

BLUE MOUNTAIN WILDLIFE

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www.bluemountainwildlife.com

INSIDE THIS ISSUE :

INVASIVE SPECIES WALK

EARTH DAY CLEAN-UP

BMW TRAIL RACE SERIES

BMW'S 15TH ANNIVERSARY

FAIRS AND FESTIVALS

NEW BMW GEAR

MORE VANDALISM

FALL EVENT SCHEDULE

OUR MISSION

**THE PRESERVATION
AND CONSERVATION OF
THE WILDLIFE AND
WETLANDS ALONG THE
SCENIC SCHUYLKILL
RIVER IN NORTHERN
BERKS AND SOUTHERN
SCHUYLKILL COUNTY**



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THE CALM BEFORE THE STORM

When winter released the Kerny from its grip and spring took hold, Blue Mountain Wildlife had planned one of its best years yet. The Earth Day Clean-Up was planned to be not only a clean-up but a chance to get some much-needed work done. The BMW Trail Race Series had been tweaked and the Race Committee was looking forward to a banner year. BMW had been invited to more festivals and was planning more events with our friends at Berks County Parks and Rec. And all of this came to pass.

Earth Day was a rousing success, with a number of work crews getting the jobs done while volunteers cleaned up the Kerny, Industrial Drive and parts of Tilden Township.

The Trail Race Series turned out to be our best ever. We raised over \$4,200 this year (best ever!), posted our second and sixth-highest attended races ever and shattered our per-race average attendance record. Even the rain did not prevent us from getting decent attendance at the Mad Dash. The Race Committee is looking forward to beating these numbers next year.

The BMW stand attended more festivals than last year. We actually had to turn down a festival because our schedule was too full! And the Kerny hosted a number of events this year, from the two Invasive Species Walks, to the Spring Macro-photography Walk, to the 15th Anniversary Open House, to the Star Watch, Walk With Dragonflies, the Historical GPS Walk and the Fall Clean-Up scheduled for summer and fall. Some drew a number of people and some had a disappointing turnout, but all were appreciated by those who attended.

Of course, there were things that didn't go so well. Vandals struck the Information Kiosk at the Monument Parking Lot and destroyed trail signage again. But all of these things, both good and bad, have been overshadowed by something that none of us would have given much thought to at the time. At the end of June, a single video was released on YouTube that, arguably, would change the Kerny for this year and possibly many years to come. But that story is for another newsletter.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS—FALL 2016

Saturday September 3, 2016...Taste of Hamburg-er Festival Dine & Dash Burgers & Trail Race 10:30 am 2nd & State Streets, Hamburg

Thursday September 8, 2016...BMW Monthly Business Meeting 6:00 to 8:00 pm Hamburg Library

Saturday September 24, 2016...Historical Walking Tour 10:00 am Monument Parking Lot

Thursday October 13, 2016...BMW Monthly Business Meeting 6:00 to 8:00 pm Hamburg Library

Saturday October 22, 2016...Fall Clean-Up 3:00 pm Upper Parking Lot



SPRING INVASIVE SPECIES WALK

GREGG ADAMS

Blue Mountain Wildlife kicked off the spring season on March 26th with a timely presentation by Richard Gardner on invasive plant species in the area and how to best deal with them. A group of about a half-dozen interested members and first-time visitors gathered at the Monument Parking Lot on a chilly Saturday morning, where Mr. Gardner showed off a number of useful tools for the removal of many different plant species that may be invading your garden or back yard and crowding out the native plants there. Mr. Gardner then led the group on a walk through the Basin, pointing out a number of invasives, such as the Purple Loosestrife that has taken up

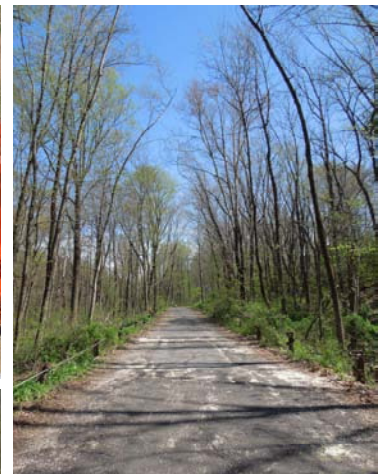
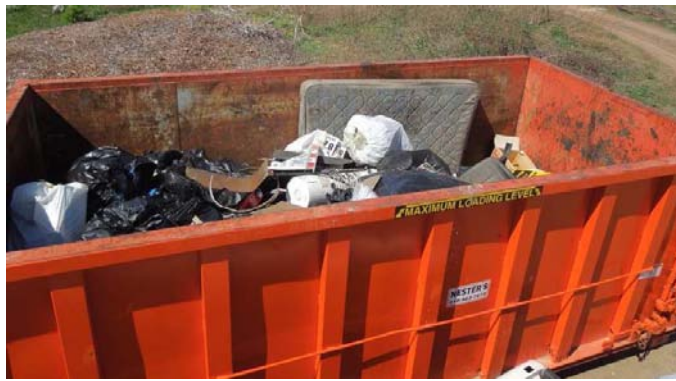
residence in many of the ponds in the wetlands. He demonstrated the best methods of removing them without resorting to the use of chemicals. The group continued along Kernsville Dam Road and ventured along the Lowlands Trail, viewing and discussing the Japanese Knotweed, oriental bittersweet and wineberries that are now growing in abundance. Finally, after emerging from the Lowlands Trail, Mr. Gardner demonstrated his effective technique for killing off the Tree of Heaven, another of the persistent invasives now growing in our area. He also showed off the effects of his techniques by pointing out the invasives that were treated last year.

EARTH DAY CLEAN-UP

GREGG ADAMS

Blue Mountain Wildlife and Tilden Township EAC again coordinated the Earth Day clean up. We had a beautiful day and a lot of people showed up. There were almost 100 people who signed up with either Blue Mountain Wildlife or Tilden Township. Nester's Sanitation again donated a roll-off dumpster and we filled it with what weighed out to be 1.03 tons of trash. We collected about 20 tires of all sizes from various places. Werley's Service took those tires at no cost to us. Please use their services to show appreciation for their generosity. The Strausstown Boy Scout troop #144 took on a mission to fight

invasive species at the Kerny and they set to it with a vengeance, clearing a large stand of Japanese Knotweed along the river south of the Lowlands Trail. Work parties re-installed the trail signage and stop sign that had been destroyed in last year's vandalism attacks, and repainted the pavement markings at the Monument. In the afternoon a work party took down a number of trees that had been leaning over Kernsville Dam Road. All in all it was a very successful day. Thanks to everyone who helped out. We look forward to bigger and better things next year.



THE "BARTRAM BREEZE" KICKS OFF THE 2016 TRAIL RACE SERIES

ELAINE COOK

Last year was the inaugural year for the BMW Trail Race Series, which was intended to be easier to run than the old Northern Berks QUAD Games. The Trail Race Series proved to be easier and more profitable and the Race Committee was looking forward to building on those advantages.

The first race of the 2016 Trail Race Series took place on a cloudy and cool day with temperatures in the 60s. Ninety-two people registered, making it the second highest registration enjoyed by any BMW race. Eighty runners competed in three race distances on the Bartram Rail Trail starting at the Monument Parking Lot. All races went out and back on the smooth and flat crushed gravel of the trail, with new leaves shading the course and gorgeous views of the

Schuylkill River, Port Clinton train station, and spring wildflowers.

In the 10K race (6.2 miles) Don Mengel prevailed in 41:37 and Anna Kunkle won the women's race in 44:51. The 5K (3.1 miles) featured a new course record as Stephanie Kershner won in 22:03. Timothy Roden took the men's 5K in 25:52. The 2K winners showed the mix of youth and experience as Jennie Breitigan, age 61, won in 13:48 and Ethan Reddinger, age 9, won the men's race in 16:52.

After the races, an Easter egg hunt was held for the children as participants and volunteers enjoyed a hot breakfast from Cracker Barrel and music from DJ Steel Thunder. Thank you to all the volunteers, sponsors, and runners for a successful kick off to the 2016 TRS!





THE "MAD DASH" CONTINUES THE 2016 TRAIL RACE SERIES

AMY BROWDER

Saturday May 21st brought the threat of rain to the Mad Dash Trail Race. Fifty-seven people registered and only fifty-one braved the threat of rain to challenge the mountain. Runners were able to choose between the 2.5K family race, the 5K event and "extreme" 5 mile course. All participants eagerly lined up just beyond the gate at the reservoir parking lot as race director Gregg Adams signaled the start. All runners followed the dirt road past Furnace Creek bridge before breaking off onto their separate courses. The family course was a straight shot up and around the reservoir, while the 5K course took runners on two loops past the Windsor Furnace shelter and around the reservoir before heading back to the finish. The extreme racers ran past the reservoir and headed up the very challenging, but beautiful, watershed trail. The course then made a left, going across the top of the mountain before turning to head back down at the AT/Eckville split.

First across the finish line was Victoria Rodriguez, winning the 2.5K in a course record 13:32. Stephanie Kershner set a second 5K women's course record this series with a time of 25:20. Kevin Cook won the men's 5K with a time of 26:40. The last course record of the day was set by Gabriel Rodriguez, who scorched the 5-Mile course with a time of 31:21. Elaine Cook won the women's 5-Mile with a time of 42:41.

Fortunately, the rain held off until the end of the race, allowing most everyone to get under cover while the awards were tallied. The race participants enjoyed the music of DJ Brett while being treated to a great lunch of barbeque chicken wraps and fruit salad, which was graciously provided by Red Robin. And of course there were the amazing pastries provided by Dutch Maid Bakery for dessert! Overall, everyone, runners, spectators and volunteers, had an amazing time taking in the spectacular scenery, staying fit and raising money for a great cause.

THE "RUN TO THE ROCK" FINISHES THE 2016 TRAIL RACE SERIES

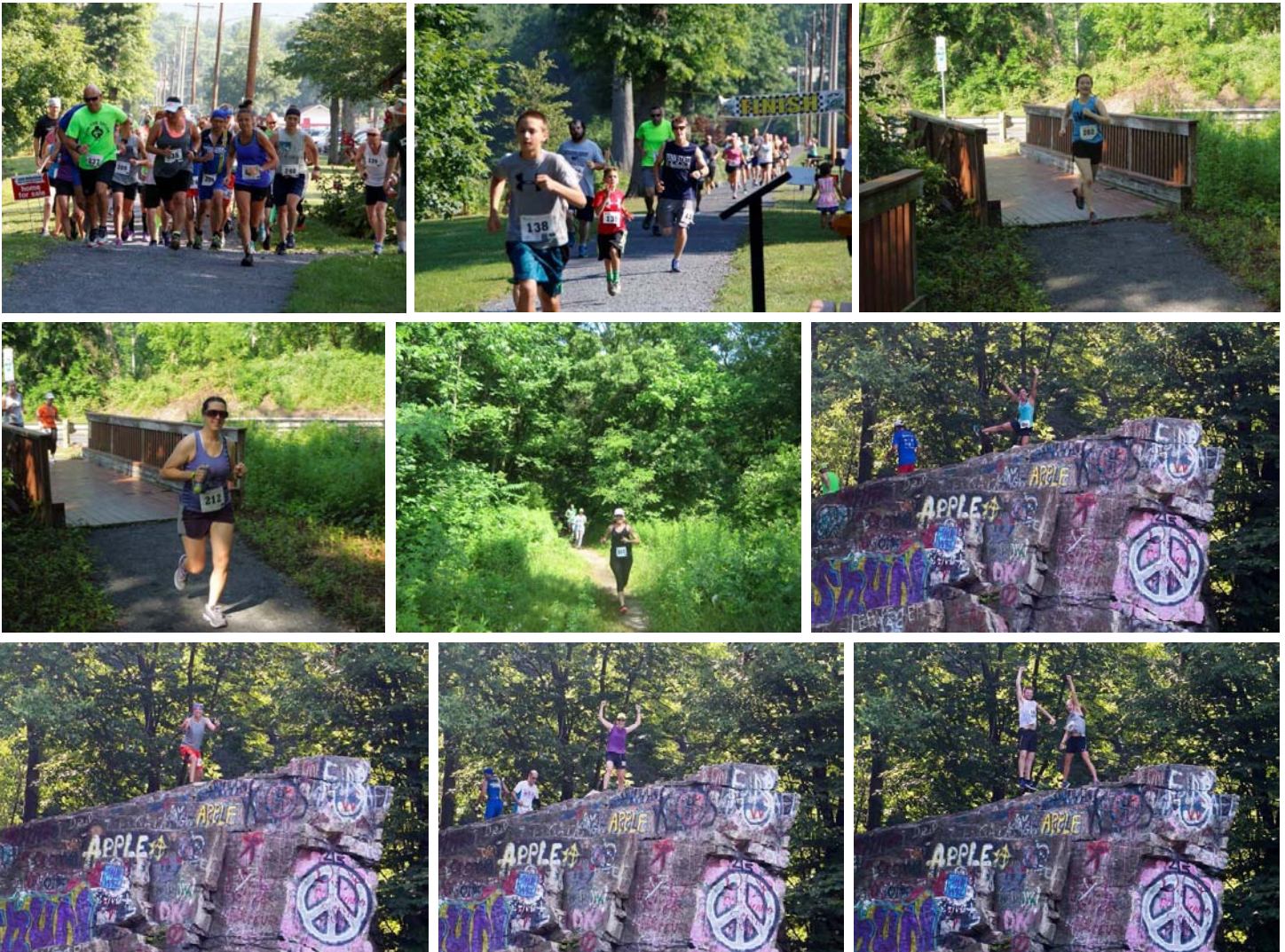
ELAINE COOK

This was the second year for the Run to the Rock and, after last year's slightly soggy first running, the Race Committee was looking forward to better weather so that we could really show off the course. The Run to the Rock includes the Etchberger Trail, Cabela's Wetlands trail, Lowland Trail, and the Pulpit Rock Trail. The 10K distance included a mix of rail trail, single track, and a portion on the Kernsville Dam road. The 5K and 2.5K were all rail trail. All three races started and finished at the Hamburg Community Park. Additionally, all 10K racers actually went out onto the Rock, where Neven Dries photographed them from the beach across the Schuylkill River, providing some exciting and fun shots of the racers.

Mother Nature did not disappoint and, after a terrific soaking rain the afternoon before, the

morning dawned clear and cool. The racers took their marks and the race started a little past 9. The 10K race was won by Troy Seitzinger in 47:03, with Gina Manbeck taking the women's title in 47:11. The 5K men's winner was Zack Schell in 23:37 and the women's winner was Stephanie Kershner in 22:11, who set her third women's 5K course record this Series. The 2.5K was won by Jennie Breitigan in 16:45 and the men's winner was Kyler Mowery in 27:29.

DJ Brett kept the music playing and Cracker Barrel served up a delicious and plentiful breakfast. Eighty-five people registered and seventy-nine runners completed the race. Over a dozen volunteers made the race possible. Thank you volunteers, sponsors and runners! We hope to see you at the 2017 Blue Mountain Wildlife Trail Race Series!



FIRST PLACE WINNERS OF THE 2016 BMW TRAIL RACE SERIES

BARTRAM BREEZE





BLUE MOUNTAIN WILDLIFE 15TH ANNIVERSARY OPEN HOUSE

GREGG ADAMS

On Sunday June 26th, Blue Mountain Wildlife celebrated fifteen years of being a certified 501(c)(3) non-profit organization with a cake. That morning, Gregg Adams, Neven Dries and Dennis Henne set up the BMW stand at the Monument and spent the day inviting visitors to the Kerny to enjoy a piece of cake and to learn about Blue Mountain Wildlife. Kay Greenawalt and the scouts from Girl Scout Troop 1359 joined us and offered lunch and refreshments to all who would stop by.

The day was warm and sunny and the Kerny had lots of visitors. We were initially surprised at how difficult it was to give away free cake, but soon realized that many people who were planning on running or biking the trails had already carbo-loaded and were only interested in the exercise. When we concentrated on the people coming off the trails and offered cold drinks with the cake, the cake started disappearing. It was a nice day of making new friends and catching up with old ones.

FAIRS AND FESTIVALS

GREGG ADAMS

Once again, Blue Mountain Wildlife scheduled a full slate of community events to attend this spring, both to renew old friendships with those that know us and kindle new ones with those that don't.

The festival season kicked off with the Hamburg Arts Festival on Saturday May 14th. The BMW stand was set up at the corner of Third and State and received a slow but steady stream of visitors all day.

The very next day the BMW stand made its way to the Schuylkill County Fairgrounds to visit Bear Creek Festival, a great little event sponsored by our friends at Schuylkill County Conservation District. The weather was chilly and rainy but the crowds were large and friendly. The BMW stand received a steady stream of visitors all day, keeping Gregg Adams and Dennis



Henne busy. The Coloring Contest was very popular, receiving over 30 submissions. Our friends at Red Creek Wildlife provided a Guest Judge to select the best of the best of the entries and award those \$20 Cabela's gift cards to the most talented kids.

The next festival was Saturday June 11th's Get Outdoors Day at Blue Marsh, sponsored by the Army Corps of Engineers. More great weather greeted the BMW stand and a fair number of visitors strolled through the many stands at the Lakeview Pavilion area.

This year the BMW stand was invited to the Red Creek Wildlife Open House on August 13th. The hot weather kept the crowds down in the afternoon, but a great many people visited during the late morning, helping us spread the word to the residents of western Schuylkill County.

NEW BMW GEAR ARRIVES TO BOOST FUNDRAISING EFFORTS

GREGG ADAMS

Blue Mountain Wildlife does not purchase fundraising merchandise very often. Our “Cry Freedom” t-shirts were purchased about 15 years ago, our patches 11 years ago and our hats several years ago. But with stock dwindling, BMW decided it was time to restock the store. So we’ve been looking at updating our designs and replenishing the stock. We have brand new patches that commemorate our 15th Anniversary. We have extra t-shirts from Earth Day that look great year-round. We have two new varie-

ties of hats to add to our Hi-Viz cap—the new yellow Runner’s Hat and the new RealTree Camo Hat. Plus, the “Freedom’s Cry” t-shirt will soon be replaced by another Dan Christ design “Winter Turkey Tracks”, as seen below. All BMW merchandise is available online at www.BlueMountainWildlifeStore.com, or at the BMW stand during fundraisers or local festivals. Show your support for the Kerny and Blue Mountain Wildlife by picking up some BMW gear and wearing it proudly.



THE FISHERMAN

Who knows why some people are destined to be friends or what's the attraction. I've never given any of this much thought. I have no idea whatsoever why or when Gysgt Kurt Hittinger and I became best of friends. Gunny and myself had many adventures over the years. As a matter of absolute fact anything we did together turned out to be an adventure. Being a typical hard-core Marine, Gunny had difficulty doing things properly unless they involved firearms or explosives. Teaching this man to be an accomplished fisherman might in itself be my greatest achievement. And teaching the Sarge boat etiquette was almost impossible. Once, while out on the river, I requested that he drop the anchor over the side of the boat and that's exactly what he did even though it wasn't tied to anything. That bit of nonsense was so funny that I'll probably be laughing about it until my last day on earth. The Gunny was the best of all things found in mankind; a creature of absolute moral character, something almost nonexistent in today's world. Gunny was a deco-



rated hero with a great sense of humility. I keep my kitchen open to old dogs and soldiers and at one time I started to look a little shabby and my friend showed up with a very large box of clothes so I wouldn't look so bad. I'm still wearing some of them. Just a few months ago Gunny and I were planning our next adventure. We had planned to have the best of fishing excursions one could imagine. We would catch many monsters and have tales to tell. Then something happened which was totally unexpected. Gunny took a turn for the worst and became very sick. Diagnosed with cancer of the stomach and liver, he only lasted about thirty days and then he was gone. My eyes filled up with tears. I would rather God had taken me and allowed my friend life but such was not the case. He was laid to rest on Friday, May 27th. The body is gone but his spirit will remain with me as long as I'm destined to be here in this world and I am sure we will have an adventure or two on the river and catch some of those monsters we talked about.

JOE SWIDER

MORE VANDALISM AT THE KERNY



On the night of May 13th, vandals struck again at the Kerny. In the most destructive attack to date, five BMW trail signs were uprooted and smashed, the kiosk toppled over, the portapotty tipped over and several traffic and SRHA signs uprooted. The work seems to have been done by one or a few individuals on foot. Some of the trail signs had been replaced about three weeks before, repairing the damage from similar acts of vandalism last October and November.

GREGG ADAMS

A police investigation was made but no arrests have been made at this time. Blue Mountain Wildlife has been working to repair the damage, with the traffic signs being reinstalled on June 3rd and the kiosk being righted and repaired on July 1st. The trail signage, being hand made, will take longer to replace.

If anyone has any information regarding this or any other vandalism at the Kerny, we urge you to contact the Tilden Township Police.



COMING THIS FALL

Taste of Hamburg-er Festival

Dine & Dash



Burgers & Trail Race

The Dine& Dash Burgers & Trail Race Saturday September 3rd at 10:30 AM

Work up an appetite for Taste of Hamburg-er Festival by running the Dine & Dash. Start by downing a burger. Then run a mile. Then down another burger. Then finish it off with another mile run. What could be better!

The race starts at the west end of the Festival near 2nd and State Streets in Hamburg. There will be awards for Fastest Overall Male, Fastest Overall Female, fastest male and female in three categories, Best Costume , Best Dog and Judges' Choice.



Historic Walking Tour of the Kernsville Dam Saturday September 24th at 10:00 AM Kernsville Dam

Come join us for a GPS-guided walking tour of this historical treasure in northern Berks. The area boasts over three centuries of history featuring the nearby mountains, rivers and former coal operation. The area was also an important transportation route, from Lenape trails to settler river passage and the Schuylkill Canal to modern day railroads and highways. Learn how this area was preserved by Blue Mountain Wildlife, who wished to save the area from development, and keep the area available for outdoor

GREGG ADAMS

recreation while protecting the wildlife and wetlands along the scenic Schuylkill River. \$5 donation per person, pre-registration is required to 610-374-2944 ext. 2611 by September 19th



Fall Clean-Up Saturday October 22nd at 3:00 PM Upper Parking Lot

Help BMW and the Schuylkill Headwaters Association clean up the shore of the Kerny and Peace Rock Beach. We will be cleaning up the area around the Rock and the Peace Rock Beach on the Schuylkill County side of the river, as well as any other areas than need attention. After the clean-up, a cook-out is planned for all participants. We are even looking into doing an Owl Prowl after the sun sets. Check the BMW website and Facebook page for more information.

AND ONE MORE THING...

GREGG ADAMS

By now, I'm sure you are aware of at least some of the events that have engulfed the Kernsville Dam Recreation Area over the last few months. At the time of this writing, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, the owners of the property, have decided to close most of the property to the public. Blue Mountain Wildlife has installed a gate just north of the Monument Parking Lot (ironically, we'd been planning the installation of this gate since 2009 and authorized its funding last year). PA DEP has posted the area as "No Trespassing", which authorizes State and Tilden Police to cite anyone found beyond the signage. The trails in and around the desilting basin are still open to the public and people are permitted to portage their watercraft around the dam. BMW is working with PA DEP to build a sensible path forward. Hopefully we will have better news in the next newsletter issue. For the latest information, visit us on Facebook at www.Facebook.com/BlueMountainWildlifeInc.



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THANK YOU TO OUR CORPORATE SPONSORS

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