

# River Talk

Newsletter of the Carantouan Greenway



Spring 2015

## Diving in the Red Sea



up university – the King Abdullah University of Science and Technology (KAUST) – to set up health and safety programs for the campus. During his time there, Jerry took up underwater photography while scuba diving in the Red Sea – known as one of the best places to dive on the planet. The Red Sea is home to an abundance of marine life – rich coral gardens, reef fish, sharks, octopus, shrimp and other invertebrates...all seen in vivid colors in the clear waters of the Red Sea. Jerry is a PADI certified divemaster who enjoys sharing his pictures and videos of the amazing life



**Join the Carantouan Greenway for our Annual Dinner Meeting scheduled on April 15** at Tomasso's Restaurant in Waverly, with cash bar/socializing and Chinese auction with items donated by 911 Earth at 6 p.m. followed by a buffet around 6:30 p.m. The cost is \$25 per person. Enjoy a night out with good friends, learn more about what's happening with the organization, and hear a special presentation around 7 p.m. on the Marine Life of the Red Sea.

This year's speaker is Jerry Gordon. Jerry has recently returned back to Tioga County after having lived and worked in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for the last three years. Jerry was working at the new, international start-

that lives below the water. Come out and spend the evening at the Carantouan Greenway Annual Dinner to learn about what it is like to dive in the Red Sea and see images of the beautiful marine life that inhabit its waters. 🐠

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## President's Report 2014

2014 has been a sound fiscal year, but more importantly a year of greater youth involvement. It began with our first Cloverleaf 4K trail run, a fun run open to all and followed by Jean Schmiege's hot potato-leek soup. Donated prizes were awarded and all participants were eligible.

The youth program began in May with Little Sprouts Pre-K (ages 3-5) at the Muldoon Park where the children examined bones & feathers while peppering our presenter with many questions. In June (*cont'd page 2*)

### *Presidents Report 2014, cont'd*

Theresa facilitated two clinics; a kid-fishing tutorial at Wildwood with Rich Ward presenting and helping a dozen young fisher-persons with their lines and the concept of catch and release. This was followed at Wildwood by local artist, Stephanie Mullen, helping children decorate Ralph Geiger's donated bird houses. These organically decorated bird houses were then donated to the Department of Aging's bird-loving senior citizens. In October we re-instituted our "Talk to the Animals." While the turnout was not great the volunteers were. We hosted a Youth

## 2014 Bird Species Count



Carantouan Greenway's Wildwood Reserve has served as a host site for a minimum of 109 bird species during the 2014 calendar year. January reported the fewest with only 27 species reported whereas May, a major month of migration, 69 species were reported. There were 216 observation occasions, April having 29 with 60 species being

reported. The most uncommon, seen on a single occasion were American Widgeon, Bufflehead and Ring-necked Duck in April, a Virginia Rail and Common Tern in May, a Horned Grebe in November, and a Black Vulture and Raven in December. Wildwood hosts four year-round resident woodpeckers; the small Downy, its larger cousin the Hairy, the larger Red-bellied and the crow size carpenter-ant eating Pileated. On the coldest winter day one should expect to find our Blue Jays, Crows, Black-capped Chickadees and White-breasted Nuthatches. Surprisingly, as long as there is any open water one can find the fish-eating Kingfisher and Great Blue Heron. The Carantouan Greenway maintains its trails and invites the public to bird, hike and just enjoy the fresh air for themselves. 🐦

Landscape Photo Contest highlighting our Wildwood Reserve and Forbidden Path for kids 7-18 followed by an exhibit of their submissions at the Elderwood Nursing Facility. In November we added our support to the Parents at Waverly Elementary Schools and the Waverly Library in hosting Maureen Wright, a noted local author of children's books for a reading, which was followed by arts and crafts.

During the year several Board members attended not-for-profit workshops in Towanda, Binghamton and Owego. Theresa submitted an application for, and we were awarded, a \$1,000 mini-grant for board development. We contracted with Martha Brennan to facilitate a total review of our by-laws as well as to add policies on Conflict of Interest and Ethics. As a result our by-laws now reflect exactly how we function as a not-for-profit. A criticism of the Board had always been "What if we went out of existence – what then?" We answered that question this year as well with a commitment from the Chemung Valley Audubon Society agreeing (December 4) to take over our assets and continue our type of environmental education. One should note that we have no plans to dissolve.

Our webmaster has returned from Saudi Arabia and will be highlighting our 2015 annual dinner with his displays and program. We welcome him back and thank our Board members for their labor of love in maintaining the Carantouan Greenway as a partner of Valley healthy living. Toward that end Sue is working on graphics for public educational material on the deer tick and Theresa is applying for funds to make it a reality. Additionally, we received \$100 from the Waverly Community Chest.

John and Marty continue to maintain clear educational trails along with Barry Skeist. James, with his political experience, assures our fiscal viability.

We are a partner with Futurescapes and should see some serious trail development along the Susquehanna (Athens bridge to Sayre bridge) in 2015. Theresa and Sue are working on grants for the deer tick signage as well as a deer enclosure to help educate the public, not only on disease but on the damage deer do to our woodlands in the way of limiting regeneration of native tree species. Your Greenway Board is always open to our members' suggestions as to how we could do a better job. With your help 2015 will be an even more productive year.

*Marty Borko, president*

## With Spring Comes the Cloverleaf Run



Despite the somewhat misty weather, a group of dedicated running enthusiasts from surrounding counties participated in the second annual Carantouan Greenway Cloverleaf 4K trail run on Saturday, March 14, at Shepard Road, Waverly. Runners crossed trails through wooded slopes, open alfalfa fields, and a level run across the dam at the 50-acre nature reserve. At the end of the race runners warmed up with soup and random prizes were drawn including

gym memberships, bird feeders, dog treats, and other nature-themed prizes. Next year's run will include the addition of a new trail as plans are currently underway for the construction of another trail in the northeastern section of the nature preserve. Other activities are being planned, including several kid-centric activities this spring and summer, and will be posted on the Greenway's website at [carantouangreenway.org](http://carantouangreenway.org). 🐾



### Wildwood Sparrows

October is sparrow month. This is when the majority of sparrow species migrate through on their way South. The Song and White-throated sparrows were seen every day during October visits. The Swamp Sparrow was seen daily right up until the end of the month. The White-crowned was seen regularly but in fewer numbers after the first week of the month. There was a single observation of a Lincoln's sparrow at the beginning of the month and Field and Fox sparrows observed at the end of the month. Towhees were observed regularly during the middle of the month. Our over-wintering sparrows the Tree and Junco returned at the end of the month. The lesson is – if you want to observe sparrows, October is the time to be enjoying the out of doors at the Wildwood Reserve. 🐾

### Dangers of a tourist flower

*By Marty Borko*

What is a tourist flower? A tourist flower is the Wendy's wrap, the styrofoam coffee cup, the cigarette packs as well as the soda and beer containers thrown out in our parking lot and along the trail. After the Cloverleaf 4K run I noticed some such flowers floating in the water just below the dam. So, as I pick up such garbage from the parking lot on a regular basis I thought today I should retrieve the floaters. Down to the outflow drain pipe I went and saw the debris floating against a sedge hummuck. I anchored my left foot on the bank and stretched my right foot for the hummuck which gave way and my right foot went in before reaching the debris. I then thought, how stupid, I should extend a stick and pull it towards me. So, a stick I got to extend to the debris. As I reached out with the stick the bank gave way and in I went head first, the binoculars hanging off my chest. I made it out with the debris and walked as fast as I could over the 20-degree, snow-covered ground to the car and a hot shower. 🐾

### Help the Greenway Become Greener

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## Friends of the Carantouan Greenway

**Yes! Count me in! I believe in protecting farm and forestland, wildlife habitat and watersheds in the Penn-York Valley. I want to become a member of Carantouan Greenway!**

- Mighty Oak ..... \$500/year       Trailblazer ..... \$25/year  
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