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President's Message - Dr. Ralph Cioppa

The Twin and Walker Creeks Watershed Conservancy's ability to sustain our programs to preserve the environment is due to all our generous supporters. **We need your support to continue.** Your contributions and letters of support since our founding in 2001 enable us to serve our community, informing you about maintaining and improving our environment. We carry out constant monitoring of our lakes and streams. We have advised our community about current issues, offered septic advice, conducted a septic survey, made our neighbors aware of the problems with in ground fuel storage tanks, informed homeowners of methods of controlling water run off, installing rain gardens, compost barrels and rain barrels, published our semiannual newsletter, maintained contact with politicians, county agencies, state agencies and local townships and conducted our annual educational program in the Shohola Elementary School. We thank our community for its commitment.

We are faced with another potentially destructive environmental issue, drilling for gas deep within the shale formations in our watershed. Past experience has proven that many problems can arise and there is no need to enumerate them here. We may lose the battle to prevent drilling but not without a logical and persuasive attempt to make the gas drilling corporations seek easier areas. Should the gas companies insist on carrying out their agenda, we must insure that the pollution issues of the past do not happen here.

We will continue our educational efforts insuring that our community is able to understand and be aware of these problems. Our first thrust is prevention, second is control, and third holding the parties contributing to problems responsible. These parties may include our public and landowners, our legislators, workers, and enforcers. We can no longer be sure of support for our environment. Our State claims it will inspect and enforce but the rules have been weakened. Agencies do not have trained staff to enforce whatever laws apply. Our thrust has to be to: first, to try prevent gas drilling; second, if drilling ensues insure that compliance with environmental concerns are met; third, strengthen our legislative process to strengthen rules.

Our next general meeting will discuss both sides of the issue of gas drilling. We have joined with many other groups to reinforce existing coalitions. They will be invited as well as our legislators, newspaper reporters, landowners, the community at large, and the gas drilling companies. We need to know and they need to know we will care. Save June 12, 2010 for this meeting.

The mission of the Conservancy is to promote a better understanding of the Twin/Walker Creeks Watershed and its ecosystems and to protect, restore and enhance the watershed through proper management and watershed stewardship.

New Research on Pesticide and Insecticide Effects on Amphibians

..... *William McCullough*

Environmental Protection Agency testing for toxic effects on humans and animals covers only a four day test period. It fails to account for toxins' long term effects. University of Pittsburgh researchers have found that frogs and tadpoles exposed to varying strengths of highly toxic pesticide endosulfan, a neurotoxin banned in several nations but used extensively in U.S. agriculture, survived for the four day test period. The researchers then put the specimens in clear, pure water. Within four more days up to 97% of leopard frog tadpoles and up to 50% of spring peepers and American toad tadpoles perished. (Read the report on www.pitt.edu/news2009/Endosulfan.pdf)

Another study involving the popular weed killer "Roundup" found that it is extremely lethal to a wide group of larval amphibians including nine frog and toad species and four salamander species. Furthermore it was found that the world's ten most popular pesticides which have been found in nature combine to form "cocktails of contaminants" which destroy amphibian populations. This is even if the individual chemicals are in concentrations considered safe for animals and humans. The popular insecticide Malathion applied in gradual amounts too small to directly kill certain amphibians, instead caused a biological chain reaction depriving them of their primary food source and indirectly causing a high mortality rate. (Read a news release about this work at www.news.pitt.edu)

It behooves us to greatly reduce, if not cease our use of these pesticides and insecticides whose use has been declared safe for humans and animals by the Environmental Protection Agency. It has now been proven that the EPA's conclusion is based on insufficient testing for long term effects for more than the initial four days.

Maple Drive Stormwater Runoff - Paul Palladino

Phase I of an Erosion and Sediment Control Plan has been completed on Maple Drive. This project was a joint venture of the (Twin and Walker Creek Watershed Conservancy), the (Walker Lake Landowners Association) and property owners Chet and Pat Dawson of Maple Drive.

For many years stormwater run-off, containing heavy sediment, phosphates and other contaminants, all very harmful to our pristine lake, have been flowing into Walker Lake via a stream on the Dawson's property. This stormwater from Pond Drive (Road) and land adjacent to the Shohola Fire Station #2, has long been a source of pollutants to our lake.

The project was spearheaded by the TWCWC, with financial assistance from WLLA and the Dawson's. The control plan was designed by Kiley Associates LLC, Surveyors and Engineers of Lakeville, PA. and constructed by Johnson Precision Stonewalls, of Lafayette, NJ. The plan was approved by the Pike County Conservation District.

Early indications of the success of the project are favorable, as evidenced by the recent heavy rainstorms and the collection of large amounts of water in the holding pond and collection basin. The TWCWC thanks the Walker Lake community, and urges continued financial and moral support, so that we may continue to protect our very valuable watershed. The completion of the project is a very proud moment for our Conservancy.

Treasurer's Report - Linda Cioppa

The Conservancy currently has \$7892.94 in its checking account and an additional \$13251.81 in a Money Market account. We received a number of individual contributions this year, in addition to \$1000 from the Twin Lakes Property Owners Association, \$500 from Walker Lakes Landowners Association, and \$200 from the Sagamore Property Owners Association. We have also received substantial contributions from WLLA and the property owner for the work on Maple Drive near the mailboxes, which will materially reduce the amount of runoff and silt entering Walker Lake from Pond Road, the firehouse area, and the property next to the firehouse. There will be substantial additional expenditures to complete the Maple Drive project.

Please continue to support our efforts with your contributions.

More News about Japanese Knotweed — Irene DeVito

Last October, I wrote a piece in this space telling about the predatory nature of a botanical bully, called Japanese Knotweed. At the end of the piece, I bemoaned the fact that deer don't eat it, so it had no natural enemies.

To my surprise and some consternation, I have learned recently that maybe deer don't eat it BUT WE DO! I say consternation because if it becomes too popular as a food supply we may never be rid of it. But we are nothing if not honest and open here at the TWCWC, so I am printing the names of some sites on which you can actually find recipes for the stuff.

Among many others (just Google Japanese knotweed) the New England Wildflower Society at www.newfs.org has recipes. www.wildmanstevebrill.com informs us of its value as a natural pesticide and its medicinal properties. It is valued for its rhubarb like cooking qualities and there are even recipes for sherbet on the Google search. I have to admit that I am never going to go cut some and cook it in any form to eat it, but some of you may find that this is just your cup of tea (which can also be made from it). To you I say, Happy Eating! - And please tell us about your experience!

*Update on Marcellus Shale Natural Gas Drilling What *You* Can Do: - Shirley Masuo*

With drinking water contamination and water well explosions in Colorado, cancer-causing toxins found in the air around gas drilling sites in Texas, and toxic fracking fluid spills in Wyoming and Pennsylvania, the dangers of unregulated natural gas drilling are becoming ever more apparent. Although gas drilling is most likely here to stay, we have a unique opportunity today to learn from the misfortune of others and change the future.

In 2005, the gas and oil industry was exempted from the Safe Drinking Water Act, leading to unscrupulous drilling methods by some companies. A frac-fast attitude across the country has left devastated land and contaminated well water in its wake. But there is a bill making its way through both the House and Senate known as the FRAC act (Fracturing Responsibility and Awareness of Chemicals Act), which would end this exemption; requiring full, public disclosure of the chemicals used in gas drilling.

The issue of hydraulic fracturing has fractured more than just shale; it has divided communities, but the good thing about the FRAC Act is that it's good for everyone. Those who are skeptical of the secrecy surrounding gas drilling would be able to get needed information, information good for those who would like to sign leases as well, so as to best protect their property and water supplies from damage.

Regardless of your opinion about gas drilling - for, against, or somewhere in between - it's important that you let your Senators and Congressmen know you want the FRAC Act passed. Please contact Senator Arlen Specter and Congressman Chris Carney, or the representatives in the area in which you are eligible to vote. Call, e-mail AND send a hard copy letter to each one and ask them to co-sponsor the FRAC Act. When you're done, educate at least one other person about the issue. It is important that each and every one of us takes the time to add our voice to the effort to better regulate the natural gas industry.

TWCWC Goes to School - Irene DeVito

On May 13, members of the TWCWC board returned to the classroom – the grade school classroom! TWCWC partnered with the Pike County Conservation District and NPS to present an Environmental Day at Shohola Elementary School. Students heard from NPS employees and watershed conservancy members who covered such subjects as Protecting our Water Supply, Conserving Water and Protecting Our Land from Water Runoff. Animal Tales/Tails and a Nature Trail were other presentations that interested the students. Joe Messineo and Nelia Wall taught the children how to properly plant a tree. Trees were planted on a section of the campus and hopefully they will grow there for many years to come! A delicious lunch was provided by the school and the afternoon sessions proved to be as busy and informational as the morning sessions. Watershed members made their way home after a very long and busy day tired but pleased to have been able to provide this service to the school.



Twin & Walker Creeks
Watershed Conservancy

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*Next Meeting 10 am—
June 12, 2010*

Resident
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Shohola, PA 18458

2010 CONSERVANCY CONTRIBUTION

I am concerned with the future quality and quantity of the water resources in our neighborhood and would like to support the conservation efforts of the Twin/Walker Creeks Watershed Conservancy through a yearly membership.

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____ City _____

State _____ Zip _____ Email _____

I am interested in learning more about volunteer monitoring efforts

Check type of contribution

Senior/Student—\$5.00

Individual— \$10.00

Family— \$15.00

Corporate— \$40.00

In support of the Conservancy's efforts, I would like to provide an additional gift in the amount of
\$ _____ Total Enclosed _____

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