



West Virginia YOUTH Environmental Program

Fall 2017

WV Department of Environmental Protection (www.dep.wv.gov)



The Blennerhassett Island mansion is one of several stops during this year's Youth Environmental Conference. Visits to the Oil and Gas Museum and the Ohio River Islands Wildlife Refuge are also on tap.

Plenty in store for conference

This year's Youth Environmental Conference will be heavy on history ... and, of course, a lot of fun.

Set for Sept. 29 through Oct. 1 at North Bend State Park, the 42nd annual edition of the conference will include stops at the historic Blennerhassett Island and Fort Boreman Park, where Union forces once roamed during the Civil War.

West Virginia's rich oil and gas history will be on display when the conference visits the state Oil and Gas Museum on Saturday.

Also scheduled is a stop at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Ohio River Islands Wildlife Refuge.

To learn more about the conference, or to register, go to www.dep.wv.gov and click on "Youth Environmental Program."



Message from the director ...

I feel both honored and humbled to have been selected as the new coordinator of the Youth Environmental Program.

My predecessor, Diana Haid, molded this program into a wonderful success over the last 40 years, and I've been privileged to have worked closely with Diana for the last eight years. Diana's wisdom and experi-



Annette Hoskins
YEP Director

ence is unparalleled and I'm lucky to have had the opportunity to pick her brain during our tenure together. That knowledge, combined with an amazingly hard-working team of Youth Program coordi-

nators, will help keep our program going strong. My first order of business will be to challenge myself and my team on future endeavors for the direction of YEP.

Let me tell you a little about myself. I am married to my best friend, AJ, with whom I have a daughter, Audrey, and we live in Charleston. I have been employed with the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection for the last 10 years, where I have had the opportunity to experience the dealings of the YEP.

See MESSAGE, Page 4



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

YEP News

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

News from the YEP districts

District 1

Brad Blaine



FOR over 15 years, I've had the privilege to work with great co-workers, youth and volunteers of all ages in the conservation of West Virginia's natural resources as the Youth Environmental Program's District 1 Coordinator.

But after lots of consideration, I will be serving others in a new position. Looking back, serving others has been a big part of my career.

From the military to a variety of field biology jobs and ultimately the District 1 Youth Environmental Program coordinator, I've always enjoyed working with people toward a common goal.

It can be challenging getting people on the same page and ultimately it's an individual choice.

But among the greatest rewards I've had in my career . . . and life, have been with those

moments in the Youth Environmental Program when someone learned something new and acted upon it — not from bias or agendas but simply science.

That was my attraction to the field — allow science to find the facts and allow people to find ways to act upon them.

The DEP and Youth Environmental Program's camps, conferences, awards, volunteer programs and participants have allowed conservation the opportunity to prosper at all stages — from discovery to career directions and everything in between.

To be a part of that process has been a tremendous honor that will long outlast me.

I don't believe in goodbyes so let me simply say "Thank you!"

I look forward to seeing you later, perhaps at an event or in the fields or forests of our great state.

District 3

Callie Sams
District Coordinator



FOR several years now, fifth-graders from elementary schools in Upshur County, in partnership with the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources, have been raising trout in their classrooms during the school year and then releasing the trout at Holly River State Park in the spring.

Ms. Bacorn's class at Union Elementary, members of the Youth Environmental Program, participated for the first time last year.

The program was such a success, Ms. Bacorn decided to apply for a grant to add an aquaponics growing system to the existing fish tank.

Her grant application was accepted, and this year the Union fifth-grade class will be raising trout *and* vegetables in its classroom! Students will have the opportunity to learn about trout habitat, water quality and what we can do to keep our rivers



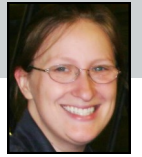
clean and healthy for wildlife and people. They will also learn about seed germination, plant cell division, and photosynthesis.

The system will demonstrate the interrelated nature of natural and human systems, and how, when done responsibly, agriculture and wildlife can both benefit.

The school already has a garden where it grows pumpkins.

District 2

Harmony Dressler
District Coordinator



AT Cacapon Institute (CI), NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office's Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEE) are critical to their mission of "Protecting Rivers and Watersheds using Science and Education." Through MWEE and hands-on conservation, students are developing science skills necessary to understanding and protecting rivers and streams.

CI's four youth programs, Potomac Headwaters Leaders of Watersheds (PHLOW), Carla Hardy West Virginia Project Community Tree (CTree), Stream Scholars Summer Camp, and Potomac Highlands Watershed eSchool (e-School), all advance MWEE.

PHLOW is building future generations of watershed stewards through environmental education and hands-on conservation at schools. Hands-on conservation projects include building a native tree growout station, installing a

rain garden, or planting trees.

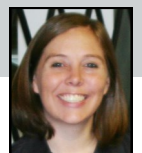
CTree promotes tree planting and education on public land through volunteerism in the Potomac Headwaters of West Virginia. Schools, parks, churches, and other community groups can apply for CTree Kits through a competitive grant process. There are many volunteer opportunities each spring and fall for youth and their families.

Stream Scholars Summer Camp is a hands-on exploration of stream ecology and conservation for sixth through eighth-grade students. Campers explore ecology, make friends, and become a Stream Scholar as they adventure across the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.

The e-School is a free, online resource for K-12 students that engages students in learning about watershed issues in West Virginia's Potomac Highlands.

District 4

Sara Prior
District Coordinator



ANGELINA Carothers became the leader for the Meadow Bridge Girl Scout Troop 31897 three years ago, and has kept the girls busy.

Ages for the scout troop range from first- to fifth-graders. Their favorite activities are nature projects and field trips.

Last year, the group sponsored a photography contest where the girls had to capture a picture of a bird using a feeder that they made from a milk jug. They will continue the contest and do another bird feeder project this year.

The group became Youth Environmental Program members in the fall of 2015.

Two members won 2016-2017 YEP awards.

One member won an award for her submission to the West Virginia Forestlands and Wood products Art category and another member won first place in the Go-Mart Corporation Energy



Essay Award category.

This year, members worked on spring planting projects at Meadow Bridge Public Library in Fayette County.

The girls also worked on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) activities for the total solar eclipse event on August 21.

The STEM activities helped members earn a citizen scientist award.

Finally, on Sept. 6, they visited Walnut Ridge Farm in Raleigh County to learn more about dogs and horses.

District 5

Tom Aluise
District Coordinator



WHEN Aimee Figgatt hitches this trailer to her truck, she has soil conservation on her mind.

It hasn't been around long — maybe a little over a year — but Figgatt's Soil Tunnel Trailer is already making a significant impression on young West Virginians.

Measuring 16 feet in length, and 8 feet in height, the interactive learning exhibit is designed to make its visitors feel as if they are venturing underground.

When they exit the box trailer, Figgatt hopes students have a new appreciation and a better understanding of the importance of soil, as well as the animals and plants that depend on it.

Property of the West Virginia Conservation Agency's Capitol Conservation District, the Soil Tunnel Trailer will be on display Friday evening, Sept. 29, during the first day of the 2017 Youth Environmental Conference at North Bend State Park. Figgatt,



the district manager for the Capitol Conservation District, will be on hand to answer questions and also lead a program on soil conservation.

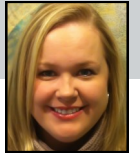
Among the features of the trailer are Styrofoam animals such as moles, groundhogs, and earthworms.

Specialty-crop vegetables like carrots, onions and ginseng are carved or painted on walls to look real.

On another wall, visitors might find insects normally found in the ground, including ants digging a tunnel.

District 6

Nedia Cyran
District Coordinator



THE Comet Cardinals 4- H Club, located in Jackson County, has been registered with the West Virginia Youth Environmental Program since October 2011.

This group is very active in recycling, litter control, and environmental education.

In 2016, the group recycled 20 pounds of aluminum, 118 pounds of glass, 95 pounds of plastic, seven pounds of steel, and 300 pounds of paper. It also recycled 14,955 plastic shopping bags, with a combined total of 80 volunteer hours.

The Comet Cardinals also work very hard cleaning up litter in their community and around Jackson County.

They spent 87 hours during their litter cleanups and beautification projects to keep their community beautiful.

They are registered with Adopt -A-Highway and clean up Liverpool Road.

The Comet Cardinals also par-

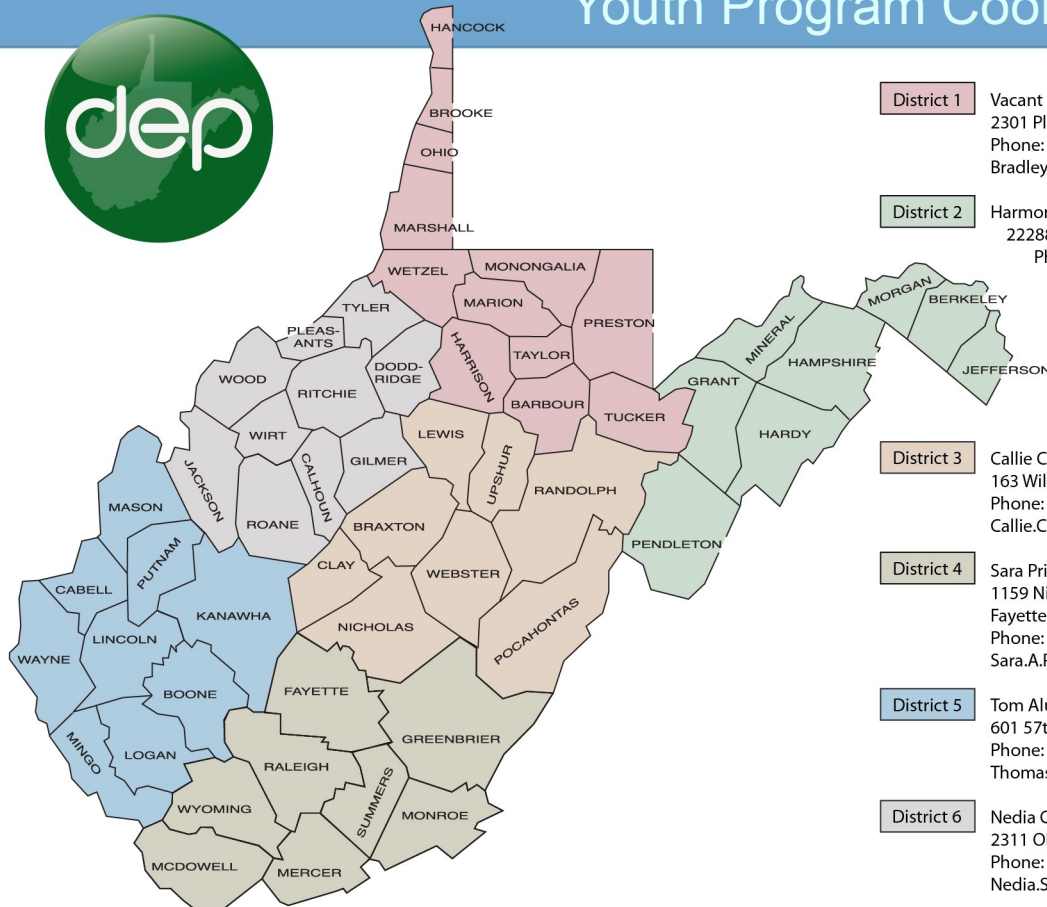


ticipate in the Make It Shine cleanups. During 2016, they adopted Comet Park, a half acre park located in Sandyville.

In 2017, they hosted litter cleanups and planted two trees. In 2018, they hope to plant bushes and flowers. They would also like to add benches to the park for the public to enjoy.

The Comet Cardinals do a great job being environmental stewards for West Virginia. They take pride in their community and do a great job working together to keep it beautiful!

Youth Program Coordinators



District 1 Vacant
2301 Pleasant Valley Road, Fairmont, WV, 26554
Phone: 304-368-3950 / Fax: 304-368-3953
Bradley.A.Blaine@wv.gov

District 2 Harmony Dressler
22288 Northwestern Pike, Romney, WV, 26757
Phone: 304-822-7266 / Fax: 304-822-3687
Harmony.F.Dressler@wv.gov

District 3 Callie C. Sams
163 Wildlife Road, French Creek, WV, 26218
Phone: 304-924-6211 / Fax: 304-924-6781
Callie.C.Sams@wv.gov

District 4 Sara Prior
1159 Nick Rahall Greenway
Fayetteville, WV 25840
Phone: 304-574-4465
Sara.A.Prior@wv.gov

District 5 Tom Aluise
601 57th Street S.E., Charleston, WV, 25304
Phone: 304-926-0499 / Fax: 304-926-0447
Thomas.J.Aluise@wv.gov

District 6 Nedia Cyran
2311 Ohio Avenue, Parkersburg, WV, 26101
Phone: 304-420-4636 / Fax: 304-420-4554
Nedia.S.Cyran@wv.gov

Spotlight On.



Haer Bears 4-H Club

Location: Mason County

Number of members: 19

Highlights: The Haer Bears just recently completed a stream cleanup at Chief Logan State Park. Other highlights include an Adopt-A-Highway cleanup (close to 30 years running); flower maintenance at the Congressional Medal of Honor Park; hand-made gifts to 80 Meals on Wheels recipients; blessing bags given to the homeless; tree planting at Chief Cornstalk Animal Reserve; and a recycling awareness day.

Calendar of Events

Sept. 23-24 — National Hunting and Fishing Days, Stonewall Jackson Resort.

Sept. 29-Oct. 1 — Youth Environmental Conference, North Bend State Park.

Sept. 30 — Adopt-A-Highway Fall Statewide Cleanup.

Oct. 1 — Roadsides In Bloom Calendar contest deadline.

Oct. 22-24 — West Virginia Educational Conference on Little Control and Solid Waste Management, Pipestem Resort State Park.

Nov. 15 — West Virginia Recycles Day.

Nov. 18 — West Virginia Recycling Coalition Re-Fashion Show, Charleston Town Center Mall.

Nov. 30 — West Virginia Recycling Coalition Youth Contest entries due.

YEP coordinator honored by City of Buckhannon

Callie Sams, the Youth Environmental Program's District 3 coordinator, was among several people honored by the city of Buckhannon for their efforts in helping the city become even greener.

The city passed a resolution formalizing its commitment to environmental stewardship. As part of the resolution, a "Green Bench" was to be placed at the corner of Main and North Locust streets in Buckhannon.

David McCauley, the mayor of Buckhannon, came up with the concept for the Green Bench, after the city was recognized by the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protec-



Callie Sams, YEP District 3 coordinator, is pictured first on left.

tion for its multiple initiatives aimed at promoting a healthy environmental. The city earned the DEP's Cabinet Secretary Award, the highest honor among the agency's environmental awards.

Callie is a resident of Buckhannon.

MESSAGE

Continued from Page 1

There is nothing better than being part of an inspired group of committed people working together for a common cause — sustaining our natural resources. Besides my work, I enjoy doing recycled art projects, hiking, baking and traveling, especially family trips to the beach.

As many of you know, the YEP has been repositioned under the direction of Ed Maguire in the Office of Environmental Advocate at the DEP.

As our team refocuses, please reach out and introduce yourself to me over the coming months. I have had the pleasure of meeting and working with some of you

"I embrace this new position and look forward to working with a great group ..."

and look forward to getting to know each of you.

I embrace this new position and look forward to working with a great group which has a compelling vision: educating the youth of West Virginia about preserving our environment.

Annette Hoskins can be reached by calling 304-926-0499, ext. 1659, or emailing: Annette.L.Hoskins@wv.gov