



Greene County Conservation District

NEWSLETTER | JANUARY 2019

CONSERVATION DISTRICT MEMBERS

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

- Blair Zimmerman, Chairman
- Dave Coder, Vice Chairman
- Archie Trader, Secretary

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- James Cowell, Jr, Chairman
- Archie Trader, Vice Chairman & Commissioner Representative
- Tom Headlee, Treasurer
- Mike Belding, Secretary
- William Wentzel, Director
- Jim Jones, Director
- Dave Shipman, Farmer Director

ASSOCIATE DIRECTORS

- Gay Thistle
- Glodenna Halstead
- William Cree, Jr.
- Jerry Day
- Dave Shipman
- Jim Willis
- Jeff Rode
- Dominick Barbetta
- Joel Folman
- Rebecca Salosky
- Charles Kubasik
- Carol Adamson
- Spencer Johnson
- Greg Hopkins

DISTRICT STAFF

- Lisa Snider, District Manager
- Lindsay Kozlowski, Assistant Manager; Environmental Program Specialist
- Zachary Basinger, Environmental Program Specialist
- Benjamin Schweiger, Conservation Technician
- Sara Hlatkey, Conservation Technician
- April Morris, Fiscal Officer
- Jared Zinn, Watershed Specialist

Conservation District Honors Thirteen at Annual Awards Ceremony



Pictured (left to right): Curt Hughes, Outstanding Cooperator of the Year Award recipient; Jim Cowell, GCCD Vice Chairman; Makenzie Thomas, Avery Berdine, Courtney Ross, members of the FFA Livestock Judging Team; Karlie Wright, FFA Advisor; and Sierra Pettit, FFA American Degree recipient.

The Greene County Conservation District honored thirteen recipients during its annual awards ceremony on Wednesday, Dec. 12 at Valley View Farm in Waynesburg.

Each year, the Conservation District honors those within the county who have shown an outstanding commitment to soil and water conservation.

Listed (in no particular order) are the honorees for 2018:

- Sarah Calvert, recipient of the Outstanding Conservation Speaker Award;

- Cumberland Township, Dirt Gravel and Low Volume Road Program Municipality of the Year;

- Curt Hughes, Outstanding Cooperator of the Year recipient;

- Sierra Pettit and Rodney Parson, Special Recognition FFA American Degree recipients;

- The West Greene FFA National Livestock Judging Team, which finished in first place at the State FFA Summer Convention and third place at the 2018 National FFA Convention; which includes: Savannah Pettit, Courtney Ross, Avery Berdine, and Makenzie Thomas;

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COOPERATING AGENCIES

- Greene County Department of Economic Development
Jeremy Kelly, Planning and Business Development Manager
- Natural Resources Conservation Service - Phil Evans, District Conservationist
- PA DCNR Bureau of Forestry - Russell Gibbs, Service Forester
- PA DEP Field Representative - Chuck Kubasik
- PA Fish and Boat Commission - Eric Davis, SW Region Waterways Conservation Officer
- Penn State Cooperative Extension - Tom Beresnyak, Area 6 Client Relations Manager
- Washington/Greene County Farm Service Agency - Michal Roup, CED
- PA Game Commission - Brandon Bonin

DISTRICT LOCATION

Our office is located on the 2nd Floor of the Ben Franklin Building at 22 West High Street
Suite 204
Waynesburg, PA 15370
Phone: 724-852-5278
gccd@co.greene.pa.us
Hours: 8:30 am to 4:30 pm Monday-Friday

The GCCD Board meets monthly at 10:00 am in the Conservation District Conference Room, 2nd Floor of the Ben Franklin Building at 22 West High Street, Suite 204.

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- The Carmichaels Envirothon Team – State Envirothon Champions who finished 18th at the International Championship – which includes: Joey Kurincak, Jacob Hair, Ryan Swartz, Stephan Zaco, Christina Adams and team advisors Kevin Willis and Megan Patton;

- Archie Trader, Greene County Commissioner and Conservation District Board Member, who was awarded for 10 years of service as a Conservation District Board Member;

- Jim Cowell, Vice Chairman, who was awarded for 15 years of service as a Conservation District Board Member;

- Glodenna Halstead, who was awarded for five years as an Associate Conservation District Board Member;

- Gay Thistle, who was awarded for five years as an Associate Conservation District Board Member;

- Jared Zinn, who was awarded for five years of service as a district employee (Watershed Specialist);

- Zack Basinger, who was awarded for five years as a district employee (Environmental Program Specialist).

Sarah Calvert, a senior at Waynesburg Central High School, was recognized for her outstanding speaking skills and for placing first at the Greene County FFA Conservation Public Speaking Contest. She is the daughter of Judy and Richard Calvert of Spraggs.

Cumberland Township was recognized for enhancing municipal roads with environmentally sensitive maintenance practices that protect water as developed by the Center for Dirt and Gravel Roads. Cumberland Township has long sought to improve Carter Road, located off of Rt. 21 near Khedive. Earlier this fall, the township added nearly 2 feet of fill to the road, added and realigned multiple cross drains, installed over 400 feet of underdrain, and added a new gravel surface to the road. The project has vastly improved drainage issues and the roads drivability.

Curt Hughes, a recently retired agricultural science teacher at West Greene High School, was recognized for the Outstanding Cooperator of the Year Award, in recognition of his accomplishments and commitment to the conservation of soil, water, and related resources through his agricultural practices.

Mr. Hughes operates a rotational grazing beef cattle and sheep farm on his 174-acre property in Richhill Township. He has been a district cooperator since 2016 and also recently participated in the districts GRACE program to apply lime and fertilizer on his fields and repairing several watering systems for the livestock.

Sierra Pettit and Rodney Parson of West Greene High School were recognized for the outstanding achievement of being awarded the highest FFA honor, the FFA American Degree; joining the less than one percent of the elite members by getting this degree.

For more information on the Conservation District awards, call 724-852-5278.



Pictured (left to right) are members of the Carmichaels Envirothon Team: Team Advisors Megan Patton and Kevin Willis, and team members Jacob Hair, Ryan Swartz, Stephan Zaco, Joey Kurincak and Christina Adams. The team won the State Envirothon Championship and finished 18th at the International Championship.



Pictured are Jim Cowell, District Vice Chairman and Sarah Calvert, who was honored as Outstanding Speaker of the Year.



Pictured (left to right) are Jim Cowell, District Vice Chairman and Bill Nicholson and Marcia Sonneborn, representing Cumberland Township. The township was honored as Dirt Gravel and Low Volume Road Program Municipality of the Year.



Pictured (left to right) are Service Award winners Commissioner Archie Trader, Glodenna Halstead, Jim Cowell, Chuck Kubasik, Zack Basinger, and Jared Zinn.



Gearing up for the 2019 Greene County Envirothon

The Greene County Conservation District is actively organizing the 32nd Annual Greene County Envirothon that will be held on May 9th, 2019 at Hunting Hills in Dilliner. Teams of students from all five County School Districts will compete in this contest that will test their knowledge on five topics - soils and land use, aquatic ecology, forestry, wildlife, and environmental issues. The 2019 current issue is Agriculture and the Environment: Knowledge and Technology to Feed the World.

Each member of the winning Greene County team will receive a \$500 higher education scholarship and will represent Greene County at the Pennsylvania Envirothon. The 2018 winners, from Carmichaels High School, went on to win

the Pennsylvania Envirothon which earned them additional scholarships and the opportunity to represent Pennsylvania at the NCF Envirothon. At this international competition, which was held in Pocatello, Idaho, the Carmichaels team earned a respectable 18th place overall out of 50 teams.

The Conservation District is incredibly proud of not only these winning students but all of the students who work to learn about our natural resources in preparation for the Envirothon each year. It is gratifying to see this level of dedication to the ideals of conservation in Greene County's youth. We also recognize that the Conservation District is not alone responsible for the Greene County Envirothon. Without the support,

partnership and sponsorships of many state and federal agencies, local and national businesses, groups and organizations this event would not be possible.

We would like to take this opportunity to express our thanks to supporters of the upcoming 2019 Greene County Envirothon which currently includes Black Diamond, Dominion Energy, Bankson Engineers, and Mike Belding for Commissioner. The Conservation District is still accepting sponsors for the 2019 Envirothon, if you would be interested in either donating to the day's event, volunteering for the event or donating to the higher education scholarship, please contact the District at 724-852-5278.



Carmichaels Team #1 won this year's Greene County Envirothon with a score of 475. The Envirothon is organized by the Greene County Conservation District (GCCD) and funded through various donations and grants including EQT Foundation, Bankson Engineers, PA Envirothon, Hunting Hills, Dominion Energy and Direct Results. All winning team members will receive a \$500 scholarship. Pictured, from l. to r., are team advisor Kevin Willis; Mike Belding, GCCD Board of Director; team members Joey Kurincak (11th grade), Jacob Hair (11th grade), Ryan Swartz (11th grade), Stephan Zaco (11th grade) and Christina Adams (10th grade); Bill Wentzel, GCCD Board of Director; Megan Patton, team advisor; Roy Sisler, Hunting Hills; and Bradley Eisiminger, GCCD Board of Director.



The Carmichaels team representing Pennsylvania at the NCF Envirothon. These students earned a very respectable 18th place at this international competition. With a score of 554.5 out of 700, this team missed the top ten by only 13.5 points.



The Carmichaels team at the State Capitol Building. These students won the Pennsylvania Envirothon with a score of 546 out of a possible 600. This is the first time that a team from Southwestern Pennsylvania has won the Pennsylvania Envirothon since 1995.

ON-LOT SEPTIC SYSTEMS:

The Importance of Maintenance and How to Pay for It.

Repairing or replacing an on-lot septic system can be a difficult and expensive proposition. For much of Greene County, though, it is a necessary burden as municipal wastewater management is not available. This article will discuss on-lot septic systems, provide information on basic maintenance and highlight a program that can help landowners pay for repairs or replacements.

The inset image (below) describes the basic structure and function of an on-lot septic system. One of the reasons on-lot septic can be problematic is that Greene County is known for a seasonably high water table. This means that groundwater is stored near the surface in our soils as opposed to deep within the earth. In years with record rainfall, like the one we just experienced, the water table is even closer to the surface. This is one of the reasons why so many of us struggle with wet basements. It also means that our groundwater is more susceptible to pollution from leaking on-lot septic systems because there is less soil between the

groundwater and the sources of pollution.

Like just about everything in our homes, our on-lot septic systems require regular maintenance to operate efficiently. Neglecting this maintenance results in septic failures, like raw sewage rising through our lawns or backing up in our bathtubs, sinks and other drains. It can also result in pollution of groundwater, which is a major concern for landowners that also have a private drinking water well on the property.

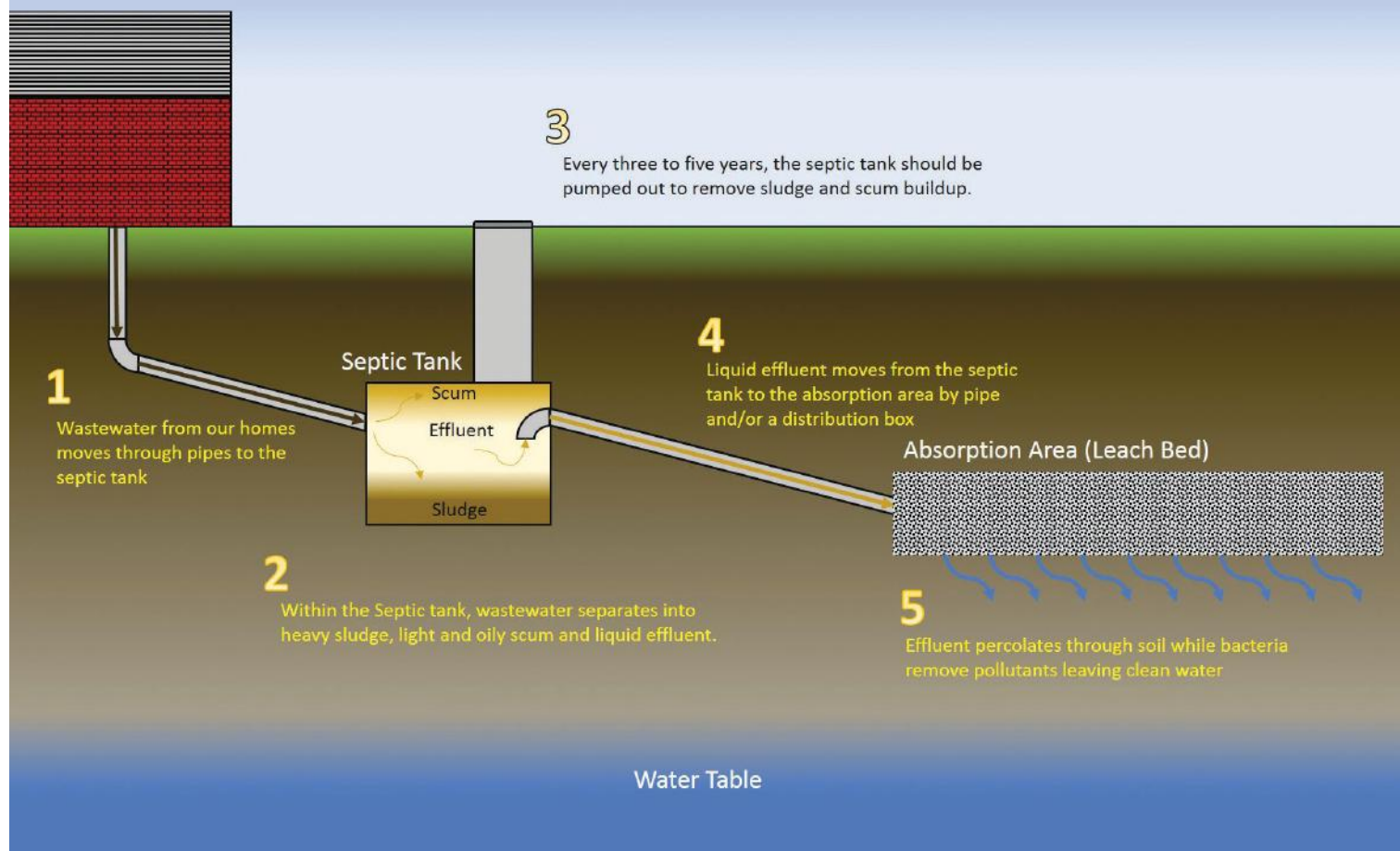
At the very least, the system should be inspected annually and pumped out every three to five years. It is always recommended to avoid compaction of the absorption area by keeping heavy things like vehicles and livestock out of these areas. Pennsylvania DEP offers more in-depth information about on-lot septic systems and their maintenance on their website (link at end of article). Being a homeowner myself, I know that sometimes important maintenance and repairs get

put off simply because they are too expensive at the time.

To help with these costs, PENNVEST offers a Homeowner Septic Loan program. These loans are available for three types of use that will cover most landowners. They can be used to repair or replace an existing on-lot septic system; repair or replace and existing connection to a public sewer, or to connect an existing home to a public sewer for the first time.

These funds can be used to pay for design, construction and permit costs. They offer very low, fixed interest rates and allow up to 20 years to repay them. This is a great way to update or replace your on-lot septic system to ensure proper function for your home and safe groundwater for you and your neighbors. For more information on the PENNVEST Homeowner Septic Loan Program, contact the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency at 1-855-827-3466 or visit www.phfa.org.

Basic Structure and Operation of an On-Lot Septic system





Conservation District to Offer New, Larger 4½-Ton Wet lime Spreader

The Conservation District has recently purchased a second, larger, wet lime spreader for use by Greene County's agricultural community. Applying lime to pasture and hay fields is one of the simplest management decisions to make. Increasing soil pH can increase forage yields and palatability, with relatively low cost to the producer.

The new 4½-ton spreader does not have surge brakes, like the District's 2-ton spreader, but has more than double the capacity. It is ideal for larger meadows where steep slopes are not as much of a concern. Its large capacity means that a farmer can spend more time spreading lime and less time loading lime.

The District is still going to offer the 2-ton spreader as well. This spreader remains ideal for small pastures and areas where steep slopes are a concern. Offering these two different spreaders

gives farmers more options to manage their forage with lime.

In addition to the two lime spreaders, the Conservation District also offers a seven-foot, end wheel no-till drill equipped with three seed boxes. This drill allows Greene County farmers to implement a no-till crop production system, which includes cover crops and promotes good pasture management.

No-till involves planting the seed directly into the soil without plowing, tilling or disking. Advantages of no-till practices include: reducing operator's time and expenses; promoting healthier soils through building soil structure and adding organic matter; feeding beneficial microorganisms; reducing soil loss from erosion and increasing infiltration and increasing yields due to optimal soil conditions.

In addition to pasture sizes and slopes, farmers should consider equipment sizes and transportation as well. A 50hp or larger tractor is needed for the 2-ton spreader while the 4½-ton spreader requires a 75hp or larger tractor. Both spreaders may be towed on roads at moderate speeds (approximately 45mph). The no-till drill requires 55hp or larger tractor and a heavy-duty truck is required for transport.

All three of these implements are available for rent from Conservation District on a first-come, first-served basis. A refundable deposit of \$50 for either spreader and \$150 for the no-till drill is required to schedule a three-day rental. For more details, please contact Ben Schweiger at the Greene County Conservation District at bschweiger@co.greene.pa.us or 724-852-5278.

NEW STAFF



The Conservation District welcomes Sara Hlatky, one of the new Conservation Technicians. Sara grew up in Greene County and graduated from Mapletown Jr. Sr. High School in 2014. She furthered her education by attending Waynesburg University where she majored in Biology. While the University, Sara researched the biotic and abiotic impacts of chronic acid mine drainage under the mentorship of Dr. Wayne Rossiter. Her research was presented at three research conferences.

She participated in a service trip with the Chinesgut Conservation Center Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission in March of 2018. The service trip involved land management projects and wildlife survey activities. She graduated with her Bachelor of Science in May of 2018. Sara is very excited for the experience of working with the District and we are all excited about her enthusiasm.



The Conservation District welcomes a new Fiscal Officer to our staff. Lifelong Greene County resident, April Morris, has taken over the position and is quickly becoming a valued member of our team. As a fiscal officer she undertakes the often-unseen tasks that are so necessary for the work of the Conservation District. She brings a lot of valuable experience to the position, having worked for the county's Department of Recreation for ten years.

Originally from Waynesburg, April now lives in Carmichaels with her spouse and two children. She enjoys the challenges of gardening; growing fruit and vegetables in the clay soils so common in Southwestern Pennsylvania. April expresses a love of nature and has a keen interest in conserving Greene County's natural resources.



NOW ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS: GREENE COUNTY FARMLAND PRESERVATION

Are you wanting to improve your farm? Are you looking to ensure your property is farmed for future generations? Have you have thought about enrolling in Farmland Preservation and selling an easement for help with projects on your farm as well as ensuring future farming?

The Greene County Farmland Preservation Board is now accepting applications from qualifying landowners for the agricultural conservation easement program. The tentative deadline for applications is February 28th, 2019

The agricultural conservation easement can permanently protect a family's farmland from being lost to future non-agricultural development. It may be used as an estate planning tool to help landowners successfully pass farms on to the next generation. Or landowners may receive cash for some of the equity tied up in their land for expansion or improving farm operation, debt repayment or retirement while retaining ownership of their land.

The easement is an interest in land, which represents the right to prevent development or improvement of a parcel for any purpose other than agricultural production. The easement may be granted by a farmland owner to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, a county agricultural land preservation program, a local government unit or a local land trust.

Easements may be sold or donated with the restrictions recorded in the recorder of deeds office in the county where the easement is located.

For eligibility, a landowner must: be enrolled in an approved agricultural security area consisting of at least 500 acres; have at least 50 contiguous acres; have at least 50% of the soils on the parcel under consideration in soil capability classes I to IV (as defined by the web Soil Survey), be available for agricultural production, and contain the greater of 50% or at least ten acres of harvested cropland, pasture or grazing land. The landowner will also need to provide ownership verification to the surface mineral rights on the parcel being considered.

Currently in Greene County, there are eight townships with approved agricultural security areas: Center, Cumberland, Franklin, Greene, Jefferson, Morgan, Washington and Wayne. If your land is in one of these townships, you may be eligible for Farmland Preservation – even if you are not yet in the Agricultural Security program. If you are not, but you are interested in Agricultural Security Areas or Farmland Preservation, please call us to find out more information about beginning an Agricultural Security Area in your township!

For more information, please contact Ben Schweiger from the Greene County Conservation District office at 724-852-5278 or bschweiger@co.greene.pa.us.



WANTED:

**Candidates for Next WCO Academy
STARTING Summer 2019**



The Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission (PFBC) Bureau of Law Enforcement is seeking 20 qualified candidates for the position of Waterways Conservation Officer Trainee. The selected individuals will report for training in the Summer of 2019 and be commissioned in the Summer of 2020. Additional information can be found on PFBC's website at www.fishandboat.com or by contacting 717-705-7820. Testing information is available on the Pennsylvania Civil Service Commission's website at www.employment.pa.gov.

- Pennsylvania Residency is REQUIRED, must be 21 years of age to apply.
- Pennsylvania Driver's License is REQUIRED.
- Must pass Criminal History check.
- Starting salary of \$31,345 plus comprehensive benefits, to include Law Enforcement Retirement Program (Age 55, 25 years).
- Will attend 1 year of comprehensive training, including ACT 120 and specialized Conservation Law Enforcement programs.
- Promotion to WATERWAYS CONSERVATION OFFICER upon completion of training.
- This position allows the successful candidate to enjoy a rewarding career in Conservation Law Enforcement, protecting our aquatic resources and those who enjoy them across the Commonwealth.



Join the 15th Annual Great American Cleanup of PA

Cleaning up our neighborhoods is one of the best and easiest ways to help build safe and healthy communities.

The 15th annual Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful Great American Cleanup of PA can help get you started. From March 1 through May 31, thousands of Pennsylvania families and friends will partake in litter and illegal dump cleanups, beautification projects, such as tree and flower plantings, recycling collections and education programs. Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful partners with PennDOT, the Department of Environmental Protection, and Keep America Beautiful to provide free trash bags, gloves, and safety vests to registered participants, as supplies last. **During Let's Pick It Up PA - Everyday from April 13th through May 6th**, cleanups registered with the Great American Cleanup of PA are eligible to take their trash to participating landfills free of charge or for a reduced rate.

Registration begins in January at gacofpa.org. Questions can be answered by Michelle Dunn, Great American Cleanup of PA Program Coordinator, at 1-877-772-3673 ext. 113 or mdunn@keeppabeautiful.org.

Registered events can win cash for a nonprofit or charity by entering the Great American Cleanup of PA Video Contest. Visit gacofpa.org/video-contest/ for more information.

Join thousands of Pennsylvanians during this initiative to help keep our neighborhoods clean and beautiful.



2 Electronics Recycling Events in 2019

Wednesday, **May 1** and **September 25**

New times: 2:00 – 6:00 PM



Greene County Fairgrounds - Rabbit Barn

Sponsored by

GREENE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

BLAIR ZIMMERMAN, DAVE CODER, ARCHIE TRADER

and

STATE REPRESENTATIVE PAM SNYDER

Questions? Call Mimi Ritenour, Greene Co. Recycling Coordinator 724-852-5300



JVS Environmental accepts

ONLY 1 OLD STYLE CRT TV PER CAR!

Multiple Flat screen TV's/monitors, OK.



NEW FEES COLLECTED BY JVS ENVIRONMENTAL:

- TV's that are torn apart/busted glass: \$50 Hazardous waste fee
- Freon appliances: \$20 each for Freon removal
- CFL & Fluorescent lightbulbs: \$2 per bulb (cash or check to "JVS Environmental")





**Greene County
Conservation District**

22 West High Street, Suite 204
Ben Franklin Bldg. 2nd Floor
Waynesburg, PA 15370

PRSRT STD
U.S. POSTAGE
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Pittsburgh, PA
Permit No. 503



Promoting Soil and Water Conservation in Greene County Since 1956

Calendar of Events

April 27, 8:00 am – 4:00 pm: Washington Township Clean-up Day. This event will be held at the Washington Township Maintenance Building in Ruff Creek, PA. It is open to all Washington Township residents. Contact the Township Supervisor's office at 724-627-6471 for details.

May 1: Greene County Electronics Recycling Event. Brought to you by the Greene County Commissioners and Representative Pam Snyder, this event will collect electronics that are often difficult to dispose of at nominal costs. For more information, contact Mimi Ritenour, Greene Co. Recycling Coordinator 724-852-5300

May 4: Morris Township Clean-up day. This event is open to residents of Morris Township. Contact the township office at 724-627-9844 for details.

May 4: Whiteley Township Spring Clean-up. This event will be held at the Whiteley Township Municipal Building and is open to all Whiteley Township residents. Contact the township office at 724-627-8935 for details.

May 4, 10:00 am – 12:00 pm: Kids Day of Fishing. The Harry Enstrom Chapter of Greene County, Izaak Walton League of America will hold this annual event on Tenmile Creek at the Old Chartiers mine in Clarksville. This event is open to children aged one through fifteen and will include prizes and a free lunch. For more information, contact Ken Dufalla at 724-377-0901

May 4, 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm: Ladies Day of Fishing. The Harry Enstrom Chapter of Greene County, Izaak Walton League of America will hold this annual event on Tenmile Creek at the Old Chartiers mine in Clarksville. This event is open to ladies only and will include prizes. For more information, contact Ken Dufalla at 724-377-0901

May 18-19, 10:00 am – 5:00 pm: Sheep and Fiber Fest. Held at the Greene County Fairgrounds, this 16th annual event will feature crafts, fiber vendors, spinning weaving and shearing demonstrations and much more. Visit www.sheepandfiber.com or call 724-627-8119 for details.

July 20, All day: Cabbage Flats Community Yard Sale. This event will be held at Cabbage Flats along route 88 in Greensboro. Come early for best selections. Contact Nancy McIntire at 724-998-4609 for more details.

Oct 5: Morris Township Clean-up day. This event is open to residents of Morris Township. Contact the township office at 724-627-9844 for details.

TBD: Waynesburg Borough Spring Cleanup Days. This event is likely to be held in the spring during the first or second Thursday, Friday, and Saturday of May and again in the fall during the first or second Thursday, Friday, and Saturday of October. Both events will be held at the Street Department compound on First Street. Contact the Borough Office at 724-627-8111 for more details.