



# West Virginia YOUTH Environmental Program

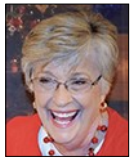


Spring 2020

WV Department of Environmental Protection

## Looking back over 40 years

This summer marks the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of state Junior Conservation Camp. The camp was the idea of the late Maxine Scarbro, who directed the state Youth Conservation Program, the forerunner of the Youth Environmental Program. Scarbro named Barbara Henry as the first camp director in 1981 and Henry served in that capacity, with the exception of two years, through 2003. YEP District 5 Coordinator Tom Aluise recently caught up with the now-retired Henry to get her reflections on camp.



Henry

**Q: Were other sites considered for the camp before settling on Cedar Lakes, where it's been since the beginning?**

A: We looked at a lot of places. I remember going up to Tucker County and visiting Wood County. We didn't want a camp that was too



**Fun at an early Junior Conservation Camp.** rugged for the kids because of their age. We didn't want them to have to rough it too bad.

**Q: How many kids were at the first camp in 1981?**

A: Our goal was 100 campers. I think we had about 105.

**Q: Has the camp always been for just 11- to 14-year-olds?**

A: Yes, and the reason being there was a Conservation Camp for older kids but nothing for the younger ones. Maxine thought there should be a camp for the younger kids.

**Q: It hasn't always been a five-day camp, correct?**

A: When it started it was just a three-day camp over the weekend. We felt like with kids that age, three days would be a good start. They wouldn't be away from home too long. I don't remember when we increased it to a five-day camp, but we saw the need for an extended time so the classes could be smaller and the projects/programs could be more in depth. It took me a while to convince Maxine that's what we needed to do.

**Q: Can you recall some of the classes from the earliest camps in the 1980s?**

See **LOOKING**, Page 4

## Message from the director . . .

As I've mentioned before, the Youth Environmental Program is continuing its efforts to preserve our natural resources and hopes to cut down on and eventually discontinue paper mailings. Thank you to those who texted, mailed, emailed and faxed back a response updating the contact information for your club(s) and giving an email address for communication.

The YEP is pleased to welcome its new District 2 coordinator, Susan Parker, who came on board January 6 and replaced Harmony Dressler. You can learn more about Susan on page 2 of this newsletter. The District 6 coordinator's spot in Parkersburg is now vacant, but we hope to have someone in that position soon.

Youth Environmental Day is Saturday, May 16, at North Bend State Park in Ritchie County. And remember, our new deadline to submit project reports is March 15, a month earlier than in the past.

During Youth Environmental Day weekend, we will have our talent



Annette Hoskins  
YEP Director

As always, if you have any questions, suggestions, or concerns, please contact me at: [Annette.L.Hoskins@wv.gov](mailto:Annette.L.Hoskins@wv.gov) or 304-926-0499 ext. 49759.

show again on Friday night, May 15, so start warming up those vocal cords!

Looking ahead to the summer, Junior Conservation Camp is set for June 15-19 at Cedar Lakes Conference Center in Ripley, Jackson County. The cost per camper is \$175 and registration forms are available on the YEP web site. Camp scholarships are also available.

This fall's Youth Environmental Conference is set for October 2-4 at Twin Falls Resort State Park in Wyoming County. We are excited to be going to Twin Falls and more information will be available later.



Find us on Facebook at:  
[www.facebook.com/depwv](http://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

Shanti Amos  
District Coordinator



I am excited to share that several schools and youth groups in District I received a \$1,000 First Energy/Mon Power STEM grant for the 2019-2020 school year.

Mon Power awarded 17 STEM Classroom Grants to groups throughout North Central West Virginia and the Eastern Panhandle.

The grant enables recipients to offer hands-on learning experiences that extend beyond the classroom. Eastwood Elementary, a Green School in Monongalia County, supports the United Nations Global Sustainability Development Goals.

As part of that initiative, students are learning the importance of clean air. The Green Team at Eastwood organized a Balloon Festival where students made their own tissue paper hot air balloons.

The children were thrilled to



launch their balloons upward utilizing the hot air balloon launcher they purchased with their Mon Power grant! To add to the excitement, Hot Air Balloon WV visited their school and gave each child (600 students) a ride in a hot air balloon.

Grants are available to educators, Pre-K through grade 12 and youth groups. To be eligible, you must live in the First Energy/Mon Power service area. For more information go to:

[www.firstenergycorp.com/community/education/educational\\_grants.html](http://www.firstenergycorp.com/community/education/educational_grants.html).

## District 3

Beth Henry-Vance  
District Coordinator



CUB Scout Pack 88 joined the Youth Environmental Program in the fall, and its members have had fun while experiencing nature.

In August, pack members toured a wetland at Glendale Park in Elkins. They learned about native plants and wildlife, and then went on a hike to see which species they could identify. They also learned about characteristics that make wetlands an important part of the environment. The program was led by Danielle Elliott from the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources.

In October, cub scouts gathered for a "spooky night tour" at the French Creek Wildlife Center, where they went on a hayride and toured the animal exhibits after dark. Located in Upshur County, the Wildlife Center is a popular place to view creatures that are part of West Virginia's heritage.



Members of Cub Scout Pack 88 include boys and girls in kindergarten through fifth grade, and the group also has participated in a backpack food donation program, Veterans Day parade and Operation Christmas Child.

This spring, the group plans to take part in a river cleanup in Randolph County. Shannon Smith, membership and activities chairperson, said they are coordinating with the Make It Shine program, students from Davis & Elkins College and community volunteers to hopefully make the river cleanup a big success.

## District 2

Susan Parker  
District Coordinator



HELLO! I would like to introduce myself as the new Youth Environmental Program coordinator for District 2.

My name is Susan Parker and I am stationed out of the Romney office, serving Jefferson, Berkeley, Morgan, Hampshire, Mineral, Grant, Hardy and Pendleton counties. I am a native of Hampshire County and have always taken pride in the beautiful county I call home.

I previously worked for the West Virginia Department of Agriculture for 12 years, focusing on invasive species control and monitoring.

I earned a bachelor's degree in horticulture from West Virginia University. I was actively involved in 4-H and FFA growing up and still volunteer with our local camp and county activities.

As a youth participating in the YEP, I fondly remember attending Youth Environmental Day at North

Bend State Park and winning the Green Spirit Award.

What an honor it is to now work with a program that directly impacted my life.

I love the outdoors and appreciate any time I get to spend on our family farm in Hampshire County. I enjoy camping and canoeing on the South Branch of the Potomac.

I am excited to see such active involvement throughout our state in the Youth Environmental Program!

It makes me proud to see the hard work that is accomplished by our members. I am looking forward to working with our youth and growing the program in my district.

I am excited about what we can do to continue to make our state a beautiful place! If I can assist your group in any way, please let me know.

## District 4

Sara Prior  
District Coordinator



SPRINGTIME in the New River Gorge is a beautiful time to get outside and explore.

As members of the Youth Environmental Program, I'm sure you are always looking for ways to learn about nature and how to help the environment.

What better way to do this than to join in the events scheduled for the New River Gorge National River's 17th annual wildflower weekend!

Scheduled for April 24-26, there will be free programs for nature lovers of all ages. Rangers and naturalists will be offering free guided hikes and programs, as well as teaching the public on how to become a citizen scientist.

With many program locations, there's plenty of opportunities to find a program to attend. Activities will be in the New River Gorge, Tamarack, and several West Virginia state parks, such as Babcock, Carnifex Ferry Battle-



field, Hawks Nest, Pipestem Resort, and Twin Falls Resort. And remember, as YEP members, you can win an award for volunteering at state parks! If your group is not already doing this, it would be a great time to learn how to get started!

For more information about the weekend activities, visit <https://www.nps.gov/neri/planyourvisit/wildflower-weekend.htm> or call the New River Gorge National River at (304) 465-0508.

## District 5

**Tom Aluise**  
District Coordinator



ANN Henry and Meghan Salter are taking environmental education to a new level. And people are noticing.

The Cabell County fifth-grade teachers were selected as the 2019 co-winners of the Make It Shine Environmental Teacher of the Year award for the elementary school level. Henry teaches at Ona Elementary and Salter at Martha Elementary. Both schools are enrolled in the Youth Environmental Program.



**Henry**



**Salter**

The Make It Shine Program is under the umbrella of the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection.

Each teacher has incorporated a "Living Stream Project" in their respective classrooms.

In describing the project, the teachers stress it "teaches children how to protect watersheds and community water supplies through partnerships."

The project incorporates aquaponics and hydroponic gardening; delves deeper into aquatic ecosystems; and helps students understand how pollution can negatively impact the water used in their communities.

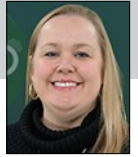
Steven Foster, chief of the Water Management Section of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers out of Huntington said the Living Stream Project "engages students in real-world water quality monitoring and problem solving" and inspires them to seek solutions.

He added, "Allowing students to be responsible for and care for a diversity of fish and plants fosters an appreciation of water resources, develops a conservation ethic and cultivates an understanding of ecosystem interactions."

He added, "Allowing students to be responsible for and care for a diversity of fish and plants fosters an appreciation of water resources, develops a conservation ethic and cultivates an understanding of ecosystem interactions."

## District 6

**Nedia Cyran**



**FAREWELL!** As many of you have already heard, I left my position as District 6 Youth Environmental Program Coordinator.

My last day was December 20. I have taken a position at the Bureau of Fiscal Services in Parkersburg.

I will now be working as a Human Resource Assistant, which is very different than any position I've had previously. I am excited to learn something new, while also still helping others.

As the YEP Coordinator, I had the pleasure of working with groups within 10 counties of West Virginia. My counties included Calhoun, Doddridge, Gilmer, Jackson, Pleasants, Tyler, Ritchie, Roane, Wirt and Wood.

I learned so much while working at the WV DEP, but I really value what I learned while working with the youth within this state and the YEP. I was captivated every day by the hard work that many of you put into keeping



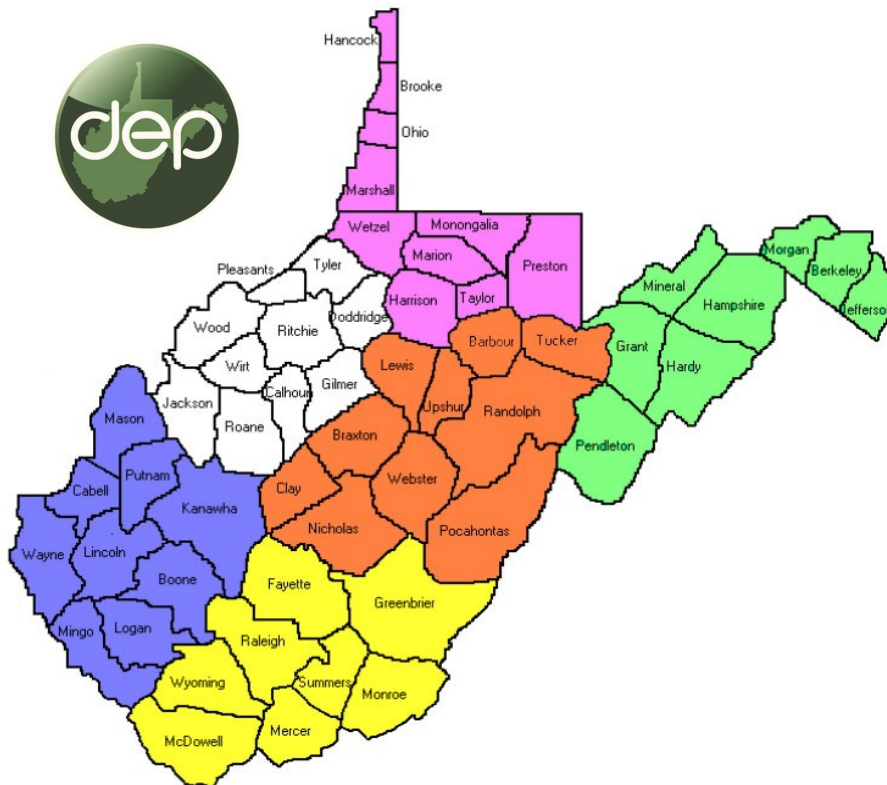
West Virginia beautiful.

I look forward to seeing you all in the future at upcoming events.

I really enjoyed many of our events, but I think my favorite was the Youth Environmental Conference in the fall. It was great to meet new members while touring the many beautiful sites that our state has to offer. The YEP has become like family and you are all a huge part of that. I will miss the teamwork and dedication of everyone that makes this program so successful.

I would like to thank you all for helping me make a difference in District 6!

## Youth Program Coordinators



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# Spotlight On.



## Hinton Helping Hands 4-H Club

**Location:** Summers County

**Number of members:** 13

If you are visiting Summers County, you might find the Hinton Helping Hands 4-H Club conducting a litter sweep around Summers Middle School or at a local playground. And, if an item can be recycled, they will recycle it! During 4-H camp, the club's leader teaches a class where campers upcycle trash into new items. The most recent project for this group is collecting pop tabs for Ronald McDonald House. As you can see in the picture, they are off to a great start! Pictured are (from left): Greyson Gum, Danielle Midkiff, Ann Lipscomb, and Logan Osborne.

## Calendar of Events

**March 15** — Youth Environmental Program reports due.

**April 1-15** — West Virginia Make it Shine Spring Cleanup.

**April 22** — West Virginia Make It Shine Earth Day Event, Clay Center, Charleston.

**April 25** — Adopt-A-Highway Statewide Spring Cleanup.

**May 15-16** — Youth Environmental Day, North Bend State Park.

**June 15-19** — West Virginia Junior Conservation Camp, Cedar Lakes, Jackson County.

**June 20** — Ohio River Sweep.

**August 1** — Adopt-A-Highway Appreciation Picnic, Tamarack, Beckley.

**September 12** — Make It Shine Great Kanawha River Cleanup.

**September 26** — Adopt-A-Highway Fall Cleanup.

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

## LOOKING

Continued from Page 1

A: I saw a brochure last year and the classes and schedule are just about the same from the beginning.

**Q: Part of your job as camp director was handling homesick kids. Was that difficult?**

A: Being a mother of four, I just naturally knew how to handle children, especially those who were uncomfortable. Our leaders were busy with their classes, as well as handling their rooms and the kids in their cabins. If they were unable to smooth over the homesickness, they called me.

**Q: In your role as camp director, did you ever have to send a camper home for bad behavior?**

A: One year, I got word that an 18-year-old was in one of the cabins. His parents had slipped him into camp. They were going on

vacation and didn't want to take him. Well, we got hold of his parents and drove him halfway home. His parents came to meet us.

**Q: While you were director, was another camp venue ever considered?**

A: It was talked about and we looked at several sites, but we always went back to Cedar Lakes. It just offered what we needed for the program.

**Q: For you, are there any real memorable camp projects the kids completed?**

A: The one that always comes to mind is the split-rail fence. It was quite an undertaking. We also worked on improving existing trails, as well as building a nature trail in the area behind the cafeteria building. In the early years, we repaired benches at the campfire circle. We had a camp project each year — something the kids could work on and accomplish during camp.

**Q: Did you notice much change in the campers from the early years to your retirement?**

A: The kids involved in conservation and environmental projects ... they don't change. That's what they believe in. You don't see a lot of change in them.

**Q: Are you surprised the camp is still going strong 40 years later?**

A: I am not surprised. The camp has a good foundation and a good reputation throughout the state. Plus, there are stable organizations that back it and believe in the camp.

**Q: Some of the same adult leaders who worked alongside you at camp in the 1980s are still involved today. What do you remember about your staff?**

A: The leaders were chosen from all walks of life and from various areas of the state. They gave of their time and knowledge year after year. They truly believed in the children of West Virginia and always strived to make the classes interesting and informative. This group was not just camp leaders, they were a group who cared for one another and for the camp.