

Celebrate Our River Day July 23, 2011

Combine the music of Jug Band, Blue Grass, and Reggae and Rock with Simply Savory BBQ, ice cream, lemonade, and nature activities and displays. All ages are invited to come on down to the Susquehanna River at Riverside Park in Tunkhannock on July 23, 2011 from 3:00 pm to 8:00 pm to Celebrate Our River Day, a free event, to tap your feet and clap your hands to the rousing music of Sadie Green Sales Jug Band, the Coal Town Rounders, and the George Wesley Band. This free event will include the arrival of a kayak River Float by Endless Mountains Outfitters and Susquehanna Kayak and Canoe Rentals, a sight to behold, as all of the colorful boats land near the bandstand. This event is made possible by a grant from the Overlook Estate Foundation.

Musical entertainment featured at Celebrate Our River Day this year will be two bands back by popular demand. David Driskell and Timothy Walker of Sadie Green Sales Jug Band will perform from 3:00 to 4:00 pm with their unique instruments, including washboard, whiskey jug, washtub bass, as well as with members of their Dietrich Theater "Jammin' in a Jug Band" Classes. David Driskell always performs a special number with two clarinets at the same time! And the George Wesley Band will end the day from 6:30 to 8:00 pm with his crowd pleasing inspirational brand of Reggae and Rock. After hearing George, one cannot help feeling better!

For the first time, the Coal Town Rounders will perform at River Day from 4:30 to 6:00 pm. There is a buzz around town about this relatively new local string band. They play traditional style bluegrass, also old time country favorites. They claim that they have an "uncanny ability to raise a ruckus out of thin air!"

This year for the first time the High Energy Fitness Gym at Riverside Park will have an Open House during the River Day festivities. This will be an excellent chance to see what the recently remodeled Gym has to offer. And while you are at the Gym, stop in to take in a short 20 minute presentation by Bill Bachman of Penn State University. At 3:15 pm and 4:30 pm he will feature Frances Slocum, an early settler of the region who was kidnapped by Native Americans. And at 4:00 pm, in full costume, he will turn into Colonial Captain Ebenezer Parrish, who rode with George Washington in July of 1776, and became a resident of Wyoming County! This will be a way to dive into our local history at a historic location. Right across the river, Indian Rocks was a staging area for the Wyoming Valley Massacre! At 5:00 pm at the Gym, Rebecca Lesko of the Endless Mountains Nature Center, will present a workshop on Butterfly Gardening.

For the first year, Plein Aire painters will be recording the sights at the river and festivities. These fresh air painters, led by Jan Henning of the Endless Mountains Council on the Arts, will exhibit their work at the Dietrich Theater Sherwood Gallery in August and September.

While you enjoy the music and watch the kayaks and canoes land, and look over the shoulders of the painters, you can also take advantage of displays and activities. The Bureau of Forestry will have a display with "tree cookies" to explain tree growth, and

will conduct two walks at 4:00 and 6:00 pm to identify and discuss trees, and talk about riparian habits along streams and the rivers. Mike Crispell, representing Countryside Conservancy, will have a display of different species of snakes native to Pennsylvania. It will feature the difference between venomous and non-venomous species, and what to do in the case of a snake bite. Susquehanna Greenway Partnership will have a display with information about all of its initiatives. Endless Mountains Heritage Region will have a display on the North Branch Water Trail and Susquehanna Greenway, including maps and brochures. The Endless Mountains Visitors Bureau will have a display with tourism information and a pick-a-lollypop game to win a prize for kids 12 and under. The Endless Mountains Nature Center will also display their many programs and offerings.

What is available for the young and the young at heart? Art activities will include fish printing at the Wyoming County Conservation District display, mural painting and cardboard boat building with Steve and Amy Colley, Dietrich Theater artists-in-residence. Nature activities will be conducted by Joe Demarco for Birding at the Park at 6:00 pm, River Critters Exploration with Bob Daniels, Tree Identification with the Bureau of Forestry, times to be announced.

Demonstrations to see will be Anthracite Outfitters' Dan Hubbard's demonstration of fishing from a Kayak, and Susi Nuss demonstrating basket making from natural material at the Riverside Park Wee Willow Dome.

To sign up for the River Float contact David Buck at Endless Mountains Outfitters at 746-3272 or Art Coolbaugh at 388-6107. For information about Celebrate Our River Day contact Margie Young at 996-1500.