

Watershed organization receives grant

The Friends of the Nescopeck, the Hazleton area's watershed organization, has received a \$3,100 grant from the League of Women Voters of Pennsylvania Citizen Education Fund's Water Resources Education Network.

The funds will be used to develop and implement a project aimed at educating citizens and decision makers about the importance of protecting and improving the watershed of Nescopeck Creek and its tributaries.

Through the "Nescopeck/Little Nescopeck Watershed Awareness Project," the Friends of the Nescopeck will partner with Conyngham Borough, the Conyngham Planning Commission and Penn State Hazleton to create a multi-media education module about nonpoint source pollution prevention in the watershed and present it to municipal officials, citizen and landowner

groups, schools, and businesses in the watershed over the next year.

"By combining the capabilities and capacities of all of the partners in this project, we will raise the community's awareness of its watershed and the potential sources of contamination to it," said project leader Tim Ference of the Friends group.

Another of the project's objectives is to encourage citizens, local government officials, and private organizations in the community to make local land use decisions which would prevent or control nonpoint source pollution, Ference said.

Nonpoint sources of water pollution are those that cannot easily be traced to a particular location and are caused by stormwater runoff and soil erosion. "The coalition hopes that by raising the community's awareness of local water resource issues, citizen participation in local public policy making will be increased," Ference said.

The Friends organization and its partners is one of 31 community coalitions across Pennsylvania awarded funding by the League to improve their community's water resources.

"The key to water resource protection is clearly local action," said League official Sherene Hess.

"The Friends of the Nescopeck and there partners have developed a strong project that will help the citizens of the community work cooperatively to protect its water resources," said Hess.

For more information about the project, contact the Friends of the Nescopeck at PO Box 912, Conyngham 18219, or by e-mail at friendsoft-henescopeck@yahoo.com.

Funding for watershed education projects is provided by the state Department of Environmental Protection through Section 319 of the federal Clean Water Act.

Hazleton Standard-Speaker

Friends of Nescopeck to hold forum

From staff reports

The Friends of the Nescopeck will hold an informal question and answer session at Penn State Hazleton on Saturday.

The forum starts at 3 p.m. in the Graham Building.

Tim Ference, member of the group said anyone with concerns about the watershed is welcome to attend. Friends of the Nescopeck will also give a status update on issues, such as pollution, concerning the Nescopeck Creek watershed.

A Water Resources Education Network grant was awarded to the group so the forum could be held.

Ference said the group decided to hold the forum to gather more public input on the watershed and to make people aware of their surroundings.

The watershed encompasses about 174 square miles in West Hazleton, Hazleton, Conyngham, Freeland, Butler Township, Jeddo, Nescopeck, Sugarloaf and Dennison Township.

5/8/09

'Wonders of the Watershed' program at PSU Hazleton

The Nescopeck/Jeddo Partnership will host the "Wonders of the Watershed Celebration" on May 9 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Penn State Hazleton Campus.

Anyone living in West Hazleton, Hazleton, Conyngham, Freeland, Butler Township, Jeddo, Nescopeck, Sugarloaf, Dennison Township is a part of the Nescopeck Watershed.

The day will include workshop sessions geared for homeowners, updates on information on the Jeddo Mine Tunnel, children's activities, entertainment, a rain barrel giveaway, and much more.

More than 45 environmental, historical and recreational organizations will be on hand to share information on the natural, cultural, and historical aspects of the area during this event.

The event is free of charge and is appropriate to families, homeowners, concerned citizens, agency representatives and anyone with an interest in learning more about their watershed or just having a fun day.

A children's poster contest relating to the watershed will also be highlighted at the festival. For more infor-

mation on workshop offerings, the poster contest, rain barrel giveaway, and entertainment, contact Kathryn Krulack at 501-2161.

The Nescopeck/Jeddo Partnership includes the Friends of the Nescopeck, Eastern Middle Anthracite Region Recovery, Eastern Pennsylvania Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation, DCNR, Nescopeck State Park, Greater Hazleton Rails to Trails, Greater Hazleton Civic Partnership, Delaware and Lehigh National Heritage Corridor, Pennsylvania DEP Bureau of Abandoned Mine Reclamation, Luzerne Conservation District and PPL Corp.
