

## Upcoming Events

### Nockamixon Park & Recreation Committee Announces Nature In The Parks Programs

By Ben Naska

This spring, the Nockamixon Park & Recreation Committee continues its successful *Nature in the Parks* program of Star Gazing Evenings and guided nature hikes.

Star Gazers can look forward to sharing the heavens from 8:30-11:00 p.m. on the evenings of Saturday, May 31 and Saturday, July 26 at Rapp Creek Park (former site of Revere Chemical on Route 611).

The park will also be the site of two guided nature hikes from 8:30-11:00 a.m. on Saturday, April 12 and Saturday, May 12.

Contact Ben Naska at 610-847-5853 for more information. 



Post Office Box 24  
Kintnersville, PA 18930  
[www.grwabucks.org](http://www.grwabucks.org)

## SAVE THE DATES - Spring '08

**Tuesday, April 15, 7:30 pm** – Public Hearing: Well Protection Ordinance. Nockamixon Board of Supervisors, Nockamixon Township Building.

**Saturday, April 26, 10:00 am** – Gallows Run Earth Day Stream Clean-up. American Grill, Kintnersville.

**Sunday, June 22-Saturday, June 28** – Delaware River Sojourn. For more information, visit the Sojourn's official website at <http://www.state.nj.us/drbc/sojourn.htm>. Via email, send your request to [katharine.o'hara@drbc.state.nj.us](mailto:katharine.o'hara@drbc.state.nj.us), subject line "Sojourn Email List."

**Thursday, June 26, Noon** – Sojourn visits the Gallows Run.

**Saturday, July 26, 9:00 am** – GRWA Lynn Island clean-up.

*PLEASE NOTE:* All are welcome to participate in cleanup events. For your own safety and comfort, please dress appropriately. We do get in the water to retrieve debris, so wear hip boots or waders. The day usually starts cool then warms, so dress in layers. Reflective or highly visible outerwear is best.

STANDARD  
MAILING

PERMIT NO. 2

KINTNERSVILLE,  
PA, 18930



# UPPER BUCKS FUTURES

Spring 2008

*The Voice of the Gallows Run Watershed Association*

## In This Issue

### Letter from the President

Progress on major issues seen **1**

### Stream Team Update

Next Project: Riparian Buffer **1**

### Waterways

Well Protection Ordinance **2**

### EarthWatch

Preserving the Landscape **3**

Get Ready To Garden! **4**

### Development Watch

Flexible Development Option **4**

Responsible Development Update **5**

Outdoor Lighting Ordinance **5**

Delaware River Sojourn **6**

### Upcoming Events

Nature in the Parks Programs **8**

GRWA & Related Groups **8**

## Stream Team Update

### Stream Team launches riparian buffer demo project

By Bill Brokaw

2008 sees the Gallows Run Stream Team building on all efforts to date in its mission to make a positive impact on the environment. The team has undergone a change over the past year, with senior members heading off to college and new members taking their place.

The 2007 Stream Team's last effort was the creation of a manual for "stream owners," providing guidance on maintaining a healthy stream. As a follow-up, the 2008 Team has designed a riparian buffer demonstration project to implement, and are seeking funding for the project from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA).

The project will be the creation of a riparian buffer along a small tributary of Nockamixon Creek. The objective is

*continued on page 4*

## Letter From the President

### Progress seen in bridge reconstruction, land conservation, stream bank stabilization

by Todd Stone

There is good news to report on the infrastructure in the Gallows Run. Reconstruction of the bridge at bottom of Old Easton Road in Kintnersville has been completed on time, unimpeded by several recent severe weather events. The construction manager reports the relocation of several large brown trout from under the bridge during re-routing of the stream during construction, as well as finding a healthy population of eels and frogs. Final masonry work is now underway.

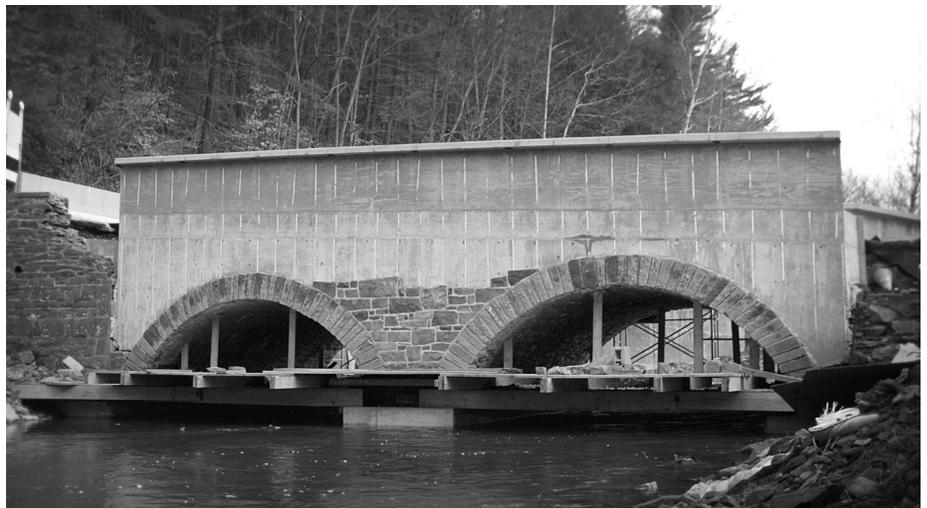
The Gallows Run Restoration and Protection Plan, available online at [grwabucks.org](http://grwabucks.org), prioritizes problem areas on the stream for action. The highest priority problem area in the watershed is the unstable stream bank at the bottom of Kintner Hill Road at Route 611 in

Kintnersville. PennDOT has awarded a \$200,321.25 contract to Richard Scherker, Jr., to begin work on a project this spring to repair and stabilize that stream bank.

The project will direct the stream back to its original course, as recommended in the GRWA plan. This project will also remove excess sedimentation from the stream course, which has built up over the course of recent storms. The project is 100% funded with state and Bucks County maintenance funds. We appreciate the efforts of PennDOT and our Soil Conservation District to approach this problem with environmental sensitivity to our high quality stream.

The GRWA continues to work with our members and partners in land conservation activities to protect the natural resources of the Gallows Run watershed.

*continued on page 7*



*The northern arch bridge on Old Easton Road in Kintnersville gets a long-awaited reconstruction after being critically damaged by last year's flooding events.*

*Photo by Bill Brokaw*

# Nockamixon Well Protection Ordinance Update

By Dr. Stephen Donovan

Nockamixon's Well Protection Ordinance has now received input from the Nockamixon Planning Commission and the Township's Board of Supervisors. It has been sent to the Bucks County Planning Commission. The date for its final hearing—and hopefully, adoption—has been set as 7:30 p.m. on April 15, 2008 at the Nockamixon Township building.

## Development Potential Hinges on Water Supply

This ordinance utilizes the township's role in formulating and administering equitable distribution of a limited, commonly shared resource crucial to all life: water. As development progresses in Upper Bucks County, we need to be mindful that the demands on our available drinking water do not outstrip the supply.

In Nockamixon and neighboring townships, residents rely exclusively on private wells to supply their drinking water. If the present rate of development continues, our wells will start to go dry, even during normal, non-drought years. This ordinance seeks to head off that possibility, while being fair to everyone's interests. It has taken a long time in gestation because of the complexity necessary to achieve that goal.

We view this ordinance as a living document. As we learn more about our aquifer, recharge rates and related water issues, we expect to modify it to reflect

the best current knowledge. In addition, as it leaves the realm of pure theory and we start to apply it in practice, we may find a few wrinkles that need to be ironed out.

## Lot Size, Recharge Rates Must Agree

The Bridgeton-Nockamixon-Tinicum Groundwater Management Committee (BNT GWMC) has studied the rate at which water refills (recharges) the local underground water supply (aquifer). This rate depends on specific local geology—the soil and bedrock we sit upon.

Due to geological conditions beneath our township, a two-acre lot (the minimum legal size per single family dwelling) in Nockamixon does not support the water needs of a typical home, which is about 400 gallons per day. For the aquifer to collect that amount of water, it has to draw from an area of land much larger than two acres.

In our Well Protection Ordinance, we are basing lot size on enabling the assurance of an adequate water supply during the worst drought in fifty years. Our research indicates this amount as 80 gallons per day, per acre in the diabase, Lockatong and Hornfels formations, and as 100 gallons per day, per acre in the Brunswick formation.

The average person uses about 100 gallons of water per day, especially during dry periods. Thus, local geology and intended use determines the minimum

lot size. For example, a four-bedroom house would be expected to house up to five people, calculated in water usage as 500 gallons per day. Thus, it would require 5 acres to support such a house in the Brunswick area or 6.25 acres in the diabase, Lockatong and Hornfels regions.

Average well depth in Pennsylvania is 180 feet. The wells in Nockamixon average 300 feet—almost double the average. Clearly, this is evidence that we already have trouble finding reliable sources of potable water. The problem will only get worse as the competition for remaining water increases, unless action is taken now through careful planning. Drilling your well deeper is only a temporary (and costly) solution to an inescapable problem.

## No Ordinance = Dry Wells

The alternative to passage of this ordinance is the eventual certainty of wells running out of water on a regular basis, not just during drought years. We have already seen one local farm's well run dry. The farmer had to immediately drill a new well to satisfy the needs of his dairy herd. We have seen Palisades High School's well level drop by a hundred feet from its initial level. These situations illustrate the very real threat posed by unregulated well drilling in service of new building development.

The consequence of not adopting this ordinance would eventually be insti-

*continued on page 6*

We advocate on behalf of sound environmental stewardship, sustainable land management, and the preservation of the rural character of our communities here in Bucks County Pennsylvania. Our tools include educational outreach, active participation in the legal processes that affect local land use, and a strategic partnership with other organizations that share our objective.

**UPPER BUCKS FUTURES** is a semi-annual newsletter published by the Gallows Run Watershed Association (GRWA). The publishers make every effort to confirm facts, dates, etc. We apologize for any typographical errors that may inadvertently slip by our proofreaders, but we cannot be responsible for any inconvenience that results from such errors.

Need more information about or wish to join GRWA?

Contact us:

**PO Box 24 • Kintnersville, PA 18930**  
**Phone (610) 346-8997**  
**info@grwabucks.org • www.grwabucks.org**

### Upper Bucks Futures Staff

GRWA President & Publisher – Todd Stone  
Editor/Designer – Mary A. Shafer

### Contributors

Alana Balogh, Bill Brokaw,  
Steve Donovan, Patti Keyser,  
Sanci Tenney, Ben Naska

### Webmaster

Bill Brokaw & The Stream Team

## Viewscapes, Hedgerows: Preservation Matters

*continued from page 3*

Often, a stream forms the border between fields, and historically the trees along the stream were left in their natural state. These trees, and the naturally occurring vegetation along a streambed, are called the “riparian buffer”, (“riparian” refers to the banks of a natural course of water.) Riparian buffers also filter runoff from fields and lawns, preventing pollution of our streams and rivers.

Villages of the new settlers, like the Indian villages, often nestled in a valley near a stream or river. These created picturesque views from the surrounding hilltops, which have been memorialized and romanticized by many American landscape painters, especially the New Hope School of Impressionism in our area. All of Bucks County at one time embodied these landscapes, but the lower part of the county gave them up in the last century to urban sprawl and development. Here in Nockamixon, these images are still real!

Hedgerows, riparian buffers and scenic views of farmland and villages are vintage Nockamixon, and define the character of our rural landscape.

Nockamixon Township is striving to safeguard the landscape that provides these beautiful vistas and ecological treasures by creating ordinances that restrain rampant development.

If you want to help preserve our Nockamixon heritage, come out and show your support at township meetings.

Strive to preserve the natural areas, hedgerows and riparian buffers on your own property. For more information, contact the Environmental Advisory Council or Open Space Committee through the Township office (610-847-5058), or visit the GRWA website at [www.grwabucks.org](http://www.grwabucks.org). 🌲



*The Gallows Run wends its way through some of the most scenic countryside in Pennsylvania. This view is of a rolling farm field in Durham Township.*

*Photo by Mary Shafer*

## Letter From the President

*continued from page 1*

The GRWA will again be hosting its annual Earth Day stream clean-up on Saturday, April 26, in partnership with Nockamixon Township and PennDOT. As always, we make the activity both meaningful and fun by mixing the family-friendly exercise of a trash gathering streamwalk with the interest and entertainment of hands-on environmental science.

We will be joined this year by Delaware Canal State Park Environmental Education Specialist Ian Kindle, who will help us conduct water quality testing and invertebrate sampling during the stream walk. We meet at the American Grill in Kintnersville at 10:00 a.m. Wading boots are recommended.

We will also be conducting a cleanup of Lynn Island on the Delaware River, in partnership with the DCNR on Saturday,

July 26. The island remains untouched since several major flooding events and can use some help with removal of debris left in the wake of these floods. This is especially important, considering the island has some fascinating new wildlife inhabitants. You'll have to show up to find out who they are! We'll meet at 9:00 a.m. at the American Grill.

The GRWA, in partnership with the Cooks Creek Watershed Association, recently hosted a meeting of the Upper Bucks Regional Environmental Advisory Committee. The purpose was to educate Upper Bucks policymakers on the environmental risks involved in oil and gas exploration and development at the Cabot Superfund site in Nockamixon. For more information, visit our website at [grwabucks.org](http://grwabucks.org).

Perhaps most importantly, Nockamixon Township is prepared to take a major step to protect the groundwater of the Gallows Run watershed for generations to come. On April 15, the Township Supervisors will be conducting a public hearing about the proposed Well Protection Ordinance.

This ordinance ties future land development to available groundwater resources, and is a model of sustainable development in our unique geology. We're very excited at the prospect of being part of history-making progress in this effort.

I want to add my appreciation of all the support given by so many to the GRWA, as we pursue our mission to protect and restore the natural resources of the Gallows Run. 🌲

# Delaware River Sojourn 2008 Marks Important Dates in River History: GRWA Members Invited to Paddle and Picnic

The Delaware River Sojourn is an annual canoe/kayak trip that covers sections of the river from Hancock, New York to the estuary in Philadelphia. The Delaware, longest un-dammed river east of the Mississippi, is as steeped in history as it is diverse in nature. The purpose of the Sojourn is to heighten awareness of—and appreciation for—the ecological, historical, recreational, and economic significance of the Delaware River, which flows through New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Delaware. The Sojourn combines paddling, camping, educational programs, historical interpretation and more.

Almost anyone can come on the Sojourn: adults, families, kids, and grandparents. Since 2001, the Sojourn has been enjoyed by people who love paddling or are curious about the outdoors. Travelers can sign up for the entire trip or for the section or day(s) of their choice.

To experience the variety of landscapes, culture, history and nature of the entire Delaware River, participants paddle in each section: upper, middle, lower, and tidal estuary. Paddlers often take side trips on the historical canals, into the tidal marshes and down the scenic tributaries. The itinerary varies from year to year, so there is always something new to discover.

The 2008 Sojourn is a special one. This year marks the 40th Anniversary of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, the 30th Anniversary of the Upper and Middle Delaware designations, and the 8th Anniversary of key segments of the Lower Delaware being officially named Wild and Scenic. In all, three-quarters of the non-tidal Delaware River, as well as portions of several Delaware River and Bay tributaries, are currently included in this National System.

The theme of the 2008 Sojourn is Conserving Our Wild and Scenic River. It is important not only to mark the anniversary of the Act, but also the inherent fact that as the decades pass, the River still, and should always, remain. This year's Sojourn takes place from June 22-28, and includes events of interest to GRWA members.

Monday evening, June 22, paddlers will put in at Dingman's Ferry Campground, where they will be treated to an hour-long

presentation on river's record-setting flood by GRWA member Mary Shafer, author of *Devastation on the Delaware: Stories and Images of the Deadly Flood of 1955*.

Thursday, June 26, Sojourn participants will be paddling the section from Raubsville to Upper Black Eddy. GRWA members are invited to join the group at noon for a picnic lunch near Lynn Island and the Gallows Run Aqueduct. GRWA members are encouraged to speak to participants to let them know what we're doing for the watershed.

Sojourners are specifically interested in talking with Palisades Stream Team members involved in planning and implementing the Gallows Run Restoration and Protection Plan. Stream Team members are invited to paddle along with Sojourners for the day, and to speak about their projects.

For more information, visit <http://www.state.nj.us/drbc/sojourn.htm>. Send email requests to [katharine.o'hara@drbc.state.nj.us](mailto:katharine.o'hara@drbc.state.nj.us), subject line "Sojourn Email List." 

## Waterways

*continued from page 1*

### Well Protection Ordinance

tuting municipal water and sewer that would completely destroy the rural character that is the very reason we like living here. Besides the visual blight a sewer would cause, the initial cost per homeowner would be in the area of \$30,000 to hook up to the big pipe in the middle of the road. Access to this main would only be the first cost. That would be followed by annual service fees to pay a water and sewer authority forever for something that we now access "for free." Municipal water and sewer is not necessary, nor is it the answer to this dilemma, but responsible planning today is required.

#### Another Way to Look At It

Another aspect of the Well Protection Ordinance is its approach to nitrate dilution modeling (NDM). This approach is something new for Pennsylvania, but it has been used in neighboring New Jersey for some time. NDM, too, limits minimum lot size, but is based on current nitrate levels in groundwater as affected by the local rate of aquifer recharge.

Nitrates are dissolved pollutants present in most groundwater, picked up as storm runoff flows over such substances as fertilizer and cow and horse manure. The more dense and less fractured the underlying rock formations, the lower the aquifer recharge, because there's not many paths for water to travel down

from the surface through the rock. Therefore, there's less dilution of the nitrate pollution, which means higher concentrations in the water that does reach the aquifer.

Drinking water is regarded as unfit for consumption when the nitrate concentration exceeds 10 parts per million. The nitrate level also serves as an important surrogate for measuring all the other harmful chemicals that enter our aquifer. The public is starting to realize that our municipal drinking water currently now contains antibiotics, household chemicals, pesticides, and pharmaceuticals at low concentrations that come from upstream septic treatment plants and leaking or failing on-site septic systems. Thus, piping water from the Delaware River is not nearly as attractive a choice as some may want us to believe. The real answer, again, is larger lot sizes.

This ordinance does not try to stop all development, but instead to plan for development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their real needs. This is the definition of "sustainable development," and is what's required to maintain the rural character we all value so highly about Nockamixon. 

*Dr. Stephen Donovan is a member of the Nockamixon Environmental Advisory Council and the BNT GWMC.*

## Stream Team Update

*continued from page 1*

to demonstrate how homeowners can convert a portion of their lawn into a naturalized area, especially if there is a stream or other watercourse flowing through the property. The Stream Team is partnering with the Bucks County Department of Parks and Recreation, the Palisades School District, Hortulus Nursery and the Heritage Conservancy on the project.

The team created a plan to plant native hardwood trees and shrubs near the entrance of the Bucks County Horse Park along Route 611 in Nockamixon. The planting is designed to expand and enhance the existing wooded area, improving wildlife habitat and providing a buffer along a small watercourse that runs through the lawn area. It is an intentionally modest and simple undertaking, serving as a model for what homeowners can realistically do on their own properties.

The grant application was submitted to the USEPA as part of the Five Star Restoration Challenge Grant Program ([www.epa.gov/wetlands/restore/5star/](http://www.epa.gov/wetlands/restore/5star/)). Heritage Conservancy prepared and submitted the grant application on behalf of the Stream Team.

Pending approval of the grant, the Stream Team hopes to implement the plan this fall, then prepare a publication documenting the project. The publication will also advise land owners how they can complete a similar project of their own.

On another note, the Tree Squad—a committee of the Stream Team—is looking forward to seeing their acorns sprout and become young trees. Approximately 300 acorns were collected and planted in raised beds to winter over. Assuming the squirrels haven't made a winter meal of the acorns, these seedlings will be potted and distributed as part of the effort to plant a thousand trees in the Palisades School District.

A Captain Planet grant is being sought to aid in this effort. Captain Planet is a superhero in the animated series *Captain Planet and the Planeteers* and *The New Adventures of Captain Planet*. Ted Turner created Captain Planet in 1990, with the intent of entertaining viewers into an awareness of environmental hazards. 🌿



### What is a Riparian Buffer?

The term riparian buffer is used to describe lands adjacent to streams, where vegetation is strongly influenced by the presence of water. They are often thin lines of green containing native grasses, flowers, shrubs and trees that line the stream banks. Riparian buffers perform many valuable functions important to good water quality:

- Act as natural runoff filters to help prevent sediment, nitrogen, phosphorus, pesticides and other pollutants from reaching a stream.
- Riparian vegetation is a major source of energy and nutrients for stream communities, especially in small headwater streams, where up to 99% of energy input may be from woody debris and leaf litter.
- Overhanging riparian vegetation keeps streams cool, especially important for the Gallows Run's native brown trout population.
- Riparian buffers provide valuable habitat for wildlife. In addition to providing food and cover, they are an important corridor or travel way for a variety of wildlife. Forested streambanks benefit game species such as deer, rabbit, quail and non-game species like migratory songbirds.
- Riparian vegetation slows floodwaters, helping to maintain stable streambanks and protect downstream property. By slowing down floodwaters and rainwater runoff, the riparian vegetation allows water to soak into the ground and recharge groundwater.

## Viewscapes, Hedgerows, and Riparian Buffers: Preserving the Landscape

By Patti Keyser, Nockamixon EAC

When Native Americans lived in Nockamixon before Europeans arrived, the land one sees today was mostly forested. The population of Pennsylvania's Delaware Valley region at that time was about one thousand people.

The Delaware Indians cleared little areas of open space in the forest for their villages and gardens. Each individual family had its own space for planting. There were no sweeping fields of wheat and corn as we know them today. It was the European settlers who developed what we can still see in Nockamixon Township, the small villages along a main road with farmers' fields all around.

The Indians cleared land by burning the bases of trees, felling them and leaving the stumps to rot while they planted around them. The Europeans learned from the Indians, but in time their fields spread out, especially with the advent of machinery. Meanwhile, as was practiced in England, early settlers of Penn's Woods began to distinguish one field from another with low stone walls built from rocks dug out of the planting area, and by trees and undergrowth that lined the edges of areas to be planted. These "living fences" also served to contain livestock and became the "hedgerows" we know today.

There is nothing quite like a Pennsylvania cornfield with a hedgerow! A thing of beauty for some, a beneficial place to live for others, hedgerows not only provide habitat for countless creatures that positively affect the balance of nature, but they create buffers for wind and for stormwater runoff, allowing water to filter back into the soil. This "recharge" of water is good for our well supplies, while avoiding erosion and soil loss for the farmer and pollution to streams and rivers.

*continued on page 7*

# Nockamixon Considers Flexible Development Option

by Sancu Tenney, Nockamixon EAC

Nockamixon Township is creating a Flexible Development Option Ordinance tailored to Nockamixon needs and traditional landscape characteristics.

The intention of this ordinance would not be to cluster housing, but to provide a means to utilize the land available for development by encouraging more sensitive building design. The ordinance would encourage building designs and techniques that are harmonious with preservation of productive agricultural land, open space, natural resources, scenic vistas, historic buildings and the township's distinctive rural character.

The ordinance would also serve to conserve steeply sloped and forested areas, creek valleys and other significant natural features that play an important role in the ecological cycle; reduce air pollution; and provide for groundwater recharge and for wildlife habitats. In

addition, it would strive to avoid severe soil erosion and sedimentation, severely increased stormwater flows and speeds that could degrade water quality in our many waterways.

Flexible Developments are a useful tool to steer development of single-family detached dwellings to those areas that are more physically suited for it. This option provides greater site design flexibility, while minimizing the impact of new development on the landscape and existing character of an area. A flexible development option encourages higher quality site layout and design that carefully respects natural features and scenic views.

As a conditional use, a Flexible Development Option is intended to offer several distinct advantages to applicants:

a developer can often reduce the effects of restrictive state and local natural feature regulations (such as pertain to wetlands and stream crossings) by utiliz-

ing flexible provisions to locate dwellings, roads and driveways away from sensitive environmental features

allows dwellings to be sited to reduce grading costs, street length and utility line length

Open space that is retained through this approach provides developers with a distinct marketing advantage over developments with no open space, as numerous studies have confirmed that many home buyers are looking for houses located adjacent to or near permanently protected woodland or farmland.

This approach allows developers to designate approximately half to two-thirds of their developable land as open space, without losing any overall density.

Work on this draft Ordinance continues as Nockamixon strives to plan for sustainable development and preserve the recognized uniqueness and special features of the Township. 🌸

## EarthWatch

By Alana Balogh

It's time to prepare for the gardening season. Are you interested in growing some vegetables, or plants that attract birds and butterflies?

Is there a place near your home where you can plant a shade tree to help provide natural air-conditioning in the summer? That perfect, green lawn that so many seek may actually not be desirable, if you don't want your yard to threaten your health or the environment.

Keeping this in mind, there's a lot to think about as you make plans for your yard and gardens this season:

- **Go Native** – Choose plants and flowers appropriate for our region to ensure the greatest success. Native plants require less care and resist insects and diseases better than non-natives. Many homeowners regularly use pesticides in their yards. Recent research indicates they may cause reproductive problems in wildlife and people. ([http://www.psrla.org/documents/pesticides\\_and\\_human\\_health.pdf](http://www.psrla.org/documents/pesticides_and_human_health.pdf). Page 39)

## Get Ready To Garden!



The U.S. Geological Survey announced that pesticides were found in almost all waterways and in some drinking-water systems. (<http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2006/03/03/tech/main1368986.shtml>)

- **Optimize With Organics** – Since you're gardening anyway, why not try growing organic vegetables this year? They will cost less (in money and carbon emissions) than those shipped from far away. They'll also be tastier, fresher and better for you and for the environment. And you don't need a big garden plot to make it happen. A couple large planters in a sunny spot can easily provide you with lettuce, tomatoes, peppers, and fresh herbs for a season's worth of fantastic salads. Help for the organic gardener of any skill level is only a click away at <http://why.org/91FM/ybyg/about.html>.
- **Feed Smart** – Every plant needs nutrients, but fertilizers can be washed into waterways and contribute to algae "bloom." This can clog the water's surface and monopolize its oxygen supply, in turn killing fish and other aquatic

life. Consult with the local Extension Service or a nature center to learn how making your own safe compost.

- **Less Lawn** – Minimize your lawn area and allow it to grow at least three inches tall for a stronger root system and less maintenance. Replace your gas-powered lawn maintenance tools with non-polluting, hand-powered tools. As an alternative, choose a lawn cover that naturally requires less water and maintenance than traditional grass. Contact your local Extension Service, nature centers or garden centers to learn your options.
- **Timing is Everything** – To eliminate the need for herbicides, make sure weeds are pulled before they develop and drop their seeds. This will also eliminate more work later in the season.

To safely dispose of synthetic pesticides, including herbicides and insecticides, contact your Township office. They can tell you times, dates and locations of any spring cleanup days, when

*continued on page 5*

# Responsible Development Update

By Sancı Tenney, Nockamixon EAC

As we know, it makes sense to ensure that important decisions we make today will result in a viable and healthy future for all. Once a project is reviewed and complies with regulations, approval to proceed is granted by the Township and responsible growth management is achieved.

Participation in this important decisionmaking process continues to be attained by the attendance of concerned citizens at meetings who ask questions, voice their concerns and offer constructive solutions to the many challenges of the complex process, resulting in Township decisions.

This is highlighted by the following plans and concerns for 51 new lots for subdivision and/or land development and 36 units currently in the Nockamixon review and approval process.

## **Christman Tract – 15-lot subdivision along Church Hill & Frogtown Roads**

– With its sweeping views and vistas in the heart of the Township, this tract has received much concern. In addition, its intermittent streams, wetlands, hedgerows, woodlands require protection. A water impact study is awaited. An alternative sketch plan was submitted proposing a cluster housing design.

## **DiPalantino Land Development for Truck Terminal along Route 611**

– Plans for this small lot located near Rapp Creek appear to stretch its abilities in terms of ensuring that Township environmental goals are met. Concerns about meeting compliance requirements include stormwater management, sewer and septic.

## **Dwayne Gross Byers Road 2-lot subdivision**

– Concerns remain about impact to wetlands and woodlands. Pervious surfaces and stormwater management also need to be addressed.

**Harrow Station senior housing development** – 36-unit age-restricted development along Route 412. Water supply and stormwater basin are the challenges here.

**Hoffman 5-Lot Subdivision along Marienstein Road** – Located in the village of Revere, concerns about this project include impact on the village viewscape.

**Sal Lapio Homes/Harrow Manor** – 15 lots along 611 are awaiting permit for exceptional value stream crossing by a septic system pipe that carries raw sewage.

**Cobbler Road, LLP** – 13 lots on 13 acres along 611 in Ferndale. A new 3-lot subdivision sketch plan was reviewed by the Planners in October of 2007, with the Township still awaiting revised preliminary plans. The property is next to the Gallows Run and the entire tract drains into its tributaries. A lot of land use issues are wrapped up in this subdivision, giving the Township many worries. Little or no information and/or documentation has been received to address major concerns including, but not limited to: stream discharge; protection of streams, steep slopes, watercourses, woodlands and ridgeway; environmental study of site for potential contamination, given its past use as a junkyard and location adjacent to a closed Bucks County landfill; potential adverse affect on the aquifer due to water withdrawal; and acceptable environmental impact.

Since Cobbler requested to have its zoning hearing postponed (“continued”), nothing happened until late 2007, when a new 3-lot sketch plan was submitted. Nothing further has been received. Environmental aspects and issues regarding impacts on public health and welfare are especially important for this site. The multitude of questions and concerns raised in the review of information submitted await response and resolution. 🌱

## **Proposed Amendment To Nockamixon Outdoor Lighting Zoning Ordinance**

by Sancı Tenney, Nockamixon EAC

Like Robert Frost, who wrote: “I have been one acquainted with the night,” the Environmental Advisory Council studied ways to preserve our night skies. As a result, Nockamixon is preparing to join other municipalities and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in revising zoning ordinance regulations for outdoor lighting.

Reviewed by the Planning Commission and Township Engineer, the proposed ordinance revisions have been forwarded to the Board of Supervisors for adoption at a public hearing, expected to occur at their May meeting. It will apply to new construction and commercial development, and will result in outdoor lighting being diffused or shielded to prevent it from creating any hazardous or nuisance glare.

The purpose of this revision is to manage and set standards for outdoor lighting so that it will serve our needs but prevent light pollution. Decreasing light pollution and reducing wasteful lighting are important elements of sound land use practices. Outdoor lighting should:

- Protect neighbors and the night sky from nuisance glare, light trespass, light disturbance, and stray light due to poorly aimed, placed, applied, maintained or shielded light sources.
- Protect the rural character and ecological resource values of the township from light disturbance.
- Protect drivers and pedestrians from the glare of non-vehicular light sources that shine into their eyes and thereby impair safe traverse through the community.
- Limit height, intensity and design of light standards and encourage devices that preclude or lessen light pollution, encourage efficiency, and promote energy conservation.
- Control lighting in outdoor public places where public health, safety and welfare are potential concerns. 🌱

## **Get Ready To Garden!**

*continued from page 4*

the next hazardous waste drop-off days are scheduled, and how to prepare this waste for safe disposal.

