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www.mcconservation.org



MONROE COUNTY
CONSERVATION DISTRICT



Winter 2020 Newsletter

Volume 44 No. 4

PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS ANNOUNCED



The MCCD Photo Contest has come to an end and the winners have been chosen! All of the entrants proved to portray stunning images of Monroe County's natural resources but only twelve winners could be chosen to be represented in the 2021 MCCD Calendar. Sheil Garl of Kunkletown was the overall winner, landing her spot on the cover of the calendar as well as the month of July with her photo titled "It's a frog's life." Sheila got to take home a quart of pure maple syrup from the Meesing Sugarbush as well as a 2021 calendar. Other winners in the calendar were Nancy Tully, Albert Imparato, Carmen Churion, Courtney Kopf, Devin Rodriguez, Pamela Kamecsy, Ali Machrone, Barbara Lewis, Jonathon Adamski, Suzanne Kuehner and Kristy Varunan. 2021 calendars are available for curbside purchase at Kettle Creek for \$7.99 plus tax. Give us a call at 570-629-3061 and get your calendar today! For a closer look at the winning photos visit our website. ❄️

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**Monroe County
Conservation District
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Resource Conservationists

Roger Spotts
Environmental Education Coordinator

Josie Bonham-Marino,
Brittney Coleman, Alesia Gallo,
Matthew Giambra
Environmental Educators

Barbara Bistras
Administrative Coordinator

Diana Flint, Clara Stalter,
Office Assistant Seniors

Becky Hippler
Groundskeeper

The Board of Directors' monthly meeting is held at 8 am on the third Thursday of each month in the District office.



**Kettle Creek Environmental
Fund Update**

As we enter winter, the KCEF Board hopes that you are all safe and healthy. Despite the days getting shorter and the pandemic continuing, we have good news to share with you. Although we had to cancel our annual fundraising event, we applied for and received two grants: a CARES grant from the County Commissioners and a grant from the Monroe County Bar Association

Foundation. The CARES grant (\$15,864) is being used to purchase needed equipment and to cover staff costs for programs that were conducted. The Bar Association grant (\$20,000) will be used to fund school programs between now and June of 2022. The Board is very appreciative of receiving these grants, especially in such a difficult year. We wish you all a happy holiday season and a Merry Christmas. Please stay safe.

-John Woodling, KCEF President

*For donation inquiries please contact Kettle Creek at 570-629-3061**

KCEF Board Members

John Woodling, Pres.
Alan Price Young, Vice-Pres.
Joseph Bedrick
Leslie J. Berger
Patrick Calpin
Ed Cramer
Tim Fisher, II
Kara Klaus-Major
Beth Moses
John Reilly
Dr. Elaine Rogers
Stephanie Spotts



Dear Members and Friends,
2020 has been a great year to get outdoors. We have noticed a higher number of hikers on the Kettle Creek trails and in Lillian's Nature Discovery Area. We are excited to see the increased use and we hope the trend continues into 2021 and beyond the pandemic. Getting outdoors is a healthy way to relax and exercise and we are glad a number of you have chosen Kettle Creek as one of your hiking spots. Along these lines the staff is putting together a series of videos depicting different hiking spots in Monroe County to showcase some of the wonderful trails that are open to the public. We hope you enjoy these fun-filled videos and take the time to explore these areas on your own.

We look forward to opening the building soon and to once again offer Saturday public programs. One season we are looking forward to is Maple Sugaring. Beginning in early February, we will once again be opening the Meesing Sugar bush near Marshall's Creek and producing sweet maple syrup. Plans are underway to offer limited registration public and group programs beginning February 28 demonstrating this unique process. Please check out the informational page on the Maple Sugaring programs in this newsletter and on our website. You also may want to consider sponsoring a Maple tree in 2021 which helps to support our environmental education efforts.

Keep an eye on our YouTube page and follow us on Facebook and Instagram for the latest news on upcoming programs. Please stay safe and enjoy the outdoors.

Roger Spotts
Environmental Education Coordinator*

2021 MAPLE SUGARING SEASON



As fall approaches with winter soon to follow, the Meesing Sugar bush sits quiet and empty. It won't be long, however, until the EE staff heads to the Sugarbush to begin the 2021 Maple Sugaring Season.

The 2020 Maple Sugaring Season was cut a little short due to Covid-19 but we were still able to produce over 30 gallons of sweet syrup. We started tapping trees on Feb. 10 and had a consistent run of sap up until the 10th of March when the warming weather stopped the flow. On our annual public day the 456 people that visited us that day enjoyed fresh pancakes with our syrup.

We hope you can make plans to join us this season! This will be our 44th year but due to Covid-19 it will be a little different. We will be limiting the number of people on site and following all Covid-19 safety protocols including masks at all times. We will require registration for visitors on one of three Saturdays in March the 6th, 13, and the 20th, 2021. Each day will feature a tour of the Sugar bush including stops to learn about Native American and early pioneer methods of making maple syrup, our evaporator process and methods of identifying and tapping a maple tree. Cost: \$6/adult and \$4/children under 12; **all members of the EE Center and all tree sponsors attend free of charge.**

Scout Groups will be allowed to register for any one of the three Saturdays. **Registration is required for any of the programs no later than the Thursday before the program.**

Dates set for group programs in the Sugarbush are Monday, February 28 through Friday, March 12. All groups interested in scheduling a tour should call the Center to set aside a time block. Each program takes 1 1/2 to 2 hours and includes learning about maple sugaring from the earliest methods used by Native Americans to present day collection/evaporation techniques. The group will also tap a maple tree and take home a sample of sweet maple syrup. Cost: \$4/participant, spaces fill up fast, so please register early. The Sugarbush is located 5.5 miles north of Marshalls Creek on Creek Rd. For more information call (570)629-3061, Monday through Friday, from 8am to 4:30pm.

Sponsor a Maple Tree

In 2020, over 190 different groups, families or individuals sponsored trees in our Sugarbush. These sponsorships raised over \$4,500.00 which was used to help pay the expenses for our group tours of the Sugarbush. We are hoping that in 2021 even more people will help us by sponsoring a tree. We tap around 250 trees each year, so there are plenty available.

For \$25/tree each sponsor receives one pint of our fresh maple syrup, a handsome certificate, free admission to one of our Public Day Programs on Saturday, March 6, 13, or 20, 2021, for up to four people and a map showing the location of your tree in our Sugarbush. Don't miss this opportunity to become involved with one of our most popular programs. Call the office or complete and return the Sponsor Form below by Friday, February 26, 2021 to become a sponsor. A tree sponsorship also makes a great gift!



Maple Tree Sponsor Form



Checks should be made payable to:
Monroe County Conservation District
(M.C.C.D.)

Your Name _____

Address _____

City, State Zip _____

Phone # _____

If Gift, Recipient's Name _____

Address _____

City, State Zip _____

Phone _____

For gift, please check one: Send letter/certificate to: Me or Gift Recipient

How many trees would you like to sponsor? ____ (\$25 per tree)

Please return to: Monroe County Conservation District
8050 Running Valley Road
Stroudsburg, PA 18360

Each year around 250 maple trees are tapped in Meesing's Sugarbush. Become part of our sugaring program by sponsoring a maple tree this year!

Two Eagle Scout Candidates Complete Projects

Over the years the Kettle Creek Environmental Education Center has been fortunate to work with numerous Eagle Scout candidates as they completed their projects at one of our outdoor sites. These projects have provided all kinds of benefits to program participants and the wildlife that live at Kettle Creek. We had two Eagle Scout candidates working hard the last several months to complete their projects and they have done an excellent job.

Ryan Farley of Tannersville and members of Boy Scout Troop #85 have recently completed a new loop trail on the recently acquired Weiss property at the Tannersville Bog. Ryan laid out the trail that connects to the existing Fernridge Trail on Bog Road. This approximately one-mile trail travels through an oak forest along the edges of meadow habitat, maintained by The Nature Conservancy through controlled burns, and along the Bog edge itself across from the boardwalk trail system. The trail is marked with blue painted blazes and is a moderate hike with the opportunity to view a wide array of plants that inhabit forest and meadow areas. It is also a great birding spot year-round. Access can be gained by parking at the Fernridge trailhead on Bog Road, hiking the short loop trail marked with yellow blazes and branching off onto the Weiss Trail marked with blue blazes.

Cassidy Feuerstein of Pocono Lake and members of Troop #97 recently completed two projects at Kettle Creek. For her Summit Award in Venturing, she completely took apart the water garden behind the building and located the leaks that have been plaguing us for years. After finding the leaks, she replaced the liner and reconstructed the water garden itself. All the amphibians that use the garden as habitat and a place to lay eggs will now be very happy. For her Eagle Scout Award Cassidy designed and installed numerous interpretive signs around the pavilion and along Kreger Trail. These beautiful signs help to ID trees as well as provide some history about the property.

We are very grateful to both of these scouts for their hard work and we hope you get the chance to visit the trails and enjoy the hike and learning experiences along the way. ❄️

Photos from Cassidy Feuerstein's work on the water garden at Kettle Creek:



We Need Your Input!



The Monroe County Conservation District (MCCD) and Monroe County Planning Commission (MCPC) are looking for your input on managing one of our most valuable assets...storm water! That's right; storm water is an asset to us all. Properly managed it can feed our streams and groundwater supply with drinking water, sustain our Class A trout fisheries, and support our local recreation based economy. Lack of management, however, can result in degradation of our streams and rivers and impose threats to our property, infrastructure, and safety.

But managing storm water isn't really about managing water. Instead it is about managing how we develop our land that feeds our streams and rivers otherwise known as "watersheds". When land is developed and converted from forests, wetlands, and meadows to parking lots, roadways, and roof

tops, more rainfall runs off the landscape than is soaked into the ground. This can lead to increased issues with flooding and erosion of our stream banks. Additionally, it can increase the amount of pollution like sediment, road salts, oil, and litter that runs off into our streams. That is why the Conservation District is partnering with the County Planning Commission, municipalities, and other local entities on updating our existing Act 167 storm water management plans to provide a better template for new development utilizing tools called storm water best management practices or "BMPs".

What are storm water BMPs? Well, you have probably seen them around the county for quite some time; practices like retention basins and roadway swales. In many cases they also take the form of "nonstructural BMPs" that aren't so obvious. This includes things such as ordinances that protect our streamside forest buffers and natural floodplains. However, our tool box is always growing with new practices as we learn more about managing storm water, and our needs are evolving as we adjust to changing precipitation patterns and higher intensity storms. That is why we are seeking public participation in the survey below. Please make your voice heard in this public process with updating our existing storm water management plans to let us know more about your local needs!

Link: <https://www.mcconservation.org/chapter-102-stormwater-management.html>*



Stanley Becker Memorial Scholarship Applications Available

The Monroe County Conservation District and members of the Stanley Becker family are pleased to announce that applications are now being accepted for the fourteenth annual Stanley Becker Memorial Scholarship. This scholarship will be awarded to a graduating senior in Monroe County who is planning on attending college and majoring in an environmental field. **The recipient will receive a \$500 scholarship.** To receive an application or for more information, please visit mcconservation.org. **Deadline for applications is Friday, April 2, 2021.** ❄️

Christmas Bird Count



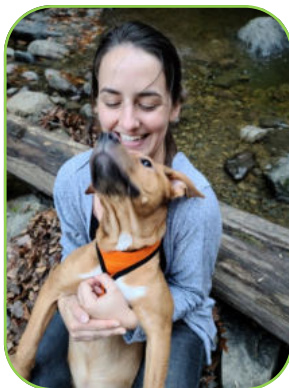
Interested in birding? Join us on December 20th for the Christmas Bird Count! Birders will be assigned segments of the count circle, located within Monroe County. Due to COVID-19 we will not be

holding the Tally Rally in person where we will submit our bird counts, but will be submitting all counts online. In order to ensure all areas of Monroe are accounted for, preregistration is required by calling 570-629-3061.

❄️

MCCD/KCEEC Welcome New Staff Members

The Monroe County Conservation District and the Kettle Creek Environmental Education Center are excited to introduce three new staff members! Please join us in welcoming them to the team!



Alexandra Dutt

Resource Conservationist

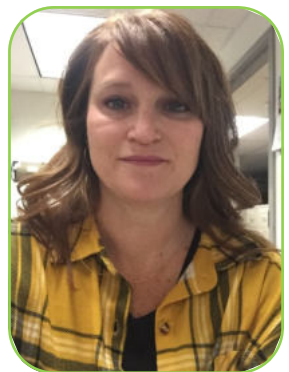
I earned both my masters and bachelor's degree in agriculture from Penn State. In my spare time I enjoy hiking, skiing, and anything outdoors. I hope one day to have a few dairy cows on my family farm.



Diana Flint

KCEEC Office Assistant Senior

I attended college at East Stroudsburg University, where I met my husband and have lived in the Pocono area ever since. I'm enjoying working at the MCCD since the job combines my love of nature and the environment with my office and customer service experience. I enjoy hiking, kayaking, cooking and spending time with my family, which includes my two sons.



Clara Stalter

MCCD Office Assistant Senior

I live in Kresgeville with my husband Dave and two boys, Jackson and Austin. In my spare time, I enjoy spending time outdoors with my family and our various animals. In the warm weather, I love to go kayaking! During the winter months, I find myself sitting back with a good book in front of the fire. ❄️

Due to COVID-19 our offices remain closed to the public at this time. The trails are open for hiking down to dusk daily with restrooms available near the pavilion area. If you would like to purchase bird seed, feeders, or other items from our gift shop please give us a call at 570-629-3061 and we will be happy to assist you. Staff will be in the office during regular business hours, Monday through Friday, 8am-4:30pm. We look forward to once again opening our doors to you once we can safely do so. Thank you for your patience during these unprecedented times and we hope you and your families stay healthy.

STAY CONNECTED

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