

Initiated 1994

NEWSLETTER

Summer 2003

Finished and Full!

The Education Center construction that began this winter was completed in April with the leadership of the Education Coordinator



7th Grade Central Cambria students testing the pH of the wetlands.

George Turner and independent contractor Richard Hudack. Several walls were built to create an entryway and a library. A long workbench along with stools and shelving was also constructed to aid school groups in on-site experiments. The kitchen was made fully functional with the purchase of a stove, refrigerator and a hot water heater. George painted a large site map on the library wall and he will also be painting the duct work to represent a watershed. Many groups have already put the Education Center to use. The Johnstown Christian Academy, Central Cambria Elementary and Middle Schools, the University of Pittsburgh and the University of Virginia are a few examples. These schools



4th Grade Central Cambria students testing their AMD knowledge at the AMD&ART Education Center.

were on site for a variety of reasons ranging from Earth Day education to a class on resource management. Thanks to the Rockefeller Foundation for providing the funding to make the AMD&ART Environmental Education Center a reality!

Ecology for Kids: Eco-Camp

AMD&ART and the Bottleworks Ethnic Arts Center teamed up to hold a three day Ecology Camp from June 23-25. The camp was called "Ecology for Kids: You can make a difference," and benefited five children from ages nine to eleven throughout the Johnstown community. The first day of the camp featured coal mining activities, the second day focused on ecology and the third day consisted of an on site tour, pic-



AMD&ART staff and campers, holding an iron-oxide tie-dyed sheet made by the campers.

nic, and scavenger hunt. Also during the three days the children

watched a coal mining presentation, learned songs about coal mining, tie dyed t-shirts with iron oxide, played a "cookie" mining game, made wool mats and participated in many other activities related to coal mining and ecology. AMD&ART worked with the Saint Vincent College Environmental Education Center to develop educational activities related to coal mining and ecology. We would like to thank the Heinz Endowment for providing the funding for the environmental games.



Litmus Garden signs created by Roman Chiu, made by IZone and funded by the Wildlife Habitat Council.

Good News!!!

AMD&ART recently received a grant from the Office of Surface Mining in order to do vital corrections and enhancements to the ponds in the treatment system. We would like to thank Bob Deason from Earthtech and Dave Hamilton from OSM for all their hard work and support in completing this grant.

New Places, New Challenges

As summer draws to a close three AMD&ART employees will be leaving to pursue new endeavors. Roman Chiu, the Design Coordinator will attend the University of Pennsylvania for a Masters in Landscape Architecture and Urban Design. Roman was a former AmeriCorps volunteer whose last year at AMD&ART was funded through a grant from the PCA. Bethany James, the Site Coordinator, is interning at the Quiet Creek herb farm in Brookville before beginning another year with AmeriCorps at a nature center. The Outreach Coordinator, Emily Ruby, has another year of AmeriCorps with the Johnstown Area Heritage Association. Good luck to all!

Local Teachers Recieve a "Window into the Environment"

On July 24th and 25th the AMD&ART Education Center was taken over by a group of teachers from Central Cambria School District. Teachers ranging from grades 3 through 12 and representing a variety of disciplines were on site participating in a teachers workshop with the slogan "Windows into the Environment: a look into the past for the future." AMD&ART partnered with Joe Emerick from Central Cambria in order to hold this event.

The teachers started out at the AMD&ART site on Thursday morning and enjoyed some refreshments

while watching a slide show presented by AMD&ART Founder Allan Comp. They were then treated to a site tour before leaving to go to the Seldom Seen Mine Tour in St. Boniface, PA. On Friday they had a quick morning evaluation at the Education Center and then enjoyed a day exploring the Heritage Discovery Center in Johnstown and the Coal Heritage Museum in Windber.

This event, designed to show teachers how to study water quality and better educate their students in local history and environmental issues in the region, was a wonderful success. One teacher said it was "the best class I have ever taken." It will now be an annual event for teachers in the

Central Cambria School District. Look in the local Nanty Glo Journal on Wednesday July 30th for an article and picture on this exciting event. Special Thanks to Joe Emerick for all his hard work!

Take a look at PA by Bike!

If you are interested in seeing local environmental and mining sites while also learning about native trees and plant call Joe Emerick who leads "Natural and Historical look at PA by Mountain Bike" tours. The tour goes from Nanty-Glo through Dilltown on the Ghost Town trail and is available in both the spring and fall. It is an all day program for fifth through twelfth graders and costs 10.75, bike included, bring your own lunch. If interested call Joe Emerick at (814) 472-5864.

A Note From the Founder

T. Allan Comp, Ph.D

AMD&ART: A Place and A Concept

I just got a call from Fairbanks, Alaska. The caller was a writer working with www.grantstation.com, a web site that serves rural communities across America, providing guidance on how to develop and fund community projects. They were calling because they heard about AMD&ART and wanted to know more. Soon you will find a new Success Story about AMD&ART on their web site.

Just a few weeks ago, the Sirka Center for Art and Ecology, located on the coast of Oregon called because they have a salmon stream restoration project and they wanted it to be developed "like AMD&ART," a real mix of disciplines that brings the best of science, history and good design.

And before that, I got a note from Shelbie Knox, who many of you will remember as the AmeriCorps historian that served AMD&ART so well. Shelbie, now in New Mexico, heard an interview with me about AMD&ART on NPR, actually part of a series developed by New Dimensions Broadcasting called "The Bioneers: Revolution From the Heart of Nature, III." We are part 12, "Nature As Healer: Restoring Life and Community" and they did a nice job of making me sound half intelligent and communicating a real sense of the power and purpose of our AMD&ART enterprise.

I mention all this to remind us all that AMD&ART is not only becoming a finished place (finally!), the AMD&ART Park in Vintondale, we are also becoming a model concept for many other communities that seek to transform environmental liabilities into community assets. I think we are a long way from the ideal model, but others seem to find inspiration and direction in what we have attempted and in our small successes. In that I find both great reward for all our work and an even greater challenge to truly finish what we have started, to create a strong base of community understanding and support for this special place and to create a more effective way for AMD&ART to share this daring idea that many disciplines, supported by great AmeriCorps Members and driven by community interest, can create something very important in Vintondale — and in America. —TAC

Implementing a Community Vision

This Fall AMD&ART will add a new VISTA to the staff. Cindy Wigger is coming all the way from St. Joseph, Missouri to work with the community of Vintondale. She will be working with both the Environmental Justice grant and the Community Vision Plan that was developed by a former intern and the town of Vintondale. Along with these responsibilities Cindy will be trying to better connect the AMD&ART site with the Blacklick Watershed Association. Cindy has both a Bachelors and Masters Degree in Criminal Justice. In the past she has worked as a Public Safety Officer for Missouri State University and most recently worked at the Regional Community Policing Institute in Missouri. We are very happy to welcome Cindy to the staff and are sure that she will be a valuable asset to the AMD&ART team.



Summer interns Ashley Shaffer and Brian Swistock. Ashley helped plan and implement the summer Ecology Camp and Brian tests the water of the treatment system and Blacklick Creek

Goodbye Orange Water!

The Saint Vincent College Environmental Education Center, with funding through a PA DEP Growing Greener Grant, developed a fun activity book about Abandoned Coal Mines and improving our local water quality. The booklet was designed and developed by the Environmental Education Center staff and Jackson Graphics.

In the book King Coal and Pyrite walk children and adults through the discovery of coal in Pennsylvania, the uses of coal and how coal was formed millions of years ago, what it was like working in a coal mine, what happens when there was no coal left in the mine, (pyrite reacts with the water in the abandoned mine). Children can also complete experiments to learn about pH and how to make pH paper and test their local stream. The book is complete with mazes and activities that depict the passive treatment systems commonly used today. The booklet contains word searches, crossword puzzles, word scrambles and other activities to demonstrate how AMD affects communities and how they can come together to clean up their local streams just like at Saint Vincent College.

If you would like a copy of the booklet, you may download it from the website: <http://facweb.stvincent.edu/eec> or contact **Angela Belli**, Environmental Education Coordinator at 724-805-2330.



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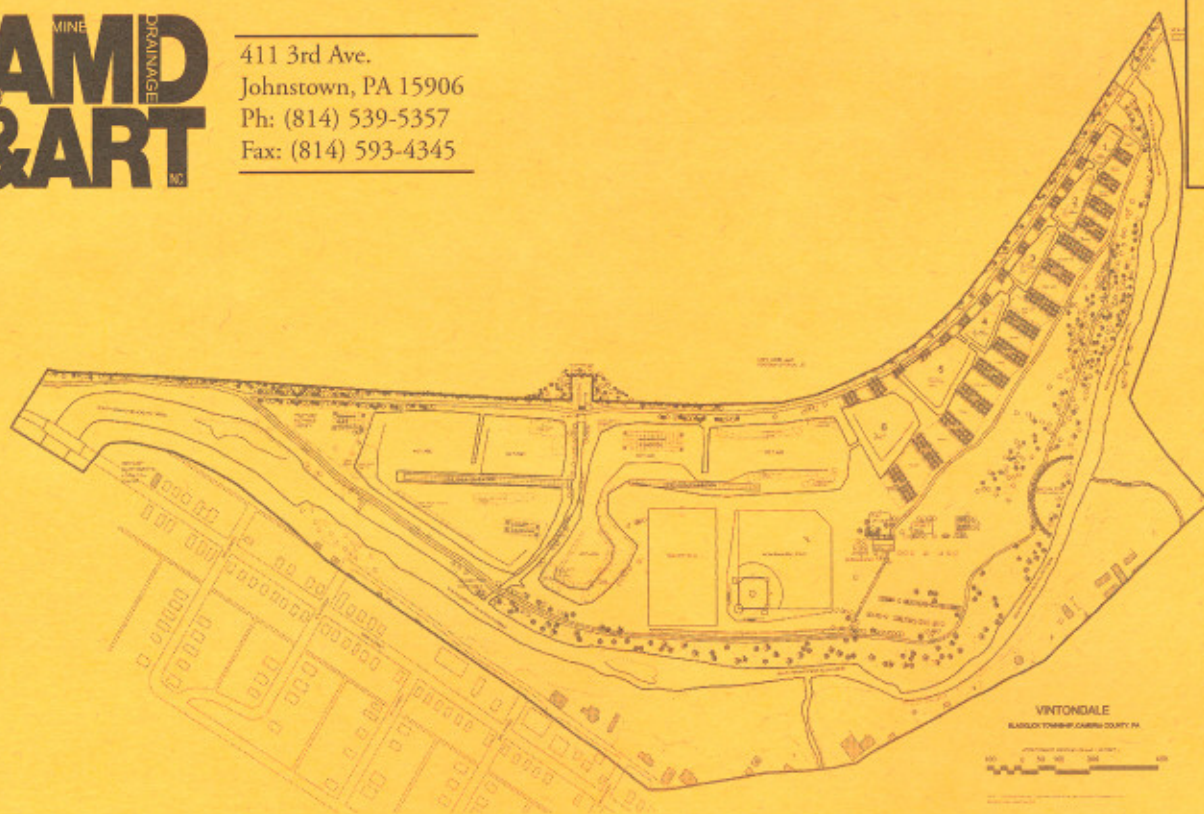
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