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 Issue 2



Safe Drinking Water Seminar- November 8 - Joyce Laudise

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What Do You Expect.....

...when you turn on the tap in the kitchen or bathroom? Most of us expect clean safe water. Because we all depend on private wells we must test our wells periodically to ensure the water is clean and safe. Learn what to test for and how to test by attending the **SAFE DRINKING WATER SEMINAR** on Saturday, November 8 from 10 AM to 12 noon at the Shohola Township Building on Twin Lakes Road. Water testing through Prosser Labs will be available.

The program is sponsored by the Twin/Walker Creeks Watershed Conservancy and Penn State Extension in Pike County. Davis Chant Realtors has graciously underwritten the cost of the program but pre-registration is required to ensure there are enough handouts and snacks. Please call 570 296 3400 for more information or to register.

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2008 Water Monitoring— Joyce Laudise



On Saturday, June 29 Kirk Mackey hosted a meeting of volunteers. Sixteen people attended. The attendees included Ralph & Linda Cioppa, Chet & Pat Dawson, John Gorka, Joyce Laudise, Peter & Alice Jane Loewrigkeit, Yoshiaki & Shirley Masuo, Tom Murante, Harold & Nancy Needham, Bill Satterlee and Gayle Schuster. Brian Oram from the Consortium for Scientific Assistance to Watersheds (C-Saw) explained his role as a watershed advisor. He demonstrated how to use the monitor-

ing equipment and suggested the lakes be monitored twice monthly rather than once a month. Under Kirk's direction the volunteers worked hard through September collecting water samples and data that Bill Andrews delivered to F X Browne in Marshalls Creek.

Using the information collected F X Browne will send their report on lake water quality by November 8. Pat Dawson has put all the data into Excel. Brian enlisted a research team from Wilkes University. These students studied the watershed. They located areas of heavy rain runoff, drainage obstructions and damage caused by water during storm events. Twenty six problem areas were documented and field located. The team will visit again in late fall prior to summarizing their work. **Learning the ropes from l to r are volunteers John Gorka, Brian Oram, instructor, Bill Satterlee, Harold Needham, Pat Dawson & Bob Watson.**

The mission of the Conservancy is to promote a better understanding of the Twin/Walker Creeks Watershed and its ecosystems and to protect, restore and enhance the watershed through proper management and watershed stewardship.

President's Message - Joyce Laudise

The following is a summary of the activities of the Watershed Conservancy since the general meeting in June.

1. The Conservancy board accepted the engineering design from Kiley Associates for a plan to reduce stormwater runoff into Walker Lake from Maple Dr by Pond Dr. The work included applying for and receiving the necessary permit applications. The total cost for the design was \$9222 with \$7900 paid through a private foundation grant. The cost to the Conservancy was \$1322. Paul Palladino chairs a committee that includes members of Walker Lake Landowners Assoc. The purpose of the committee is to inform nearby residents, seek funding and engage contractors. The project is divided into phases. The committee will tackle one phase at a time.
2. As previously mentioned Kirk Mackey enlisted 16 volunteers to help with monitoring the 3 lakes.
3. The Conservancy board and members actively opposed Route A for the PPL Transmission Line upgrade out of concern for the degradation of the high quality streams and natural habitats in the watershed. We sent letters, noted our concerns on the Conservancy's website and attended meetings. We thank everyone who wrote letters on their own and posted signs on their property. Route B was finally chosen. This route will not impact our watershed and will have less of an environmental impact overall.
4. Rich Schuster and Pat Messineo contact by a welcoming letter new landowners in the watershed to inform them of the work the Conservancy does. Ten letters have been sent out since June. When new residents attend a general meeting they are given a package that contains the PCCD booklet PIKE COUNTY: Where People, Land and Water Meet plus information on septic systems and their maintenance.
5. The Conservancy president attended an informational meeting on a new natural gas pipeline that will be built alongside the current 50 year old one that traverses the watershed. Tennessee Pipeline Co is seeking to add 100 ft to the present 50 ft right of way making as much as a 150 ft swath through the 7.7 mi that the current pipeline travels through Shohola. There are many environmental concerns. The Conservancy will work with and support the Pike County Conservation District and Shohola Township as they strive to protect residents and the environment from harm.
6. There are several privately owned large parcels of land in the watershed that may be leased for natural gas exploration and extraction. The Conservancy aims to publicize the need to prevent environmental damage during the process of exploring and extracting. The biggest concern is the impact of drilling on drinking water. The wells of involved landowners are of immediate concern but so are other wells because the ground water is tapped by all residents. See related article.

Of the 6 activities mentioned only number 3 can be checked off as completed. The others are ongoing. We ask that residents renew their membership and support us by being as active as possible in these activities. We appreciate the financial and in-kind support of the Twin Lakes Property Owners Assoc, the Walker Lake Landowners Assoc and Sagamore Estates. We look forward to seeing you on November 8 at 10 am at the Shohola Township building located at 159 Twin Lakes Rd.

It's very pretty but..... Irene DeVito

should it really be growing there? During a recent workshop held in Wayne County, staff of the Pike and Wayne County Conservation Districts and the National Park Service focused their attention on the non native invasive plant known as Japanese knotweed (*Polygonum cuspidatum*). A plant that was introduced for ornamental use in the 1800's has grown to be an especially knotty problem particularly along riverbanks creating encumbered river access, pavement damage, reduced natural biodiversity, soil erosion and bank instability, which leads to flooding. Unfortunately, control of this plant has proved to be difficult and expensive. The plant is recognized by its hollow, bamboo like stems that can reach to nine feet in height. Knotweed stems are annual, dying back to their rhizomes each year with new shoots emerging in April, growing rapidly, sometimes as much as 3 to 4 inches daily. The dark green leaves alternate on the stem; they are about 4 to 6 inches long and almost as wide with squared off bases, narrowing to a pointed tip. The numerous flowers are small, greenish white ones appearing in late summer. The spread of this plant occurs in 2 ways; fragmented rhizomes can become new plants in very little time and the seeds are easily dispersed on wind and water. Great care must be taken in any effort to rid property of the aggressive pest. Cutting is one method but must be done very carefully. It is almost impossible to attain success with this method because of the difficulty of removing all the rhizomes. Repeated cutting, however, can reduce the vigor of a plant-at least three cuttings are necessary to ensure that there is no new growth. If there is, then the process should begin again. Cov-

ering and shading the stand is another method that has been somewhat successful; after cutting, the area is covered with plastic (clear plastic is best for this purpose) that is tightly secured. After a time, this should kill the rhizomes. The final method is the use of an herbicide; this method is controversial because of the possibility of damaging other living things in the area.

Local, state, the federal government and their various agencies must make expensive decisions regarding removing the weed from roadsides and publicly owned riverbanks. Education of work crews is important because if they are working on a roadside or riverbank for another reason and come across a stand of knotweed, necessary efforts to remove it, might make the problem worse because of the tenacious growth habit through the rhizome. The rhizomes have to be completely removed or the problem will return, possibly destroying pavement, causing erosion and reducing sight line work already done.

If private owners find knotweed on their property the decision making process has to begin – are they satisfied with its location, will it spread to other nearby private and public properties (most probably), is it destroying the ability of native animal and bird species to find habitat and food, thereby stressing them, will it create problems for the buildings on the property and will it cause erosion. All of these factors must be taken into consideration. If the property owner does decide to begin the removal process, he/she would be wise to educate themselves further than this article can provide. There are many informational fact sheets and pamphlets available. You may contact Nick Spinelli at the Pike County Conservation District for further information. His phone number is 570 226 8220 and his email is nspinelli@pikepa.org.

Oh, by the way and unfortunately deer don't eat it. I would like to see if there is a way we can encourage them to consume it – could there be a product out there that could do that – Deer Delicious? Probably not, we are on our own with no help from the ravager of almost every other plant we want to use.

Natural Gas Leasing - Peter Wulfhorst

If you are a resident of Pike County, you might have heard about the “Marcellus Shale”. This geologic formation that underlies Pike County has attracted natural gas companies because of higher energy prices and new drilling technologies that could recover significant supplies of natural gas. All of the talk and activity surrounding natural gas reserves in Pennsylvania can be exciting as well as confusing for landowners. Penn State Cooperative Extension has been conducting natural gas educational programs as well as developing facts sheets to try and lessen the confusion. Several Penn State Cooperative Extension fact sheets include *Gas Well Drilling and Your Private Water Supply* and *Natural Gas Exploration: A Landowner's Guide to Leasing Land in Pennsylvania*.

Gas Well Drilling and Your Private Water Supply – Gas well drilling can occasionally impact groundwater resources that provide water for many residents of Pennsylvania. A single gas well can produce hundreds of thousands of gallons of waste fluids during drilling and during years of gas production. Landowners need to know what they can do to protect their groundwater from gas well activity.

A Landowner's Guide to Leasing Land in Pennsylvania – This guide is meant to be a tool for property owners, covering the basics of what you need to know, answering some common questions about natural gas exploration in Pennsylvania and directing you where to go for further information. The guide outlines what the gas resource is, how and why landowners are likely to be contacted, how a gas lease works, and what to consider when making decisions about gas leasing.

The Extension Service will be sponsoring educational programs on gas leasing. For more information about the programs or to get copies of these publications just call the Pike County Cooperative Extension office at 570 296 3400 or visit the Conservancy's website at www.twcwc.com and look under “Other Resources”.

It's Election Time! Joe Messineo, the chair of the Nominating Committee, announced the slate of officers for the next 2 years. They include President, Ralph Cioppa, President Elect, Paul Palladino, Secretary, Pat Messineo and Treasurer, Linda Cioppa. Election of officers will take place at the Nov 8 meeting. Shirley Masuo is the newest member of the Watershed

**Twin & Walker Creeks
Watershed Conservancy**

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*Next Meeting 10 am—
November 8, 2008 at the Shohola
Township Building*

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2008 CONSERVANCY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

I am concerned with the future quality and quantity of the water resources in our neighborhood and would like to support the conservation efforts of the Twin/Walker Creeks Watershed Conservancy through a yearly membership.

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____ City _____

State _____ Zip _____ Email _____

I am interested in learning more about volunteer monitoring efforts

Check type of membership

Senior/Student—\$5.00

Individual— \$10.00

Family— \$15.00

Corporate— \$40.00

In support of the Conservancy's efforts, I would like to provide an additional gift in the amount of
\$ _____ Total Enclosed _____

Mail this form with check payable to:

**Twin/Walker Creeks Watershed Conservancy
132 East Shore Road
Shohola, PA 18458**

