



Volume #21 Issue #4
May 20, 2016

Current in the Creek

2016 Creek Camps

Session I: June 26-July 1

Session II: July 10-15

Apply at:

<http://sites.allegheny.edu/creekconnections/creek-camp/>

Pittsburgh-Area Student Research Symposium

By Laura Branby, Creek Connections Pittsburgh Educator

What do you get when you bring more than 300 people from 13 Pittsburgh area middle and high school (students and their teachers) and 19 companies and organizations to a beautiful YMCA camp on a Friday in April? Another successful Student Research Symposium at YMCA Camp Kon-O-Kwee!

The damp weather didn't dampen the day when Creek Connections welcomed participating students and their teachers along with environmental professionals to share their work through project displays, interactive games, and oral presentations.

Viable Industries started the day as the keynote speaker. Josh Sager, Strategy and Engineering Partner, shared the ways that Viable is joining technology and the environment through coding. Viable built Water Reporter, an app for smartphones that allows visitors to the Sawmill Run watershed to log in and report things they see in the watershed. Sawmill Run Watershed Association members then get a notice that something is happening in the watershed. It's an important step for people to see the intersection of technology and environmental work.

All students in attendance participated in Creek Connections throughout the school year, performing water chemistry tests on a local creek/river to track the water's health. They

completed projects and brought them to the Student Research Symposium to share with the other students, teachers and environmental friends. While students checked out their peers' projects, they also explored careers in related fields while interacting with the representatives of environmental organizations and related companies.

One of the favorite parts of the day followed with students participating in a focus group activity led by one of the environmental friends. They blanketed YMCA Camp Kon-O-Kwee as they looked for amphibians in vernal ponds, recreated the predator/prey relationship in an active game, fished in the pond (first fishing experience!), examined lichens to determine air quality, explored aquaponics, tested various drinking water sources and participated in many other hands-on activities.

The weather was dreary but the camp was humming with excitement all day! Many thanks to all the teachers, students, environmental friends, and YMCA Camp Kon-O-Kwee for a wonderful culmination to a year of hard work!



Allegheny College Student Research Symposium

By Wendy Kedzierski, Creek Connections Project Director

We had a great turnout for this year's Student Research Symposium with more than 450 students, 34 teachers and 47 environmental professionals! What a tremendous representation of all the schools participating in the project all year long. We'd need a new location if everyone involved were able to attend!

The day started out with a riveting keynote talk by David Boughton from Pennsylvania Sea Grant. He had us all enchanted with Lake Erie shipwreck stories and Lake Erie trivia. We learned that science careers are exciting and discoveries remain to be made!

The main part of the day was the sharing of student projects as oral presentations, posters, models, etc. We are always impressed with the wide variety of topics and the work put into the informative presentations and displays.

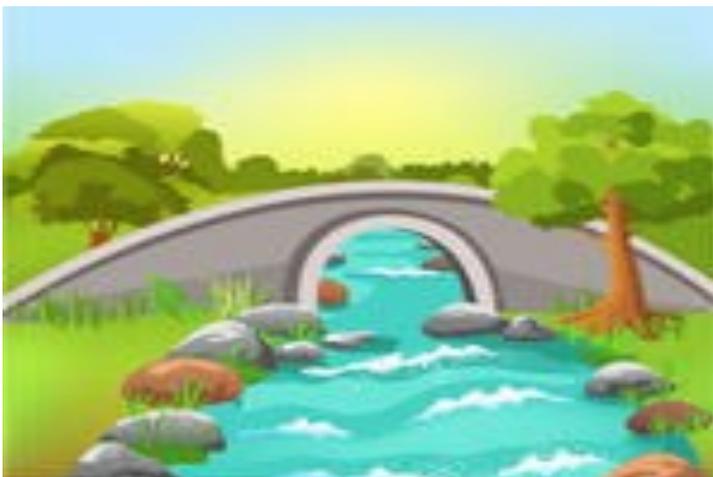
After lunch in the gym, students were divided into small groups to head out around campus for an interactive activity. Of course, this is when the rain started. The water cycle will not be denied! It was not a washout though, and even the groups who remained outdoors, like those learning how to properly value trees, learned a lot and had fun! Some of the indoor activities included underwater robots in the Allegheny pool, building bat houses with a local bat expert and learning about bird beak adaptations with one of our professors.

The symposium is a celebration of the year of hard work of stream investigations. It's great to hear what all the schools are doing, because they are all so different! We are already looking forward to next year and time out at the creek!

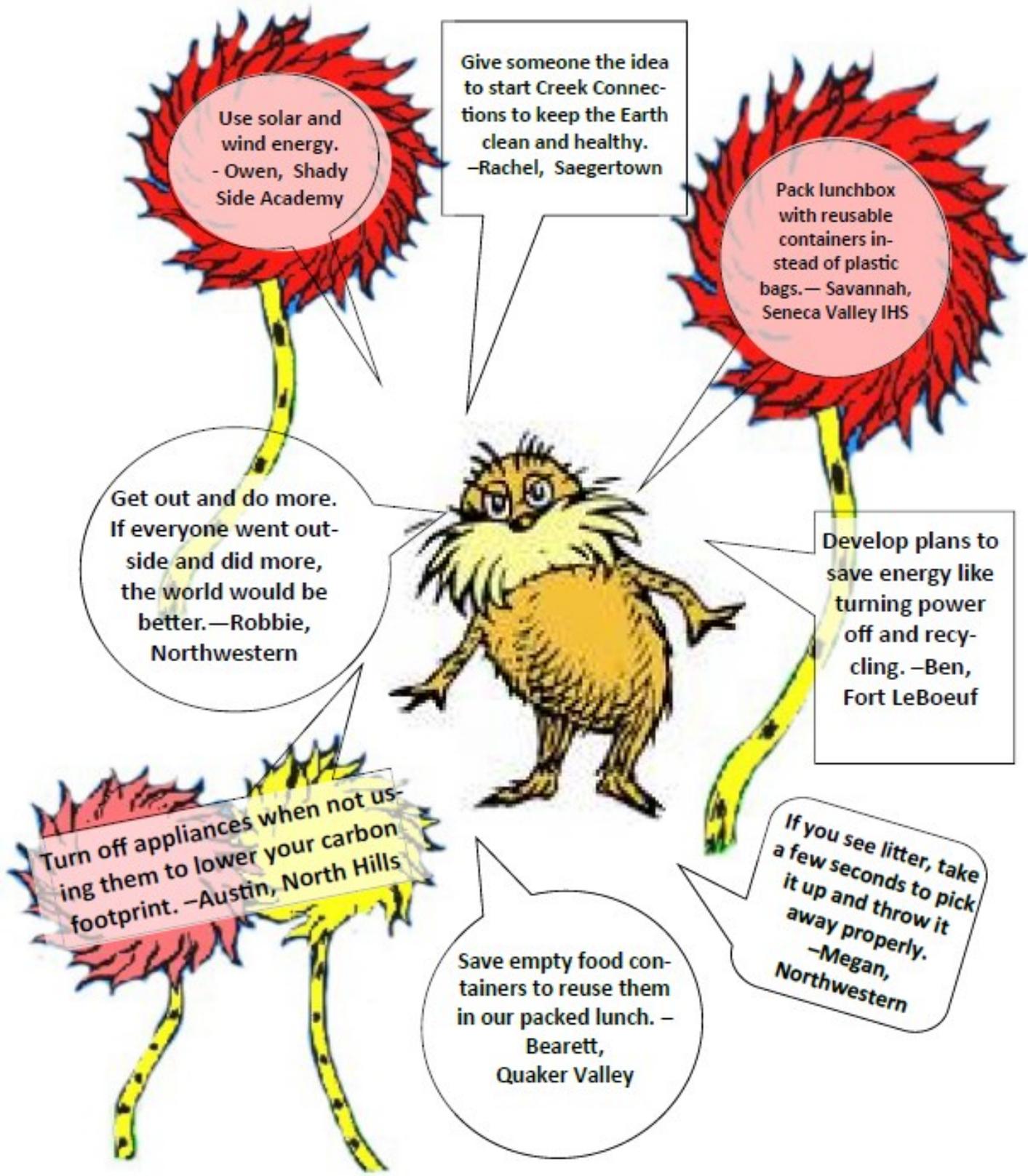


Above Left: Overview of the display area of the symposium.

Above: A student talks to Terry Lobdell, local bat expert.



What would the Lorax do?



Use solar and wind energy.
- Owen, Shady Side Academy

Give someone the idea to start Creek Connections to keep the Earth clean and healthy.
-Rachel, Saegertown

Pack lunchbox with reusable containers instead of plastic bags. — Savannah, Seneca Valley IHS

Get out and do more. If everyone went outside and did more, the world would be better. —Robbie, Northwestern

Develop plans to save energy like turning power off and recycling. —Ben, Fort LeBoeuf

Turn off appliances when not using them to lower your carbon footprint. —Austin, North Hills

Save empty food containers to reuse them in our packed lunch. — Bearett, Quaker Valley

If you see litter, take a few seconds to pick it up and throw it away properly. —Megan, Northwestern



Above: Many, many thanks for a spectacular year from the 2015-2016 Creek Connections Staff! Back row: Brogan McGowan, Matthew Hutchinson, Wendy Kedzierski, Levi Lundell, Jake Turin. Front Row: Paul Sutkowski, Johanna Stanley, Camille Sicker, Kala Mahen, Melissa McCann, Melissa Mattwig and Laura Branby.

Connect with

CREEK CONNECTIONS

Allegheny College
520 North Main Street
Meadville, PA 16335

Phone: 814.332.5351

Email: creek@allegheny.edu

Web: creekconnections.allegheny.edu

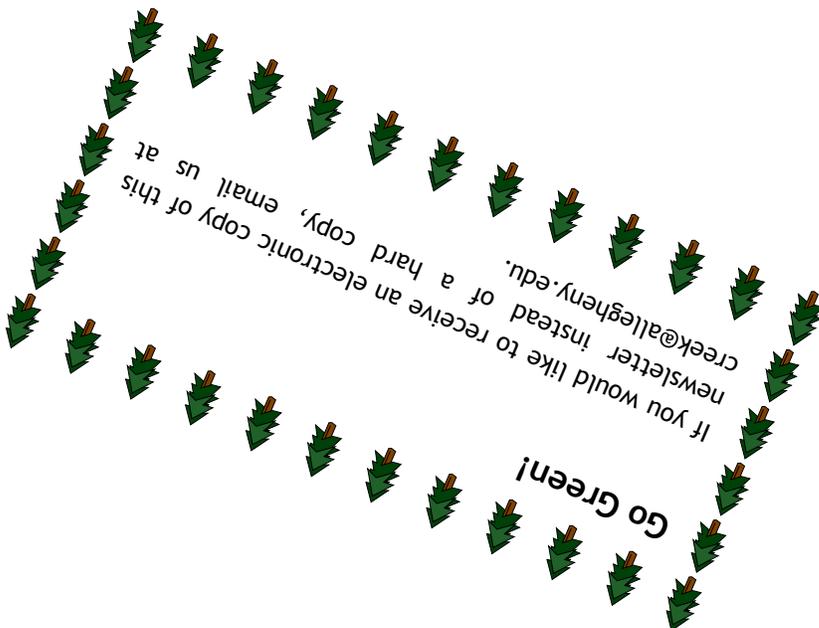


Find us on
Facebook

CREEK CONNECTIONS

is supported by:

Allegheny College,
Richard King Mellon
Foundation, Grable
Foundation, Frick Fund
of the Buhl Founda-
tion, PPG Industries, the Pennsylvania
Department of Environmental Quality,
contributions through the Educational
Improvement Tax Credit Program and
private donations.



CREEK CONNECTIONS
Allegheny College
520 North Main Street
Meadville, PA 16335

