

## PPL's Susquehanna Riverlands hosts students for Envirothon

PPL's Susquehanna Riverlands was buzzing May 5 as 170 students from 11 high schools throughout Luzerne County tested their knowledge of environmental matters during the annual Envirothon academic competition.

"PPL is committed to environmental stewardship and strongly supports education initiatives in the community," said Joe Scopelliti, Susquehanna community relations manager. "We are happy to host the Envirothon, which attracts bright students throughout Luzerne County who care about our natural resources."

The students, from ninth through 12th grade, compete against their peers in five categories: aquatic ecology, forestry, soils, wildlife and a current issue. The current issue discussed in the 2010 competition is protection of groundwater through urban, agricultural and environmental planning.

Envirothon is an after-school, self-study program in which students volunteer to participate. A faculty adviser helps guide the students as they become more knowledgeable in environmental science through study and various programs such as tree identification, water testing and soil surveys.

"Envirothon's mission is to raise awareness among students about environmental issues," said Jennifer Verry, the Envirothon coordinator for the Luzerne Conservation District. "The students who participate are very passionate and knowledgeable about the environment."

MMI Prep's team won the Luzerne County event. Team members are David Polashenski, Brianna Nocchi, Brittany Fisher, Shital Patel, Paul Blanner and team adviser Tony Gennaro.

The team joined more than 15,000 students participating in the state competition, which was held May 26 at PPL's Montour Environmental Preserve in Danville.

Members of MMI's Envirothon team show off their medals. From left are Joshua Longmore, manager, Luzerne Conservation District; David Polashenski; Brianna Nocchi; Brittany Fisher; Shital Patel; Paul Blanner; and Tony Gennaro, team adviser.



## PPL joins lawsuit to suspend payments to federal Nuclear Waste Fund

PPL Susquehanna has joined several other nuclear plant owners and the Nuclear Energy Institute in a lawsuit filed in federal court seeking suspension of the fee that is paid into the government's Nuclear Waste Fund.

Since PPL began payments to the fund in 1983, it has paid \$386 million. Companies pay a fee of 0.1 cent per kilowatt-hour for electricity generated and sold by nuclear power plants.

"Although the federal government has essentially eliminated funding and moved to withdraw the license application for a federal nuclear waste repository at Yucca Mountain in Nevada, nuclear plant owners are still obligated to pay the fee for the government to dispose of used fuel," said Tim Rausch, senior vice president and chief nuclear officer.

"We have joined in this lawsuit with several other nuclear plant operators from across the country because we believe that collection of the fee should be suspended until the federal government defines and properly evaluates its used nuclear fuel management program."

A similar lawsuit also was filed by the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners, the organization that represents the interests of state public utility commissions.

## Merit badge program teaches Scouts nuclear science, energy conservation

Summer camp usually offers an opportunity for Boy Scouts to earn merit badges in hiking, fishing, swimming and other outdoor activities. But every July, Scouts from the Columbia-Montour Boy Scout Council's Camp Lavigne near Benton tackle more technical subjects. With the help of PPL Susquehanna, they work on two badges: energy and nuclear science.

"We wanted to give the boys an opportunity to take on some of the badges that are more difficult to earn, as well as introduce them to future careers in nuclear energy," said Nancy Bishop, supervisor at the Susquehanna Energy Information Center and vice president-Marketing for the Scout Council. "Since most of the boys are from communities in northeastern Pennsylvania near the plant, it also is a chance to show them the Susquehanna plant and help them to be more informed about nuclear power."

Among their activities to earn the nuclear science badge, the boys build an electroscope and a model of the plant's reactor. To meet one of the badge requirements to see X-ray equipment in use, they visit a gatehouse at the Susquehanna plant where security personnel explain the various screening devices in use.

Requirements to earn the energy badge include doing an energy audit, presenting a speech on ways to conserve energy, making charts showing the world's energy resources and describing examples of energy waste in their communities.

This year, the merit badge classes will be offered each week during the three-week Camp Lavigne season in July.

## PPL Project Earth grant helps teachers learn about Susquehanna River-Chesapeake Bay connection

King's College environmental science professor Brian Mangan and retired Berwick Area School District science teacher Mary Jo Gibson are using a PPL Project Earth grant to help educate teachers this summer about the connection between the Susquehanna River and the Chesapeake Bay.

The summer graduate course, offered through the Wilkes-Barre college, is a partnership between King's, the school district and the Chesapeake Bay Foundation.

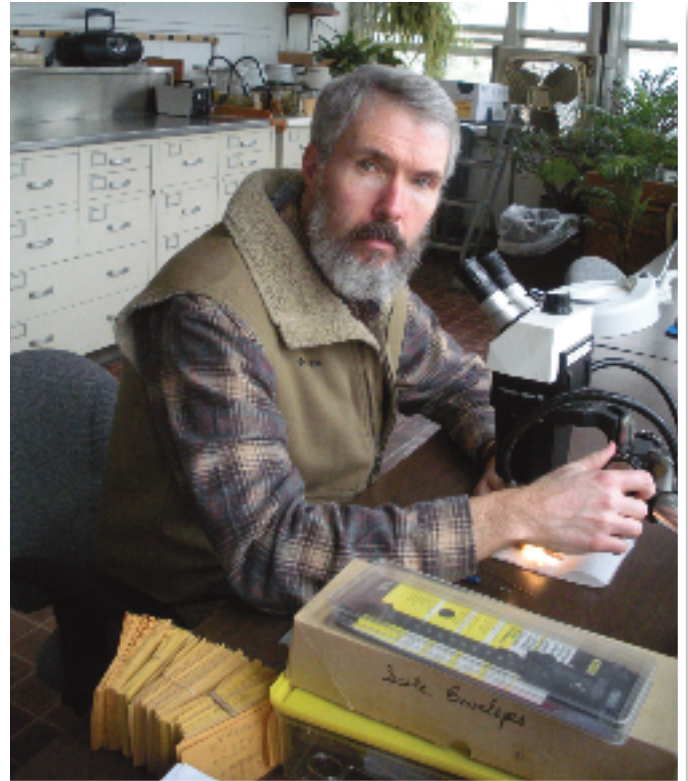
Mangan, Gibson and a dozen teachers will be spending July 11-16 at the foundation's Karen Noonan Center in Maryland.

The class will cover the ecology, geography, geology, history and human culture of the bay.

"There is something of a disconnect," Mangan said, "in getting people in New York and Pennsylvania to care about what they see as Maryland's bay. Folks along the Susquehanna have to recognize that their actions have a direct effect hundreds of miles downstream."

Gibson, an alumna of Mangan's first bay course, will help the teachers convert course information into lesson plans.

The Chesapeake Bay course is open to educators from Grades K-12 and any other college graduate interested in this topic. For more information or to inquire about registration, contact Briget Ford, King's College Graduate Program, at [brigetford@kings.edu](mailto:brigetford@kings.edu) or 570-208-5991.



Mangan



Susquehanna nuclear plant security officers participated in Law Day events at Millville and Southern Columbia high schools in May. Law Day, founded in 1958, is sponsored by county Bar Associations to educate people about the use of law to achieve individual and social justice. Security officers participating in the Millville event were, from left, Randy Kukorlo, John McDonald, Kristen Chapin and Chad Davis.

# PPL, Susquehanna Women in Nuclear chapter sponsor school science fairs

Students at two area schools participated in science fairs this spring sponsored by PPL and the Susquehanna chapter of Women in Nuclear.

In March, 30 kindergarten through fifth-grade students at Salem Elementary School displayed their projects for parents and classmates. Five lucky students won a random drawing to receive a science kit about electricity provided by PPL/WIN. Then in May, 95 students from Northwest Area School District competed for PPL/WIN-sponsored prizes at its science fair.

“It was a great opportunity for us to encourage students to explore different areas of science and let them share that knowledge with their peers,” said Susquehanna WIN President Victoria Dennis, a reactor operator at the Susquehanna nuclear plant.

Salem Elementary students, from left, Abigail Calvert, Ryen Steele, Dustin Roberts, Spencer Yacuboski and Samantha Dyer proudly display their science kits for WIN President Victoria Dennis.



“These science fairs are one of the many ways that Susquehanna plant employees reach out to local communities,” said Tim Rausch, senior vice president and chief nuclear officer. “We’re proud of the commitment they have to this area.”

The Susquehanna chapter of WIN was formed in 2002 to provide networking, mentoring and leadership development for its members, as well as provide nuclear industry education and outreach programs to the community, Dennis said. It is part of U.S. Women in Nuclear, a national organization open to women and men working in the fields of nuclear energy and radiation.

## Bell Bend Update: NRC audits are part of licensing process

Because of the great community interest in the proposed Bell Bend nuclear power plant, which a separate affiliate of PPL is pursuing, periodic updates on the project are included in Inside Susquehanna.

Since the application for a Combined Operating License was submitted by PPL Nuclear Development in October 2008, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission has conducted detailed reviews of numerous safety and environmental areas. To date, PPL Nuclear Development has responded to about 400 of the 500 requests for information from the NRC.

The NRC also conducts audits of the information in specific sections of the application to gain further insights. Audit activities include document reviews, face-to-face meetings and site visits.

In 2009, PPL hosted a weeklong audit of more than a dozen separate environmental areas in the application.

Recently, representatives of the NRC and other state and federal agencies visited three sites that had been considered along with Bell Bend for the new nuclear power plant. An evaluation of alternative sites is required to ensure the site chosen is the preferred site when all environmental considerations have been weighed appropriately. Through this alternative sites audit, the NRC and other agencies will determine whether PPL’s choice of Bell Bend as the preferred site is appropriate.

## Testing after refueling ensures safe and reliable operation

It takes hundreds of tests throughout PPL’s Susquehanna nuclear power plant to ensure the plant’s systems will function as designed after each planned maintenance and refueling outage.

When the outage work is complete and the unit begins generating electricity again, plant staff begins “start up testing” which means increasing power levels in steps of about 10 percent at a time and performing various tests.

This testing ensures safe operation by allowing operators to slowly bring the unit up to full power and test systems every step of the way. The plant’s engineering department develops and directs each test, while plant operators monitor the unit’s performance.

Coming out of this spring’s Unit 1 outage, this testing process allowed PPL personnel to test the plant’s systems under modified conditions to support an increase in the amount of power the unit can generate.

It took about one week for operators to reach Unit 1’s previous authorized power level. As tests were successfully completed, plant operators increased power more gradually and over a longer period of time until reaching the new, higher authorized power level.

Testing doesn’t stop once the plant has reached full power level. Operators and engineers continually monitor and test the plant’s systems to ensure safe and reliable operation.



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## Susquehanna Riverlands Environmental Preserve

### **Edible Wild Plants Walk**

Sunday, July 18, 1:30-3 p.m.

Wetlands Nature Area

Presented by: Gerry and Len Janus

Join Gerry and Len Janus as they return to the Riverlands with their fascinating and popular program on wild plants that can be eaten and traditionally have been used as food. Please dress appropriately for a walk in the woods. In case of inclement weather, the program will be moved indoors to the Susquehanna Energy Information Center. Please call ahead at 1-866-832-3312 in case of questionable weather.

### **Journaling through Nature**

Saturday, July 24, 10:30 a.m. to noon

Susquehanna Energy Information Center

Presented by: Nancy Bishop, Supervisor-SEIC

A glorious day spent in the great outdoors

can inspire the deepest, most poetic thoughts. But putting those thoughts onto paper can be an intimidating and frustrating exercise. Nancy Bishop draws on her many years as a reporter, writer and editor to help find ways to make that process a little less painful. After a brief discussion on technique, we will leave the Susquehanna Energy Information Center for a stroll through the Riverlands, looking for inspiration as we go. In case of inclement weather, the program will be held entirely indoors.

### **Forests and Ferns**

Sunday, Sept. 12, 1:30-3 p.m.

Council Cup parking lot

Presented by: Dr. James Montgomery, Environmental Studies Director, Ecology III

Soon the trees will start to turn color and the leaves will start dropping. But not

before Jim Montgomery takes us out for a chance to learn how to identify some of those trees and the adaptations that allow them to survive. A botanist and world-renowned expert on ferns, Montgomery will look at the forest from floor to canopy and discuss some of the changes that take place as the plant community winds down for a long winter nap. Montgomery's walks are a popular annual tradition here at the Riverlands. Join us to see why.

These free programs will be held at the Susquehanna Riverlands Environmental Preserve, 634 Salem Blvd., Berwick, PA 18603

For more information, visit [www.pplpreserves.com](http://www.pplpreserves.com) and click on Susquehanna Riverlands.



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