

The year 2015 was once again a productive year for the Warrington Environmental Advisory Council (WEAC). With the support of active members, and many other volunteers, we were able to obtain two grants to support our programs, hold a highly successful Community Service Day, naturalize detention basins and enhance one of the Township Trails.

### Valley Square Earth Day Event April 25, 2015

The WEAC partnered with the Valley Square Shopping Center and held an Earth Day event. This event gave the WEAC the opportunity to educate the residents of Warrington and surrounding townships of some current environmental issues including protecting the watershed. Also discussed were the dangers of honeysuckle and other invasive vines growing on trees as well as destructive bamboo. Bat houses, blue bird houses and rain barrels were sold. We distributed environmental informational pamphlets and activity books for the kids, as well as other giveaways. Valley Square Shopping Center supplied lightning bug kits for the kids to assemble and take home. The big hit of the day was the flower pot painting for the kids. Burpee supplied seed packets for the kids to take home and plant in their painted pots. It was a great day!



### Grant funding For Naturalizing a Detention Basin

The WEAC was successful in securing a grant for approximately \$5000.00 from the Tree Vitalize Watersheds program under the supervision of the Bucks County Conservation District to naturalize a detention basin located at Hidden Court. This grant enabled the WEAC to purchase approximately 230 native trees and 50 native shrubs to plant in this basin. Volunteer labor also valued at approximately \$5,000.00 was used to plant the materials. These trees and shrubs will absorb rainwater runoff entering the

basin and will help to clean any polluted water, as well as reduce flooding downstream. The Basin was planted during Warrington's Community Service Day, 2015.





### **Warrington Community Service Day May 9, 2015**

Over 200 volunteers participated in our annual Community Service Day donating their time, which was valued at over \$20,000. Activities were numerous and challenging. The younger kids and some parents planted annuals at Twin Oaks, Upper Nike Park, Igoe Porter Wellings (IPW) Park and the War Memorial. They made everything look beautiful!

About 185 volunteers from the Central Bucks South National Honor Society, the Central Bucks South Environmental Club, the German Honor Societies of Central Bucks South, East and West participated. Additional volunteers included local residents who brought their energy and enthusiasm. Their accomplishments were awesome as they took on various, large projects in multiple locations. Other projects included weeding and planting around the Twin Oaks main building, maintenance of the rain and butterfly gardens in IPW Park and a litter clean up at the Bradford Dam. The previously naturalized detention basins at Morning Walk & Evening Walk, Billingsley & Stump Roads, Guinea and Greenridge Lane and Guinea and Warwick Roads were all weeded and mulched. This was no easy task!

Three new projects were also completed. The first project was located at the forested area adjacent to the trail beginning at Morning Walk Drive and Evening Walk Lane leading to IPW Park. The area was cleared of invasive species, and new trees and shrubs that bear edible fruit were planted. This project was completed under the supervision of Woods of Plenty LLC. The water detention basin and area at the end of Hidden Court was the site of the two other projects. About 40 high school volunteers, under the supervision of 6 adults, planted approximately 250 trees and shrubs to naturalize this basin. A 50x50 foot meadow was also prepared and planted. These

projects involved digging, hauling, planting, driving stakes and building wire cages to keep the deer from damaging the plants. Additional National Honor Society students completed the work on the following weekend, by tying and staking the remaining plants. They really worked hard! Along with the basins, Warrington youth built 30 blue bird houses and 8 bat houses. Parents, be proud of them!

The efforts of our young people were supported by monetary donations along with food and drink donations from many local businesses. A special thank you to our main sponsor BJ's, in addition to a significant donation of food; several BJ's employees helped serve the food to our hungry volunteers. Also Mr. Stephen Servis from HomeStarr Realty made a monetary donation and he and his family spent the day planting trees and shrubs with us. Other businesses supporting our effort included Costumers Bank, Allstate Insurance of Warrington, Chipotle, Chickie & Pete's, Elbow Lane Day Camp, Home Depot, Lowe's, John Mohan Tax Collector, Soprano's Pizza, Stutz Candy, and Wawa. Thank you, Warrington's merchants.





### **Forest Trail Enhancement for a Greater Community Experience**

A new project was initiated in May 2015; the goals of this initiative are to enhance a currently protected forest surrounding Warrington Township trails, increase visitor safety, reconnect humans to the forest and generate food for both humans and wildlife. This was accomplished through professional mechanical invasive plant management, general forest improvement including removal of some dead trees, and planting an array of native fruiting and flowering plants.

Currently, non-native invasive plants plague the identified regions of forest. Professional Staff from Woods of Plenty, LLC performed mechanical invasive plant management and general forest improvement extending 15-20ft deep into the forest from the trail. Two project sites have been selected. The 1<sup>st</sup> site begins at the trailhead of the IPW Trail System at Morning Walk Drive and extends along the Morning Walk Trail for approximately 450 linear feet. The 1<sup>st</sup> phase of at Site #1 was completed in May, 2015.



The 2<sup>nd</sup> phase will be completed by June 2016. The 2<sup>nd</sup> site begins at the Bird Blind located in John Paul Park at Lower Nike, and ends at the PECO Power Line Right of Way. The distance is approximately 400 feet. The 1<sup>st</sup> phase of Site #2 will be completed by June 1, 2016. The 2<sup>nd</sup> phase will be completed by June of 2017.

The 1<sup>st</sup> phase of work at each site involves the professional mechanical invasive plant management using hand tools to preserve all existing native plant material assets and not introduce any chemicals to an environment heavily trafficked by humans and wildlife. All of the organic material generated from managing the invasive plants will be utilized in the development of habitat for wildlife. This material will also serve as native plant trellises within the forest. The second phase involves annual maintenance of the sites.

Volunteers will subsequently spread mulch, native plant seed, and plant a plethora of native fruiting and flowering plants to usher in the transformation. Small group mini-courses on invasive plant identification, their impact on the native forest biosphere, and

management options will also be conducted. Interested volunteers will then have the opportunity to participate in managing invasive plants. Interpretative signs will be installed at each site.

### **Warrington Community Day (WCD) 2015**

The WEAC exhibited displays of blue bird houses, bat houses and rain barrels. The WEAC gave out freebies for children of all ages. A special thank you to Bartlett Tree Company for providing 200 bare root native trees to give away.



### **Eagle Scout Project**

Mr. David Schmidt, Eagle Scout Candidate, completed his project during Community Service Day 2015. The project involved removing wires and wooden stakes that were placed several years ago by PENNDOT around newly planted trees. The area was designated as a naturalized riparian buffer by the Army Corps of Engineers, in conjunction with the construction of the 202 Parkway. The project area was located adjacent to the 202 Parkway Service Road, off of Stump Road. Many of the trees had grown very large and the wires were restricting their growth and some of these trees were in jeopardy of dying. In addition to removing the wire around the trees, the scout troop removed invasive vines that could choke the trees. Invasive plants were also removed from the ground surrounding these trees. Boy Scout Troop 24, members of the Central Bucks National Honor Society, the PENNDOT Environmental Manager, as well as family friends worked under the direction of David Schmidt to complete his project.

### **Additional Projects**

- The WEAC has been working with Doylestown EAC to extend the existing Bluebird trail in Doylestown through Warrington along the 202 parkway. The Blue Bird houses that will extend along the Warrington trail portion will be installed in 2016.
- Blue Bird houses were installed in the Morning Walk Detention Basin and the Hidden Court Detention Basin.
- Approval and material purchases for Screech Owl boxes were made in 2015. This initiative will begin at the WEAC's Community Service day, 2016.
- Plans to update the bird blind with new feeders, seed, and replacement of old fencing began in 2015 and were implemented in 2016.

### **Articles Written for the Links in 2015:**

Members of the WEAC contributed the following articles to the Link: Compost Your Leaves, Fall Is Ideal For Planting Trees, Manage Water On Your Property To Eliminate Mosquito Breeding Areas, Healthy Natural Lawns, Turn AC Off When You Leave Your House, Blue Bird and Bat Houses, Rain Barrels, Tips for a Healthy Yard, Soil Test for Lush Green Gardens and Lawns, and Protect Your Trees, etc..