



Pennsylvania Resources Council, Inc.
 Working to Protect the Environment Since 1939
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ENVIRONMENTAL

Living

Summer 2003

Pennsylvania Resources Council

Volume 4 - No. 1



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Environmental Living Education: Providing students, teachers and the community with information and resources designed to increase awareness of environmental issues and to develop the skills and knowledge that encourage environmentally friendly behavior. PRC is a member of the Environmental Fund for Pennsylvania.



Hooked on Worms

Story on page 8.

IN THIS ISSUE

- New Executive Director
- Hooked on Worms
- Construction Junction Reaches Milestone
- Lens on Litter Contest
- Ground Level Ozone
- PRC Hosts Birthday Party

“All the fertile areas of this planet have at least once passed through the bodies of earthworms.”

– Charles Darwin

WHAT'S HAPPENING

at PRC

PRC Welcomes New Executive Director

We welcome Larry D. Myers as PRC's new Executive Director. Larry recently retired from Allegheny Energy as the Environmental Policy director where he held a variety of technical and management positions during his thirty-year career. He holds a B. S. degree in Environmental Administration from the University of Pittsburgh. He has experience working with non-profit organizations: assisting them with public outreach/education programs, building public/private partnerships, membership drives and fundraising. Larry is Treasurer of the Sewickley Creek Watershed Association in Westmoreland County and past chairman of the Southwest PA Ozone Action Partnership, Inc. He has expressed his interest in continuing his career in activities more closely related to natural resource conservation and public education. Larry, his wife Diane, and teenage children, Matt and Krissy, live in Greensburg, Pennsylvania.



PRC Welcomes New Board Members

Andrew S. McElwaine is the president and CEO of the Pennsylvania Environmental Council (PEC). He is an adjunct faculty member at Carnegie Mellon University and the University of Pittsburgh. He has also served as a staff member of President George H. Bush's Commission on Environmental Quality.



Daniel P. Sheehan is a senior associate with Malcolm Pirnie's Environmental Restoration practice. With over 19 years of experience in the environmental consulting field, Mr. Sheehan has routinely worked with industry, municipalities, federal, state and local regulators and the public to develop and implement effective solutions for protecting the environment.

James P. Snyder is recently retired from the PA DEP. He was most recently Director of the Bureau of Waste Management. He was also a senior manager with over 38 years of experience. He is a nationally recognized waste management and environmental remediation expert.



Sandy Wiggins is the Executive Vice-President of W.S. Cumby & Son in Swarthmore, Pennsylvania, with primary responsibility for business development, estimating, pre-construction and

development services. Sandy has led the firm's Green Team in its effort to be a model for sustainable enterprise and Green Building.

Barry Stutts is the Manager of Responsible Care® for Bayer Corporation. He promotes environmental, health and safety programs and performance improvement. He also serves as the co-chair for a recently formed non-profit group, the Southwest PA HHW Task Force, which facilitates "proper collection and disposal of household hazardous waste and minimize its generation through education in southwestern Pennsylvania."



Tomlinson Fort is a Principal with Integrated Science & Technology, Inc. (IST) in Exton, Pennsylvania, where he provides environmental remediation and litigation consulting services to Fortune 500 Industries, environmental law firms and other clients. From 1996 until 2003, Mr. Fort was Sunoco's Director of Remediation and Environmental Services, with responsibility for remediation, underground storage tank compliance, and the management of Sunoco's air, water waste and tank experts.



Mission Statement

Pennsylvania Resources Council's mission is to promote conservation of our natural resources and protection of scenic beauty through public education and outreach in a collaborative effort with government agencies, business, charitable foundations and other nonprofit organizations.



Pennsylvania Resources Council

Working to Protect the Environment Since 1939
Visit us at our website at www.prc.org or www.litterbug.org

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2003 Clean Lawnmower Rebate Program Helps Reduce Air Pollution

PRC, in cooperation with DEP, Exelon Corp. and Home Depot Stores, retired and recycled more than 200 air-polluting gas lawnmowers and string trimmers this spring. Participants who turned in a gasoline-powered lawnmower or string trimmer received a rebate coupon for up to \$75.00 on the purchase of an electric or battery operated mower or string trimmer.

Even accounting for the amount of coal and oil burned to generate electricity, switching from gas to electric mowers reduced emission of nitrogen oxides (NOx) by 85 percent, carbon monoxide by 99 percent, and carbon dioxide by 39 percent. Lawn and garden equipment actually account for 5 percent of the air pollution in the United States. Switching to electric or battery-operated lawn equipment can help prevent ground level-ozone. ■

(See more on ground level ozone and what you can do to prevent it on Page 8)



Construction Junction Reaches Milestone

The month of March marked a significant milestone for Pittsburgh's reuse operation known as Construction Junction (CJ was initially formed through PRC). A highly visible booth display at the Pittsburgh Home and Garden Show and the operation's first significant deconstruction project pushed March sales over the \$50,000 mark. Since moving to a new location in Pittsburgh's East End, the store has generated over \$429,000 in sales and has received over 66,000 donated items of construction material. Most of the items were destined for our region's landfills. Another milestone of note is that CJ will pass the \$1,000,000 sales mark sometime in mid May.

April began a year long "Recycle It Here Throughout the Year" campaign at Construction Junction of hard-to-recycle items such as appliances, computers, propane tanks, tires, and more. Construction Junction's new location is an exciting resource for PRC to utilize in the implementation of its larger recycling goals and assists Construction Junction's goal of becoming a "full service" recycling facility. "The recycling events drive significant customer traffic to the store which contributes to the overall success of the operation," said Mike Gable, Executive Director of Construction Junction. "We plan to



CJ's Mike Gable with Allegheny County Chief Executive Jim Roddey and Pittsburgh Mayor Tom Murphy.

hold these events in partnership with PRC on a yearly basis." For a complete list of the recycling events, go to CJ's web site at www.constructionjunction.org. ■

PRC and Construction Junction to Host Monthly Collection Events

In an effort to "close the recycling loop" and remove items from the waste stream, the Pennsylvania Resources Council (PRC) and Construction Junction (CJ) are hosting monthly collections for different items beginning in April 2003. Since last year's collections, PRC and CJ have expanded the types of materials collected to include gas cans, electronics, gas-powered lawnmowers, latex paint, and more! See the schedule to the right for more details.

All collections will take place at Construction Junction, 214 N. Lexington Street, in the North Point Breeze section of Pittsburgh. PRC and Construction Junction are both nonprofit organizations and need volunteers to assist with directing traffic, unloading vehicles, and handling contest registration. Please consider volunteering your time for some of these events. For more information or to volunteer, call PRC at (412) 431-4449 x243. ■

Collection Schedule:*

Saturday, July 19 - (10am-2pm)

Appliances

Saturday, August 16 - (10am-2pm)

Electronics and Tires

Register to win a refurbished computer!

Saturday, September 20 - (10am-2pm)

Appliances

November and December -

Phonebooks (Drop-off during business hours)

January 2004 -

Christmas trees

*At each collection, a nominal fee will be charged for processing. Please call (412) 431-4449 x243 for prices.

These collection events are sponsored by Office Depot, Appliance Warehouse, Unipaper Recycling Company, Citizens Bank and Mother Earth Recycling and Repair sponsor these collection events. They are a project of Pennsylvania Resources Council (PRC), Construction Junction, the City of Pittsburgh, Allegheny County Health Department, the PA Department of Environmental Protection, and the Southwest Pennsylvania Ozone Action Partnership.

Lens on Litter Photography Contest



The Lens on Litter Contest is a yearly program in which Pennsylvania residents are asked to photograph the worst examples of litter in their communities. Winning photographs travel around the state to bring attention to the blight of littering and illegal dumping on the environment. The winning photographer receives \$1,000.

The 2002 winning photographer was 17 year-old Michael Cassidy, Jr., a junior at Springfield High School in Delaware County. His photograph "Reflection of Litter" is of a littered site near the train tracks in Morton, Pennsylvania.

As part of PRC's Clean Community Awards Program, the Delaware County Department of Community Service assisted in cleaning up the once-littered site. ■



"Reflection of Litter" by Michael Cassidy, Jr.



Volunteers cleaning Morton train track area.



PRC's Litterbug with volunteer clean-up crew.

Tips for a More "Natural" Lawn and Garden

"If one way be better than another, that you may be sure is Nature's way."

— Aristotle

- Don't bag your grass clippings. Grass and yard wastes can be recycled into compost along with your kitchen scraps to make a valuable - and cheap - mulch and fertilizer.
- Mulch as much as possible. It reduces evaporation and saves water
- Use rubber soaker hoses instead of sprinklers.
- Use insecticidal soaps or other non-toxic sprays that target specific insects
- Use cream of tartar or chili pepper to rid area of ants
- Soap and water spray kills aphids

For more information, visit our website at www.prc.org.

Construction Junction's goal is to become a "Full Service" recycling facility.

WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING!

at PRC

Governor Edward G. Rendell with the infamous Litterbug.



PRC Annual Awards Dinner

A Level 4 snow emergency in Philadelphia postponed PRC's December Annual Awards Dinner until February of this year. The dinner, which recognizes individuals, organizations and businesses who work to protect the environment, provides PRC an opportunity to thank valued partners as well as to help generate revenue to support PRC's educational programs.

This year, PRC recognized leaders in litter awareness and cleanup on the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of the creation of the Litterbug and PRC's fight to clean up the environment. Governor Ed Rendell dropped by to meet the infamous Litterbug and to congratulate this year's honorees.

The anti-litter champions honored were: David Hess, former secretary of the PA DEP, the Community Service Program of Delaware County, the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections, and Hoss's Steak and Sea House. ■



Nancy Martin-Silber, an educator from PRC's western office, teaches the Watershed Awareness Program at Roosevelt Elementary School in the Carrick neighborhood of Pittsburgh



Fireworks in Pittsburgh and Litterbug Bus Wrap during the lighting of the Roberto Clemente Bridge



Woodrow Wilson Middle School students presenting garden project at the Building the Town Green Conference sponsored by PRC, the Delaware Valley Green Building Council and the The Institute for Local Self Reliance.

PRC's Litterbug with children at the Philadelphia Zoo Conservation Fest



The National Soft Drink Association's Preston Read presents street-cleaning brooms to PRC's Dave Mazza and members of the Shadyside Chamber of Commerce. The National Soft Drink Association chose Pittsburgh as one of only two cities in the United States to pilot its new recycling program. The event was part of PRC's ongoing anti-litter program in the Pittsburgh area.

Hooked on Worms

As recycling goals and landfill costs climb, much time and effort continues to be put toward promoting recycling throughout the Commonwealth. However, one simple and inexpensive, yet extremely effective, recycler is often overlooked – the lowly earthworm.

Soil scientists and organic farmers have long known the value of earthworms in recycling organic materials into a valuable soil fertilizer.

In fact, some farmers consider earthworms in their soil to be as valuable as a good work crew or tractor. One to three million earthworms can be found in one acre of land. In a year's time, these worms can process over ten tons of organic residues into available plant nutrients and can turn over forty tons of soil – with no cost to the farmer. PRC's latest interest is harnessing the power of earthworms to promote the diversion of a variety of waste products from the landfill.

Worm composting, or vermicomposting ("vermi" is Latin for worm), is an effective way to recycle both food and paper waste. According to the EPA, approximately 10 percent of the waste stream is food and over 38 percent is paper. These materials can be removed from the waste stream and used as resources, specifically food and bedding, for a worm bin. Not only is vermicomposting valuable in reducing the wastestream, it also produces two highly marketable products: worms and castings. Red worms are marketable within the fishing industry and worm castings are for sale in many lawn and garden centers as a rich, organic soil fertilizer.

PRC is now working to promote worm composting in the southwestern region of the state. Funding is being requested to promote a three-session in-school worm-composting program. Additionally, a two-hour presentation on worm composting will be piloted this summer to Allegheny County residents. During the workshop, participants will be given information on setting up and maintaining a healthy worm-composting bin. Using the materials provided in the class, each student will set up a worm bin that can be used to compost his or her food waste materials. Over 150 residents have signed up to be contacted when the dates of the classes are set.

PRC is also working with residential facilities and schools to recycle food and paper waste. Westfield Farm Cooperative, a vocational rehabilitation residential facility located in Lawrence County, is participating in a worm-

composting project coordinated by PRC. Eight residents, along with staff, received three training sessions on worm composting and helped to install two commercial scale worm-composting units in August of 2002. During only a four-month period following installation, Westfield residents composted over 1,000 pounds of kitchen waste. They harvested over 80 gallons of worm castings, and their worms doubled in population. Markets for both products are currently being researched. This fall, PRC will be installing a similar system at the Felician Sisters Convent and School in Moon Township. Further funding is currently being sought to expand this program to a number of other schools and facilities in the region.

Sometimes the simplest solutions to the most overwhelming problems can be right in front of your face. When looking at organic waste materials, the solution is underfoot. ■

Ground Level Ozone

Ozone(O₃) is a complex form of oxygen. In the upper atmosphere, it saves our skin by shielding the earth from harmful ultraviolet rays. However, when ozone forms close to the ground, it can harm us. We call this type of ozone "ground-level" ozone pollution.

Ground-level ozone is produced when nitrogen oxides (NO_x) and volatile organic compounds (VOC's) combine under intense sunlight. On warm days, these VOC's and NO_x "bake" together in the sun forming dangerous ozone concentrations which can remain over large regions. Both urban and rural areas can have high ozone levels, depending on wind speed, direction and topography. Ground-level ozone causes various health problems for humans and damages crops and ocean life.

The "bad" ozone can aggravate bronchitis, emphysema and asthma. Even healthy adults can feel ill on high ozone days, especially while exercising or working outdoors. Prolonged exposure to high concentrations of ground-level ozone can lead to lung damage.

Cont. on next page



Region's First County-Wide Household Hazardous Waste Event a Success

The Southwestern Pennsylvania Household Hazardous Waste Task Force, a volunteer group representing a diverse mix of over 15 individuals from industry, environmental, educational, non-profit, and government organizations was formed to develop a cooperative, multi-county household hazardous waste collection program for residents of Southwestern Pennsylvania.

The mission of the Task Force is to facilitate the proper collection and disposal of household hazardous waste and minimize its generation through education in Southwestern Pennsylvania. PRC has been working with the SW Task Force since its inception January 2002 and not only acts as the task force administrator, but also sits on the administrative, funding, and education subcommittees.

The first collection event was held Saturday, May 31, at Heinz Field in Pittsburgh. The event marks the first time the region has had a coordinated HHW collection event in over twenty years and approximately 1500 people participated. Future 2003 events are tentatively planned for Armstrong, Beaver, and Westmoreland counties. ■



Cars lined up to drop off hazardous waste materials at Heinz Field in Pittsburgh

Cont. from previous page

How you can help prevent ground-level ozone from forming:

- Postpone non-essential trips or combine several errands
- Carpool, walk, take the bus, or bike to work when you can
- Postpone fueling your automobile tank until evening
- Keep your car in good working condition and keep tires properly inflated
- While driving, avoid prolonged idling and jackrabbit starts
- Switch from a gas-powered to an electric lawnmower
- Postpone using your lawn and garden gas-powered equipment until evening
- Avoid using lighter fluid when lighting a charcoal grill. Better yet, switch to a gas grill
- Don't burn leaves or trash, compost or recycle instead ■

New Pasture Management Plan at Ridley

Clonmel Farm, a horse boarding and equestrian training operation, is a PRC tenant at our Ridley facilities near Newtown Square, PA. This past spring, a new Pasture Management Plan was implemented to protect against soil erosion, nutrient runoff, water pollution and over grazing. In addition to the resource conservation benefits, the Plan will provide more grazing opportunity for the horses, more sustainable grasses, enhanced watering facilities and a significant savings in purchased feed. The Plan was developed by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service in cooperation with the Southeastern PA Resource Conservation & Development Council, PA

Department of Environmental Protection, Clonmel Farm and PRC. The first open house was held May 11th and additional ones are being planned. Their purpose is to educate fellow ranchers and farmers on ways to enhance production and reduce costs while protecting natural resources. Everyone wins! ■



Horse path following contour lines for horse movement at PRC facility.

PRC Hosts Environmental Birthday Parties

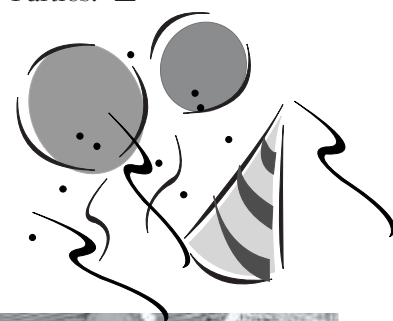


Nestled on a 22-acre picturesque landscape, the Pennsylvania Resources Council Newtown Square Environmental Living Center is the perfect place to hold birthday parties for any age. The main house looks out onto rolling fields, horses, a stunning wetland area, and much more!

PRC's first Environmental Birthday Party was held on August 10, 2002, and the second was held May 18, 2003. Both children celebrating their birthdays with PRC are from our Hands-on-the-Environment Summer Camp.

There are many options to choose from when planning your birthday party with PRC. Themes and hands on activities for partygoers delight children and adults as they celebrate this wonderful occasion. The event also acts as a learning experience for everyone at the birthday party, gaining information and facts on selected environmental themes. A

guest appearance from the Litterbug is the icing on the cake at PRC's Environmental Birthday Parties. ■



To schedule a party or an Eco-Event at PRC's Environmental Living Center, call 610-353-1555, ext. 228.



Children's Pages COMPOSTING

D T U R V X W D X S W O I V R T O I C S F X W M D H T
 S S G U B H S K M O C Q S A Q A J A D H M H Y H H E S
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 G Z Z M L W P K R T J K U X A Q I Z A Z M G P V C A Z

Words to Find

Air Browns Bugs CoffeeFilter CoffeeGrounds
 Compost Dairy Fat Fruit Grass Greens Heat
 Landfill Leaves Meat Oil PaperTowels Pile Plants
 Soil Sun Teabags Trash Vegetable Water Worm

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