



West Virginia YOUTH Environmental Program



Spring 2016

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

Message from the director . . .

As many of you may know, Cedar Lakes Camp and Conference Center in Jackson County is undergoing a period of transition.



Diana Haid
YEP Director

Cedar Lakes has been a welcoming home to our Junior Conservation Camp for 36 years. We undoubtedly have a strong partnership with the facility, which serves our camp needs greatly, and hope it continues for many years to come.

The West Virginia Board of Education currently operates Cedar Lakes but bills were introduced during the 2016 legislative session



Whether it's Cedar Lakes or elsewhere, the YEP is committed to providing Junior Conservation Camp.

to transfer ownership from the BOE to the state Department of Agriculture. If the legislation is passed and signed by the governor, the Department of Agriculture will assume control of Cedar Lakes on July 1, 2016.

This summer's Junior Conser-

vation Camp is June 20-24, so we will be back at Cedar Lakes in 2016. What the future holds beyond 2016 for our camp location, however, is not so clear. One thing is certain though: the camp will continue somewhere in 2017 ... and years after.

The Youth Environmental Program is fully committed to providing West Virginia children with an annual week-long camp that focuses on sound environmental education and strong character building.

See MESSAGE, Page 4

There's plenty to do at Youth Day

You can camp for free ... participate in a fishing derby ... enjoy a delicious lunch, on the house ... and dance the night way.

There's some environmental education and youth group recognition mixed in as well.

It's all part of the 53rd annual Youth Environmental Day, scheduled for Saturday, May 21, at North Bend State Park in Ritchie County. Festivities actually begin Friday evening, with a program led by Youth Environmental Program coordinators, followed by a movie.

Saturday is the main event, with a parade, educational displays and the awards

See YOUTH, Page 4



One of the features of Youth Environmental Day at North Bend State Park in Ritchie County is a Saturday morning parade of youth groups, many decked out in clever hats.

Remember: Project reports due April 15

Youth Environmental Club members have until April 15 to submit summary reports about their club projects in order to be eligible for cash awards.

Reports should be submitted to: Diana Haid, WV DEP Youth Environmental Program, 601 57th St. S.E., Charleston, WV 25304.

Awards will be presented on Youth Day, May 21, at North Bend State Park.



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
District Coordinator



YOUTH Environmental Program members in District 1 have continued their stewardship efforts despite some rough winter weather. Groups have made environmental enhancements at regional landfills and improved habitat for wildlife. Several have completed projects with their local solid waste authority. Others have been preparing for nationally recognized competitions.

Often, I get questions from group leaders asking what they can do to get their group involved with the environment.

"Environment" encompasses our entire planet and can be a bit overwhelming, so I encourage them to act locally. An "ideas for projects" list can be found on the YEP website to get started and I'm happy to meet with them as well.

One upcoming event that I'm particularly excited about is the 75th annual State Conservation Camp at Camp Caesar in Webster County.

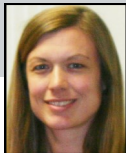


Seventy-five years is quite a milestone and to the best of our knowledge, this is the first such camp of its kind in the U.S. More than 16,000 campers have attended since the camp started.

The camp is open to ages 14-18 and will run from June 13-18. Scholarships are available to cover the \$185 registration. More details can be found at: <http://wvconservationcamp.com/index.php> or by contacting Dr. Ben Spong at: 304-293-9425 or ben.spong@mail.wvu.edu.

District 3

Callie Sams
District Coordinator



I'M sure all of District 3 is buzzing with spring just around the corner and the YEP project deadline fast approaching.

I've been busy myself, although much more on a personal level than work-related.

On Jan. 11, Willow Jane came into this world at 11:16 p.m., my first child and perhaps a future YEP member.

She weighed 6 pounds, 9 ounces and was 19 inches long. Willow tipped the scales at 10 pounds when we visited the doctor for her one-month appointment (see photo).

My husband Nathan and I are loving every sleep-deprived minute. Willow loves to be held and cries when we put her down. We are so thankful for family and friends who continue to be a great help.

I plan to return to work next month and will hit the ground running.

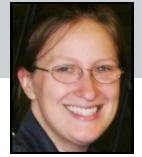


One of my first events back will be the Girl Scouts of Black Diamond annual meeting and Vendor Fair on April 15 at the Days Inn in Flatwoods, Braxton County.

On April 21-22, the West Virginia Envirothon competition is set for Camp Caesar in Webster County. Interested teams can register by downloading the form at: <http://www.wvca.us/envirothon/>

District 2

Harmony Dressler
District Coordinator



EACH year, the sixth-grade students of Jefferson County gather to participate in the Jefferson County Science Olympiad.

The event began as a small science field day for sixth-graders at a single school, but has grown to include all the sixth-graders in the county. The Olympiad has been hosted by the National Conservation Training Center, For Love of Children Outdoor Education Center, and CraftWorks at Cool Spring.

In 2015, there were more than 700 sixth-graders from Jefferson County's middle schools at the Ranson Civic Center for the Olympiad. The students rotated through several stations, and participated in hands-on activities that were related to different fields of science. Several of the stations introduced the students to different environmental concepts.

At one of the two WV Department of Environmental Protection

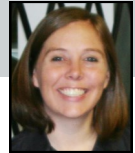
stations, students learned about trash management practices, like reducing, reusing, recycling, and composting, and participated in a recycling relay race. At the other DEP station, students experienced the water cycle as a water molecule in exploring how water moves from place to place on our planet, and how different atmospheric conditions make this possible.

At the WV Division of Forestry station, participants learned more about decomposers that are found in the forest. Students were able to dissect a decomposing log to look for the insects that were responsible for the decomposition.

CraftWorks at Cool Spring presented a station on watersheds. Students learned how a watershed forms. Then they painted a scene from their own watershed that would later be used in an installation.

District 4

Sara Prior
District Coordinator



DUST off those hiking boots and get ready for the New River Gorge National River 100-mile challenge.

This program is supported by the National Park Service (NPS), Active Southern West Virginia, and the YMCA of Southern West Virginia.

It was created to celebrate the 100-year anniversary of the National Park Service.

The New River Gorge National River has plenty of trails to explore.

I encourage all my Youth Environmental Program members to enroll in the challenge and start earning those miles.

You can hike as a group or have a friendly competition within your group.

Don't forget to take litter bags so you can collect any litter that might be at the trailhead and along the trail.

You can also plan a tree identification hike, wildflower hike,

or even a bird watching hike.

The possibilities are endless and I promise the outcome will be refreshing and amazing!

If you sign up to participate, send me an email at sara.a.prior@wv.gov.

In addition to receiving a prize from the NPS, I will send a prize to you once you have met the 100 mile goal.

I am lucky to have the park in my backyard. My favorite trails are the Endless Wall and Long Point trails in Fayetteville, Glade Creek Trail in Prince and the Grandview Rim Trail.

To register for the challenge, send your name and email address to:

NewRiverGorge100MileChallenge@nps.gov or call 304-465-2515. And don't forget to take pictures and hashtag it #NRG100mi.

District 5

Tom Aluise
District Coordinator



TALK about a win-win project.

At New Haven Elementary School in Mason County, fourth-graders are promoting both recycling and reading in a creative initiative that began in September.

It works like this: Any student or local citizen who recycles 10 pounds of material gets a free book from the New Haven Public Library. Books are provided through a grant from Mason County Early Literacy.

"It's a small effort, but we're having fun," said Shayla Blackshire, who teaches one of the two fourth-grades classes at New Haven.

Recycling bins are located outside of the school.

Blackshire estimates the school has collected 250 pounds of bi-metal, 500 pounds of cardboard, 1,500 pounds of newspapers and magazines, 90 pounds of aluminum and 60 pounds of plastic bottles.



About 1,200 plastic shopping bags have been turned in.

The school is transporting the recyclables to the Mason County Recycling Center.

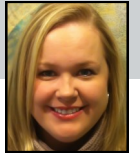
New Haven Elementary also has an environmental club, made up of fifth-graders, and it's doing its part as well, collecting office and other paper throughout the school.

Even the local library has caught on, recycling more than 400 outdated or damaged books.

• Photo courtesy of Point Pleasant Daily Register.

District 6

Nedia Cyran
District Coordinator



THE Lubeck Conservation Club meets once a month at Lubeck Elementary School in Wood County.

The group is extremely interested in learning ways it can make a difference in the community. The group's leader, Jennifer Burdette, does a great job teaching the students about their environment, while incorporating projects that benefit the school and their neighborhoods.

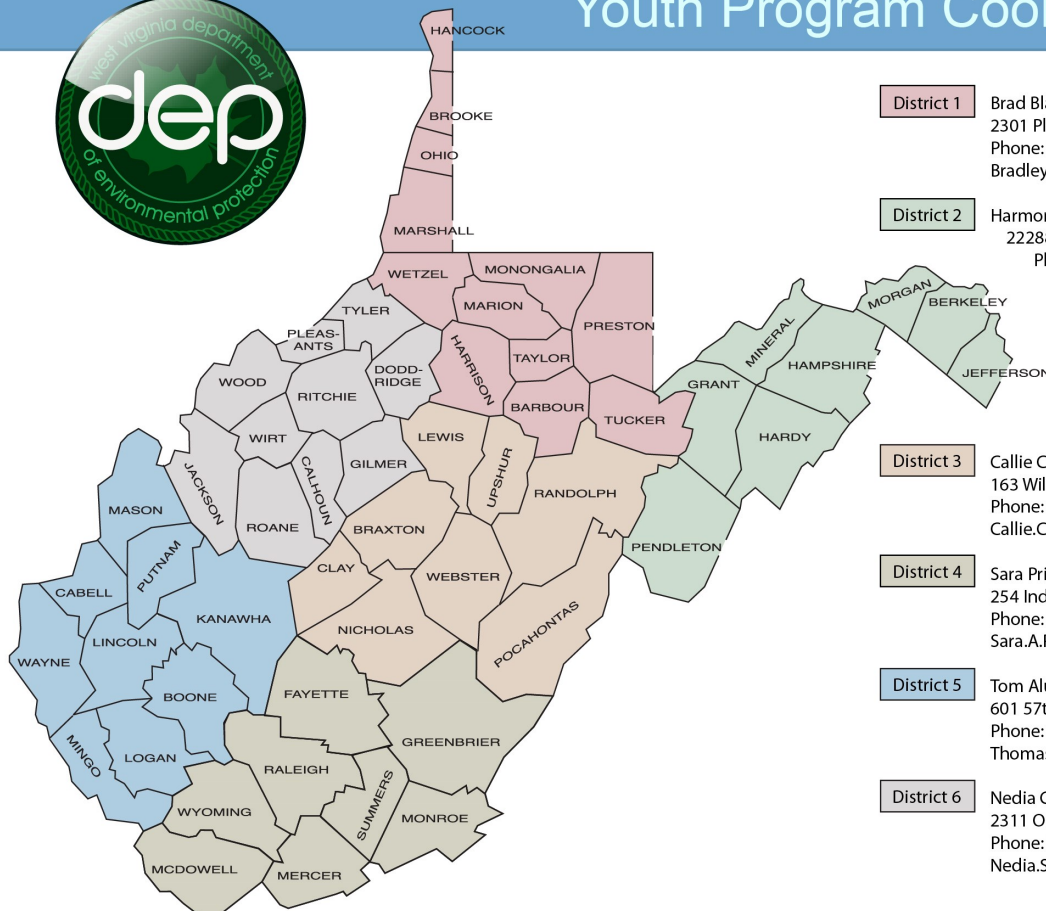
At their December meeting, the students learned about the common birds of West Virginia and how to identify them. They also assembled blue bird houses (see photo) to install around the school. Building a habitat for a common bird is a great project. The boxes will also be a great addition to the school's butterfly garden. The garden is very beautiful and the students have done a great job planting flowers that the butterflies need to survive.

Jennifer teaches the kids about water conservation, litter control,

and recycling. The Conservation Club also is busy learning about decomposition. Club members have buried different items, many that are recyclable, to see how long it actually takes for them to decompose. This will help the children better understand the importance of recycling or re-use of products. The Lubeck Conservation Club does an impressive job keeping Lubeck beautiful.



Youth Program Coordinators



District 1 Brad Blaine
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
254 Industrial Drive, Oak Hill, WV, 25901
Phone: 304-465-1911 / Fax: 304-465-1524
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.



Wilderness Warriors

Location: Fayette County

Number of members: 10

Highlights: The Wilderness Warriors were busy last spring and summer with nature hikes to learn about different plants, trees, insects and animals. They learned the importance of reducing their footprint as they spent time outdoors. This spring, the Warriors plan to look for areas of natural milkweed growth and work with the community to establish more sanctuaries where the monarch butterfly can flourish.

Calendar of Events

April 1-14 — Statewide Make It Shine Cleanup.

April 15 — Youth Environmental Program reports deadline.

April 21 — DEP Earth Day Celebration at Clay Center.

April 30 — Adopt-A-Highway Statewide Cleanup.

May 21 — Youth Environmental Day, North Bend State Park.

June 18 — Ohio River Sweep.

June 20-24 — Junior Conservation Camp, Cedar Lakes, Ripley.

August 6 — Adopt-A-Highway Appreciation Day Picnic, Tamarack.

Sept. 10 — Great Kanawha River Cleanup.

Sept. 30-Oct. 2 — Youth Environmental Conference, Canaan State Park.

YOUTH

Continued from Page 1

program among the highlights. The YEP will hand out nearly \$15,000 in award money to member groups who have completed outstanding projects, as well as individual winners for essays and other contests.

Later Saturday, hiking, fishing, volleyball and a recycling craft will be offered, all leading up to a dance to close out the day.

To obtain a reservation form to attend Youth Day and camp for free, visit the YEP web page at:

<http://www.dep.wv.gov/pio/YEP/Pages/default.aspx>

The reservation deadline for Youth Day is May 2.

For more information, call Diana Haid at 304-926-0499, ext. 1114, or email: Diana.K.Haid@wv.gov.

MESSAGE

Continued from Page 1

While we sincerely hope Cedar Lakes remains an integral part of our important mission, we will search diligently to find the best available alternative site if we don't return to Jackson County.

As for this year's camp, we're excited as usual. Many different fun and educational activities are planned.

Please have your camp applications with payment to me no later than May 2. Also, there are a limited number of scholarships available. Please contact me for scholarship information.

May 2 also is the deadline to register your group for our annual Youth Day, scheduled for May 21 at North Bend State Park in

Ritchie County. (See story in this newsletter for more information.)

Youth Day is one of our favorite events because we get to recognize our outstanding YEP groups for the tremendous projects they've completed throughout the year.

Additionally, I would like to thank the many sponsors who fund the generous awards we hand out on Youth Day. Without the financial backing of our dedicated sponsors, Youth Day would not be the success it is.

Finally, high school seniors who attend a school or who are members of a club that is enrolled in the YEP have until April 15 to apply for the \$10,000 Rick Vercellio Memorial College Scholarship.

The scholarship provides \$2,500 per year for four years to a school of the recipient's choice. The scholarship winner will be announced at Youth Day.

I hope you all have a great spring and summer. Please be careful as you head outdoors to conduct Make It Shine and Adopt-A-Highway cleanups on our state's streams, parks and roadways. As always, we appreciate everything you do to make West Virginia a better place to live, work and play.

Please don't hesitate to contact me or your district coordinator if we can be of assistance in any way.

Diana can be reached at: Diana.K.Haid@wv.gov or 304-926-0499, ext. 1114.