



WATERSHED NEWS

December 2023

LITTLE SEWICKLEY CREEK WATERSHED ASSOCIATION
P.O. BOX 183 LEETSDALE, PA 15056

www.lscwatershed.org

Note from the President 2023

Barbara Carrier

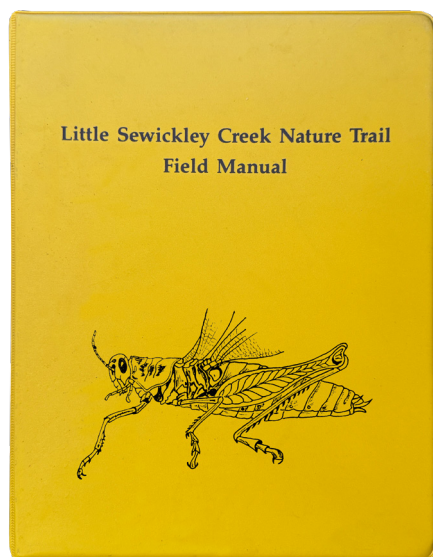
Greetings from the Little Sewickley Creek Watershed Association! This past year, the association along with Fern Hollow has begun and supported a Quaker Valley Middle School Creekers program as well as continuing the work of Ed Schroth in the QV Creekers program. Dr. Porter at our November meeting spoke positively about the types of fish found in the creek.

Little Sewickley Creek and its twenty-six mile watershed is one of the few high quality streams in Allegheny County and in Pennsylvania. The watershed's mission is not only to educate but to protect this special jewel in our area. This year has been particularly busy with the LSCWA actively participating in meetings with the QV District over the construction of the new school and attending the Edgeworth Planning Commission meetings concerning the Sewickley Academy field changes.

We were recently gifted a field manual for the "Little Sewickley Creek Nature Trail" printed in 1990, put together by the Nature Trail Guides and supported by the Village Garden Club and the Little Sewickley Creek Watershed. The guide is full of information and drawings of wildflowers, trees, insects, fish and animals

that were found along the banks of Little Sewickley Creek. This is a manual that shouldn't be put on the shelf and forgotten. It will be used this year as part of the Creeker Program.

We are asking for your support as the association continues its mission to protect Little Sewickley Creek Watershed.

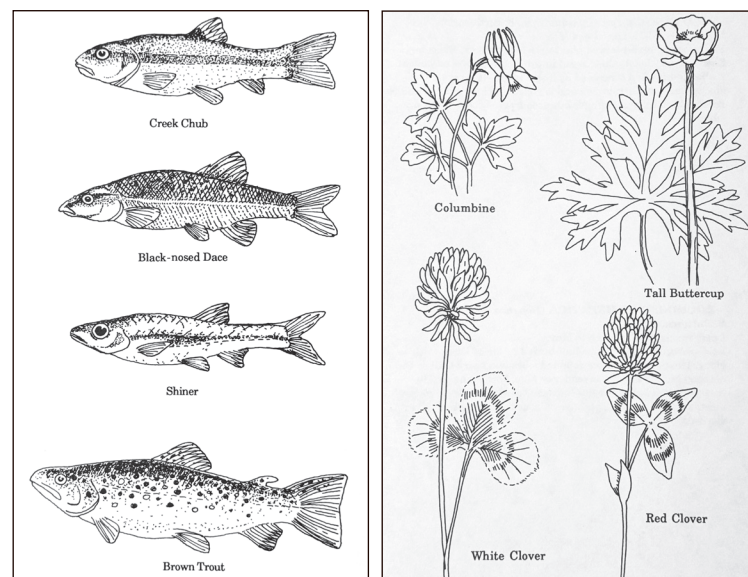


Special Presentation at LSCWA Annual Meeting

John Orndorff

Dr. Brady Porter, Associate Professor of Biological Sciences at Duquesne University, spoke about the fish population in Little Sewickley Creek at the LSCWA Annual Meeting on November 13, 2023. Dr. Porter has been conducting field trips with his students to Little Sewickley Creek for the past 20 years. His surveys document the effects of removing the Woodland Dam in 2015 on the distribution of fish populations in the creek. Dr. Porter continues to study Little Sewickley Creek with members of his research lab and through field trips for his Stream Field Biology course. On the weekend of October 21-23, 2023, he conducted both a class field trip and annual electrofishing survey to obtain this year's data from 4-5 sites. Dr. Porter is president of Pennsylvania Biological Survey (PABS), a nonprofit, all-volunteer organization whose purpose is to increase knowledge of, and foster the perpetuation of, the natural biological diversity of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Pictures from the Little Sewickley Creek Nature Trail guide. Additional detail from the guide will be posted on the Little Sewickley Creek Watershed website at www.lscwatershed.org



Summer Discovery Camp 2023

Chriss O'Lare, Secretary

Part of the LSCWA's official purpose is "Educating the general public, and in particular local students, about the interrelationships among our surface waters, ground water, plants, animals, and people that share the resources of our Watershed." Our organization has taken this mission quite seriously as evidenced by our long-running educational programs for students living in and around our watershed. Although we recently lost Ed Schroth, long-time board member and local educator, his legacy carries on. The "Up The Creek Gang" of high school students has become the QV Creekers run by the Fern Hollow Nature Center and now also includes an additional program for middle school students. And his Experience in Outdoor Learning, the day camp he started for fourth and fifth graders in the 1980s, morphed into Summer Discovery which celebrated its thirtieth summer with fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh graders this year.

There are definitely a few differences between the original program and today's program. We have moved upstream to Walker Park instead of using Quaker Valley High School and Pontefract Park. We no longer take bus rides to visit local Sewickley sites or North Park, but parents drop off their kids at Kings Lake on Fridays. We have added an evening program for the whole family to learn about the night sky. But the objective to teach students about local flora and fauna and our watershed is still the same. And probably most of the campers, whether from the 1980s or 2020s, would say that their favorite part of camp is when they are in Little Sewickley Creek.

Pictures from 2023 Summer Discovery Camp
c/o Chriss O'Lare



Ed Schroth

(June 28, 1941 – January 14, 2023)

Chriss O'Lare, Secretary

On June 25, 2023, LSCWA was invited to a memorial celebration for Ed Schroth, former LSCWA board member, and originator of the environmental education program that evolved into the Summer Discovery camp. As a teacher at Quaker Valley High School, he also created the “Up the Creek Gang” for high school students to monitor Little Sewickley Creek. That initiative continues with the “QV Creekers” as part of the Creek Connections program, and is sponsored by LSCWA with the help of Fern Hollow Nature Center educators. His family invited his friends, colleagues, and former students to Walker Park to share their memories and participate in some of his passions: a pollinator walk and an exploration of Little Sewickley Creek.

Teaching was Ed Schroth’s passion and gift; he mentored and inspired thousands of students in 50 years as an educator. After 36 years at QV, Ed Schroth transitioned to Duquesne University where he taught environmental science, supervised student teaching, led academic delegations to China, and oversaw field and stream initiatives.

Outside of the classroom, Ed was a devoted steward of the earth. He introduced recycling to Sewickley and was very active with the Little Sewickley Creek Watershed Association. Ed Schroth was honored as Sewickley Valley’s Man of the Year, and as Western Pennsylvania’s Environmental Awardee. In his later years, Ed Schroth joyfully served Grace Anglican Church as chorister and warden. At home in Leetsdale he was a gardener and apiarist. He delivered “Ed Talks”, traveled with his beloved wife, and proudly watched his grandchildren grow up.

His daughter Beth also crafted a special message for this newsletter:

For over 50 years, my dad was active at every bend and in every pool of Little Sewickley Creek. Along The Creek, he observed, collected, recorded, stocked, monitored, taught, and advocated. He considered Little Sewickley Creek our region’s greatest asset, and he worked tirelessly to both protect it and to share it with younger generations. Little Sewickley Creek was my dad’s best teacher, and he was its best student.

Thank you all for your work with him, and most importantly for your advocacy for the stunning, sparkling Little Sewickley Creek.

Quaker Valley Creekers

Gretchen Barbera, Environmental Educator, FHNC

High School Creekers

The Quaker Valley Creekers, established in 2009, is an environmental science internship for high school students in Sewickley. The course is in partnership with Creek Connections at Allegheny College, a work-study program that brings hands-on environmental science to schools in Western Pennsylvania.

This past year, the Quaker Valley Creekers spent time exploring interests in beavers living on Little Sewickley Creek, monitoring water quality through chemical and biological testing, as well as participating in a research project with Robert Morris University. In an ongoing independent project through Allegheny College, students tested nitrate, dissolved oxygen, phosphates, and pH upstream and downstream of the new high school location. These tests were to help students better understand the impact that development and construction have on watershed ecosystems in their community.

The Creekers High School internship had the opportunity to work with Professor Catie Hanna and her cohort of biology students at Robert Morris University. Creekers collected data from a vernal pool in Sewickley Heights Borough Park, measuring if Red Maples around the pool were budding in succession with Wood Frog emergence. The goal of the project is to determine if the changing climate is impacting trophic progression in the vernal pool ecosystem. We hope to continue collecting data for this ongoing study in the following years.

At the end of the year, Quaker Valley Creekers participated in the Creek Connections symposium, where they showed off independent projects. Each student produced a project that showed off an interest or a question they had about environmental science.

We hope to have another great year learning about the Little Sewickley Creek Watershed and our role in keeping it healthy! If you or someone you know would like to help out, please feel free to contact gretchen@fhnc.org!

Middle School

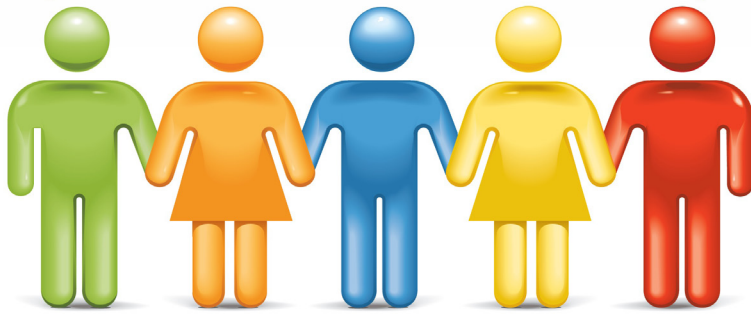
The Middle School Creekers program is an extension of the Quaker Valley Creekers, a program that has been running at the high school for the past 14 years. The Middle School program is an afterschool club designed for students interested in environmental and citizen science. Students learn about the Little Sewickley

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Creek Watershed by studying its history, topography, and ecosystem interactions. Middle Schoolers help Little Sewickley Creek Watershed test the health of the waterway while getting a comprehensive knowledge of the watershed and how it functions as a healthy ecosystem. Students use multiple methods for scientific exploration, such as Minecraft world-building, population estimates, and citizen science to understand the Little Sewickley Creek Watershed.

We hope to have another great year learning about the Little Sewickley Creek Watershed and our role in keeping it healthy! If you or someone you know would like to help out, please feel free to contact gretchen@fhnc.org!



2023 Current Board Members

Officers

President: Barbara Carrier, Rep. Glen Osborne
Vice President: Diana Morrow,
Rep. Sewickley Heights
Secretary: Chriss O'Lare, Rep. Franklin Park
Treasurer: John Orndorff

Members

- David Case, Rep. Leet Township
- Steve Downing, Member
- Meg Forsyth, Member, Rep. Bell Acres
- Joseph H. Hajnas, Member
- Mary Kirsch, Member
- Roy Kraynyk, Member, Liaison with Allegheny Land Trust
- Joe Marrone
- Deb Canney, Rep. Leetsdale
- Chris Popovic, Trail Advocate; Website, Newsletter and Fundraising
- Steven Pukansky, Member
- David Quatchak, Member

Little Sewickley Creek Watershed Association 2024 Budget

John Orndorff

For the past two years LSCSWA has been spending more than it raises in fees and contributions. Thanks to the financial stewardship of our past presidents the association has built up an investment fund which has helped us make up the difference between income and expenses. Nevertheless, we need to renew our efforts to recruit new members and broadcast the services we provide to our Sewickley Valley community. Please be generous with your annual donations.

INCOME	\$17,500
Membership Contributions	\$7,500
Summer Discovery camp registration fees ..	\$1,800
Investment Account	\$8,200
EXPENSES	\$17,500
Program	\$15,500
Summer Discovery Camp Expenses	\$4,000
QV Creekers Program	\$3,250
QV Middle School Watershed Club	\$2,500
Website Expenses	\$750
Expert Consultants	\$5,000
Administrative	\$250
Postage.....	\$75
Post Office Box Fee.....	\$125
Secretarial Supplies.....	\$50
Fund Raising	\$1,750
Newsletter Expenses	\$1,600
Postage.....	\$150

Keep an eye out for future LSCWA events at our website: www.lscwatershed.org

If you would like to contribute to the LSCWA, send checks to "Donations" at P.O. Box 183, Leetsdale, PA 15056.

If you are interested in becoming a Little Sewickley Creek Watershed Board member, please reach out to our President or any Board Member for more information.