

The South River Current



Promoting interest and collaboration for watershed stewardship



Watershed Restoration: A Community's Collective Impact

"Never underestimate the power of a small group of committed people to change the world. In fact, it is the only thing that ever has." — *Margaret Mead, Cultural Anthropologist*

In 2020, **Keep America Beautiful** studied the quantities and qualities of litter across U.S. roadways and waterways. They estimated 207 million items of personal protective equipment (PPE; like masks and gloves) were littered in 2020 alone. And that's just PPE! Imagine all the trash defacing sidewalks, parks, and city streets and entangling birds, fish, and other wildlife. It's an overwhelming problem with a somewhat simple solution: clean up one community at a time. While no single group can clean up the whole country, a single group can cleanup a community! Since the fall of 2018, the Waynesboro Public Works Department has hosted Watershed Cleanup Days. Through the years, a total of about 110 volunteers have collected 210 bags of trash, a few tires, and even a mattress! They picked up litter along the Greenway, the South River, and segments of East Main Street, South Delphine Avenue, Hopeman Parkway, and Bookerdale Road. The next Watershed Cleanup is scheduled for Earth Day, Saturday, April 22, 2023, from 9 a.m. to noon. This year, volunteers will be collecting trash along Hopeman Parkway. Every set of hands makes a difference! Click [here](#) to be a part of this year's transformation!



Did You Know?

- Volunteers are essential to the success of Riverfest. If you are willing to help as needed or assist with canoe rides, email Riverfest organizers at: info@riverfestwaynesboro.org.
- The City of Waynesboro is hosting a free Rain Barrel Workshop on Saturday, April 22nd at 9 a.m. Materials are provided, but attendees will need to bring their own drill for assembly. Click [here](#) to sign up.
- Meet local authors at Riverfest in the special events tent. Read all about Riverside Chats [here](#).



Connections: What's Next at Riverfest?

Spring is nearly here! Do you see the buds on tree branches and spring flowers peeking out of the ground? Nature is waking up from its winter slumber. As your calendar begins to fill up with outdoor activities, be sure to mark April 29th for Riverfest 2023! This FREE annual event takes place river-side at Constitution Park South in Waynesboro beginning at 10 a.m. Activities include Reptile World shows, a Stream Safari, presentations by the Wildlife Center of Virginia, a Fish and Fun Rodeo, canoe rides, kids' arts and crafts, electro-fishing, and the ever-popular South River Duck Race!! Come learn about environmental conservation and watershed stewardship while enjoying the great outdoors. Want more information? Go to <https://riverfestwaynesboro.org/>. Please be aware that Riverfest is a rain or shine event and, although pets are loved by all, Riverfest organizers request you leave them at home.

Thank you to the following members of the community who volunteer as Riverfest Board Members: Amber Buck, Haley Garnett, Brennen Gilbert, Dave Hennel, Robert Horowitz, Calvin Jordan, Lacy Kegley, Linda Matkins, Urbie Nash, Amanda Nicholson, Sue Overton, Wyn Paiste, Danielle Poole, and Kristin Trover.



Take a Walk Back: When Passion is Contagious

The first Riverfest was in 1997. For those of you who think that feels like just last year, let's do the math – that was 26 years ago! Riverfest began at the home of Susanne Goldsmith, a dedicated conservationist who lived beside the South River in one of the oldest houses in Waynesboro. A couple of classes of school children went to the house to see the river firsthand and learn the importance of the river in the community. Soon after her first event, Susanne recruited some local volunteers to become board members and established Riverfest as a nonprofit organization. For several years, the annual event offered various educational displays and activities for children. Slowly, more and more people came. In 2002, thanks to a new board member's ingenuity, the now-annual duck race was born! That clever board member, Urbie Nash, became president in 2004. He understood the value of the event and began brainstorming ways to boost interest and attendance. When he came upon a packed crowd at a nearby live, interactive reptile event, he knew he had found the answer! Thanks to Urbie's resourcefulness and a half-page newspaper photo of the new live snake exhibit planned for Riverfest that year, attendance doubled and has been growing ever since. Riverfest still exists solely to encourage residents to enjoy the beautiful South River, the South River Greenway, and all that local nature has to offer. Come one, come all – let's celebrate our watershed together!



Upcoming Events

Click on links for more information.

- April 22nd, 9 a.m. to noon - Waynesboro Public Works Annual Clean Up. [Public Works Annual Spring Clean Up](#)
- April 22nd - IF4 (International Fly Fishing Film Festival). Showing at Basic City Beer Co. Doors open at 1 p.m. Film starts at 2 p.m. [Tickets Link](#)
- April 29th, 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. – [Riverfest 2023!](#) Waynesboro's Annual Riverfest Event.