



# West Virginia YOUTH Environmental Program

Spring 2017

WV Department of Environmental Protection ([www.dep.wv.gov](http://www.dep.wv.gov))



## YEP Director Diana Haid retires



## 'I'm so honored to have been a part of it all'

*"Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better, it's not."* – **Dr. Seuss, *The Lorax***

This famous quote can apply to so many different situations in life but, as intended, it is especially true for sustaining our environment and conserving our natural resources. For nearly 40 years, my motivation has been that young people be taught about the environment and how to live in a sustainable way to preserve what we have.

It is very important that our youth learn how to live without degrading the environment so that future generations have a clean place to live. As the coordinator of the Youth Environmental Program and director of the Junior Conservation

Camp, I have witnessed this happening through the activities, presentations, events, classes, demonstrations, workshops, tours, displays, programs, community projects, etc., that form the framework of these wonderful programs. I am so honored to have been a part of it all.

With that said, I wish to tell you that I am retiring. I have thoroughly enjoyed learning about your projects, as well as providing environmental learning opportunities for you over the years. I will miss our association immensely. Your love for our beautiful state and the pride you have in your communities will remain in my heart forever.

I am unsure if I will be attending any events this year. However, please know that I support your

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## Youth Day, camp next up for YEP

As the warm air of spring arrives, West Virginia's Youth Environmental Program will heat up with activity.

Judging begins in late April for the YEP's annual awards and will culminate with Youth Environmental Day at North Bend State Park.



This year's Youth Day, the 54th annual, is set for May 20 and includes, not only an awards presentation, but also exhibits, a parade hat contest, free lunch and a Saturday night dance. Those wishing to attend Youth Day should fill out a registration form by May 5. Forms are available by visiting the YEP page at: [www.dep.wv.gov](http://www.dep.wv.gov). To reserve camp sites for Youth Day, contact North Bend at 304-643-2931.

Once Youth Day is complete, the focus will turn toward the 37th annual Junior Conservation Camp at Cedar Lakes in Ripley. This year's camp is scheduled for June 19-23 and is open to youth ages 11-14.

Camp applications are available on the YEP page and are due no later than May 1. For more information about Youth Day or Junior Conservation Camp, call 304-926-0499, ext. 1659 or contact your YEP district coordinator.



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[www.facebook.com/depyouth](http://www.facebook.com/depyouth)

**YEP News**

WV Youth Environmental Program  
601 57th St. S.E., Charleston WV 25304

# News from the YEP districts

## District 1

**Brad Blaine**  
District Coordinator



**WINTER** has seen a lot of environmental stewardship activities by youth groups in District 1, with more to come.

Groups throughout the region recycled Christmas trees into fish habitat, as well as mulch. My college alma mater, West Virginia University, hosted the WV Science Bowl and it was a pleasure to meet some of the administrators and teams from around the state who participated. Blackwater Falls State Park hosted its fifth annual Cardboard and Duct Tape Sled Race, which is always great fun and a Recyclable Materials Boat Race is planned for May 27, so consider participating. For more information check out [www.blackwaterfalls.com](http://www.blackwaterfalls.com).

Backyard Bird Counts through the Division of Natural Resources, poster contests through WVU Extension, scavenger hunts and nature hikes at the Schrader Environmental Education Center

at Oglebay are just some of the events YEP groups have been a part of. It doesn't take much searching to find a cure for cabin fever in West Virginia!

Spring brings new opportunities. I am looking forward to participating in the WV Envirothon at Jackson's Mill on April 20-21. Here, participants in grades 9-12 will test their conservation knowledge against other teams (school, 4H, FFA and others) from across the state.

Volunteer litter cleanups, Youth Day at North Bend State Park, STEM events, FFA land judging, Save Our Stream water quality monitoring, and conservation camps will be just some of the places we hope to see you.

And remember, there's probably a YEP award for just about all of them, so be sure to send in your reports!

## District 3

**Callie Sams**  
District Coordinator



**JOIN** us for the Make It Shine Youth Challenge, presented by the Youth Environmental Program and West Virginia Wesleyan's WE LEAD team, at Stockert Youth Center in Buckhannon from 1 to 3 p.m. on Sunday, March 19.

This event will provide an opportunity for area youth groups to learn about service projects that address an environmental need. They will be challenged to take on one of these projects during April Make It Shine Month.

Presenters from the state Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Natural Resources, Upshur Solid Waste Authority, City of Buckhannon, Appalachian Forest Heritage Area, WVU Extension and West Virginia Wesleyan will be on site to demonstrate project ideas on topics such as litter cleanups, recycling drives, wildlife and fish habitat, gardens, invasive

species removal, trail maintenance, state parks, rain barrels, and more.

Groups can also choose to design their own project through the Roots & Shoots program, founded by Jane Goodall. If groups have completed their project prior to April 15, they may submit a report of their actions to the Youth Environmental Program and be eligible this year for an award. If not, they can still submit for an award next year.

In addition, prizes will be drawn for youth groups who attend the event and follow through with a project and a rain barrel will be raffled off to groups interested in doing a stormwater or gardening project. The Avian Conservation Center of Appalachia will be onsite with birds of prey.

We hope to see you there!

## District 2

**Harmony Dressler**  
District Coordinator



**STEM** fields offer a wealth of career opportunities. Many of those jobs are in the environmental field. The Mineral County Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) Festival is an opportunity to explore some of those careers. It is set for Saturday, March 25, from noon to 4 p.m. at Potomac State College in Keyser.

The state Division of Forestry and the state Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) will present *Water Wonders*. Participants will journey through the water cycle by pretending to be a water molecule.

Also at the station, you can learn about programs offered by the DEP, including the Youth Environmental Program, Adopt-A-Highway, Make It Shine, and Operation Wildflower.

Environmental stations are just one of the many types of STEM activities offered. For more infor-

mation on the Mineral County STEM Network, visit <http://mineralstem.com/>. For regular updates on the STEM Festival, Like their Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/MineralCountySTEM>.

In conjunction with the Mineral STEM Festival, the Division of Forestry is sponsoring a Project Learning Tree (PLT) workshop at Potomac State from 8 a.m. to noon on March 25.

This PLT workshop is open to educators, both formal and non-formal, who want to incorporate important environmental lessons into any discipline, including science, math, fine arts, social studies, language arts, and music. You must pre-register to be included in the class. For more information, to sign up for the workshop, or to leave a message, contact Linda Carnell at 304-822-4512 or [Linda.O.Carnell@wv.gov](mailto:Linda.O.Carnell@wv.gov).

## District 4

**Sara Prior**  
District Coordinator



**IN** February I visited White Sulphur Springs Elementary School in Greenbrier County to discuss recycling with the students.

The newly enrolled YEP group is doing big things when it comes to recycling. The school recently revived its recycling program and it's truly a group effort.

Teacher Sarah Hann created a recycling crew that started with only two fifth-grade students. With no funding for a recycling company to retrieve the recyclables, Ms. Hann would load her car with as many bins as she could and drive them to the recycling center.

Knowing that the school could do more, Ms. Hann requested and received funding for a recycling program from the school's PTO.

Now, the recycling company comes to the school twice a month to empty the bins. The recycling crew has grown to six

fifth-grade volunteers.

They collect the bins on recycling day and redistribute the bins after they've been emptied. The crew also has started making posters to promote the program.

Currently, the school recycles paper, aluminum cans and some plastic.

In the future, it hopes to recycle the individual-size plastic milk cartons from lunch.

When asked why she was inspired to coordinate a recycling program at her school, Ms. Hann said:

"If the students don't understand the importance and responsibility of keeping our land clean, then they will have trashed it before they know it. I want them to be able to feel like they can have pride, and lay claim to something beautiful — our planet."

## District 5

Tom Aluise  
District Coordinator



FOR most high schoolers, Saturday mornings are reserved for sleeping in late.

The Winfield High School Environmental Action Club (EAC) is different. It does some of its best work while everybody else is snoozing away.

Formed about seven years ago, the EAC is a familiar presence at cleanup events around Putnam County.

Earlier this school year, the Winfield students participated in the Great Kanawha Cleanup (see photo), working alongside other volunteers on a warm Saturday morning to remove trash and other debris from the banks of the Kanawha River.

The group also heads up Winfield High School's recycling program and is involved with annual beautification projects around the school.

Linda Wollaber, a biology teacher at Winfield, is the EAC's faculty sponsor and uses her science background to teach club



members about stream health and aquatic insects. The EAC has done stream evaluations on Scary Creek in Putnam County.

Wollaber said the club typically has 10 to 12 members.

It was started by a Winfield High student, Sequoya Bua-lam, who went on to win the Youth Environmental Program's \$10,000 Rick Vecellio Memorial Scholarship.

"Sequoya did it all," Wollaber said. "I actually would like to do more than we're doing now."

And Saturdays are OK.

## District 6

Nedia Cyran  
District Coordinator



THE Ohio River Sweep is scheduled for Saturday, June 17, from 8 a.m. to noon. ORSANCO has been sponsoring the volunteer shoreline cleanup of the Ohio River and many of its tributaries since 1989. The Ohio River is a source of drinking water for over five million people, a major transportation route for coal and other energy products, and a natural resource for many plants and animals. Each year, thousands of volunteers are needed to participate in the cleanup.

The event promotes environmental stewardship of the Ohio River and allows volunteers to experience a hands-on stewardship practice which highlights the value of the Ohio River for recreational purposes and environmental sustainability.

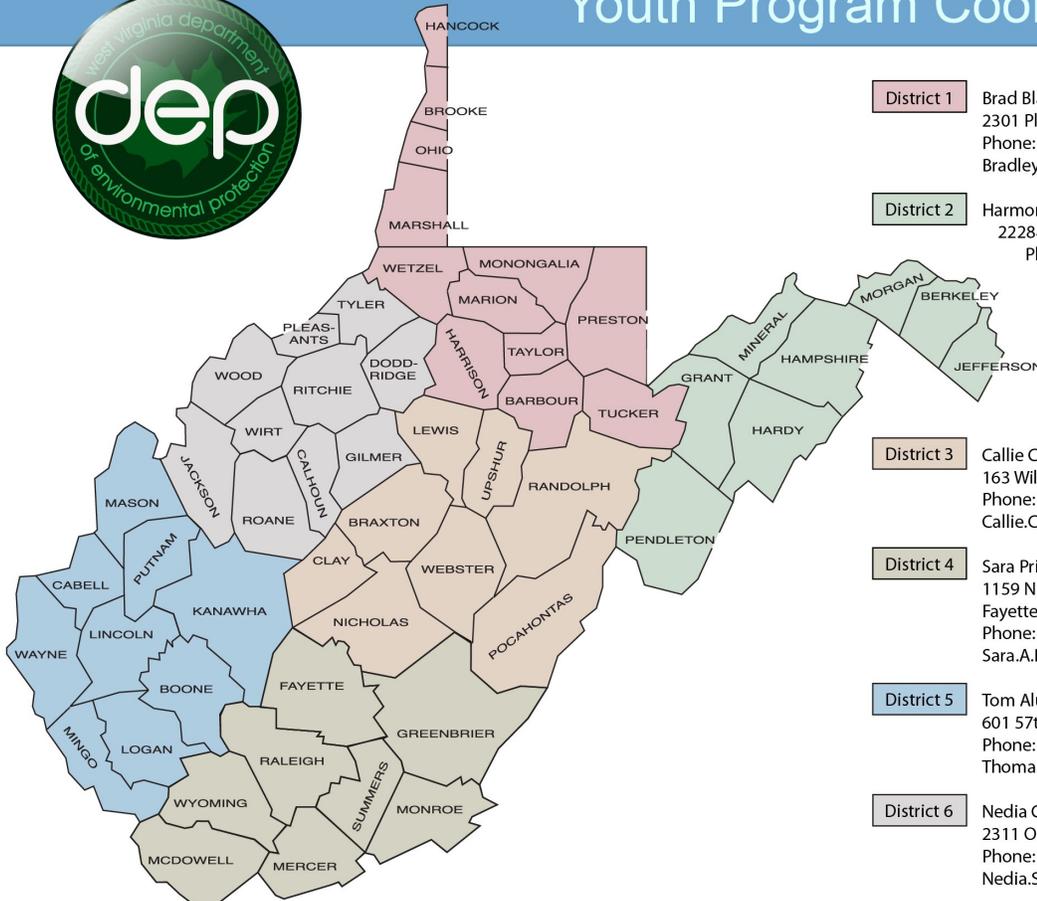
In conjunction with the Ohio River Sweep, a student poster contest is held to promote awareness of the event and the need for volunteers. Students in kindergar-



ten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade who live in the area are eligible to participate.

To volunteer, visit [www.orsanco.org/river-sweep/](http://www.orsanco.org/river-sweep/) to find a cleanup location that is convenient for you. Then, contact the coordinator of that site to let him/her know that you plan to volunteer. You can also call ORSANCO at 513-231-7719. Also, feel free to contact me at [nedia.s.cyran@wv.gov](mailto:nedia.s.cyran@wv.gov).

## Youth Program Coordinators



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# Spotlight On.



## Sandy Pals 4-H Club

**Location:** Preston County

**Number of members:** 30

**Highlights:** Sandy Pals 4-H Club was formed in 1988 and has been very active in conservation ever since. The club has participated in highway litter cleanups through Adopt-A-Highway and stream cleanups through Make-It-Shine. It also participates in cemetery cleanups, tire collections and engaging others in proper waste management through posters and hands-on compost-recycle-landfill sorting activities. It has monitored water quality, constructed blue bird houses and learned about owls through the WVU Extension office. It will be doing roadside plantings at the club's signs, which emphasize proper waste disposal and safety.

## Calendar of Events

**April 1-15** — Statewide Make It Shine Cleanup.

**April 15** — Youth Environmental Program reports deadline.

**April 20** — DEP Earth Day Celebration at Clay Center, Charleston.

**April 29** — Adopt-A-Highway Statewide Cleanup.

**May 20** — Youth Environmental Day, North Bend State Park.

**June 12-16** — State Conservation Camp, Camp Caesar, Cowen.

**June 17** — Ohio River Sweep.

**June 19-23** — Junior Conservation Camp, Cedar Lakes, Ripley.

**August 5** — Adopt-A-Highway Appreciation Day Picnic, Morgantown.

**Sept. 9** — Great Kanawha River Cleanup.

**Sept. 29-Oct. 1** — Youth Environmental Conference, North Bend.

## Remember: Tell us about your projects by April 15

Youth Environmental Club members have until April 15 to submit summary reports about their club projects in order to be eligible for cash awards.

Reports should be submitted to: WV DEP Youth Environmental Program, 601 57th St. S.E., Charleston, WV 25304.

Awards will be presented on Youth Day, May 20, at North Bend State Park.

## MESSAGE

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efforts and wish each of you great success with your environmental endeavors this coming year and for many, many years after that!

Additionally, you will remain in good hands with the district Environmental Coordinators Brad Blaine, Harmony Dressler, Callie Sams, Sara Prior, Tom Aluise and Nedia Cyran.

They will make sure your projects receive the recognition they are due and that opportunities are available for youngsters to attend camp.

It has been my privilege getting to know them. I will dearly miss our teamwork.

*"It's not what it is, it's about what it can become." — Dr. Seuss, The Lorax*



Diana Haid, center, took some time at her retirement reception to pose for a photo with her Youth Environmental Program coordinators. From left are: Brad Blaine, Callie Sams, Sara Prior, Harmony Dressler, Nedia Cyran and Tom Aluise.