

Conneaut Lake Conneaut Valley Fort LeBoeuf Maplewood Hopewell Memorial Meadville **Allegheny College** Saegertown Riverview Highlands Fern Hollow Nature Center Slippery Rock Quaker Valley

Clymer Pittsburgh Perry Science & Technology Youngsville Bethesda City Charter Bradford High School Upper Commodore Perry St. Clair

Pittsburgh Obama Grove City CAPA Jamestown Mercer North Allegheny Brashear Linesville Green Valley Costa Rica Aliquippa Gateway Seneca Valley Shady Side Environmental Charter School

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CREEK CONNECTIONS LINK

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Newsletter for CREEK CONNECTIONS

Based at Allegheny College in Meadville, Pennsylvania

Getting the Junk out of French Creek

By Wendy Kedzierski, Project Manager

Approximately 300 participants joined the French Creek Valley Conservancy (FCVC) for the annual French Creek Cleanup. Over 17,000 pounds of trash were removed from the watershed that day! Participants ranged from individuals and groups of friends to boy scouts and college students. A scout troop took home the prize for the most trash collected by a group and Allegheny College collected \$1000 for the educational institution with the most participants. The Allegheny group included Creek Connections, Students for Environmental Action (SEA),

Outing Club, Phi Kappa Psi, as well as several individuals. The French Creek Community Theater cashed in on the prize for the community group with the most participants. There were prizes for individuals as well.

FCVC will continue to hold this wonderful watershed event every year on the Saturday after Labor Day. Start planning now for next year! Get your teammates, classmates, family and friends to sign up and represent your school or community group. You can take home one of next year's prizes!



Above: Students from Allegheny College—Students for Environmental Action (SEA) show off their “Most Unusual Junk” found in French Creek.



Above: Participants loaded canoes and kayaks as well as walked creek banks to collect trash.

Creek to Creek- pgs. 2&3 Testing Tip - pg.4 Feature Creature - pg. 4

Letter from Senator Casey- pgs. 4 & 5 Staff - pg. 6

Creek to Creek: Where in the world is Creek Connections?



Above: North Hills high school students investigate their site on one of the last warm days of the year.



Above: Quaker Valley Creekers search for salamanders and other creatures at their site.



Above: Sarah Dippold, alumni Creeker, and Will Tolliver, freshman Creeker, show people aquatic creatures at the ALCOSAN open house September 18th.



Above: Mrs. Bires Quest team from Hermitage entertain and educate the students aboard the Imagination Ohio River Celebration Cruise in September.





Above: Creek camper works with Eric Chapman from Western PA Conservancy to collect hellbender data.



Above: Creek campers check out the bats in the boxes at the Crawford County Conservation District with Wil Taylor from Jennings Environmental Education Center.



Above: Session I Creek campers hang with Chompers on the Allegheny campus.



Above: Session II Creek campers "carp" it up at the Pymatuning spillway.

Senator Casey Responds

Creek Connections received the letter on the following page over the summer from Senator Robert Casey in response to a letter written to him from a student during our annual student research symposium in April, 2010. Sahar Arbab, an Allegheny student, lead a focus group activity titled "A Letter for the Better". Here's the summary of her focus group: One of the best ways to address your leaders in government is with the power of a letter. Letters to senators and representatives are very effective tools to influence their decisions and actions. Although

this is true, politicians are often flooded with letters, so it is important to make yours stand out. In this session students will learn a few tips on how to write an effective and well-received letter to the representative or senator of their choice. They will then write and send one encouraging action on an environmental issue of their choice!

We were very pleased to receive a response from Senator Casey. Please consider writing to your officials at the local, state and/or federal level and share the news about your stream site with them.

Feature Creature

By William Tolliver & Briana Bulger, Allegheny College students

This is a very unique macroinvertebrate that is found in various freshwater creeks across the United States, including French Creek. They get their common name from their habit of swimming rapidly in circles when alarmed, and are also notable for their divided eyes which can see both above and below water. Adults have a bubble of air trapped underneath their abdomens which allows them to dive and swim under the water for a long time. Another interesting fact about this beetle is that if squeezed *gently* they can give off an aroma that can intrigue ones senses. One may say that it smells like green apples, or one may say it smells like Froot Loops™. Whatever the case may be, it sure smells good to us and serves as warning to each other!



Left: adult form

Right: immature form



Photo Credit: <http://blackberrypond.blogspot.com/2010/05/whirligig-beetle.html>

Testing Tip

by Sahar Arbab, Allegheny College student

Pebble Count

When doing a pebble count of a waterway, it is a random selection. You are not trying to get a certain amount of fine gravel, coarse gravel, boulder, silt, sand, bedrock, and cobble. By doing this, you will skew the results. The note taker is supposed to tally the class size. By determining the most common size, scientists can determine different parameters of the streambed like erosion rates and sediment supply.



ROBERT P. CASEY, JR.
PENNSYLVANIA

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United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3805

June 22, 2010

Creek Connections
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Meadville, PA 16335

Dear Friends:

Thank you for taking the time to contact me about the environment. I appreciate hearing from you about this issue.

The thoughts you have shared with me display a strong and sincere interest in both your community and in the important concerns we currently face as a people and a Nation. I am especially encouraged to know that young people such as yourself are already beginning to think seriously about these matters. This shows me that our country can look forward to being served in the future by individuals like yourself, who demonstrate strong leadership potential. I hope you have the opportunity to someday serve your community, our Commonwealth, or our country. I cannot stress enough the satisfaction and pride you will experience from helping others.

I encourage you to continue to share your thoughts with me and remain active in the issues important to your community. Please do not hesitate to contact me in the future about this or any other matter of importance to you.

If you have access to the Internet, I encourage you to visit my web site, <http://casey.senate.gov>. I invite you to use this online office as a comprehensive resource to stay up-to-date on my work in Washington, request assistance from my office or share with me your thoughts on the issues that matter most to you and to Pennsylvania.

Sincerely,



Robert P. Casey, Jr.
United States Senator

Creek Connections Staff



Above: 2010-2011 Creek Connections Staff. Standing left to right: Laura Branby, Evelyn Ma, Ian Armstrong, John Milligan, Zach Piso, Wendy Kedzierski, Jim Palmer, Sahar Arabab, Will Tolliver, Lucas Carrion, Briana Bulger; Sitting left to right: Sara Salisbury, Amy Kerschner; Not pictured: Mark Kirk, Cameron Eddy.

FEATURE CREATURE ANSWER:

This issue's Feature Creature (pg. 4) is a whirligig beetle (Family: Gyrinidae).

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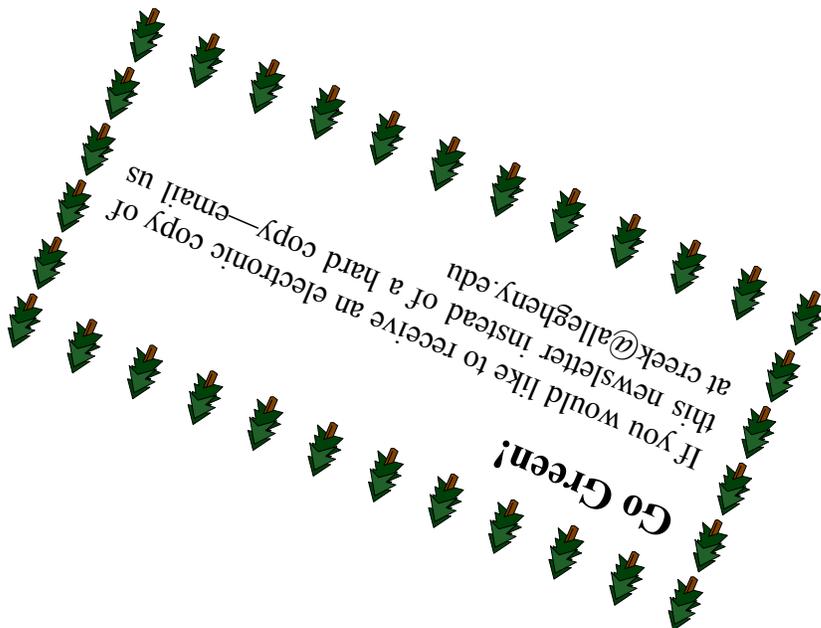
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