



# Swatara News

June 2014

Swatara Watershed: Parts of Berks, Dauphin, Lebanon & Schuylkill Counties

## Swatara Water Trail:

- 60 miles in length
- Public Access Points every 7 miles
- Schuylkill, Lebanon & Dauphin Counties
- Sites: Union Canal locks, limestone outcrops, farms, fossil beds, log cabins, historic bridges....

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## 26th Annual, Swatara, a Rustic Sojourn

Just when you thought you've seen it all, a sojourn can take a new twist. In 2014, at the start of the Swatara Sojourn, a text came in stating that a search for the body of a missing woman was commencing at the same time as our float trip. We were at the boat launch starting our safety briefing when State Police arrived to search our banks, and a helicopter was flying overhead

up and down the Swatara. With five months of planning this trip under our belts, everyone was briefed on what was happening, and given an opportunity to go home rather than participate.

Safety and emergency management training indicates a body in water is usually found within five miles downstream of where they disappear. Our Sojourn started in the last mile or last 20% of that 5-mile window.



Since the Swatara was at 3.8', down from 8.6' a few days earlier, but higher than most of our float trips, and muddy, we knew we would not see much trash, and proceeded with a respectful and somewhat somber start. Because of

the slightly faster flow, we avoided snag piles along the side, but all eyes were looking for the poor woman. Luckily, police found her 1.5 miles from her car on Sunday when we were further downstream. Had we come upon her, we would have pulled to the side to mark the stream, and call 911 so professionals could find us/her to do their forensic examination and body retrieval.

When pulling out to camp for the night, muddy banks were scaled using ropes tied to trees by shore support. Everyone worked together, no complaints. What an experience with a great group of people. Bonding and memories from such a Sojourn are something that no one can take from us.

## United Way Day of Caring Clean-ups

On Saturday, April 26, SWA had two projects, cleaning up both the Border Cabin and Swatara Watershed Park. Fallen limbs were gathered, potholes were filled, and at the Cabin, floors were swept and window measurements taken to purchase materials to bring the windows up to a Labor and Industry Code height of 42".



## Austin Barry's Eagle Scout project improves Boat Launch



SWA is fortunate to witness the leadership skills of Austin Barry as he pursues his Eagle Scout classification by improving the Boat launch at the Swatara Watershed Park on Blacks Bridge Road in East Hanover Township. Completion is scheduled for June 30. In addition to improving the launch for access by canoes and kayaks on the Swatara Water Trail, Austin's project will help to keep sediment from eroding the banks and polluting the water. Further, a public safety element has

been incorporated to accommodate the Northern Lebanon County fire companies. With two drownings on the Swatara in the last two months, access is critical. The Jonestown Fire Company boat has a tall light rack that will not allow passage under bridges during high water. Therefore, our access will open additional miles of the Swatara for search and rescue.

In short, Austin's project is huge, and we want to congratulate him and his team for a job well done.



Austin is pictured with his parents, Heidi and John Barry.



**Swatara  
Watershed  
Park offers  
Seasonal  
Primitive  
Camping and  
U-Tow canoes  
for groups.**

### Enjoy the Great Outdoors

**For Sale:** Rugged, durable **1989 Michi-Craft 17' commercial grade aluminum canoes**, 720 pound capacity, wide beam for stability. Made from hardened air craft aluminum. \$300 each. Call Park Ranger Tom Embich 649.9361. Get outdoors with your family.

**Seasonal Primitive Campsites** available for a \$425 donation. Fish, swim, hike the Swatara Watershed Park, 1929 Black's Bridge

Road, Annville. For available sites, call Park Ranger Tom Embich 649.9361. The 2014 camping season runs May 1-Oct 31, Terms: <http://www.swatarawatershed.com/>

**Pavilion** for Events, Picnics, Reunions...\$50 per day donation.

**8 U-Tow canoes on a trailer** available for groups. Call Park Ranger Tom Embich 649.9361 for terms. 10% discount for non-profits. & youth groups accompanied



by adults. Parental release forms required.



### Peeps Diorama Depicts Swatara Sojourn

The Lebanon Daily News held a "Peeps" Diorama contest, and the Swatara Watershed Association saw an opportunity to promote the Swatara Sojourn by depicting peeps canoeing down the Swatara

Creek. We didn't win, but accomplished education and outreach.



## Central Pennsylvania Business Journal Nonprofit Finalist

Swatara Watershed Board members attended the Central Pennsylvania Business Journal nonprofit awards breakfast: Standing Ben Miller & Jo Ellen Litz. Seated L to R Dick Blouch, June Blouch, Ann Marie Lasky. We didn't win, but had an enjoyable time, and were honored to be a finalist in the Non Profit Brand Identity/Unique Marketing Campaign Awards category. A breakfast and awards program

took place at the Lancaster Marriott, 25 S Queen St., Lancaster PA, on Friday, February 28, 2014 from 7:30am-10:00am. Our 25th anniversary logo, online store, and sojourn were submitted for consideration.



**Old State Road/Bear Hole Run in Swatara State Park:**  
To drive through, open 2nd Friday & Saturday

monthly; & the 4th Friday & Saturday March, April, September, & October. To all of our Bordner Cabin

Volunteer Stewards,  
thank you!

## Swatara Eagles Nest Along the Swatara

Our pair of bald eagles returned to their nest, and have two new eaglets nested high up in a tree on a farm along the Swatara Creek on Pine Road in East Hanover Township.

Photo credit: Rita Stima-Stief



**Take A Hike! National Trails Day Hike –**  
**Saturday, June 7, meet at 9am at Sand Siding Trail Head @ Swopes Valley Road in Swatara State Park for a walk along Bear Hole Trail to Bordner's Cabin.**  
**About 4.5 miles round trip, gravel trail with some elevation changes. This is a free event, all ages.**

## Duke Street & Inwood Bridge Closed

While funding has been identified to repair the Inwood Iron Bridge, south of Swatara State Park, the Duke Street bridge in Hummelstown is dropping stone, and was also closed, both the road and water route, which caused a hardship on the Swatara Sojourn. Portaging was not possible due to steep banks and a high masonry wall. Because the Duke Street Bridge is impassable on the Swatara Water Trail, we be-

lieve that priority should also be given to repairing this bridge.



Recommended Reading: "[The Big Thirst](#)" by Charles Fishman.  
Quote #1: "Water itself isn't becoming more scarce, it's simply disappearing from places where people have become accustomed to finding it—where they have built communities assuming a certain availability of water—and reappearing somewhere else."



## Berks, Dauphin, Lebanon & Schuylkill Counties

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### You can invest in our Clean Water Projects:

Individual Membership \$20/year, \$200 lifetime. Business Membership \$500 lifetime.



We're on the web  
[www.SwataraWatershed.com](http://www.SwataraWatershed.com) and  
Facebook—Swatara Water Trail.

## Pipelines Crisscross Lebanon and Surrounding Counties



Five years ago, SWA learned that Tenaska will build a power plant in N Lebanon Township along 7<sup>th</sup> Street. The Swatara Watershed Assn, League of Women Voters, & Lebanon County Conservation District heard & learned from our neighbors that we should prepare & educate our residents about the impacts of Marcellus Shale, both from drilling & pipelines. So, in 2011, we held a Conversation on Marcellus at NLHigh School. Videos online. Then, at a Lebanon County Commissioners meeting in 2012, UGI presented their Texas Eastern pipe from 501 east

to a Berks County facility. Also, the Buckeye Pipeline was upgraded in NW Lebanon County, & Sunoco Mariner will redo an existing pipeline, & run a second line alongside the first. In 2014, a 4th pipeline is proposed by Williams Atlantic Sunrise. Route: N to S from Pine Grove through Lebanon County--Union, E Hanover, N & S Annville, and S Londonderry Townships. Originally 600' wide, the line will scale down to a 50' right-of-way. After FERC approval, a utility company has the power of eminent domain, but will pay property owners for the value of the

easement. The line will run at least 5' underground, & the walls of the high-pressure pipe will run from .6-1" thick. 7 streams will be crossed underground. Comment on Williams Atlantic Sunrise pipeline. Refer to docket# PF 14-8. Call 1.866.208.3372, or [www.ferc.gov](http://www.ferc.gov). Informational open house Tuesday, June 10th from 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. at Annville-Cleona High School, 500 S White Oak Street, Annville. It is open to the public. This is not the last pipeline that will be built here. Learn more.