



West Virginia YOUTH Environmental Program



Fall 2021

WV Department of Environmental Protection

STRIKE A POSE!

ReFashion Show: a fun way to recycle

By Tom Alulse

From the recycling bin to the sewing machine. It's not the typical path recyclables take — unless, of course, a ReFashion Show outfit is the end product.

From newspapers to water bottles. From soda cans to cardboard boxes. And from repurposed VHS tape to Venetian blinds, just about anything goes on the ReFashion Show runway, where amateur designers and models give new, glittery life to materials otherwise destined for the landfill.

"It makes people think about recycling in a non-traditional way," said Carol Throckmorton, touching

on the benefits of the show.

Throckmorton, of the West Virginia Solid Waste Management Board, is the longtime MC of the ReFashion Show, which is scheduled to make its 19th run at 1 p.m. on November 20 at the Huntington Mall. It will be the show's debut at a venue outside of Charleston.

"I think taking the show to a different county will expose it to a new audience and generate excitement for possible future contestants," Throckmorton said.

Sponsored by the Recycling Coalition of West Virginia, the ReFashion Show is open to any age and

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Refashion Show outfits bring out true creativity in the models and designers.



Message from the director . . . we're stronger than ever

DURING a recent lunch date with Diana Haid, my predecessor as director of the Youth Environmental Program, we were reflecting on the pandemic's devastating impacts on so many things, including the YEP.

We both shook our heads in agreement that neither of us could have ever imagined two years' worth of YEP events — our most popular get-togethers, in fact — would be wiped from the slate.

But here we are today: Youth Environmental Day, state Junior Conservation Camp and now the Youth Environmental Conference, all canceled in both 2020 and 2021, victims of safety concerns created by the pandemic.



Annette Hoskins
YEP Director

The YEP has adjusted like everyone else, going to virtual offerings for our members and we plan to continue down that path, with the hope it won't be for much longer. Right now, we are working toward a virtual platform for the upcoming Youth Conference, which had been scheduled for Oct. 1-3 at Capon Resort State Park. We were excited about the conference's stop in the Eastern Panhandle.

Granted, virtual events are better than no

events. But myself, as well as the program's coordinators, thrive on face-to-face interaction with YEP members. We've developed close and productive working relationships with many of you over the years and those relationships are fostered best through in-person activities like Youth Day and the Youth Conference, as well as visits to your clubs, schools and troops.

One day, we'll return to the way it's supposed to be. Until then, don't worry. The YEP isn't going anywhere. If anything, the pandemic has made us stronger, as we've maneuvered through endless uncertainties and challenges, while searching for — and finding — new ways to connect with you.



Find us on Facebook at:
www.facebook.com/depwv

YEP News

WV Youth Environmental Program
601 57th St. S.E., Charleston WV 25304

News from the YEP districts

District 2

Susan Parker
District Coordinator



THE North Fork 4-H Club recently made a pledge to become a more environmentally friendly club and has successfully done just that, collecting more than 3,000 pounds of recycling.

The club (pictured) not only has involved schools in its recycling efforts, but has conducted four community recycling drives within Pendleton County.

It has recycled office paper, magazines, newspaper, cardboard, plastics Nos. 1 and 2 and aluminum and tin cans.

Collection days are a club effort with members and parents all pitching in to help. The materials collected are taken to the North Fork Recycling Center in Franklin to be recycled.



The Hampshire County Arts and Music Festival was conducted on September 11 in Romney and the YEP program was proudly represented by the Croucher family. The Croucher kids, Victoria and J.D., led the Kids' Art Tent. Kids upcycled items to make finger puppets and decorative dis-



plays.

The Crouchers recently started their own business, RDSWV, which stands for "Recycle, Discover, Support West Virginia." Their business location, for now, is a thrift store supported by community donations. They offer recycling bins for the community to drop off newspaper, cardboard, aluminum cans and plastic shopping bags. Check out their website <https://rdsww.com/> to learn more about their expanding projects.

Youth Contest offering cash

Trying to earn some extra money for your club, school or troop? One easy way is to encourage your members/students to enter the annual Recycling Coalition of West Virginia Youth Contest.

The contest is for all ages and prize money is awarded in five different age groups: grades K-1, 2-3, 4-6, 7-8 and 9-12.

For the grades K-1 and 2-3 age groups, there is coloring/cutting activity that not only tests a student's coloring abilities, but also their knowledge of composting and recycling. The winner in each age group will receive \$25, while \$75 will go to that winner's school, troop or club.

For the three older age groups, students are asked to create something related to recycling. They can draw a picture, write a poem, compose or sing a song, make a short video, write an essay or mold a sculpture. The three winners in these age categories will each receive \$75. Their schools, troops or clubs will be awarded \$100.

The deadline to submit entries for the Youth Contest is November 30.

For more information about the contest, visit www.wvrecycles.com.

District 3

Beth Henry-Vance
District Coordinator



NOT all classrooms have four walls.

That's the theme of a new program called Adventure Pocahontas, where students are learning skills such as kayaking, skiing, hiking and biking. They also get to explore top-notch parks, trails and forests in their own backyard.

The program's founder, Tracey Valach, said she is thrilled that Pocahontas County Schools approved the curriculum for the 2021-2022 school year. She hopes the program, which is part of an organization called Nature's Mountain Classroom, will spread to other counties in coming years.

"I'm super excited to see the impact ... to watch it grow," Valach said, explaining she wants local kids to experience nature and the outdoor activities that West Virginia is known for.

Grades two through five are participating from all Pocahontas



County elementary schools, and each grade has a separate focus one day a week for four weeks.

Fourth-graders are learning how to kayak. They also are learning about watersheds, the water cycle and aquatic insects.

Their first stop was the lake at Watoga State Park, where Valach said one student called it "the best day of her life."

Fifth-graders will focus on mountain biking skills this fall. Second-graders will learn how to ski at Snowshoe Resort this winter, and third-graders will hike a variety of trails and learn Leave No Trace principles this spring.

District 4

Sara Prior
District Coordinator



ARE you located in Raleigh County (supplies might be available for other counties) and looking for outside-of-the-box activities for a youth group or class to learn about the environment?

If so, Tiffany Ward with West Virginia State University 4-H has the perfect solution.

I had the privilege to team up with her for a drive-by Earth Day event in 2020 (see Earth Day kit in photo). Since then, we have worked on several projects together with many more in the works.

I enjoy working with her because she is very passionate about her job.

She sees so much opportunity in West Virginia, Ward knows that "our youth set the future, but first they have to see a future in West Virginia."

She feels that if students can connect to the Earth and learn in non-traditional settings or tech-



niques, it could be the spark that inspires them.

Tiffany and her team created curriculum with supplies that can be borrowed and used by a teacher or youth group leader.

A group can learn in detail about trees, mammals, pollinator gardens, water quality, and much more.

She's also available to do presentations for groups. If you would like information, please contact Tiffany at: tiffany.ward@wvstateu.edu.

District 5

Tom Aluise
District Coordinator



IT'S safe to say this dynamic duo delivers a powerful one-two punch toward environmental stewardship in Boone County.



Miller



Bias

And they have the hardware to prove it.

Bobby Miller is an instructor for the Adventure Tourism Management Program at the Boone Career and Technical Center and the latest recipient of REAP's Make It Shine Environmental Teacher of the Year Award for the high school level.

Lilly Bias, a 2021 graduate of Scott High School, is the YEP's Vecellio Scholarship winner, an honor worth \$10,000 toward her college future.

Miller's students at BCTC are litter-collecting warriors. Over

the past seven years, they have completed 15 significant cleanups in southern West Virginia. One area of Miller's focus is the Little Coal River, where his inspired students routinely collect trash and tires.

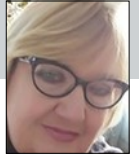
Bias has participated in many of Miller's cleanups and goes above and beyond in her quest to make her home county more attractive for those who live there and visit.

On her own, Bias recruited family members and employees from the city of Madison to clean up a troublesome section of the Little Coal. Because of her efforts, a large haul of trash and tires was removed from the river, making that section more pleasant and easier to navigate.

Miller said Bias "has an ability to take on causes that can change perceptions and amount to positive changes in our community for the larger good."

District 6

Debbie Florence
District Coordinator



IN the early morning hours of December 27, 2020, staff and board members of the Ritchie County Solid Waste Authority awoke to the news that their recycling center was engulfed in flames.

Community firefighters valiantly fought the blaze, but in the end, the main building was a complete loss. Before the fire, the center accepted 23 different recyclables. So, for a community of avid recyclers, it was a devastating loss.

But some didn't miss a beat, thanks to help from some friendly neighbors, including the Pleasants County Solid Waste Authority and the City of Parkersburg.

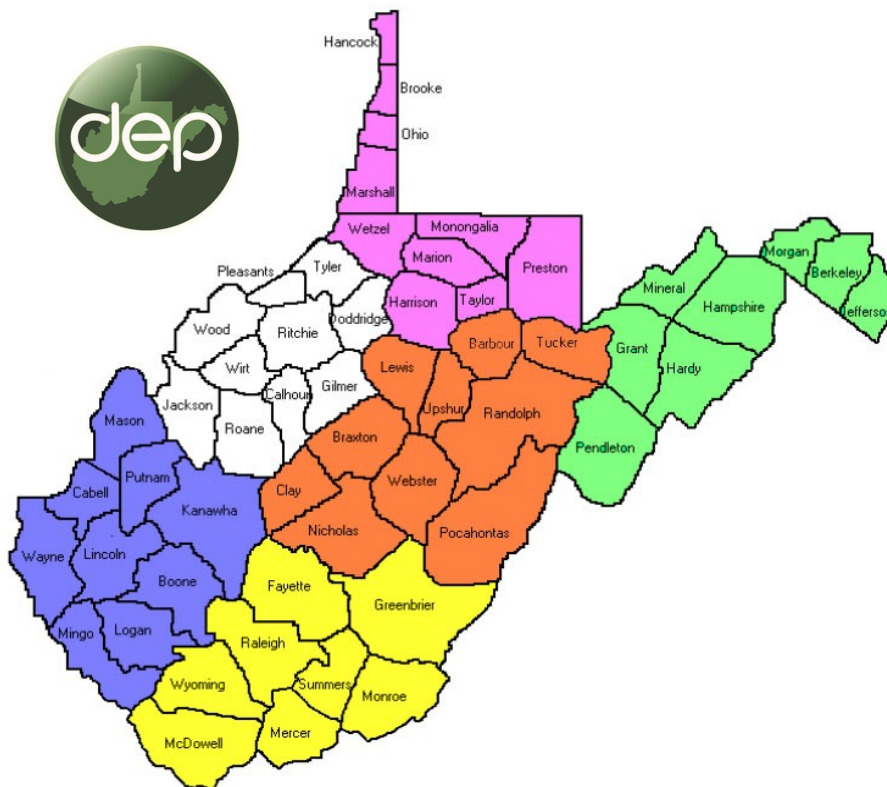
Both were quick to lend a hand to support Ritchie County and provided alternate drop-off points for recyclables. Determined to continue recycling, the Highland School Hawks Conservation Club, led by president Eowyn McCutchan (pictured), arranged for Pleasants County to accept the bulk of their recyclables, arranged



for Parkersburg to accept their glass, then regularly traveled the extra distance to both locations.

The Ritchie County Solid Waste Authority is currently working on plans to rebuild.

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Spotlight on.



Highland Adventist School

Location: Randolph County

Number of members: 40

Students at this school spend lots of time outdoors year-round and participate in several environmental education projects. The school received a rain barrel from a special Department of Environmental Protection watershed project last year, and students have put the rain barrel to good use in their greenhouse. They also hike along the Allegheny Highlands Trail nearly every day, pick up litter, go camping, learn outdoor skills and focus on service.

Calendar of Events

September 18 — Great Kanawha River Cleanup.

September 25 — Adopt-A-Highway Fall Cleanup.

October 17-19 — REAP/Association of West Virginia Solid Waste Authorities Conference, Glade Springs Resort.

October 28-30 — West Virginia Science Teachers Association Conference, Stonewall Jackson Resort.

November 15 — West Virginia Recycles Day.

November 20 — Re-Fashion Show, sponsored by Recycling Coalition of WV, Huntington Mall.

November 30 — Recycling Coalition of WV Youth Contest deadline.

** For more information about Make It Shine and Adopt-A-Highway events, call: 1-800-322-5530.*

SHOW

Continued from Page 1

typically draws 25 to 30 models from throughout West Virginia. The show has had as many as 60 contestants. Last year's event was conducted virtually because of the COVID pandemic.

The ReFashion Show was inspired by an episode of the Bravo Network's Project Runway, where models were sent to a recycling facility and tasked with turning trash into fashion.

Paul Hayes, chairman of the Recycling Coalition, said participating in the ReFashion Show gives models and designers a new outlook on the way we manage our waste.

"I think they gain many new perspectives," Hayes said. "One is how long it takes to collect enough materials to complete one garment. It illustrates the need for quality of materials collected."

Hayes added, "As a recycling advocacy organization, our goal is not to change what people know, think, believe or feel. It is to

change what people do. If people make purchasing decisions based on what we can recycle or reuse, we have changed what people are doing."

The ReFashion Show has regulars who'll compete multiple times.

"A large part of its success can be attributed to the models who come back year after year," Throckmorton said. "They make it fun and, without their constant support, it would not be as successful."

Brooke, Ritchie and Roane counties typically send models to the show.

"Seeing contestants return is always exciting," Hayes said. "Over the years, we see how designers broaden their reuse of something. They seem to refine their creative ways."

"On their first entry, we might see shower curtains transformed into a beautiful gown. But the next year, the shower curtain rings might be used and an old loofah sponge as well."

As far as favorite outfits over the years, Hayes said many come to mind.

"One of the most beautiful dresses was designed and modeled by Lauren Fritz from

Brooke County High School," Hayes said. "The dress used 1,247 water bottles collected from football games, including 253 water bottle labels used on top of reused crinoline."

Hayes also was impressed by a dress made from peacock feathers, designed by an employee on a peacock farm in Hampshire County.

"There was a dress made by a Girl Scout from Roane County who cut teardrop sequins out of aluminum cans that were then hand sewn to another old dress," Hayes said.

Participants in the show are divided into two age categories — 13 and under; 14 and over — based on the age of the designer.

Themed categories include the Shopping Challenge, Newspaper Challenge, Cosplay Comic-Con and General.

Each age category receives \$150 for first place, \$100 for second and \$50 for third. The themed category winners receive a \$50 gift card. Registration is conducted the day of the event and models under 18 must have parental consent.

For more information call 304-414-1122 or email ReFashion@wvrecycles.org.