



Volume #22 Issue #2
December 16, 2016

Current in the Creek

2017 Creek Camp Sessions:

I: June 25-30

II: July 9-14

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[sites.allegheny.edu/
creekconnections/creek-camp/](http://sites.allegheny.edu/creekconnections/creek-camp/)

Mrs. Barr's Pinewood Elementary 6th Grade Classes Win Big in Green Your School Contest

By Victoria Rus, Pinewood Elementary Student

The Pinewood 6th grade in Jenison, Michigan, is hard at work. We have been working on Woodcrest Park. We are doing this project not only to learn but to make a difference. We hope to make this park healthy again. There are a few problems there such as *E. coli*, sediments, and an overabundance of mosquitoes. Creek Connections has been a big help to us with our water quality kits that help us test for things like *E. coli*, macroinvertebrates, alkalinity, and nitrates. Those are just a few of the things we test for. We were awarded a grant from Tom's of Maine. Originally Mrs. Barr had posted our project on www.donorschoose.org to raise money to purchase another water chemistry test kit set from Creek Connections. Tom's of Maine then chose from projects on Donors Choose to support further. Our project, on making a local lake safe to swim in again, came in third in the competition, which involved online voting. Read more about the winners here:

www.tomsofmaine.com/greenschoolfund. The grant of \$10,000 will really help our project take

off. We will be able to do so many great things with the money, such as buying tools like work gloves, shovels, and camcorders so we can make a documentary of our project. We really hope to make a fun place for kids and a nice place to be for our whole community to enjoy. This is a big project; it's not easy, but we are determined to do good for our community. After all, this is our world, and we have to take care of it.



Holiday Happiness!

Attention teachers! Be sure to enter those crazy contests that Wendy and Laura forward to you by email! Our teachers are winners! Congratulations to Paula Cosnek, our teacher from Hopewell Memorial Junior High School, who won a one-way flight in the “Help for the Holidays” Green Teacher ticket giveaway courtesy of the Earth Day Network in partnership with Southwest Airlines. She entered the giveaway after deciding to take a chance one half-hour before the deadline. Our teachers are doing great things, and we are so happy when they are rewarded! Merry Christmas, Paula!

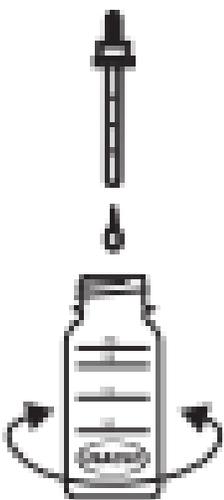


Testing Tip Twofer

By Paul Sutkowski, Allegheny College student

This first testing tip might sound obvious, but it is very important. When doing any test that involves using a dropper, make sure you are holding the dropper completely vertical. If the dropper is at an angle when it is being used, the drops will not be the same size. This makes any result from the test be inaccurate.

Secondly, it can be difficult to fill the turbidity dropper to the 0.5 mL line. An easy way to fill the dropper is to carefully watch where the reagent is in the dropper as you are filling it. It sounds easy, but it can be tough to do! Another method is to fill the dropper past the 0.5 mL line and then squeeze out reagent until it is at the 0.5 mL line. Once this is done the measured amount is in the dropper. When you release the bulb and air bubbles form, it's OK and still holds the correct amount of reagent to then place into the column with the distilled water.



Thank you to our Robert Morris University Creekers!

My name is Taylor Andree, and I am working as an intern with Creek Connections for the fall semester. I am from Erie, Pennsylvania, and I went to McDowell High School. I am currently a senior at Robert Morris University where I am majoring in biology/pre-medicine. I will be graduating in December, and I hope to attend



medical school next fall. I decided to work with Creek Connections this semester because I wanted to learn more about environmental science. I am able to learn more about our environment and local waterways while helping middle and high school students at the same time. My favorite part of the teaching experiences is watching students who have never had the desire or opportunity to play in the creeks learn how much fun these areas are, and learn how important it is that we conserve these places in our communities. The work that Creek Connections does is so important, and I am very happy to be a part of it.

My name is James Harris. I am a senior at Robert Morris University majoring in environmental science. I got involved with Creek Connections mostly because I needed an internship in order to graduate, and this was the perfect opportunity for me to fulfill my graduation requirement in an enjoyable way. My first experience with helping students with Creek Connections was at Hopewell Park. I remember we used the kicknets and checked for macroinvertebrates. It was a very different experience because I have never worked around middle schoolers before. It was interesting to see how they acted and listened to directions, and just to listen to how much they knew about the stream and the creatures living in it. It was a fun experience, and I am very glad I got to help educate the younger generation; it really opened my eyes to how important it is to bring children up the right way with an awareness and sense of caring for the environment. I think these traits are more important now than ever, and in my opinion, the future looks bright. In addition to the first experience helping kids, I have helped several other times, and I hope to help out a few more times before I graduate. Creek Connections was a great choice for an internship, and I know I will miss it after I graduate and will remember my experiences forever.

Feature Creature

By Melissa McCann, Allegheny College student

I am a microscopic aquatic invertebrate that lives in colonies. We are usually attached to a structure such as a rock or submerged branch. I am a rounded, jellylike mass. Others of my species resemble antlers, mosses, or vines. I eat microscopic organisms, and as I feed, I cleanse the water by filtration. My presence usually indicates good water quality. I can be found in the water, but I am unique because I am the only one of my kind since I live only in freshwater. I usually prefer the calm waters of lakes, ponds, and swamps. I am harmless, although I occasionally clog pipes and sewage treatment equipment. If you want to look for me outside on your dock, I reach my largest size in later summer. A single colony of mine can be over 12 inches wide!





Above: Pinewood Elementary students conduct water quality monitoring.

Feature Creature Answer from page 3:

Bryozoan

Information from: mdc.mo.gov/discover-nature/field-guide/bryozoans-moss-animals

Connect with

CREEK CONNECTIONS

Allegheny College
520 North Main Street
Meadville, PA 16335

Phone: 814.332.5351

Email: creek@allegheny.edu

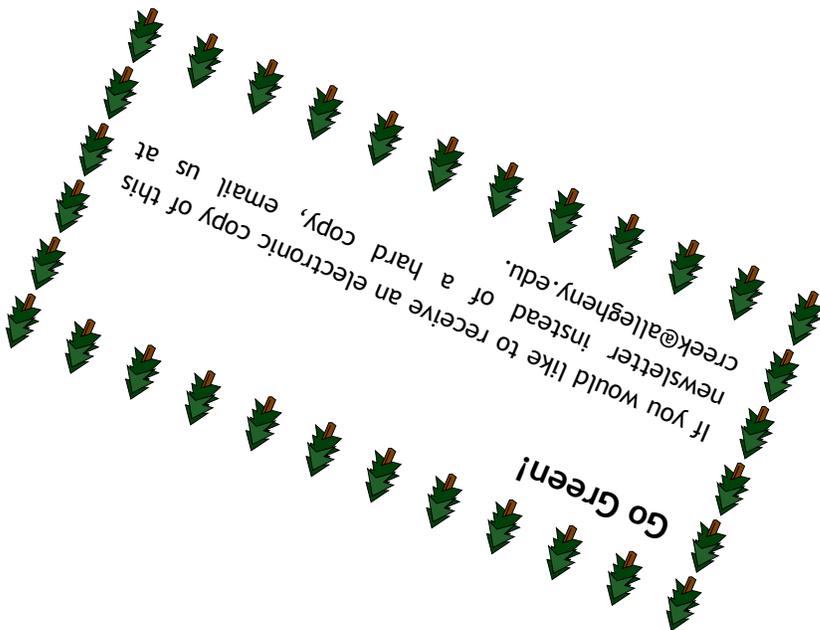
Web: creekconnections.allegheny.edu



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is supported by:

Allegheny College,
Richard King Mellon
Foundation, Allegheny
Co. Conservation
Dist., Dept. of Environmental
Protection Education Grant, Grable
Foundation, Frick Fund of the Buhl
Foundation, PPG Industries, donations
through the Educational Improvement
Tax Credit Program, and private
donations.



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

