

good news + communities



WETLAND WARRIORS

PROVIDED

From left, Mill Creek Watershed Council member Annie Rahall, volunteer Rachel Armstrong, volunteer Erin Krieger, volunteer Mary Cullum, and Mill Creek Watershed Council Kara Scheerhorn helped work on the Wildermuth project.

Volunteers plant trees, shrubs to restore wetlands as part of 22-acre Wildermuth restoration project

Freezing temperatures couldn't stop more than 25 volunteers in West Chester Township from braving the early Saturday morning chill on Nov. 15 to help the environment.

The group planted more than 400 native wetland species at the newly constructed 22-acre Wildermuth Stream and Wetland Restoration Project as part of an eco-friendly endeavor of the Mill Creek Watershed Council of Communities.

"It was cold, but the sun was out within an hour and people were peeling coats because it was good work," said volunteer Mark Rogge.

Rogge, a senior project manager at HNTB Corporation, an infrastructure solutions firm, said five of the 10 employees at their Cincinnati location assisted with the three-hour long job as part of the company's mission of giving back.

Wastewater treatment is a portion of what HNTB does so the volunteer opportunity was a perfect fit for the employees. Rogge said his crew had also worked with the council over the summer taking stream samples to test water quality of the Mill Creek and its tributaries.

Volunteers planted 12 different indigenous species of plant plugs, shrubs and roughly 200 native trees

including red maple, sweetgum and pin oak.

According to Kara Scheerhorn, Watershed Coordinator for the Council, the project is necessary for flood-water storage, to improve water quality and to enhance the area's biodiversity.

"This wetland basically is there to hold back more water from reaching the Mill Creek Valley which is where we have a lot of the flooding problems," Scheerhorn said. "Reading and Evendale, Sharonville, places like that."

Wildermuth is located on the east

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KARA SCHEERHORN

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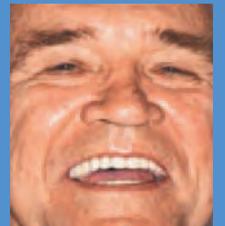
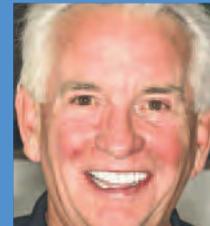


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COVER STORY



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Volunteer Rachel Armstrong helps with planting at the Wildermuth Stream and Wetland Restoration Project.

Wetland work

Continued from Page AA1

fork of the Mill Creek just north of the Upper Mill Creek Water Reclamation Facility between Allen and Crescentville roads in the Schumacher Dugan Commercial Park, and has been in the works for ten years.

Scheerhorn said the area was designated as a priority project in the Upper Mill Creek watershed action plan of 2004. The property was donated to West Chester Township by the Wildermuth family in 2008.

However, it wasn't until last year when Scheerhorn wrote for and received the \$100,000 Section 319 non-point source pollution grant from the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency through the federal Clean Water Act to kick things off.

That grant was matched with a \$70,000 local grant. Of those local funds, Butler County Water and Sewer Department, the project sponsors, kicked in \$50,000 and the Butler County Engineer's Office gave \$20,000.

Apex Companies, the Wildermuth project managers, lowered the level at the stream inlet so more overflow water can be stored in the wetland. They also installed a pilot channel to reconnect the stream with its floodplain and an outlet control device to help manage pollutants that enter the waterway upstream. The hope is to create better water quality throughout the Mill Creek, which has been plagued with pollutants for years.

This project, combined with other efforts in recent years to restore the Mill Creek, will pay off, experts say.

Dr. Craig Straub, Wildermuth senior project manager with Apex Companies, said the overall quality of the area will continue to be monitored for measurable results.

Scheerhorn said the volunteer efforts contributed to a substantial time and cost savings. A grand opening will likely be held in April when the new plantings are better established.

Scheerhorn also noted that proposed future use plans for Wildermuth include a bike trail and public access, although no specific details have been made available.

Hospital brings in hyperbaric therapy

By Sue Kiesewetter
Enquirer contributor

LIBERTY TWP. — Fort Hamilton Hospital is expanding its wound care center by opening an office in Liberty Township.

The Liberty Pointe Wound Care Center begins operations Dec. 29 in a former urgent care center at 1717 Dutchland Parkway.

It specializes in the treatment of difficult-to-heal or chronic wounds, using hyperbaric oxygen and negative pressure therapies along with skin substitutes.



PROVIDED

Fort Hamilton Hospital is expanding its wound care center.

The hospital is adding a second location in an effort to better serve

existing clients and expand its patient base, said Elizabeth Long, spokeswoman for Kettering Health Network, the hospital's parent company.

"We've been so successful at Fort Hamilton that we're excited to extend our reach further out," said Heidi Loughran, clinical nurse manager at the soon-to-open clinic.

On average, the hospital treats about 100-125 clients weekly in Hamilton. Its wound care center opened six years ago. This is its first expansion.

"We will have specialized physicians and case managers in wound care at Liberty Pointe, just as we do at the hospital," Loughran said.

Most of the staff will initially come from the hospital's wound care center, which partners with Healogics Inc., a Florida based agency. As the client base expands, so too, will staffing, said Christina Skinner, Liberty Pointe's program manager.

"Our goal is to (heal the wound) in 9-10 weeks," Loughran said. "We have a 94 percent heal rate in 14 weeks or less."

Services offered will treat four different types of ulcers as well as surgical wounds, malignancies, and wounds related to radiation treatment.

Many people don't realize that advanced wound healing services are available as a treatment option and can be obtained with or without a referral from a physician, Skinner said.

The center will be open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays. Once it opens patients can call 513-645-8181 for information or to schedule appointments. Until then individuals can call the hospital's wound care center at 513-867-3166, which will schedule appointments at both locations.

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Future of Anderson's ACTV in question

By Sheila Vilvens
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The days of watching local governmental meetings, "Anderson Speaks," or other such programs on public access cable might be numbered in Anderson Township.

During its Dec. 18 meeting, the Anderson Township Board of Trustees is expected to consider an agreement that would provide funding for ACTV through the end of June. At the end of the agreement, the station would cease to broadcast. The agreement would need approval from the trustees and the ACTV Board of Directors. It's a difficult decision that's been in the making since June of this year, Anderson Township administrator Vicky Earhart said. The current agreement is good through the end of December.

During its June planning meeting, the trustees took a hard look at ACTV and the \$288,000 it provides annually to keep the station operating. The first contractual operating agreement between the township and ACTV was signed in 1995. Changes in revenue from the state level including the elimination of estate taxes and tangible property

taxes along with electric deregulation and reductions in the local government fund required the township to take a hard look at its revenue and budget, Earhart explained.

"We're their sole funding source," Earhart said. The township offered to extend its contract with ACTV through the end of 2015 if the station could find other revenue sources to cover at least half of its operating costs. Unable to find other funding sources, in October ACTV Board Director Craig Best issued a statement.

"The ACTV Board of Directors is sorry to announce, that sometime in the near future (2015), ACTV will be going off the air." It went on to state that the board of directors and trustees are working on a "short term" plan that would involve the details of the closure.

Longtime host of Tasty Treats from Anne's Kitchen and ACTV Board of Directors member Anne Schlegel called ACTV one of the "crown jewels" of Anderson Township.

Earhart noted that if ACTV were to remain on the air, it would need to switch to digital. This would result in an additional investment of \$140,000

for equipment upgrades. There are those in the community who like having access to the station.

"We understand that," she said. "But we have to look at our limited resources and make sure we're reaching as many residents as possible." The township has a successful print publication, Anderson Insights, which reaches all residents. It also has a website and a new Facebook page which are accessible to many. The township is also considering other social media tools for reaching out and keeping residents informed, she said.

Viewership data for ACTV is not available. Time Warner and ACTV representatives have consistently told the township that there is no mechanism for determining the number of people who watch community television stations. The viewership of ACTV is limited to residents who are customers of Time Warner who also have a specific box. In an effort to bring its unique programming to a broader audience, the ACTV staff provides access to its shows via its website and YouTube channel.

This article appeared previously in the Forest Hills Journal.