

# WAY E-NEWS

*A coalition of stakeholders committed to being innovative leaders encouraging watershed-based planning, restoration and protection*



November 28, 2011

A PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP

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**WATERSHED CONTACTS**

**COUNTY PLANNING – (717) 771-9870  
CONSERVATION – (717) 840-7430**

- Agricultural conservation planning
- Environmentally sensitive dirt & gravel road maintenance
- Environmental stewardship and watershed protection
- Erosion & sediment control
- Stormwater complaints

**24-HR EMERGENCIES – (877) 333-1904**

- Chemical and oil spills from transport trucks, trains and industrial facilities

**ENVIRONMENTAL – DEP-SCRO**

- General Info 717-705-4700
- Director SCRO 717-705-47047
- Air Quality 717-705-4702
- Energy & Technology 717-705-4703
- Environmental Cleanup 717-705-4705
- Mining (800) 541-2050
- Radiation Protection 717-705-4704
- Waste Management 717-705-4706
- Water Supply Management 717-705-4708
- Water Management 717-705-4707
- Watershed Management 717-705-4704

**FISHERIES – (800) 541-2050**

- Wildlife (fish, reptiles, amphibians) nuisance problems or to report violations
- FISH KILL 1-855-347-4545

**GAME & WILDLIFE – (888) 742-8001**

- Wildlife (mammals or birds) to report violations or nuisance problems

**ILLEGAL DUMPING**

- Illegal dumping on state forest and park lands (877) 772-3673
  - Illegal dumping York County 840-7687
- MUNICIPAL (Phonebook Blue Pages)**
- Air pollution by burning household garbage
  - Dumping waste in surface waters
  - Floodplain disturbances
  - Municipal and residential septic/sewage problems
  - Stormwater management

**NOXIOUS PLANTS – (717) 772-5209**

**RECYCLING – (717) 845-1066**

**WETLANDS – (717) 249-2522**

Updated 4/27/2011

## WATERSHED ALLIANCE OF YORK

[Ag Land Preservation Board of York County](http://www.york-county.org/gov/AUTH/agri.htm) - [www.york-county.org/gov/AUTH/agri.htm](http://www.york-county.org/gov/AUTH/agri.htm)

[Brunner Island Environmental Preserve](http://www.pplpreserves.com) - [www.pplpreserves.com](http://www.pplpreserves.com)

[Carroll Citizens for Sensible Growth](http://carrollcitizens.com/) - <http://carrollcitizens.com/>

[Codorus Creek Watershed Association](http://www.codoruscreek.net) - [www.codoruscreek.net](http://www.codoruscreek.net)

[Codorus Endowment Implementation Committee](http://www.yccf.org) - [www.yccf.org](http://www.yccf.org)

[Codorus State Park](http://www.dcnr.state.pa.gov) - [www.dcnr.state.pa.gov](http://www.dcnr.state.pa.gov)

[Conewago Canoe Club](http://www.conewagocanoecub.org) - [www.conewagocanoecub.org](http://www.conewagocanoecub.org)

[Deer Creek Watershed Association](http://deercreekwatershed.com/) - <http://deercreekwatershed.com/>

[Farm & Natural Lands Trust of York County](http://www.farmtrust.org) - [www.farmtrust.org](http://www.farmtrust.org)

[Gifford Pinchot State Park](http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/stateparks/parks/giffordpinchot.aspx) - [www.dcnr.state.pa.us/stateparks/parks/giffordpinchot.aspx](http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/stateparks/parks/giffordpinchot.aspx)

[Gunpowder Valley Conservancy](http://www.gunpowderfalls.org) - [www.gunpowderfalls.org](http://www.gunpowderfalls.org)

[Holtwood Environmental Preserve](http://www.pplpreserves.com) - [www.pplpreserves.com](http://www.pplpreserves.com)

[Horn Farm Center for Agricultural Education](http://www.hornfarmcenter.org) - [www.hornfarmcenter.org](http://www.hornfarmcenter.org)

[Izaak Walton League York Chapter #67](http://www.yorkchapter67iwla.org/) - [www.yorkchapter67iwla.org/](http://www.yorkchapter67iwla.org/)

[Lower Susquehanna Riverkeeper](http://www.lowersusquehannariverkeeper.org) - [www.lowersusquehannariverkeeper.org](http://www.lowersusquehannariverkeeper.org)

[Maryland's Upper West Shore Trib Team](http://www.dnr.state.md.us/bay/tribstrat/upper_west/up_west_shore.html) - [http://www.dnr.state.md.us/bay/tribstrat/upper\\_west/up\\_west\\_shore.html](http://www.dnr.state.md.us/bay/tribstrat/upper_west/up_west_shore.html)

[Mason-Dixon Trail System](http://www.masondixontrail.org/) - <http://www.masondixontrail.org/>

[Mid-Atlantic Ecological Landscapes Partnership \[MAEscapes\]](http://www.maescapes.org) - [www.maescapes.org](http://www.maescapes.org)

[Peach Bottom Concerned Citizens Group Inc.](http://www.pbccg.com) - [www.pbccg.com](http://www.pbccg.com)

[Prettyboy Watershed Alliance](http://www.prettyboywatershed.org) - [www.prettyboywatershed.org](http://www.prettyboywatershed.org)

Reel to Real York (R2RY): Sustainable Film Partnership of York County

[Sierra Club – Gov. Pinchot Group of PA](http://pennsylvania.sierraclub.org/pinchot/) - <http://pennsylvania.sierraclub.org/pinchot/>

[Shank's Mare Outfitters GO PLAY OUTSIDE!](http://www.shanksmare.com) - [www.shanksmare.com](http://www.shanksmare.com)

[Sonnewald Natural Foods](http://www.sonnewald.org/) - [www.sonnewald.org/](http://www.sonnewald.org/)

[Spoutwood Farm Center for Sustainable Living](http://www.spoutwood.com) - [www.spoutwood.com](http://www.spoutwood.com)

[Sunnyside Farm CSA](http://www.sunny-side-farm.com/) - <http://www.sunny-side-farm.com/>

[Susquehanna Gateway Heritage Area](http://www.susquehannaheritage.org/) - <http://www.susquehannaheritage.org/>

[Susquehanna Greenway Partnership](http://www.susquehannagreenway.org) - [www.susquehannagreenway.org](http://www.susquehannagreenway.org)

[Trout Unlimited Codorus Chapter #558](http://www.codorustu.org) - [www.codorustu.org](http://www.codorustu.org)

[Trout Unlimited Muddy Creek Chapter #575](http://muddycreektu.org/) - <http://muddycreektu.org/>

[Watershed Alliance of Adams County](http://www.adamswatersheds.org/) - <http://www.adamswatersheds.org/>

[Watershed Alliance of York](http://www.watershedsyork.org) - [www.watershedsyork.org](http://www.watershedsyork.org)

[Yellow Breeches Watershed Association](http://www.ybwa.org) - [www.ybwa.org](http://www.ybwa.org)

[York-Adams Regional Smart Growth Coalition](http://www.yorkadamssmartgrowth.org) - [www.yorkadamssmartgrowth.org](http://www.yorkadamssmartgrowth.org)

[York Audubon Society](http://www.yorkaudubon.org/) - <http://www.yorkaudubon.org/>

[York County Conservation District](http://www.yorkccd.org) - [www.yorkccd.org](http://www.yorkccd.org)

[York County Parks & Recreation](http://www.YorkCountyParks.org) - [www.YorkCountyParks.org](http://www.YorkCountyParks.org)

[York County Planning Commission](http://www.ycpc.org) - [www.ycpc.org](http://www.ycpc.org)

[York County Solid Waste & Refuse Authority](http://www.ycswa.org/) - [www.ycswa.org/](http://www.ycswa.org/)

York County TMDL Work Group



## WATERSHED EDUCATION & OUTREACH

### **Watershed Audit Shows Achieving Chesapeake Pollution Diet May Be Even More Challenging**

CEDS has just completed a Severn River Preliminary Watershed Audit. The poor condition of existing stormwater BMPs, the large amount of exposed soil on construction sites, and the few proposed projects meeting forest conservation requirements on site does not bode well for efforts to restore the Severn and the Bay like the Chesapeake Pollution Diet, Watershed Implementation Plans, and the NPDES Municipal Stormwater Permits. Comprehensive Watershed Audits, such as that conducted in the Severn River system, is a new approach developed by CEDS for accelerating aquatic resource recovery by augmenting efforts to bring watershed activities into compliance with clean-water laws. The Audit begins with a preliminary survey of regulated activities within a watershed to determine if pollution releases exceed allowed limits. CEDS then uses *Equitable Solutions* to assist those responsible for each activity to quickly halt excessive pollution releases. When this cooperation first/*Equitable Solutions* approach fails to halt the pollution, CEDS uses *Smart Legal Strategies* to achieve full compliance. The first Preliminary Audit has just been completed in the Severn River watershed. The Audit was conducted in concert with the Severn River Association (SRA). The principal findings of the Preliminary Audit are:

- A very small sampling of the 2,000 existing stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs) in the Severn watershed indicate that (depending upon BMP type) a third- to all no longer provide pollution reduction benefits;
- These BMPs could be keeping up to 1.4 million pounds of pollutants out of the Severn annually, but are likely trapping just a fraction;
- The high BMP failure rate is most likely due to the County stormwater inspection staff having gone from seven full-time employees in the 1990s to one today;
- While the Chesapeake Bay Pollution Diet and Watershed Implementation Planning efforts assume 66% of construction site soils are treated with highly-effective temporary stabilization measures (straw mulch, grass seeding, etc.), a very limited sample indicates 10% to 30% may be a more accurate figure, at least in the Severn River watershed;
- A review of recently submitted subdivision plans shows the County denied approval for one project because of Environmental Site Design (ESD) short-comings, another received an ESD waiver, and while the other two pre-date ESD both could easily be modified to incorporate ESD measures at a likely cost savings to the developer and greater protection for the Severn;
- While retaining a minimum of 50% of the Severn watershed in forest is critical to River quality and existing forest cover is 42%, only one of the four proposed projects met 100% of ESD forest conservation requirements on site;
- Projects built anywhere from five- to fifteen-years ago were assessed for compliance with the forest conservation easement areas shown on the plat for each. It appears that all easement areas shown on the plats are still in forest; and
- The Preliminary review indicates that the two permitted point source discharges to the Severn are in full compliance with pollution discharge limits.

The Severn River Preliminary Watershed Audit report is available at: [www.ceds.org/audit](http://www.ceds.org/audit)

### **Whitaker Center Expedition Chesapeake Project Goes Live On The Web**

Expedition Chesapeake is making waves on the web. [Whitaker Center for Science and the Arts](#) in Harrisburg Monday unveiled [a new website](#) for the Center's \$10 million initiative to entertain, educate and engage the 17 million residents of the Chesapeake Bay watershed. The website adds to the project's [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [You Tube](#) presence and includes a host of features designed to bring the Chesapeake Bay watershed and the project to life. A promo video which highlights Emmy winner Jeff Corwin is featured, as well as information about the watershed and the bay itself and updates on the key elements of the project. Expedition Chesapeake includes four related components headlined by a 42-minute giant screen film. The educational components include a television documentary, a hands-on, traveling science exhibit, and a set of online learning experiences designed to engage students from Cooperstown, New York to Virginia Beach, Virginia. Visitors to the site can click on the "Get Involved" button to learn how to become an active participant in the initiative as a donor or an Expedition Chesapeake ambassador by following updates on Chesapeake's various social media channels. In recent weeks, Whitaker Center announced the addition of Jeff Corwin to the project and will partner with producer David Lickley to make the film. Corwin is perhaps the world's best known celebrity scientist and Animal Planet star. He recently launched the ABC television series *Ocean Mysteries*. Lickley has won virtually every award in the giant screen film industry in his 25-year career as producer, director and writer. He has directed some of the most successful giant screen nature films of all time, including "Born to Be Wild," "Bears," and "Jane Goodall's Wild Chimpanzees." Lickley is Director of Large Format Films for Science North, one of Canada's leading science education centers. The television documentary will be made in partnership with Penn State Public Broadcasting. It will focus on the making of the giant screen film, the first of its kind for the watershed. PSPB can include the Emmy-award winning *Courtside with Coquese* and videos for the Geospatial Revolution project and collaborations with NASA in their gallery of work. For more information, visit the new [Expedition Chesapeake](#) website.

### **2012 WRCP Calendar Features PA Rare And Endangered Plants, Animals**

Looking for a great calendar for 2012? Download the [Wild Resource Conservation Program Calendar](#) featuring rare and endangered plants and animals in Pennsylvania. The WRCP is Pennsylvania's biodiversity conservation program. WRCP works to conserve Pennsylvania's non-game animals, wild plants and their habitats. WRCP also works to educate the public and school-aged youth about the importance of Pennsylvania's species and special places. The plants and animals featured in this 2012 downloadable calendar are some of those WRCP has focused on in the educational products created by, or in conjunction with, the Wild Resource Conservation Program. New to this year's calendar is an interactive feature – events are clickable and will take you to a website for more information. Have an environmental or wildlife-related event you would like to add to the calendar? Send the date, event title, and website address by email to: [jsprajcar@pa.gov](mailto:jsprajcar@pa.gov) and WRCP will make every effort to add it. [Click Here](#) to download your free 2012 WRCP Calendar.



## WATERSHED FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

### **Conservation International Holiday Gift Center**

Welcome to our gift center! Here, you'll find the perfect gifts for family and friends. They're our thanks for your generous donation. Items are shipped via USPS First Class or Priority Mail. Please allow 7-10 business days for delivery to gifts shipped within the U.S., and a maximum of 4-6 weeks for international shipping. Please note: We source our merchandise responsibly. Where possible, we make sure our products are reusable—so you can reduce your impact on our planet. CI Gift Center:

[https://secure2.convio.net/cintl/site/Ecommerce?store\\_id=3221&JServSessionIdr004=zh8d87swa3.app214a](https://secure2.convio.net/cintl/site/Ecommerce?store_id=3221&JServSessionIdr004=zh8d87swa3.app214a)

### **Celebrate the Bay this Holiday!**

Celebrate the wonder of our natural world this season with gifts from the Chesapeake Bay Foundation. Share the "Save the Bay" message with the outdoors lovers on your list and know that each purchase supports outdoor education and the protection and restoration of our rivers, streams, and Bay. This holiday, give a gift that will help protect and restore the Chesapeake Bay and your local rivers and streams. Shop now:

<https://www.benchworksbranding.com/welcome.php>

### **Raise money for Center for Watershed Protection through online shopping!**

Here's an easy way to raise money for the Center for Watershed Protection. As you plan to take advantage of Cyber Monday deals online, shop through [GoodShop.com](http://www.GoodShop.com), where you can shop at more than 2,400 top online retailers and a percentage of your purchases will go to the Center for Watershed Protection. You pay the same price as you normally would, but a donation goes to the Center for Watershed Protection. Also start using Yahoo! powered GoodSearch.com as your search engine and they'll donate about a penny to your favorite cause, the [Center for Watershed Protection](http://www.CenterforWatershedProtection.org) every time you do a search! You can also enroll in the GoodDining program. Eat at over 10,000 participating restaurants nationwide and you can earn up to 6% of every dollar spent on the meal as a donation for the Center for Watershed Protection. Here's the web site - <http://www.goodsearch.com>. You can also read about GoodSearch in the NY Times, Oprah Magazine, CNN, ABC News and the Wall Street Journal. Won't you GoodSearch/GoodShop for the Center for Watershed Protection? <http://www.goodsearch.com/nonprofit/center-for-watershed-protection.aspx>

### **Fish & Boat Commission Offers Gift Giving Ideas That Will Float Your Boat**

Dozens of "wild" holiday gifts for the angler, boater or wildlife fan on your list are just a click away at "[The Outdoor Shop](http://www.TheOutdoorShop.com)" on the Fish & Boat Commission's website. The Outdoor Shop: [https://www2.pa.wildlifelicense.com/ALS/merchCtrl.php?start=1&merch\\_role\\_type=F&site=pa/f](https://www2.pa.wildlifelicense.com/ALS/merchCtrl.php?start=1&merch_role_type=F&site=pa/f)

### **Game Commission Offers Wild Gift Giving Ideas**

Does the thought of Black Friday shopping crowds make you want to go into hibernation? Do the traffic jams near the malls get unbearable? Dozens of "wild" holiday gifts for that hunter, trapper or wildlife fan on your list are just a click away at "[The Outdoor Shop](http://www.TheOutdoorShop.com)" on the Game Commission's website. The Outdoor Shop:

[https://www.theoutdoorshop.state.pa.us//FBG/game\\_secured/GameOutdoorShop.asp?ShopperID=D044FF25A39343B8B2A250C398D9EE](https://www.theoutdoorshop.state.pa.us//FBG/game_secured/GameOutdoorShop.asp?ShopperID=D044FF25A39343B8B2A250C398D9EE)  
[DD](http://www.theoutdoorshop.state.pa.us//FBG/game_secured/GameOutdoorShop.asp?ShopperID=D044FF25A39343B8B2A250C398D9EE)

### **VISIT GROWING UP GREEN YORK!**

Visit Growing up Green, new in downtown York, to buy sustainable products and toys for children from a local merchant MANY of which are made in America! 266 West Market Street. See website for store hours (Same as downtown farmers markets).

Web: <http://growingupgreenyork.com/AboutContactUs.html>

### **Give a Gift to The Natural Capital Fund**

Thanks to you, our partners, NCIF made a positive impact in more communities than ever in 2011. We've invested more than \$2 million in 24 businesses that provide good jobs while building a green economy across our service area. Each dollar loaned or invested by NCIF generates more than \$4 in new investments. You can help. Please consider a gift to the Natural Capital Investment Fund this giving season to continue to expand business opportunities in rural communities. Your support will help us continue to find, support and fund entrepreneurs who are demonstrating, that triple-bottom-line businesses can sustain rural communities and their natural resources. Make a secure online donation now (<https://www.conservationfund.org/civcrm/contribute/transact?reset=1&id=10>). NCIF is a wholly owned affiliate of [The Conservation Fund](http://www.TheConservationFund.org). The Conservation Fund is recognized as a 4-star charity by [Charity Navigator](http://www.CharityNavigator.org), and received an "A+" grade for unsurpassed effectiveness and efficiency from the [American Institute of Philanthropy](http://www.AmericanInstituteofPhilanthropy.org).



### **Join SGP in the Creating Susquehanna Greenway**

The Susquehanna Greenway Partnership provides assistance to many local partners to create new trails and parks in their communities, and conserve our natural resources and cultural heritage. If you believe, like we do, that our land and water resources must be protected and enhanced to ensure that we have a healthy and prosperous future, we ask that you show your support for our work by becoming a member. Your contribution will help to create green collar jobs constructing parks, trails and river accesses. It will help to increase property values and minimize future flooding through green infrastructure improvements. The bottomline is that if we want our communities to be the types of places where families and young professionals want to live, where new businesses want to locate, then we must invest in greening our communities. Your investment in the Susquehanna Greenway Partnership is an investment in the future of our river towns and future generations. Please [click here](#) to join today. Thank You! Trish Carothers, SGP Program Director

### **Support Wild Resources!**

You can contribute to the Wild Resource Conservation Fund without spending a penny. When you use [iSearchiGive.com](http://www.iSearchiGive.com) to search the web or shop online, a donation is made to the Fund in your name. Go to <http://iSearchiGive.com> today and tell them you support the Wild Resource Conservation Fund.

### **Give Yourself and Your Family a Life-Long Gift this Year!**

Become a member of one or more of WAY's partnering organizations (see page 2), or volunteer to serve on a board, committee or event. Membership has many benefits:

- Supporting locally led conservation initiatives
- Environmental stewardship opportunities to give back or pay it forward
- Watershed protection where you live, work and play.

Nature is a great gift to give to yourself, your spouse, your children, and grandchildren to be cherished for a lifetime! Give now at [www.watershedyork.org](http://www.watershedyork.org).

### **York County Women's Giving Circle "Alternative Christmas Fair" Gift Giving**

The Watershed Alliance of York has three gifts for you to give, and they are:

- \$25 = One native tree planted in a riparian buffer
- \$50 = Two tons of rock for a stream restoration project.
- \$100 = One Watersheds & Wetlands educational classroom program in a local elementary school of choice.

### **York County Conservation District Gift Giving Ideas**

No, these are not Black Friday sales, or Small Business Saturday sales, or Cyber Monday sales. These are Conservation Everyday sales!

- Rain Barrels – 60 gal \$65; 80 gal \$85
- Rain Gauges \$10
- PA Wildlife Book \$25 (to be published in January 2012)
- York County Wildlife Art (price subject to piece)
- York County Conservation District Hats \$10

The Conservation Shop: [www.yorkccd.org](http://www.yorkccd.org)

### **York County Parks Christmas Magic - A Festival of Lights holiday program**

York County Department of Parks and Recreation presents the 28th edition of "Christmas Magic – A Festival of Lights" event at Rocky Ridge County Park. This popular holiday program opens Friday, November 25<sup>th</sup> and runs through December 31, 2011. Hours of the show are 6 pm – 9 pm weekdays and 5 pm – 9 pm Saturdays and Sundays. Christmas Magic is a .5 mile walk along park trails decorated with 400,000 lights, holiday scenes, animation and much more.



## **WATERSHED FACILITATION ASSISTANCE**

### **Upper West Shore Trib Team Meeting – Dec 5**

This is a confirmation of our December meeting, to be held at the McFaul Center in Bel Air on Monday 5th December. We'll make it a combination WIP update and Holiday get-together, so please join us, plan to listen to updates about the WIP submissions from Harford & Cecil Counties, focused on the 2-year milestones, and do bring your favourite xmas hors d'oeuvre or snack to share with the group. (Steve, I'll record the two updates and forward them to you before the Holidays). Also, please bring a thumb drive if you'd like a copy of Brian Smith's presentation from November. The original is 30 mb! I've managed to get it down to 5 mb, which is still a little big for most folks email systems / patience! In January, Steve Stewart (who is on vacation for the December meeting) will give us a slightly longer and more in depth look at Baltimore County's WIP process and outcome. **However, we have a decision to make.** Our meeting should be on Monday January 2nd, but that seems to be a holiday. Please follow this link [www.doodle.com/rpdpvbyi8w78txbn](http://www.doodle.com/rpdpvbyi8w78txbn) and indicate your preferred meeting option or options and we'll work out the best date / available venue combination. Many thanks, and Happy Thanksgiving weekend! Rupert Rossetti, [RupertRossetti@aol.com](mailto:RupertRossetti@aol.com)

### **Balancing Nature and Commerce in Communities that Neighbor Public Lands – Jan 30 – Feb 1**

January 30 - February 1, 2012 in Shepherdstown, WV – During this three-day course teams will focus on the economics, natural resources and community character of their areas and learn valuable partnership-building skills. At the end of the course, teams will leave with a specific action plan for implementing a collaborative project when they return home. To discuss forming a team, call us! Learn more...

[http://www.conservationfund.org/course/balancing\\_nature\\_and\\_commerce\\_communities\\_neighbor\\_public\\_land](http://www.conservationfund.org/course/balancing_nature_and_commerce_communities_neighbor_public_land)



## **WATERSHED TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**

### **Even the Cleanest Wastewater Contributes to More 'Super Bacteria'. Study Finds**

ScienceDaily (Nov. 14, 2011) – A new University of Minnesota study reveals that treated municipal wastewater – even wastewater treated by the highest-quality treatment technology – can result in significant quantities of antibiotic-resistant bacteria, often referred to as "superbacteria," in surface waters. The study also suggests that standard wastewater treatment technologies probably release far greater quantities of antibiotic-resistant genes used by bacteria, but this likely goes unnoticed because background levels of bacteria are normally much higher than in the water studied in this research. The new study is led by civil engineering associate professor Timothy LaPara in the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities College of Science and Engineering. The study is published in the most recent issue of *Environmental Science and Technology*, a journal of the American Chemical Society. The research was part of a unique class project in a graduate-level civil engineering class at the University of Minnesota focused on environmental microbiology. Read article...

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2011/11/111114152539.htm>

### **Acid Pollution in Rain Decreased With Emissions, Long-Term Study Shows**

ScienceDaily (Nov. 16, 2011) – Emissions regulations do have an environmental impact, according to a long-term study of acidic rainfall by researchers at the University of Illinois. The National Atmospheric Deposition Program collects rainfall samples weekly from more than 250 stations across the United States and analyzes them for pollutants. The program recently released a report detailing trends in acidic rainfall frequency and concentration over 25 years, from 1984 to 2009. "This is the longest-term, widest-scale precipitation pollution study in the U.S. In particular, we wanted to see how the trends in the pollution and the rain correlated back to emissions regulations," said Christopher Lehmann, a researcher in the program, which is part of the Illinois State Water Survey at the U. of I. "We're seeing regulations on emissions sources having direct and positive impact to reduce pollutants in rain." Read article...

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2011/11/111116162244.htm>

### **Abnormal levels of caffeine in water indicate human contamination**

Newswise – Researchers led by Prof. Sébastien Sauvé of the University of Montreal's Department of Chemistry have discovered that traces of caffeine are a useful indicator of the contamination of our water by sewers. "E coli bacteria is commonly used to evaluate and regulate the levels of fecal pollution of our water from storm water discharge, but because storm sewers systems collect surface runoff, non-human sources can contribute significantly to the levels that are observed," Sauvé explained. "Our study has determined that there is a strong correlation between the levels of caffeine in water and the level of bacteria, and that chemists can therefore use caffeine levels as an indicator of pollution due to sewerage systems." Read article... <http://www.newswise.com/articles/chemistry-professor-links-faeces-and-caffeine>

### **Increased agriculture regulations still to come from EPA**

Southwest Farm Press – The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency doesn't necessarily have farm interests lined up in its crosshairs, but it's not exactly ignoring agriculture as a target of opportunity either. "We've had it pretty good in agriculture for a long time," said Shannon Ferrell, assistant professor at Oklahoma State University, during the recent Rural Economics Outlook Conference. "EPA went after the low-hanging fruit first, the big polluters," Ferrell said. "Now, they're going after the rest." Read article...

<http://southwestfarmpress.com/management/epa-shifts-aim-big-polluters>

### **Paying farmers to protect habitat could save environment, cash**

The Vancouver Sun – A research consortium is field testing a revolutionary plan that would pay British Columbia, Canada, farmers and ranchers to produce cleaner air, water and wildlife habitat alongside their food crops. By placing a monetary value on water purification through wetlands or preserved ecosystems on privately owned agricultural land, governments and conservation groups may be able to pursue their environmental goals by compensating farmers for changing their practices and protecting sensitive lands. Read article...

<http://www.vancouversun.com/business/Farmers+paid+take+green+approach/5718014/story.html>

### **Federal program would offer annual payments for wetlands protection**

Grand Forks Herald – Farmers in the flooded Devils Lake Basin could benefit from a federal agricultural program designed to voluntarily protect wetlands and flooded agricultural lands. An appropriations bill recently released by a joint U.S. House-Senate conference committee includes \$7.5 million for the program, according to Sen. John Hoeven, R-N.D., a member of the Appropriations Committee. The program allows producers and landowners to enter into 10-year agreements to voluntarily protect wetlands and flooded farmland in return for annual payments. Read article... [https://secure.forumcomm.com/?publisher\\_ID=40&article\\_id=221242&CFID=429254652&CFTOKEN=29194358](https://secure.forumcomm.com/?publisher_ID=40&article_id=221242&CFID=429254652&CFTOKEN=29194358)

### **Soil conservation survey shows shift to mulch-till**

WJBC – Wet springs in Illinois have caused an increase in crop tillage, according to a study. The survey reveals that use of no-till crop production systems has fallen 5 percentage points since 2009 to 24.2 percent of fields. While the use of conventional tillage increased during this period, so did the use of mulch-till, a practice that leaves at least 30 percent of the residue from the previous crop on the ground and protects soil from erosion. Read article... <http://wjbc.com/soil-conservation-survey-shows-shift-from-no-till-to-mulch-till/>

### **Farmers battle sedimentation, nutrient runoff in creative ways**

Farm and Dairy – Agricultural runoff and sedimentation into nearby water systems is nothing new in Fremont, Ohio. New data shows that the impact – large concentrations of harmful algal blooms just a few miles north in Lake Erie, where most of the water drains – is growing. A new device created by a farming family – a concrete trough or chute that's called an "instream sediment collector" – may help solve the problem. Read article... <http://www.farmanddairy.com/news/ohio-farmers-battle-sedimentation-nutrient-runoff-in-creative-ways/31685.html>

### **Geography students developing watershed management plans**

UB Reporter – University of Buffalo students have spent the semester developing plans to manage the Cattaraugus watershed and surrounding ecology. One group of students has collected data on soil erosion and created computer models that help identify areas of the watershed that produce sediment at a higher rate. The researchers also are using modeling to test the efficiency of strategies for limiting erosion. Read how... [http://www.buffalo.edu/ubreporter/2011\\_11\\_17/renschler\\_watershed\\_class](http://www.buffalo.edu/ubreporter/2011_11_17/renschler_watershed_class)

### **New Partnership for Sustainable Rural Communities Report**

The HUD-DOT-EPA Partnership for Sustainable Communities and the USDA has just released Supporting Sustainable Rural Communities, a report that discusses how the four agencies are collaborating to support rural communities. This publication highlights how small towns and rural places across the country are using federal resources to strengthen their economies, provide better quality of life to residents, and build on local assets such as traditional main streets, agricultural lands, and natural resources. The report includes sections on how HUD, DOT, EPA, and USDA programs support environmentally and economically sustainable growth in rural places; performance measures rural communities can use to target their investments; and 12 case studies of rural communities using federal resources to achieve their development and economic goals. It also outlines steps the Partnership for Sustainable Communities is pursuing to support small towns and rural places. To read the report, please visit <http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/publications.htm#huddotepa>. For more information on the Partnership for Sustainable Communities, please visit <http://www.sustainablecommunities.gov>

### **EPA Renews Partnership to Improve Septic Systems**

On November 9, 2011, EPA and 16 organizations renewed their commitment to improve septic system performance for over 26 million homes nationwide. One of the challenges that communities face is the improper operation and maintenance of septic systems, leading to system malfunctions and potential health hazards. Today, one in five homes in the United States uses a septic system to handle its wastewater. Ten to 20 percent of all septic systems may not be properly functioning, which can pose risks to public health and the environment. Signatories to the memorandum of understanding (MOU) have doubled since its initiation in 2005 with eight public and private partners. The MOU partners have achieved a number of successes in encouraging proper management of septic systems and increasing collaboration among EPA, state and local governments, practitioners and assistance providers. The partnership has supported a credentialing program for septic system installers and a model septic system performance code, training opportunities and improved curriculum consistency to enhance the competencies of installers and maintenance professionals, coordinated research priorities, and a wiki website to serve as a one-stop shop for sharing decentralized wastewater information. For more information, visit: [www.epa.gov/owm/onsite](http://www.epa.gov/owm/onsite).

### **Penn State Extension Offers New Online Tool To Help Interpret Water Test Results**

Penn State Extension is now offering a new online tool to help Pennsylvanians interpret water test results called DWIT-- [Drinking Water Interpretation Tool](#). You recently had your private water supply tested, hoping to gain valuable information about the quality and condition of your water. Upon receiving the water analysis report, you find yourself looking at confusing columns of decimal numbers, abbreviations, and contaminants that are difficult to pronounce. What does this all mean? This scenario happens all too often to those with private water supplies, and if that person is unsure as to what the water analysis report means, it will be difficult to make any changes to improve or protect their water supply. While reports will differ depending on the lab doing the analysis, most will contain some of the same basic features: a list of contaminants tested, their concentrations, and, in some cases, highlight any problem contaminants. An important feature of the report is the units used to measure the contaminant level in your water. Milligrams per liter (mg/l) of water are used for substances like metals and nitrates. A milligram per liter is also equal to one part per million (ppm) - that is one part contaminant to one million parts water. Results of the water analysis report are compared to Department of Environmental Protection's drinking water standards. Each contaminant that was tested for, have acceptable limits or standards in drinking water. These standards are categorized into Health-based (primary) standards, and Aesthetic (secondary) standards. Health Based Standards include those contaminants that have known health effects. Examples include total coliform bacteria, E.coli bacteria, barium, lead and mercury. Aesthetic standards include contaminants that affect the taste, odor or color of the water. While these have no adverse health effects, they may make water unpalatable, reduce the effectiveness of soaps and detergents, or cause staining. Aesthetic contaminants may include iron bacteria, hydrogen sulfide, and hardness. Depending on the lab, the analysis report may indicate which of the standards were not met by your water supply and give suggestions or resources for remediation of the problem. Whether your water is causing illness, stains on plumbing, scaly deposits, or has a bad taste, a water analysis report identifies the problem and enables you to make knowledgeable decisions about water treatment. Retain your copy of the report in a safe place as a record of the quality of your water supply. If potentially polluting activities occur in your area, you may need a record of past water quality to prove that your supply has been damaged. Penn State Extension also offers a tool on its website to help with water test result interpretation. The tool is called DWIT (Drinking Water Interpretation Tool) and [can be accessed online](#). Simply type in the results that you received on a water analysis report to the online form, click submit, and recommendations will be given based on those results. The Penn State publication, "[Water Tests: What do the Numbers Mean?](#)" is also available on the Water Resources website to aid in reading and understanding your water analysis report. Some information taken from the Penn State Extension Fact Sheet F103-- [How to Interpret a Water Analysis Report](#).

### **Winterizing Your Pond**

Autumn is a beautiful season as the leaves begin to change and people start pulling out their brightly colored sweaters. However, all of those falling leaves can be a headache for any of you that have large ponds on your property. Leaves seem to be attracted to ponds and cover the surface during the fall months. This can end up causing problems for your pond through the winter as well as next spring! There are some steps that you can take to winterize your pond as well as prevent some of those problems. Learn how...

[http://extension.psu.edu/water/discovery-watersheds/newsletter/news/2011/winterizing-your-pond?utm\\_source=feedburner&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=Feed%3A+agsci-water-watershedwinds+%28Penn+State+Watershed+Winds+Newsletter%29](http://extension.psu.edu/water/discovery-watersheds/newsletter/news/2011/winterizing-your-pond?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+agsci-water-watershedwinds+%28Penn+State+Watershed+Winds+Newsletter%29)

### **Winter, Road Salt, and the Chesapeake Bay**

We can soon expect our annual doses of wintry weather. On average, we can expect measurable snowfall, sleet, or freezing rain just less than twenty days a year in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. Increasingly, local and state highway agencies rely heavily on road salt and other de-icers to keep roads open and safe. Prior to the 1970's, sand and other abrasives were the primary weapon of choice to attack snow and ice on roads. With the advent of new spreaders and increased road traffic, highway agencies shifted toward heavier use of road salt. About a third of all road salt used in the U.S. is applied to roads in the mid-Atlantic states. In our region, about 20 tons of road salt is applied to each mile of four lane highway, in a normal year. Chloride, one of the main components of road salt, is extremely soluble in water. As a result, there is virtually no way to remove chloride once it gets into the watershed. Consequently, once snow melts, streams tend to get salty. Researchers have discovered that mean annual chloride levels are positively correlated with watershed impervious cover. In addition, road salt contains many impurities. As much as 2 to 5% of road salt consists of other elements, such as phosphorus, nitrogen, copper and even cyanide (very harmful to humans and aquatic life). Many public health officials have traditionally held that the increased presence of chlorides in our drinking water is not a major drinking water concern. The broader public health concern, however, is the sodium that is contained in road salt. It has been reported that sodium levels are steadily rising in Maryland drinking water reservoirs and may soon get to levels that might affect sensitive populations who need to restrict sodium. Sodium can be harmful to many forms of aquatic life. High salt levels are also frequently measured in roadside soils. Many species of trees, shrubs, and ground covers are extremely sensitive to high soil chloride levels and may be killed, die back, or fail to germinate if located within the first few feet from pavement. Highway researchers report that as many as ten percent of trees found along road corridors are harmed by road salt. The impact of road salt on plant survival is an important design factor for stormwater management practices that rely on vegetative covers, such as bioretention, swales, and constructed wetlands. A list of common plant species that are at high risk from road salt is provided in the "What you can do" article in this newsletter. Some species, however, flourish in soils with high chloride levels. Two notable examples are cattails and Phragmites, both hardy and invasive wetland species that

prefer brackish water. Road salt can also cause major damage to road infrastructure such as bridge decks and paving. The same is likely true for stormwater infrastructure. The road salting that keeps our society moving in the winter clearly has a large economic and environmental cost. To date, no cost-effective alternative to road salting has emerged. Many highway agencies take the salt problem seriously and are working hard to develop new technology to reduce its environmental impact. These agencies are also covered in the MS4 municipal stormwater permits, so they are challenged to show how new road salting technologies can actually reduce chloride inputs to Bay watersheds. Homeowners can also make better choices in using de-icing chemicals for their driveways and sidewalks. Read "What You Can Do" for a series of tips on how to achieve a low salt diet for your paving (see below article). Article paraphrased with permission from the Chesapeake Stormwater Network visit [www.chesapeakestormwater.net](http://www.chesapeakestormwater.net) for more information.

#### **WHAT YOU CAN DO! Put your sidewalk and driveway on a low salt diet**

Keeping ice and snow off your driveway and sidewalks is important for safety. The following tips can help you choose the best deicing product for your home and the environment.

1. *Buy early.* Make sure to buy your deicing product well before the big storm hits, otherwise you will be looking at empty shelves, and have few, if any, environmental choices to make at the store.
2. *Check the label.* The table below provides a summary of the pros and cons of main ingredients of common deicing products. Calcium chloride is recommended over sodium chloride (rock salt).
3. *Avoid kitty litter and ashes.* Although these products are environmentally friendly, they don't work. While they provide some traction, they do not melt snow and ice. Also, they tend to get real gooey and messy when it warms up, which often causes tracking on the floors of your home. If traction is what you want, then stick with sand, which is much cheaper and easier to clean up.
4. *Shovel early and often.* When it comes to snow removal, there is no substitute for muscle and elbow grease. Deicers work best when there is only a thin layer of snow or ice that must be melted. So get out the snow shovel and move as much snow as you can during the storm if possible. A flat hoe can also help to scrape ice off the surface before any deicers are applied.
5. *Know your salt-risk zone.* You wouldn't want to kill your favorite tree, shrub or grass, so check out the plants that grow within five or ten feet of your driveway and sidewalk (and the road, for that matter). The table below summarizes some salt sensitive plants that might be at risk. If you have a salt-sensitive tree, shrub or grass in this zone, you should avoid any de-icing product that contains chlorides (rock salt and calcium chloride), or use very small doses. You may want to use CMA as a safer alternative, or stick with sand for traction.
6. *Avoid products that contain urea.* Urea is fairly expensive and performs poorly when temperatures drop below 20 degrees F. The application rate for urea during a single deicing is ten times greater than that needed to fertilize the same area of your yard with nitrogen. Of course, very little of the urea will actually get to your lawn, but most of it will end up washing into the street and storm drain. Given that nitrogen is a major problem in the Bay, it doesn't make sense to use nitrogen-based products for deicing.
7. *Apply salt early, but sparingly.* As Mom always told you, a little salt goes a long way. The recommended application rate for rock salt is about a handful per square yard treated (after you have scraped as much ice and snow as you can). Throwing any more salt down won't speed up the melting process. Even less salt is needed if you are using calcium chloride (about a handful for every three square yards treated - or about the area of a single bed). If you have a choice, pick calcium chloride over sodium chloride. Calcium chloride works at much lower temperatures and is applied at a much lower rate.

Article adapted with permission from the Chesapeake Stormwater Network, [www.chesapeakestormwater.net](http://www.chesapeakestormwater.net)



#### **Think Globally. Act Locally! Buy Nothing Holiday Ideas from Around the World**

Buy Nothing Christmas is about reducing consumption, and one of the ways that you can do that is to recycle or reuse old things that still have value. Homemade gifts are an excellent way to tell someone close to you that you love them, but allows you to disengage from the consumer attitudes that have come to dominate this wonderful season. Some of the best are foods made with home grown ingredients, or the homemade hand warmer. These can also be used to relieve aching muscles after a hard day of shoveling snow, and they do the job very well! Many people can remember getting homemade toys for Christmas when they were young, but that really doesn't happen anymore. If you are considering buying nothing for Christmas, why don't you make your kids a toy instead? It's rewarding for you to build a skill and your kids will love it! Check out this easy tutorial for how to build a hobby horse for your child. There are many different ways to give gifts without buying, and some of them are listed below to help you celebrate your Buy Nothing Christmas. Many of the following ideas were borrowed from Bill McKibben's [Hundred Dollar Holiday](#) and from the [Center for a New American Dream](#).

- Give seeds. Explain how best to grow them; for edible plants, provide a recipe or two. - *Bonnie Phillips*
- Give seed balls for guerilla gardening, along with the recipe for making them. - *Bonnie Phillips*
- Give compost to newbie gardeners. - *Bonnie Phillips*
- Make a personalized collage using recycled materials. This is a fun group project. - *Bonnie Phillips*
- A hand made **recipe book** would be a good idea. A compilation of old family recipes from your family, and your friends' families. Start collecting them in the summer and take your time and edit and make them real nice and sturdy (to withstand the heavy use!) - *Brittany*
- **Books on tape** - this is great if you have two or three people on your list that will enjoy the same book, it only costs time! A compilation CD of the choir my husband and I sing in. Make a **puppet theater** - paint a white sheet, cut a hole out for the stage, and hang in hall/door with a tension rod). If I get ambitious, I'm thinking of **producing a video** for distant family members of our kids' exploits in the past year. My husband is a composer, and he is planning to compose theme songs for some of our family members. - *Noelle*
- Adopting a polar bear, snow leopard or giant panda in the name of all my friends and family members from World Wildlife Fund. - *Matt*
- One year I made **mini loaves of quick bread**. I think it was pumpkin bread. One could make cranberry or whatever you like. I wrapped the loaves and placed them in small baskets that I picked up at yard sales over the summer months. I added packets of instant spiced cider, cocoa, or tea, and festive napkins. I then tied it up with a raffia bow along with a recipe card for the bread. Another year I made key chains out of beads that matched the color of each persons car. - *Lisa Wilson*
- Well, our buy-nothing circle spread just a little wider this Christmas, and I'd like to share a few highlights. They include some "transition" gift ideas too, for those who can't handle BNC just yet:



- One friend saved us a lot of money by simply handing us some RAM for our PC. He knew we needed it and he had extra. It was great!
- Two family members got creative and made by hand an "action figure" of my husband and a marionette of me! Of course, this wouldn't work if the individuals didn't happen to be so artistically talented, but what unique and personal gifts!
- Another friend who makes pottery simply gave us a lovely bowl more special than anything we could have bought.
- Parents bought us necessities that we would have had to buy anyway.
- We made **writing paper** with hand-drawn silly little doodles and hand-folded envelopes for some friends.
- For most of those who weren't ready to move to a buy-nothing Christmas, we bought organic herbal teas and fair-trade coffees... they don't add to the clutter because they're enjoyed and gone, and they support sustainable businesses! Small steps ... but in the right direction. - *Sara Parks Ricker*
- Brilliant website and ideas. You get my full support. As an another idea, try [www.oxfamunwrapped.com](http://www.oxfamunwrapped.com). It allows you to send a gift to the 3rd World and depending on your budget you can buy chickens, blankets, radios, right up to a travelling theatre! Our 10 year old son has 'traded in' some store gift vouchers to buy a goat. We have sent friends and families christmas 'gifts' from this site. Best wishes - *Chris, Nottingham, UK*
- At our house, we try to make all Christmas gifts. That means that December is a flurry of activity as our children make salt dough ornaments and then paint them to give to teachers and other adult friends. Last year, one boy made playdough, and one made a crayon ball to give to the other. For our friends, we've painted white candles with Christian symbols; these have become tradition. For our extended families, we made books with old pictures and memories. Our children especially love hand-made gifts; in this age where everything is plastic, they relish the idea of love in a sweater. - *Molly*
- I have been going down to my local **recycling centre** to see what's on offer. To my surprise, I found 10 glass coffee containers. Which are now glassed painted and filled with goodies for kids. - *Sophia*
- A couple of years ago I did a **calendar** for the family with everyone's photos and birthdays. That was a big hit. - *Karin*
- Last year we had a **cookie exchange** instead of a big party for work. Everyone brought cookies or treats - whatever their specialty was (one person made tree ornaments instead). We RSVP'd so we knew how many cookies to make, one for each person because we had so many people. We all went home with piles of cookies and treats. It was great, and so much fun. - *Annika Sangster*
- What about bumper stickers? I'd love to purchase some of these posters in bumper sticker format. Available? - *schrrills*  
*Editors response:* Hmm... I'm already feeling like we have too much stuff on our website. Would we sell the bumper stickers on the Buy Nothing Christmas website? Maybe start off with a colour printout of your favourite poster, laminate it and then glue it on your bumper. I know, sounds dumb, and like a lot of work. But the more time you spend creating your own world, your own messages, the more alive you become. I can help with re-formatting graphics or text for printouts. Let me know how it goes. If you have some success with bumper stickers, let me know and I'll try to spread the word. Best, Aiden.
- I'm going to give **my art** this Christmas. It gave me the motivation to finish the production of a demo CD. The first copies will go to my family and friends. —*Gabriel*
- Give **Linux** for Christmas! It's free and it works like a charm! These days, distributions include not only the operation system that runs your computer, but applications such as word processing, spreadsheets, picture and sound editing, etc. And give a hand installing it. It's not that it's too difficult, but some people's tech-savvyness is rather limited. —*Gilles Pelletier*
- We have just launched a new scheme in the UK called [Wedding List Giving Ltd](http://Wedding List Giving Ltd). It allows the prospective bride and groom to choose a charity and ask guests to donate towards the "gifts of their choice." Hannah Crouch [Editor's note: the site includes charities like the Alzheimers Society, Amnesty International, Cancer Research UK, Children's Express, Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace, Oxfam, Tearfund and others.]
- Just try make a spiritual gift, not material, not an object. I prefer **doing something** - singing a song, writing a poem - for a person. Plus a little beautiful card, because most people want to "have something in the hands," it's just a habit. —*Matania, Russia*
- Great site, lovely idea. Some friends of mine have a **jumble exchange**; it works like this. Everyone brings clothes, books, ornaments or toys that they don't really use any more. It all gets laid out on tables or a tarpaulin in the garden (or in the house if you have room). Everyone picks out what they want (no money changes hands). At the end there's a "grand holding up" where everyone is shown what is left. If no-one wants it, it goes to a charity shop (thrift store). Usually there are three or four big bags left over to go to the charity shop. Another idea is to write out some nice poetry in calligraphy style and frame it. To avoid buying the frame, you could make it out of driftwood or broken china mosaic, or pebbles. —*Yvonne Aburrow*
- We bought wax and made homemade candles. My husband carved stamps, we made our own paper and made greeting cards on recycled paper. Most of all, we vow to get the Christmas spending craziness under control and pay attention to our families and each other instead of the mall! If you still want to give a gift, there are so many more worthy causes than supporting the manufacture of plastic toys. I work for a nonprofit organization that supports grassroots groups working to live sustainably, preserve biodiversity, and gain a voice in their future. See [www.greengrants.org](http://www.greengrants.org). Other groups doing similar work include [www.globalfundforwomen.org](http://www.globalfundforwomen.org), [www.globalfundforchildren.org](http://www.globalfundforchildren.org). For more information on global giving in general, see [www.gwob.org](http://www.gwob.org) —*Erika Carlson*
- For your husband: Go to your favourite market or second hand shop and get a nice frame. With your most creative writing, write your wedding vows. — *Maud Ray*
- I usually make fudge (it helps to find a really good recipe) and put it in tins. I also buy old frames for cards, etc., I think the person would enjoy. I don't buy for anyone that is not either my child or parents/inlaws. And other than for the kids, I refuse to pay a lot. The cheaper it is the more personal it is sometimes.— *Shelley, Prince Edward Island, Canada*
- For me, environment and peace issues are interrelated, inseparable even. Some gift purchases help the environment and peace: Give people CFL bulbs to save energy. Give Fair Trade coffee, tea and chocolate made in people-friendly and earth-friendly ways. Buy recycled paper for people. If possible pay someone to buy clean electricity which is still more expensive than dirty electricity. And one of our special concerns: Purchase a Peace Bond from the Nonviolent Peaceforce which even now has peace teams in Sri Lanka. "Upon Maturity the Bearer will See a Large International Team Trained for Nonviolent Conflict Intervention Around the World". Go to [NonviolentPeaceforce.org](http://NonviolentPeaceforce.org) to learn more. Keep up the good work. — *A. Palmer, Swarthmore, Pennsylvania*

- Perhaps an alternative to department stores is [Ten Thousand Villages](#) which provides vital, fair income to Third World artisans by marketing their handicrafts and telling their stories in North America. This alternative emphasizes the fair distribution of wealth while still in a consumerism context. — *Shalom, Carl*
- Make a sweater from yarn found at goodwill/used clothing store.— *Kristina Giggz*
- Look through your (and your kids') old clothes, cut out squares of fabrics they will remember, and make a little wall hanging or pillow or stuffed toy or whatever. Pick a nice quote or scripture verse and write it up in calligraphy or a nice handwriting. — *Gwenyth*
- When i was little my parents always recorded a tape of me singing christmas caroles and/or reading stories for my grandparents and other family that lived far away. When i got older i started to make little comics for my friends, that were about us and things we had done. always with an added twist and some inside humour. This is totally fun to do- even if you're drawings are crappy. i think that this year i will write stories for my friends and family telling them why i love them! — *T.B.*
- Make pillows or stuffed animals. Cut out soft pieces of felt and hot glue them on to the pillow to personalize them with messages or make cute faces. — *Kaitlin*
- **Give something you don't use any more.** A sweater that you only wore once; a set of drinking glasses you forgot you owned. Clean them up and give them as gifts. I have found all sorts of things in my apartment that I have no need for, but know someone who would appreciate and enjoy it! — *Jessica*
- When someone asks what I want for Christmas I tell them, "Peace on Earth. Goodwill for all". If they explore the idea further (usually with, "No, really. What do you want?") I tell them to pick a charity and give to them whatever they would have spent on me. It makes me feel good that someone who really needs it is getting something. And ... It always fits! — *Bill Budenholzer*
- **Babysitting coupons** for the new parents. Grow your own veggies, can or freeze them and give them away at Christmas/Solstice. Spend more time with your family and friends...when you're dead you won't be able to. Decide as a family to work less hours, spend less and have more time together. Shovel the sidewalk for your neighbour. Plant trees. — *Lee*
- Make a small drawing of your select person's living room or other room in their house and give it to them. — *Julian van Mossel-Forrester*
- I have been giving more gifts that consist of certificates of gift from the [Heifer Project](#). This year the only exception is my 9 year old granddaughter. — *Paul Shankland*
- I am making several batches of biscuits ("cookies" your side of the pond!) and boxes from some lovely dark red recycled card. — *Alice Crawford*
- Plant **plants**, now, to give for Christmas. Herbs, in particular. This is one way to always be present in your loved one's days for a while to come. — *jeela*
- Buy a used book and in the inside cover explain why you chose the book for that person.
- Make tree ornaments out of old CDs.
- Purchase gifts at a fair-trade shop, garage sale or thrift shop.
- Make hand-made soap or candles.
- If you are skilled in a particular area, **offer a lesson or class**.
- Make a birdseed ball.
- Make a soothing, herb pillow filled with lavender, rose, etc.
- Collect **quotes** that make you think of someone.
- Stamp and address **postcards** for family members.
- For the elderly people in your life, research newspaper and magazine articles from their youth and present in a creative fashion.
- Make a calendar with pictures of family members and/or scenery.
- Wrap gifts in newspaper, maps, scarves or interesting clothing.
- Fill an old trunk or suitcase with fun clothing, hats and gaudy jewelry for your children to play dress-up.
- Make a puppet from a sock.
- Give away a valued possession.
- Frame a piece of your artwork.
- Fill a basket with home-made goodies.
- Bake your favourite holiday treat and pack in a recycled tin.
- Paint an empty wine bottle with non-toxic paint and fill with olive oil. Top with an oil pour spout that can be found at a gourmet cooking shop.
- Videotape and interview your elderly parents about childhood memories, how they met, etc., and give to siblings or children.
- Compile a list of **memories** and arrange them in a creative fashion.
- Do something exciting and challenging together (e.g., long walk, bike ride, hike, art course).
- Knit a stocking, hat, socks, etc.
- Write and illustrate a book for the young people in your life.
- Collect meaningful photos for the gift recipient, make colour photocopies and create a collage.
- Create a **menu** of various culinary delights (e.g., Tantalizing Thai, Mexican Fiesta, etc.) and have the gift recipient choose one of the options.
- Create coupons for a massage, spring cleaning, child-minding, manicure, etc.

