



SCWA Newsletter

WINTER EDITION

JANUARY 2012

**Sewickley
Creek
Watershed
Association**

*Working Together
For A Better
Environment*

**Remember to
Renew Your
SCWA
Membership!**

Contact Us:

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Youngwood, PA 15697
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**Thomas W. Keller,
Executive Director**

Eagle Project Provides Wildlife Habitats at Lowber



Scout Member D.J. Gress showcases one of ten bat boxes he constructed and installed at the Lowber remediation site.

Over Thanksgiving weekend, members of Boy Scout Troop 552 of Pokerun and the Sewickley Creek Watershed Association aided David Jacob "D.J." Gress in the completion of his Eagle project. After receiving permission from the Scouts and SCWA, D.J. constructed 10 bat boxes, 5 wood duck boxes, and 5 mallard duck boxes, to increase the wildlife habitat possibilities around the association's Lowber abandoned mine discharge remediation site.

Wood ducks are thought to be North America's most colorful waterfowl species. The mallards are commonly seen on our waterways. These ducks use nesting boxes to lay



A fellow scout member assists D.J. in the installation of wood duck boxes into the middle of the wetland pond.

and incubate their eggs. D.J. placed wood duck boxes on poles driven into the bottom of the wetland pond, while the mallard boxes were placed on peninsulas throughout the wetland. These boxes will provide a man-made site for safe nesting from predators. The ducks eat nuts, berries, weed sedges, small invertebrates and duck weed. Some of these smaller plants can cause havoc to the flow through the remediation site, so some munching by the new site residents will be a great help.



After cleaning a path, the bat boxes were mounted on ten foot poles along the edges of the site. One might ask, why bat boxes? Bats are important to the ecosystem—essential to the health of our natural world. They control pests, are vital pollinators and seed dispersers for countless plants. Bat droppings are also a natural fertilizer.

Bats are primary predators of night flying insects such as mosquitoes and various pests that harm crops and garden vegetables. A single little brown bat can eat more than 1,000 mosquito-sized insects in just one hour. Decreasing the mosquito population also decreases the chances of spreading West Nile Virus.

That being said, bats are currently in danger from a fungal-type disease called white-nose syndrome, which has killed over a million bats and devastated bat populations across the eastern United States. One way to protect the bat is to provide safe, secure habitats—D.J.'s project has given us a great start!

Join Us For Dinner!

The Association is asking its members to help make our 2012 fundraiser dinner an exciting and successful event! This is an opportunity for all of us to celebrate our Association's achievements in conserving our natural resources and promoting recreation, as well as raising needed unrestricted operating funds to help cover expenses such as rent, utilities, insurance and energy to run our treatment facilities. As a member, you help to make these success stories possible—come see what we have been working on in your backyard during 2011.

The 2012 Fundraiser Banquet will be held on Saturday, March 17 from 6:00—9:00 pm at Giannilli's II Restaurant, located in Greensburg just west of the Inn at Mt. View intersection. Dinner will include a hot buffet, and a cash bar will be available. Raffle prizes and a 50/50 drawing will be given away. There will also be a short presentation of the Association's accomplishments from this past year and award presentations to Eagle Scouts who have assisted SCWA with various projects. R. John Dawes, Executive Director of the Foundation for Pennsylvania Watersheds, will be our guest speaker for the evening, discussing similar success stories on watershed remediation throughout western Pennsylvania.

Individual tickets are \$25 each and must be purchased in advance. Contact a board member or call (724) 836-8764 for tickets. Business sponsorships are also available starting at \$250, which includes eight (8) dinner tickets, a one-year Association membership and recognition as a sponsor at the dinner as well as in the newsletter and on the Website.

With your help, we'll make this event bigger and better than the 2011 banquet. See you there!

Banquet Details

Saturday, March 17
6:00—9:00 pm

Giannilli's II, Route 30
West, Greensburg

Tickets: \$25.00
Call (724) 836-8764 for
reservations

Sewickley Creek Watershed Association
PO Box 323
Youngwood, PA 15697

We're On The Web!
www.sewickleycreek.com



*Working Together For A Better
Environment*

**Join Us At Our Next Monthly
Meeting!**

Every Third Thursday at 7:00 pm
Midtown Plaza, Office 201
450 South Main Street
Greensburg, PA 15601

Open To All!

SCWA Board of Directors

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Executive Director,
Thomas W. Keller

Dean Nelson Named to SCWA Board

Dean Nelson is currently an Associate Professor of Statistics at the University of Pittsburgh at Greensburg where he has worked since 2002. He served for 5 years as the Assistant VP for Academic Affairs at UPG until he returned to teaching full-time in 2011. Prior to this, he worked at Saint Vincent College as the Coordinator of Institutional Research. Dean and his wife Lureen have three children, and currently reside in Ligonier Township.