



# SCWA Newsletter

SUMMER EDITION

JULY 2013

## Sewickley Creek Watershed Association

*Working Together  
For A Better  
Environment*

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**Thomas W. Keller**  
*Executive Director*

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## Tours Now Available at Lowber System



Association member and local resident, Lewis Stout, explains the operation of the Lowber AMD Treatment System to Pitt Students.

In early 2012, SCWA partnered with Yough High School to build an educational kiosk and interpretive trail around the Lowber Abandoned Mine Drainage (AMD) Treatment Facility in Sewickley Township. The intent was to eventually offer the facility as an outdoor environmental lab for area schools and colleges as a way to supplement their in-class studies. Students would be able to see first-hand how AMD water is treated to the point

where it will actually support trout, and also learn a little about local coal mining history in the process.

The Association has begun promoting tours of the Lowber facility, and providing an interpreter, Lewis Stout, to guide them. The first tour was conducted with Professor McCreary's Environmental Chemistry Class from the University of Pittsburgh, Greensburg Campus, this spring. Mr. Stout explained how the system was built, how it operates, and how the finished project now attracts and supports a variety of wildlife.

Also this spring, Westmoreland County Commissioner, Ted Kopas, toured the facility with representatives from the Westmoreland Conservation District and SCWA. Commissioner Kopas praised the work being done to remove the iron oxide from the AMD water before it enters Sewickley Creek, and promotes tours of the facility.

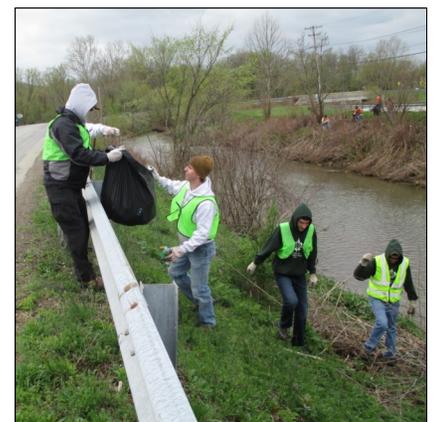
Organized groups including local residents are encouraged to contact Tom Keller at the SCWA office for more information on scheduling a tour of this great project!

## Volunteers Celebrate Earth Day 2013 at Litter Clean-Up Event

SCWA members and friends were out in force on Saturday, April 20th to clean up nearly four miles of roadway and two miles of stream banks as part of the statewide Great American Cleanup of Pennsylvania. Despite the chilly weather, crews cleaned the Youngwood-Armbrust Road, Avenues A&B in Youngwood, and Lowber Road. Forty-nine bags of trash, 13 tires, power tools, a TV and auto parts were collected by volunteers.

A special thanks to Boy Scout Troop 465 who traversed steep and heavily vegetated banks of Jacks Run to remove unsightly litter and other illegally dumped items. For nearly 20 years, this Troop has participated in SCWA's cleanup events.

A huge thank you to area businesses, including Jioio's Restaurant, Wal-Mart, Youngwood Sunoco and the New Stanton and Youngwood Sheetz, for sponsoring this event.



Scout Troop 465 cleans banks along Jacks Run in Youngwood.

# Yough High School Wins Environmental Education Leader Award



Award recipients L-R: Rob Cronauer, WCO Jason Farabaugh, Randy Swink, Bill Janiro, Mike Diebel, Rob Hepler, Dorothy Bibby and Lou Stout.

School District Superintendent, Dr. Janet Sardon. "Teaching students commitment to our projects such as the one done in Lowber is an important part of their educational work in our school district. Creating a citizenry that cares about our environment and the world in which we live is critical," she added during the award presentation. Dr. Sardon, along with teachers and students attended the event and accepted the award. The students constructed an education kiosk and interpretive trail at Sewickley Creek's Lowber AMD Treatment Facility.

Other award recipients include Hepler's Hardware (Environmental Business Leader) and PA Game Commission's WCO Jason Farabaugh (Community Environmental Service.) Rob Cronauer, Watershed Specialist at the Westmoreland Conservation District and Lou Stout each received Volunteer of the Year Awards for

their dedication and service to natural resource conservation efforts.

Guest speaker for the event was Ellen C. Keefe, Executive Director of Westmoreland Cleanways, who spoke on the topic of SCWA and Westmoreland Cleanways working together to protect our watershed. Board President, Dr. Ellen Uschak, also provided a brief overview of SCWA and gave an update on current projects as part of the evening's program.

The Association expresses its sincere appreciation to all who attended and supported the 2013 fundraiser banquet, including business sponsors: University of Pittsburgh at Greensburg, Hepler's Hardware, Rachel Hoza, CPA, Loyalhanna Watershed Association/SNS Properties, Westmoreland Conservation District, and Adam Eidemiller, Inc. Visit SCWA's website for a complete listing of sponsors, prize donations and photos of the event.

SCWA was very pleased to present Yough High School with this year's Environmental Education Leader Award at its annual fundraiser banquet held March 9th at Giannilli's II Restaurant in Greensburg.

"At Yough, the work of the students and staff makes a difference in our communities where we live," noted Yough

## Sewickley Creek Stocked Twice with Trout



More than 150 people helped stock approximately 1,000 trout in Sewickley Creek between Apple Mills Road and Lowber this April and May. The two trout stockings were a result of a partnership between the West Newton Sportsman Association (WNSA) and SCWA.

Raffle tickets were sold by both groups to fund the stocking event. The first experimental stocking event was conducted in 2012, and the partnership between WNSA and SCWA has grown as a result of a successful event.

Volunteers of all ages carried buckets of trout to various locations along Sewickley Creek and hurried back to the stocking truck for more buckets! According to WNSA President, Paul Angelcyk, approximately 80 fish were "tagged." Anyone catching a tagged trout must have a "Stock the Yough" pin to claim a prize at Youghiogheny Canoe Outfitters in Collinsburg.

Tickets for future trout stocking events will go on sale in August. For more information, contact Paul Angelcyk from WNSA at (724) 708-5621 or SCWA at (724) 610-0829.

## Lowber's Mute Swan

The white swan residing in the wetland at the Lowber AMD Treatment System is a Mute Swan (*Cygnus olor*). He has officially been dubbed "Cygnus" and is a widower, as his mate was killed by traffic on the nearby road. As the name implies, the Mute Swan does not have a clear call as native swans do, but rather subdued sounds and loud hissing, particularly when disturbed.

Cygnus and his late bride arrived at the Lowber site a few years ago accompanied by a lone Tundra Swan. The Tundra soon left, but the Mutes stayed, and had two clutches of eggs although none of them reached maturity.

Despite his hardships, Cygnus has periodically shown up on the pond at Goehring Park behind Giant Eagle in West Newton and other ponds in the area. But, he always returns to the Lowber wetland where there is a year-round abundance of aquatic plants to feed on thanks to the reclamation efforts at the site. With any luck, he might meet another lucky lady at this now reclaimed paradise!

