pm Extension Office
- February 26 Jan/Feb Board of Directors Meeting, 5:00pm Extension Office (SNOW DATE)
- March 26 March Board of Directors Meeting, 5:00pm Extension Office

### Annual Meeting

Wednesday, April 23<sup>rd</sup>, at 7:00pm at the Board of Education headquarters.

Refreshments will be served so please come join us for this important meeting. January meeting

The \$10 WSWA membership dues run the calendar year and are now due. It is important to maintain your membership, as it entitles you to vote at the annual meeting. Please give your check/cash to Andy Swaim, Treasurer, either in person or send to: WSWA, P.O.Box 757, Berkeley Springs, WV 25411.

**The Board of Directors generally meets every 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the month at 5:00pm at the Extension Office. All members are urged to attend and participate.**

**It is a good idea to check Facebook for any changes in date, time or location!**

#### *WSWA Officers and Board Members*

- President: Kate Lehman 304-279-0717.....goldfairy39@gmail.com
- Vice President: Betty Harmison.....304-258-1088
- Secretary: Susan Jones.304-258-6122.....wvbagend@frontier.com
- Treasurer: Andy Swaim .....304-258-0418
- Norman Dean.....deannorm@frontier.com
- Stacy Dugan.....sdugan@stacydugan.org
- Larry Lower.....larrylower@yahoo.com
- Rebecca MacLeod.....pendle35@gmail.com
- Carol Reece.....rocky2@earthlink.net