



What's Happening at Blue Marsh Lake?

USACE

Volume 2, Issue 2

Spring has Arrived

Spring has arrived slowly at Blue Marsh Lake. The boat docks are installed at all boat launches. But the water is still very cold. Please be careful when recreating on or around the water. Hypothermia is a huge factor during the spring months, as the water is slow to warm up. Please take the proper precautions when around the water, whether you are trout fishing along the area streams, bass fishing from a boat, or hiking the trails that run along or across bodies of water. Stearns Manufacturing Company "rule of fifty" states that "in water of 50 degrees Fahrenheit, you have a 50 - 50 chance of surviving beyond 50 minutes without a protective life jacket." So, when you are out on the water wear that life jacket. If your plans involved boating on the lake, please keep a lookout for floating debris. There has been ice on the lake for the last three-to-four months, plus occasional fluctuations in the level of the pool. That tends to increase the amount of debris. Always keep a sharp lookout for other watercraft.

Blue Marsh also offers many land-based recreation opportunities, including hiking, biking, horseback riding, and wildlife watching. When you are out hiking please stick to the trails. You have less of a chance of getting into poison ivy and picking up ticks when staying on the developed trails. Carry drinking water with you, as it is not safe to drink water from the streams.

If you encounter horseback riders on the trail, you should always yield to them. This means stopping when bike riding and pulling off to the side of the trail and allowing them to pass you. If you are overtaking horseback riders or pedestrians please warn them in advance.

Before heading out for a day on the trails or on the water leave a copy of your plans with a family member, neighbor or friend. Include where you are going, how long you expect to take, and a description and license plate of your vehicle. Stay safe and have a great time!



Ready, Set, Wear It!

Ready, Set, Wear It! campaign is a one-day event that is part of a year-long Wear It! effort to promote safe and responsible boating. This event is occurring across the nation, as well as Canada. Blue Marsh Lake is partnering with the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary in doing this year's event at Dry Brooks Boat Launch on Saturday, May 16. We will be doing boat safety checks and answering visitor's questions from 10 am - 2 pm. At 2:00 pm we will all be meeting at the Dry Brooks Boat Launch to join in the National Safe Boating Council in an attempt to break last year's record of number of persons wearing life jackets. Your dogs can participate too! So bring your life jackets and join us at Dry Brooks Boat Launch for a great photo opportunity, and take part in delivering an important safety message.

Ready, Set, Wear It!
Life Jacket World Record Day
Boating enthusiasts set new life jacket world record on May 17, 2014.

WE DID IT AGAIN! Participants: 6,973

Uniquely Prepared Life Jacketers	Dogs in Life Jacketers	Uniquely Life Jacketers
5,430	49	1,543

TOTAL NUMBER OF EVENTS - 175

United States: 120 Events	Japan: 16 Events
Australia: 6 Events	Rwanda: 1 Event
Brazil: 1 Event	Nigeria: 2 Events
Canada: 9 Events	South Korea: 1 Event
Finland: 19 Events	

Learn more at ReadySetWearIt.com

Inside this issue:

Take Pride in Blue Marsh	2
Fin and Feather	2
Celebrate National Trails Day	2
Spring Crossword Puzzle	3
National Get Outdoors Day	3
Meet Volunteer Nancy Houser	3
Spring 2015 Programs	4

Upcoming Programs

- May 2 - Hike with a Ranger, 10:00 am, State Hill Vista
- May 6 - Who Lives in a Tree, 10:00 am, Conference Center
- May 9 - Camping With Cabela's, 1:00 - 5:00 pm, Kernsville De-silting Basin
- May 14 - Bird Walk, 8:00 am, Justa Road
- May 16 - Ready, Set, Wear It!, 10 am - 2 pm, Dry Brooks Boat Launch
- May 17 - Trail Yoga, 10:00 am, Spring Creek Access

Take Pride in Blue Marsh

April 18th, 2015 was the 35th Take Pride in Blue Marsh event. It is the largest volunteer event held at the lake annually. Approximately 375 people participated. Many environmental projects were completed on this special day. The projects that were completed in 2015 included: 25 picnic tables painted, mulch was spread in flower beds, the fee booth and administration building planters were cleaned and replanted, eight yards of playground mulch was spread under play structures, a trail bridge was replaced, a culvert installed and a section of trail stabilized, three dumpsters were filled with trash, 2000 seedlings were planted, approximately five miles of trail was trimmed, 9 new picnic tables were constructed, a guiderail was removed and a new one was constructed, and mulch was spread at the Visitor Center and Ranger Station. Rehabilitation work was completed in the Sensory Garden. The volunteers provided \$47,062.00 of work to Blue Marsh Lake.

A unique recreation opportunity that we only allow for the weekend is camping. Each year, eight different scout groups camp. Another outstanding fact about the day is that the Family Campers and Recreational Vehicle club cooks hot dogs and puts together snack bags for everyone for lunch. The hot dogs and snacks are all donated to the club from local food companies. Over the past 35 years the volunteers that attend Take Pride in Blue Marsh has saved \$195,000.00 worth of work.

We look forward to having you here to celebrate the 36th Take Pride in Blue Marsh on April 16, 2016.



Fin and Feather

Spring is a popular time for fishing, boating, and turkey hunting. The Fish and Boat Commission stock trout year round. The following dates are the spring stockings: Tulpehocken Creek May 7th, 12:15 pm, from a restaurant parking lot in Stouchsburg, and Spring Creek was on April 13th, 12:00 pm. An extremely popular fishing spot for fly fishing is the Tulpehocken Creek from the Stilling Basin to Rebers Bridge Road. That section is a special regulation area where you can only catch and release and use artificial lures. Bow fishing is not allowed in the Stilling Basin as well as the delayed harvest/artificial lure area. Catfish are another popular species fished for at the Stilling Basin. A record catfish was taken from there in April of 2007. It was 44.75 inches long with a 30 inch girth weighing 48 pounds, 6 ounces. Local bass clubs run bass tournaments from April through October. From January 1 through April 11 and June 14 through December 31 the minimum size of bass is 15 inches with a daily limit of 4. From April 12th through June 14 no tournaments are permitted and bass are catch and release only.

A junior turkey hunt was held on April 25th. Only one bird can be taken. May 2nd - 30th is Spring Gobbler season (bearded birds only) with a daily limit of one and a season limit of two if you have a second license. From May 2nd-16th hunting hours are one half hour before sunrise to 12:00 pm, and May 18th-30th legal hunting hours are one half hour before sunrise to one half hour before sunset. Good luck to all the hunters and fisherman. Have a great and safe season. Remember to wear your life jacket when in and around the water.

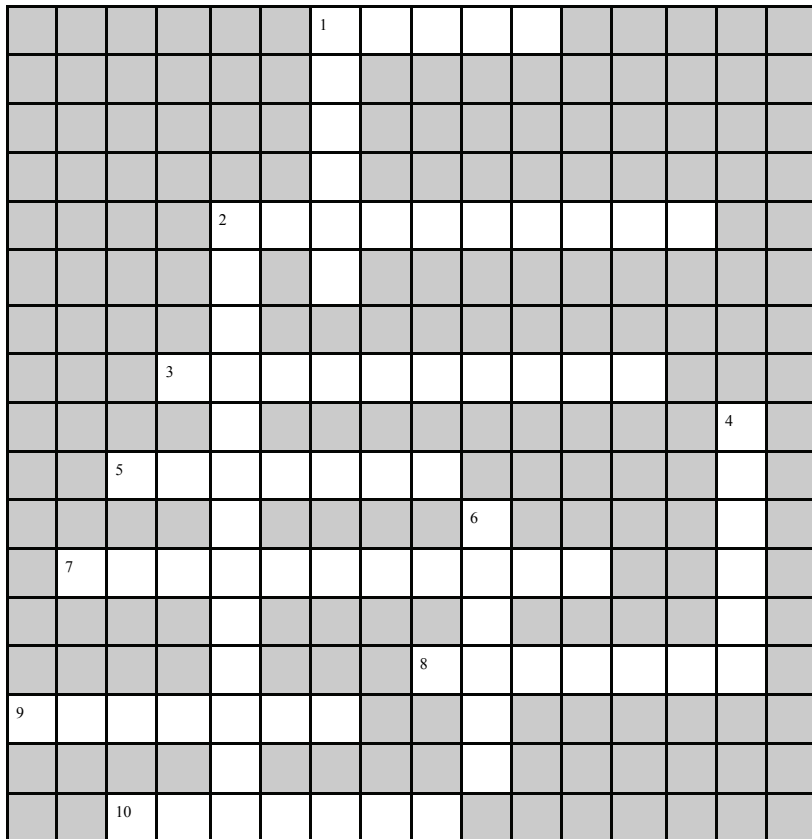
Celebrate National Trails Day

Blue Marsh Lake and the Berks County Parks has exciting plans for the weekend of National Trails Day. We are kicking off this year's event on Friday, June 5 with a paddling event—Paddling Down the Creek. Bring your canoes and kayaks and join us at the Stilling Basin at 5:00 pm. Our group will meander down the Tulpehocken Creek ending below the Berks Leisure Area. Participants must provide their own watercraft, lifejacket and transportation. Registration required (610-374-2944).

Saturday, June 6, is officially National Trails Day. Last year we celebrated at Blue Marsh Lake, but this year it will be observed at Antietam Lake Park, 1:00 - 4:00 pm. There will be displays on the local trails located in Berks County, a program presented by Environmental Educator Jennifer Brooks, and geo caching.

The weekend finale will be Tikes on Bikes on Sunday June 7, at the Heritage Center at 1:00 pm. Bring out the family and pedal along the Union Canal Trail, and also learn about basic bike maintenance. Berks Area Mountain Biking Association will be leading a ride along the Union Canal Trail, and teaching some basic bike maintenance skills. There will be displays on recreation opportunities at Blue Marsh Lake, Berks County Parks, and other areas of the county. Registration required (610-374-2944).

Spring Crossword Puzzle



ACROSS

- 1 They like to swim in cool and clean water.
- 2 Their skin is smooth and must remain moist.
- 3 An item that boaters must have on their boat.
- 5 Birds do this activity annually.
- 7 A popular water sport.
- 8 Ants love these.
- 9 These come in many different colors.
- 10 You need a rod and reel to do this activity.

DOWN

- 1 There is over 30 miles of them at Blue Marsh.
- 2 You hear them croaking in the early spring.
- 4 You can sit on top of them or sit in them.
- 6 This is a popular activity on the trails.

ANSWERS ON BACK PAGE

National Get Outdoors Day



On Saturday, June 13, 2015 the GO Day Committee and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at Blue Marsh Lake will be offering a full day of outdoor activities from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the 4th annual Get Outdoors Day event. Over 40 clubs and organizations join together to celebrate National Get Outdoors Day, and Let's Move Outside at the Dry Brooks Day Use Area next to the swim beach. The event encourages healthy outdoor recreation.

Admission to the park is free and there will be activities held on land and water for visitors of all ages. On land, there will be a hike, Control Tower Tours, fitness programs, geo caching, K-9 presentations, and much more. On the water, there will be a flare demonstration, canoe and kayak safety, and fishing lessons. Visitors can also try their fishing skills at the Catfish Pond which is sponsored by the Federated Sportsmen's Clubs of Berks County. Come out and join us for the day to see what Berks County has to offer.

Meet Volunteer Nancy Houser & the Sensory Garden Volunteers

Nancy Houser has been volunteering at Blue Marsh Lake for 16 years. She and her late husband, John, were a team as they taught third graders along Great Oak Nature Trail. She has also been a Master Gardener for 25 years. Because of her experience it was a given to ask her for help in rescuing the Sensory Garden, which is located at the Eyes of the Eagle Sensory Trail. She has stepped up and recruited fellow Master Gardeners in working on the garden. And they are doing a fantastic job. Her neighbor, Claudia Mahon, who is also a volunteer at Blue Marsh, has joined Nancy and recruited a group to join in maintaining the sensory garden. The garden includes native plants, as well as some non-natives that stimulate the senses of smell, touch and sight. Nancy is looking for additional volunteers to help them with weeding, planting, etc. throughout the spring, summer and into the early fall. Another one of Nancy's interests includes butterflies. And she knows them well. Nancy enjoys the outdoors, her dog, and being part of the Master Gardeners. Thank you Nancy for all that you do. You are awesome!



USACE

Blue Marsh Lake
1268 Palisades Dr.
Leesport, Pa 19533

Phone: 610-376-6337
Fax: 610-376-1919
<http://www.nap.usace.army.mil/Bluemarsh>
Visit us on Facebook!

ACROSS

1 Trout
2 Salamanders
3 Life Jacket
5 Migrate
7 Water Skiing
8 Picnic
9 Flowers
10 Fishing

DOWN

1 Trails
2 Spring Peepers
4 Kayaks
6 Biking

Newsletter prepared by:
Natural Resource Specialist Ranger Kathy Grim
Email: Kathleen.J.Grim@usace.army.mil
Natural Resource Specialist Hallie Groff
Email: Hallie.E.Groff@usace.army.mil



**U.S. Army Corps of Engineers,
Philadelphia District**

Spring 2015 Programs

Hike with a Ranger: Saturday, May 2, 10:00 am, State Hill Boat Launch Vista, & Saturday, June 20, 8:00 am, Church Road Access

Get Outdoors Who Lives in a Tree: Wednesday, May 6, 10:00 - 11:30 am, Conference Center

Camping with Cabela's: Saturday, May 9, 12:00 - 5:00 pm, Kernsville Dam, Hamburg, PA

Bird Walks: Thursday May 14, 8:00 am at Justa Road, and Thursday June 4, 8:00 am at Church Road Access

Control Tower Tours: Thursdays, and May 21, 10:00 am at the Visitor Center

Ready, Set, Wear It! National Safe Boating Week Kick-off: Saturday, May 16, 10:00 am - 2:00 pm, Dry Brooks Boat Launch

Trail Yoga: Sunday, May 17, 10:00 am, Spring Creek Access

Family Fun Day Aqua Charades: Saturday, May 23, 1:00 pm, Conference Center

National Trails Day Paddle Down the Creek: Friday, June 5, 5:00 pm, Stilling Basin. Pre-registration required (610-374-2944)

National Trails Day: Saturday, June 6, 1:00 - 4:00 pm, Antietam Lake Park.

National Trails Day Tikes on Bikes: Sunday, June 7, 1:00 pm, Berks County Parks Heritage Center

National Get Outdoors Day: Saturday, June 13, 11:00 am to 4:00 pm Dry Brook Day Use Area

