



Fall 2023

WV Department of Environmental Protection

Message from the director . . .

We are continually trying to find ways to make it easier for you, our Youth Environmental Program clubs, to file your yearly reports in March.

The latest tweak we've made to the process involves submitting photos. In the past, to send us photos electronically of the outstanding activities in which your club, school or troop is involved, you were required to email the pictures to me. Now, you can simply upload the photos in the same Google Forms document you are using to provide your Summary Report and Project Narrative. There will even be categories



Annette Hoskins
YEP Director

for your pictures. For example, photos of your roadside cleanup might go under Litter Control. There are categories for other activities as well, including Tree Plantings and Beautification.

As always, you are welcome to submit a scrapbook with pictures, rather than providing them electronically. But remember, you are still required to use the Google Form document to send us your Summary Report and Project Narrative.

The bottom line is however you choose to inform us about the

See MESSAGE, Page 4

Panhandle Bound

Youth Environmental Conference making October stop at Cacapon State Park

It's been more than 10 years — 13 to be exact — since the Youth Environmental Conference last stopped in West Virginia's Eastern Panhandle.

So, it was time the Youth Environmental Program's annual conference for 13- to 18-year-olds scheduled a visit to Morgan County.

This year's event — the 48th annual — is set for October 6-8 at Cacapon Resort State Park and there is still time to register for a weekend of fun and education in one of the Mountain State's most beautiful and historic settings!

Scholarships are available not only for conference attendees to come for free but also their chaperones as well.

While some conference details are still being finalized, a full two days of activities are on tap.

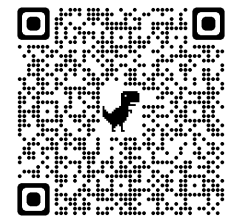
Field trips on Saturday, October 7, include visits to the Cool Spring Nature Preserve, the Ridge State Fish Hatchery, Mountain View



Top: The lodge at Cacapon Resort State Park in Morgan County will be the headquarters for this year's 48th annual Youth Environmental Conference, scheduled October 6-8. It's not too late to register.

Conference registration

Scan this QR code for easy access to Youth Environmental Conference registration.



Solar and the Berkeley County Recycling Center.

For those arriving by 5 p.m. on Friday, October 6, there will be arts and crafts available and other environmental

education.

The conference convenes on Friday evening with a presentation from the Cacapon State Park naturalist.

There also will be an idea swap among youth groups on Friday before

evening festivities conclude.

Speakers are planned following dinner on Saturday evening before the conference winds down.

See PANHANDLE, Page 4



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www.facebook.com/depwv

YEP News

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

News from the YEP districts

District 1

JoAnn Snoderly
District Coordinator



HI! I am new to the Youth Environmental Program this year. I started in the spring and I am so excited to be working with the talented and hardworking YEP team and the professionals within the DEP at large.

It was a fun summer meeting and getting to know some of our program participants, both in District 1 and at events across the state.

I am so inspired by the thirst for knowledge and the passion for protecting and improving our environment that I've witnessed in our youth.

I cannot wait to see this year's projects and the lasting impact these actions will have in ensuring West Virginia stays "wild and wonderful."

For those who don't know me, I was born in West Virginia and raised on a farm in Marion County. I graduated from WVU with degrees in journalism and inter-

national studies, then spent a decade working in the newspaper industry in West Virginia and Alaska before arriving at the DEP.

In my free time, you will usually find me enjoying the outdoors.

I love hiking, camping, kayaking and simply spending time on my porch watching the wildlife. I also volunteer with a Morgantown-area search and rescue organization.

It is a goal of mine to hike in every county in the state, so please feel free to reach out and share your favorite trails and routes with me (or just to say hi). For current participants or anyone interested in signing up for the Youth Environmental Program in District 1, I am easily reached by cell at 304-389-9179 or email at:

joann.r.snoderly@wv.gov.

District 3

Beth Henry-Vance
District Coordinator



KIDS and adults have been exploring the great outdoors through a nonprofit called Appalachian Expeditions, based in Tucker County.

Featuring a range of day camps and overnight trips, the group focuses on inspiring a love of nature through hiking, backpacking, canoeing and other experiences.

This is the sixth year of programming, said Libbey Holewski, who co-founded Appalachian Expeditions with her husband, Alex Snyder.

Holewski said their mission is to inspire awareness and appreciation of the Central Appalachian region through adventure, community and sustainability.

"The goal is to get people out in this region, get them outside and help them form a relationship with nature," she said. "If you don't get out in it and enjoy it, you won't be inspired to take care of it."

The children's programs include day camps for ages 5 to 13, and overnight backpacking and canoeing trips for ages 10 to 17.

They take place mainly in Tucker and Randolph counties, and camps range from 3-day to 14-day adventures. Campers are able to hike, explore lakes and rivers, learn about native wildlife and practice Leave No Trace principles.

Appalachian Expeditions is enrolled in the Youth Environmental Program and participates in Adopt-A-Highway cleanups.

For more information about children's programs or adult overnight trips, visit: appalachianexpeds.org.



District 2

Susan Carroll
District Coordinator



AS we embrace the start of the 2023-2024 school year, a lot of communities in the Mountain State are looking for ways to encourage students and staff to recycle more within their schools.

The Berkeley County SWA has seen success with its "Operation Greenlid" School Recycling Program. The program, with support from Apple Valley Waste, started in 2015 as a way to encourage student participation in recycling in their area. Area public schools, private schools, classrooms and school-based organizations participate by filling 96-gallon recycling totes with recyclable materials. The program got its name from the green lids of the totes that were provided by Apple Valley Waste.

The schools deliver the filled totes to the Berkeley County Recycling Program. Each tote is tallied at the end of the school year and prizes are awarded based on the highest numbers of totes filled with

recyclables. First-place winners receive \$500, second place \$300 and third place \$200.



In the 2022-2023 school year, the top three schools combined collected more than 1,100 totes of material for recycling. If you are located in

Berkeley County and are interested in additional information about Operation Greenlid, contact the Berkeley County SWA at 304-267-9370 or email: office@berkeleycountyrecycling.com.

Don't live in Berkeley County? I challenge you to work with your school, local officials and your Solid Waste Authority to start a program in your area!

District 4

Jessica Astley
District Coordinator



HELLO, West Virginia!

My name is Jessica Astley and I am the newest District 4 Youth Environmental Program coordinator.

My husband and I moved from New York's Hudson Valley at the end of last year. Before coming to West Virginia, I was the communications assistant for The Olana Partnership, a nonprofit organization that works to preserve and restore the estate of 19th-century artist Frederic Church.

Before my time with The Olana Partnership, I was an environmental educator for New York State Parks, Constitution Marsh Audubon Center and Sanctuary and the Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation.

I graduated with a bachelor's degree in biology with a focus on environmental science from Syracuse University in 2018 and earned a master's degree in science writing from Johns Hopkins

University in 2022.

Outside of my full-time job, I am a freelance writer, amateur nature photographer and graphic designer. I have had stories published in several different publications, including National Parks Traveler.

I focus my photography on wildlife, especially birds and landscapes. Since coming to West Virginia, I've been inspired by the wild and wonderful outdoors and started creating Appalachian-themed graphic illustrations.

On weekends you can find me tending to my vegetable garden, reading, spending time with my cats, birding or enjoying some form of outdoor sports. I am excited to continue exploring southern West Virginia, while advocating for youth involvement in creating sustainable relationships with the natural world.

District 5

Tom Aluise
District Coordinator



THE Water Wonders STEAM Camp made a splash in the Cabell County area recently.

The week of water education for students in grades six through nine had something to whet the appetite of just about any curious student.

Sponsored by the National Youth Science Foundation, the camp was conducted on the campus of Marshall University and included educators from the Department of Environmental Protection, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, City of Huntington and others.

Each day had a water theme — Water Use, Watersheds, Wetlands, Water Quality and Aquatic Species — and included classroom instruction, plus hands-on learning activities.

The highlight of each day was afternoon field trips that piggybacked on the lessons learned each morning. Students, for example, visited the Huntington

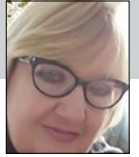


Wastewater Treatment Plant; Beech Fork State Park to learn about the dam and water gauges and test water quality; the Robert C. Byrd Locks and Dam, to experience a wetlands tour; the Applegrove Fish Hatchery; Ritter Park to observe aquatic insects (see photo); and Harris Riverfront Park on the banks of the Ohio River.

Staff from the WVDEP took students on a boat ride in the Ohio and also electroshocked a sampling of fish from the river to give the students an up-close look at the aquatic diversity.

District 6

Debbie Florence
District Coordinator



RITCHIE County residents and District 6 YEP groups eagerly anticipate the re-opening of the Ritchie County Recycling Center on Thursday, September 14. The community has been without a recycling facility since December 27, 2020, when an early-morning fire destroyed the building.

Jane Hearne, office manager and Ritchie County Solid Waste Authority board member, said the loss was devastating for a community so invested in recycling.

“We expect an onslaught of people visiting the center on opening day,” she stated. “I’ve talked to so many people who have been collecting and storing their recyclables for over two years now, just waiting for the day they would once again have a center in the community.”

While only certain items will be accepted the first two weeks of operation, additional items will be gradually added week by week until the center is operating at full



capacity. Once fully operational, the center will have the ability to process 21 different items.

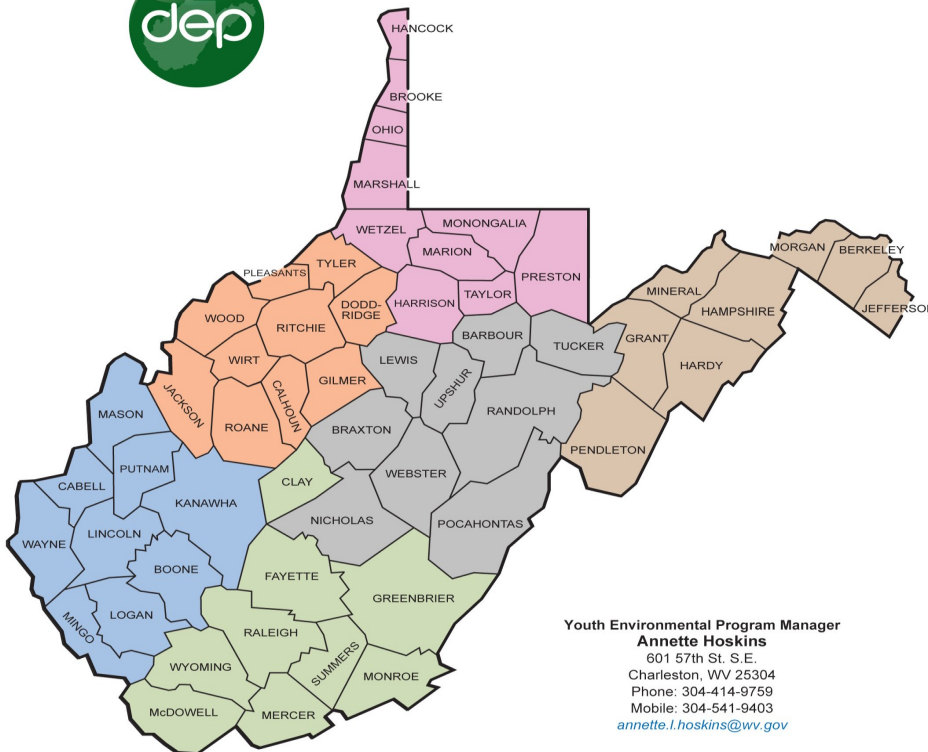
Currently, the center will operate with two vertical balers and eventually install a horizontal baler, which the board plans to have online in seven to nine months. Vertical balers can handle a variety of recyclables, while horizontal balers are limited to a few specific materials. The addition of the horizontal baler will give the center a less labor-intensive means to process a greater quantity and variety of recyclables.

Visit their Facebook page (Ritchie County Recycling) to view the opening schedule.

west virginia department of environmental protection



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Spotlight on.



Sandy Pals 4-H Club

Location: Preston County

Number of members: 18

This year marks the Sandy Pals' 34th year participating in the Adopt-a-Highway program, removing litter from a three-mile section of West Virginia Route 92. In September, the club served dinner to members of the Laurel Mountain/Fellowsville Clean Watershed Association and learned about a water treatment project improving the streams in which the 4-H group studies benthic ecology. The Sandy Pals' biggest project this year was a nine-day e-cycling collection event for club members and county residents. Electronics collected at the event filled three trailers and a pickup truck bed. The group also collects plastic shopping bags throughout the year and plants flowers near its 4-H signs and local school.

MESSAGE

Continued from Page 1

important work your club is doing, we want to read about it and see pictures. In the meantime, we will continue to search for other ways to make the whole process easier for you. At the end of the day, the more good news you give us, the more we can relay to the governor's office about the great things the YEP is accomplishing for West Virginia.

In other news, you can read more about them in this issue of our newsletter, but I want to welcome our two newest and very talented district coordinators to the YEP.

JoAnn Snoderly is now our coordinator out of the DEP's Fairmont office and covers Hancock, Brooke, Ohio, Marshall, Wetzel, Monongalia, Marion, Taylor, Preston and Harrison counties.

Jessica Astley works out of the DEP office in Fayetteville and is responsible for Clay, Fayette, Raleigh, Greenbrier, Wyoming, McDowell, Mercer, Monroe and Summers counties.

Welcome aboard!



September 30 — Adopt-A-Highway Fall Cleanup.

October 6-8 — Youth Environmental Conference, Cacapon State Park.

October 22-24 — REAP/Association of Solid Waste Authorities Conference, Oglebay Resort.

November 15 — West Virginia Recycles Day.

November 18 — Recycling Coalition ReFashion Show, Huntington Mall.

February 14 — Make It Shine Environmental Teacher of the Year Nominations due.

March 15 — Youth Environmental Program Club Reports Due.

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

ReFashion Show looking for creative designs

Have an idea for an outfit made from material you might normally throw in the trash or recycle?

The ReFashion Show is looking for you. Sponsored by the Recycling Coalition of West Virginia, this year's 21st annual ReFashion Show is set for November 18 at the Huntington Mall.

Registration starts at 11 a.m. and you can win up to \$250 for your outfit.

Outfits must be made from recyclable or reused materials and an entry can come from an individual or group.

For additional information or to obtain a registration form, visit www.wvrecycles.com.

PANHANDLE

Continued from Page 1

Leaders from the Youth Environmental Program and law enforcement officers from the state Division of Natural Resources will be on hand throughout the weekend.

For more information about the conference, go to www.dep.wv.gov and type "Youth Environmental Conference" into the search bar.

You can also contact your district coordinator or Youth Environmental Program Director Annette Hoskins at 304-414-9759 or: Annette.L.Hoskins@wv.gov.