

Currents



WVWA Welcomes Dennis Miranda as Executive Director



Photo courtesy Dennis Miranda

WVWA is delighted to welcome Dennis Miranda as the new Executive Director, beginning on February 4. Dennis is a passionate conservationist, avid birder and trail expert with a broad grasp of environmental issues.

Dennis and his family are moving to the area from Gainesville Florida where Dennis was the Executive Director of the Florida Trail Association, a statewide non-profit trail organization with the mission to construct, maintain and manage the 1400-mile Florida National Scenic Trail.

From 2004-2010 Dennis was the Executive Director of the Rahway River Association in Northern New Jersey, a non-profit conservation group whose mission is to preserve open space, protect natural resources and improve the water quality of the Rahway River Watershed. Dennis was the Urban Parks Project Manager for the New Jersey Conservation Foundation in Chester, NJ from 1994-2004.

Dennis is a graduate of St. Peter's University and his hobbies include bird watching, hiking, botanizing, butterfly watching, mountain biking and gardening.

Looking forward to his new post, Dennis writes,

With over half a century of acquiring open space, protecting water quality, preserving cultural resources and educating the public of the natural heritage of the Wissahickon Valley Watershed, it is an honor to take the helm of the Wissahickon Valley Watershed Association.

As the newest WVWA Executive Director, it's my privilege to join an organization blessed with a superb and dedicated staff, a generous and devoted Board of Directors, a wonderful community of supporters and members and a legacy to build upon for this century.

The statement, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has..." by famed Anthropologist Margaret Mead reflects fittingly upon the accomplishments of the WVWA in an urban/suburban watershed. The challenges that face the Wissahickon in coming years are multiple; deer overbrowse our forests, the Wissahickon Creek suffers from poor water quality, exotic plants colonize our preserves and the future effects of climate change are as yet unknown.

But the most important challenge may very well be to prepare the next generation of stewards, nature lovers and supporters for the Wissahickon Creek watershed. The resounding fundraising success of the Reforesting the Wissahickon campaign underscores the community's commitment to maintain and restore the natural landscape of the over 1200 acres of preserved natural lands that embrace the 21-mile Green Ribbon Trail.

Providing children, families and people from all walks of life with the opportunity to explore our trail to look for wildlife, to take an afternoon hike or to simply commune with nature, makes our lives richer, our communities livable and ensures that nature is a doorstep away. I am confident that the next fifty years will be no less challenging but even more successful than the first half century!

But together, we will continue the journey to make the Wissahickon Creek Watershed a model of preserving, managing and maintaining the natural and cultural resources. Please join me on this exciting journey!

Please come out to a WVWA event to welcome Dennis to the Wissahickon Watershed! 🌿

Reforest the
Wissahickon
Campaign
Exceeds
\$100,000

WVWA members' enthusiastic response to the *Reforest the Wissahickon Campaign* lifted total contributions to over \$100,000. Over one-third of our membership contributed to this important project.

Special gratitude goes to Saly Glassman and the Youtensil™ for the very generous leadership challenge grant that kicked off this campaign

Your generous support of WVWA truly makes a difference. As we all experienced, Hurricane Sandy swept through the Wissahickon Watershed leaving a trail of destruction and crippling power outages. Major storms, like Sandy, Lee and Irene, topple older trees, uproot newer growth and erode the banks of the Wissahickon Creek. Your gifts will allow WVWA to plant trees throughout the Wissahickon Watershed in 2013. This exciting initiative provides funding to plant many more native trees and enhance the habitat in the Wissahickon Valley.

Please come out and help plant these trees and remove invasive species at a 2013 WVWA Volunteer Day. The first Serve the Preserve Day will be Saturday, April 6 at WVWA's Armentrout Preserve. Please contact Bob Adams at bob@wvwa.org or 215-646-8866 to volunteer.

Please visit www.wvwa.org or call for more information on the Youtensil™. 🌿

WVWA Showcases Rain Gardens



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A rain garden is a landscaped area, planted with wildflowers and other native vegetation, that soaks up rain water mainly from an impervious surface such as the roof of a building or a parking lot. Rain gardens improve the quality of the water that enters the Wissahickon Creek.

WVWA worked closely with teachers, students and parent volunteers at Germantown Academy to install two rain gardens on the school's campus. The school's active participation in the project provided the students with an opportunity to understand the importance of managing storm water runoff as well as the value of incorporating native plants into the landscape. The rain gardens are located off Morris Road near the stadium complex and wetland preserve.

Recognizing that WVWA plays a leadership role in sustainable land management techniques, Ecochic Gardens has installed two new rain gardens at the WVWA offices located at 12 Morris Road in Ambler. The gardens are designed to soak up water from the roof of the historic Trumbauer barn that serves as WVWA's headquarters.

These projects were accomplished with support from the Delaware Estuary, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, and the owners and staff of Ecochic Gardens which specializes in naturalistic garden design using native plants. WVWA thanks these organizations for their generous support.

If you are interested in learning more about rain gardens, please join us on Tuesday, March 26 at 7 pm, at WVWA Headquarters for an informative Rain Garden Workshop.

And please, stop by in the spring and check out the newly installed rain gardens...they may inspire you to create your own rain garden! 🌱

Maple Sugaring Festival



Sunday, March 3, 12:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. Get outdoors and join WVWA for a fun winter event that the whole family will enjoy. Take a guided tour through the WVWA's beautiful Four Mills Reserve and learn about sugar maple trees. Watch how they are tapped, then witness the sap being boiled into sugar. End your walk at WVWA's historic headquarters for hot chocolate and warm treats with real maple syrup.

The program lasts approximately 45 minutes. The guided tours will be on a trail that may be wet or slippery in places. Please wear sturdy, protective shoes or boots and dress for the weather. No dogs or strollers for this event. Park in Ambler and look for signage. Walk over the Butler Avenue Bridge and turn left onto the Green Ribbon Trail.

- *Reservations are requested - you can register online or by phone: info@wvwa.org or 215.646.8866*
- *Walk-ups are welcome as space allows*
- *WVWA member fee: \$5 adult / \$3 child (12 yrs and under)*
- *Non-WVWA member fee: \$10 adult / \$5 child (12 yrs and under)*
- *SPECIAL! Become a WVWA member and receive a free tour*
- *Memberships begin at \$45. Join online at www.wvwa.org*

3rd Annual Native Plant Sale

Friday, April 19, and Saturday, April 20, WVWA will be hosting its third Annual Native Plant Sale. A wide selection of native trees, shrubs, herbaceous plants and ferns will be available for purchase.

Native plant experts will be available to provide advice and suggest the perfect natives for your garden.

FRIDAY, APRIL 19

Members Only Preview Sale- 1:00 – 5:00 p.m.

Public Sale - 6:00 – 7:00 p.m.

Sustainable Gardening Lecture- 7:00 p.m.

Open to the public. Check the calendar of events for more information and plan to join us for this popular lecture... and enjoy some wine and cheese! Plants will be available for purchase from 6:00 - 7:00 p.m. before the lecture.

SATURDAY, APRIL 20

Plant Sale- 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Open to the public

JANUARY

Winter Walk at Four Mills Reserve

• **Sunday, January 27, 1:00 p.m.**

• WVWA Four Mills Barn,
 12 Morris Road, Ambler

Winter is a wonderful time to be in nature. Bring a friend and experience a winter walk along the Wissahickon beginning at WVWA's historic barn. Following the walk light refreshments will be served at the Four Mills Barn. This walk will be on a trail that may be wet or slippery in places. Please wear sturdy, protective shoes or boots and dress for the weather. Hikes are cancelled in the event of inclement weather.

• Free of charge but pre-registration is encouraged

Garden Lecture with Jenny Rose Carey



• **Sunday, January 27, 2:30 p.m.**

WVWA is pleased to partner with Temple University Ambler to present an English garden lecture with the Director of the Ambler Arboretum, Jenny Rose Carey. This theme is a great preview for the 2013 Philadelphia Flower Show *Brilliant!*, celebrating British gardens. Jenny Carey is a native of England and comes from a family background of gardeners.

• Free of charge but pre-registration is encouraged

• Register and get more information at:

www.wvwa.org

• Temple Ambler Campus is at 580 Meetinghouse Road in Ambler

• Follow the Loop Road to the Learning Center located at the back of the campus

• Parking is available in the lot near the Learning Center

FEBRUARY

Sustainability Movie Series at the Ambler Theater

Tuesday, February 12 at 7:30 p.m.

The Greenhorns

WVWA is again a sponsor of the Pennypack Farm & Education Center's sustainability movie series at the Ambler Theater. The three films each highlight important environmental issues. Movies are scheduled on the second Tuesday of the month in February, March and April.

• Doors open at 6:00 p.m. for sponsor expo

• \$10.00 per film or \$24.00 for all three films

• Tickets are available at:

www.amblertheater.org/pennypack.php

Winter Birdseed Sale

• **Seed MUST be pre-ordered. Order Deadline: Tuesday, Feb. 19 by 3 p.m.**

Order quality birdseed that is appropriate for the birds in the Wissahickon Watershed. Your order helps WVWA protect wildlife and habitat.

PICK UP TIMES

• Friday, February 22, 2:00 – 5:00 p.m.

• Saturday, February 23, 9:00 a.m. – Noon

• At WVWA Headquarters

12 Morris Rd. Ambler, PA 19002

MARCH

Maple Sugaring Festival

• **Sunday, March 3, 12:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.**

Take a guided tour of the sugar bush through WVWA's Four Mills Reserve on the Green Ribbon Trail. Learn about the trees, taste the sap and see it boil into syrup. Finish with a sweet treat and hot cocoa at WVWA's headquarters. Program lasts approximately 45-minutes.

• Park in Ambler, walk over the Butler Avenue Bridge and turn left onto the Green Ribbon Trail. Look for signs.

• WVWA Members: \$5 adult/\$3 child (12 years and under); Non-Members: \$10 adult/\$5 child (12 years and under)

• Registration requested at www.wvwa.org or call 215-646-8866

• Walk-ins welcome as space allows

Sustainability Movie Series at the Ambler Theater

Tuesday, March 12 at 7:30 p.m.

King Corn

• Doors open at 6:00 p.m. for sponsor expo

• \$10.00 per film or \$24.00 for all three films

• Tickets are available at:

www.amblertheater.org/pennypack.php

Preserve Walk at Camp Woods & Armentrout Preserve

Saturday, March 23 at 1 p.m.

Enjoy a walk through the beautiful Armentrout and Camp Woods Preserves. WVWA will offer two options – a fast paced exercise walk and another more leisurely guided walk. Well-behaved, leashed dogs are welcome.

• Meet at the parking lot at Armentrout, on Beale

Road, off Penllyn Blue Bell Pike

• Visit www.wvwa.org for a map

• Free of charge but pre-registration is encouraged

Rain Garden Lecture

Tuesday, March 26 at 7 p.m.

Water Conservation Part 1

RAIN GARDENS

Part one of the WVWA water conservation series considers the most beautiful way to conserve water- building your own rain garden! Simple to install and maintain, rain gardens are indeed a thing of beauty. Learn where to site, how to build and what to plant in your rain garden.

• Free of charge but pre-registration is encouraged

APRIL



Spring Serve the Preserve Day- Reforest the Wissahickon Day!

Saturday, April 6 at 9 a.m.

Join WVWA at the Armentrout Preserve for a great morning of forest edge restoration

that includes planting trees and invasive removal. Ideal for scouts, service projects and anyone who wants to make a difference in the Wissahickon Watershed. Wear gloves, a hat and bring a shovel. Snacks and tools will be provided. Busy that day? Purchase trees to plant through the Adopt a Tree program at www.wvwa.org.

- Contact Bob Adams at bob@wvwa.org or 215.646.8866 for more details and to register

Sustainability Movie Series at the Ambler Theater

Tuesday, April 9 at 7:30 p.m.

Ingredients

- Doors open at 6:00 p.m. for sponsor expo.
- \$10.00 per film or \$24.00 for all three films
- Tickets are available at: www.amblertheater.org/pennyback.php

Rain Barrel Workshop

Thursday, April 11 at 7 p.m.

Water Conservation Part 2 RAIN BARRELS

In part two of our Water Conservation Series, make your own take-home rain barrels. Rain barrels reduce runoff, collect storm water for later use, and save time and money. Learn how to install and use your own rain barrel in this informative workshop. Each participant will assemble a rain barrel to take home. So bring a vehicle large enough to transport your new rain barrel!

- \$30.00 for materials.
- Workshop limited to the first 18 participants

WVWA Native Plant Sale

Friday, April 19 (2-5 p.m.) Members Only Day

Friday, April 19 (6-7 p.m.) For those attending the Sustainable Gardening Event

Saturday, April 20 (9 a.m. to noon) General Public

Purchase high quality native trees, shrubs, wildflowers, ferns and grasses that will look great in your yard and benefit WVWA. Plants will be available on a first come, first serve basis.

- WVWA Four Mills Barn, 12 Morris Road, Ambler

WVWA Sustainable Gardening Wine & Cheese Event

Friday, April 19 at 7 p.m.

Water Conservation Part 3 SUSTAINABLE GARDENING TECHNIQUES

Join us at WVWA's Four Mills Barn for a Sustainable Gardening Workshop and Native Plant Sale. Discussion will include garden design and maintenance, simple garden installation techniques, plant selection, composting, leaf mold, rain barrels and rain gardens. Bring your questions, concerns, garden photos and sketches...and enjoy some wine and cheese with WVWA!

- FREE
- Please RSVP to info@wvwa.org or 215.646.8866



Evans-Mumbower Mill Open House

Sunday, April 21 from 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.

- First Open House of the Season
 - Swedesford & Township Line Roads, Upper Gwynedd
- This 19th century gristmill is once again water-powered! Bring your family to visit, learn about and experience the history of milling along the Wissahickon.
- Free for members, \$5 adult and \$3 children 3-12
 - Information and directions at: www.wvwa.org/evansmill

43rd Annual Creek Clean Up



Saturday, April 27 starting at 9 a.m.

Join WVWA and the Friends of the Wissahickon (FOW) to clean all 21-miles of the Wissahickon Creek and its tributaries, from top to bottom! Following the clean up, join all of the volunteers for a picnic in Fort Washington State Park. All volunteers are registered and pre-assigned to sections of the Creek on a first-come first-serve basis.

- Email Bob Adams at bob@wvwa.org or call 215.646.8866

MAY

Wissahickon Birdathon

Friday & Saturday, May 10 & 11

Teams of birders canvass the Wissahickon Watershed in this fun and friendly competition identifying as many bird species as possible within a two-day period. The teams collect pledges to raise funds for WVWA. Following the birding the teams meet at WVWA's barn for a festive party. Birders and teams of ALL skill levels are encouraged and welcome. Teams can bird as best fits their schedule over the time allotted.

- See website or contact Carol DeLancey at: carol@wvwa.org or 215.646.8866

Preserve Walk at Briar Hill

Sunday, May 19 at 1 p.m.

Take a brisk walk through the WVWA Briar Hill Preserve. WVWA will offer two options – a fast paced exercise walk and another more leisurely guided walk. Dogs welcome.

- Free of charge but pre-registration is encouraged
- Meet at Prophecy Creek Park Parking Lot

Evans-Mumbower Mill Open House

Sunday, May 19 from 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Swedesford & Township Line Roads, Upper Gwynedd
 This 19th century gristmill is once again water-powered! Check www.wvwa.org/evansmill for special program information.

- Free for members, \$5 adult and \$3 children 3-12
- Information and directions at: www.wvwa.org/evansmill

ONGOING

Adopt A Tree Program

Support our efforts to eradicate invasive plants and reforest the Wissahickon Watershed. Make a memorial donation, honor a friend, or just purchase a native tree to be planted. \$30 donation per tree.

- Donate on line at www.wvwa.org or call 215-646-8866

MAKE A DIFFERENCE Volunteer for WVWA

WVWA's many accomplishments are made possible with the help of the many incredible volunteers who play an integral role in helping fulfill the mission. Each year hundreds of volunteers, including individuals, families, groups, organizations and schools invest their time and talents for a wide variety of events, stewardship projects, and education programs to enhance life in the Wissahickon Watershed.

WVWA Environmental Education 2013

The WVWA Environmental Education program continues to expand and has met with rave reviews from educators, parents and students. Sharing the importance of environmental stewardship with children is an integral part of the WVWA mission. The WVWA Environmental Education program encourages youth to develop and maintain the awareness, knowledge, enthusiasm and competence to understand important environmental concerns impacting the Wissahickon Watershed. The program includes students from the Wissahickon and Upper Dublin School Districts, Germantown Academy and the Center School.

Designed to provide a link between curriculum and the real world, the WVWA education program meets state curriculum standards while emphasizing a watershed approach to appreciating, achieving and sustaining environmental improvements in a hands-on fashion intended to interest and excite students. The program is designed to educate students and their teachers about local water issues and environmental-related concerns.

WVWA programs provide a basic knowledge of the water cycle, watershed management, water chemistry, aquatic life, pollution biology and environmental science that should be part of every student's experience.

Study at the Evans-Mumbower Mill

WVWA is grateful to groups from McGladrey in the Blue Bell office, Coventry in Fort Washington and Starbucks in Flourtown and North Wales; students and faculty from Upper Dublin High School, Sandy Run Middle School and Wordsworth Academy, all who planted trees and shrubs. Also thanks to Germantown Academy students, teachers and parents who planted two rain gardens at GA and Scout Troops 540 and 98 for their help with stewardship projects on the Green Ribbon Trail.

WVWA welcomes volunteers of all ages and abilities who want to make a difference in the Wissahickon Watershed. Please contact Cari Reilly at 215-646-8866 or cari@wvwa.org to discuss how you can help WVWA! 🌱

provides fourth grade students a firsthand understanding of the functional operations of this now operative gristmill. Aligned with Pennsylvania curriculum standards, the program follows a structured three-lesson format focusing on both science and social studies-based curriculum guidelines and emphasizes water as a clean source of energy.



🌱 *An Evans-Mumbower Mill volunteer shows a group of children an artifact found during an archaeological dig.*

WVWA is extremely grateful to MSS - Movers Specialty Service, Inc., First Priority Bank and Susquehanna who provide funding through the PA EITC Program for their wonderful and enthusiastic support of this program. Additional funding for the WVWA Education Program comes from a generous and loyal local donor who is a supporter of sustainability and environmental education. 🌱



Our Mission

The Wissahickon Valley Watershed Association's Mission is to protect the quality and beauty of the Wissahickon Creek and to enhance life in the watershed by:

- *Protecting and enhancing open space*
- *Promoting awareness of environmental issues through education*
- *Promoting wise land use*
- *Preserving historic sites important to the history of the Wissahickon*

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Thanks to Our
 Walk & Trail
 Race Sponsors

Thank you to the **Corporate Sponsors** of the Walk for the Wissahickon and the NEW Green Ribbon Trail Race! Special thanks go to the North Wales Running Store for helping to organize WVWA's new trail race. The Trail Race was a huge hit with runners of all speeds and they enjoyed running on the Green Ribbon Trail and through the Natural Lands Trust's Gwynedd Wildlife Preserve. Everyone enjoyed a delicious lunch provided by the Fireside Bar & Grille of Ambler. Thanks to the numerous volunteers who helped to make this event a success – despite a rainy morning.

Watch WVWA's website for the 2013 event dates. 🌿



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