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From: elise.corbin@vaswcd.org
Sent: Wednesday, January 11, 2023 1:05 PM
To: 'Elise Corbin'
Subject: Conservation Education Newsletter January 2023 - PLEASE DISTRIBUTE TO TEACHERS - Thanks!

Peter Francisco SWCD Conservation Education Newsletter
Welcome back for 2nd Semester - January 2023



In this Newsletter...

Mini-Grant announcement, conservation teacher of the year, recap of first semester programs, field trips and poster contest results

Photo: The District coordinated a field trip with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation for Buckingham high school students in Mrs. Snoddy's environmental science classes. Students explored the Lynnhaven River and Chesapeake Bay, trawled for fish, pulled up crab pots, and performed water quality analysis.

2023 Environmental Education Mini-Grant Application

Do you need supplies for an environmental education activity, project or field trip? Would you like to create an outdoor classroom or enhance an existing one? The District is providing mini-grants for Buckingham and Cumberland schools. Teachers may apply for grants up to \$1,000 per project (\$4,000 total per school). Applications are being accepted all calendar year. Click on the link below to apply:

[Environmental Education Mini-Grant Application \(google.com\)](#)

Pre-school and Primary School

Pumpkins and Pollinators – (SOL Science 1.4, 1.5) **Did you know . . .** that a tiny two-winged midge fly makes it possible for us to have chocolate???? Other tiny critters make it possible for us to have pumpkins. Buckingham County preschoolers know! They learned what bats, bees, beetles, butterflies, hummingbirds and flies have in common: they are pollinators and our heroes. They learned the basic parts of a plant, how pollination occurs, some interesting facts about each pollinator, played with pollinator puppets and watched a 4-minute video showing pollinators in action. Then they made their very own “nanananananana” bat mask! (Note: Bats in Virginia are insectivores not pollinators, eating an average of 1,200 insects per hour for a total of 6,000 to 8,000 per night. They eat gnats, mosquitoes, fruit flies, beetles, moths and other flies. While they don’t help provide food for us through pollination, they are still our heroes.)



The District participated in Cumberland Elementary School's back to school night. Our free SOL-related environmental programs were show cased and we gave away tote bags, organic lip balm, information on our septic grants, and other goodies. Students who stopped by the table got to look in a treasure chest to discover some of the over 5,000 products made from trees. They also got to make leaf rubbings.



The District also provided activities for students at Buckingham Elementary School's Family Engagement Night in November. Thankfulness was the theme, so students played a thankful game with M&M's, learned why we should be thankful for pollinators and painted pumpkins.



Elementary School

Middle School

After school programs at Buckingham Middle School (SOL Science 5.1, 5.8, 6.1, 6.6, 6.9, LS.1, LS.7, LS.8) The District provided weekly after school programs for students at Buckingham Middle School as part of their 21st Century Grant during the fall semester. Students learned about physical and chemical changes, made slime, learned about rocks and minerals, received an introduction to water, learned about the importance of water for their bodies, receive an introduction to soils, made soil tubes and edible soil cups, performed soil erosion experiments, learned about wildlife and made edible scat, painted pumpkins and learned about pollinators among other things.



Canoe program for Buckingham and Cumberland middle school students (SOL Science 6.1, 6.6, 6.9, LS.1, LS.7, LS.8) The District teamed up with Buckingham and Cumberland Cooperative Extension and the Chesapeake Bay Foundation to provide a canoe trip for middle school students in Buckingham and Cumberland Counties. We met at the confluence of the Slate and James Rivers. In addition to the canoe trip, students seined for fish/macroinvertebrates, tested the James River for pH, dissolved oxygen, temperature, phosphates and nitrates.



High School

Field trip to Lynnhaven River and Chesapeake Bay (SOL Science 6.1, 6.6, 6.9, LS.1, LS.8, BIO.2, BIO.6, BIO.8) –Students from Mrs. Snoddy’s science classes at Buckingham High School toured the Brock Environmental Center, boarded a 40-foot boat and explored the Lynnhaven River and Chesapeake Bay. They trawled for fish, pulled up crab, performed water quality monitoring and explored marshlands. For many students it was the first time they saw the Chesapeake Bay. The District received a grant from the Chesapeake Bay Restoration Fund to pay for these field trips. The grants are funded with monies from the sale of Chesapeake Bay License Plates.

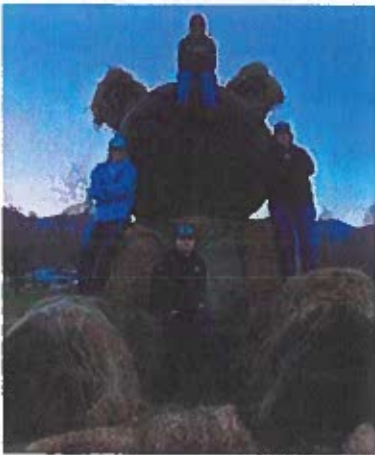


Water Quality Program (SOL Science 6.1, 6.6, 6.9, LS.1, LS.8, BIO.2, BIO.6, BIO.8) –Students from Mrs. Snoddy’s science classes at Buckingham High School participated in an outdoor adventure in the outdoor classroom near Buckingham Pre-School. The District coordinated the event with Ruth Wallace from Buckingham Cooperative Extension. Students searched for macroinvertebrates in the stream and tested the water for temperature, pH, dissolved oxygen, turbidity, phosphates and nitrates. The biological, chemical and physical indicators came back as a good water quality.



Envirothon Team Training at Graves Mountain Lodge

Peter Francisco Soil and Water Conservation District is pleased to provide support for the Buckingham and Cumberland County High School Envirothon Teams. The Virginia Envirothon, sponsored by Dominion Energy, is a team-based, hands-on environmental problem-solving competition for high school students. The competition includes a current environmental issue and oral presentation as well as aquatics, soils, wildlife and forestry elements. Students have an opportunity to work with natural resource professionals and many team members end up with careers in the environmental field. The District also sponsors students for Forestry and Youth Conservation Camp and awards college scholarships. A special thanks to Andrew Schmitt from BCBS and Joshua Fleenor from CCHS for serving as coaches for their high school Envirothon team. Both the Buckingham and Cumberland teams were registered to participate in the training at Graves Mountain Lodge in November; however, Buckingham team members were sick and unable to attend.



Scholarship

Each year the District awards four \$1,000 scholarships to students residing in Buckingham and Cumberland Counties pursuing an undergraduate degree relating to conservation or the environment. For more information or to download an application, visit our website: <https://www.peterfranciscoswcd.org/scholarships> Applications will also be sent to

guidance counselors, FFA Advisors, Envirothon Team Coaches and high school science teachers. Applications are due **Friday, March 3, 2023**.

All Grade Levels

Poster Contest Results



The District’s annual poster contest was judged in October. Below is a list of winners. The 2022 contest had a new digital category for students in grades 7-12. Chelsey Gregory’s digital poster won first place at the state level and has been forwarded to be judged at the national level. Chelsey won \$100 for winning at the state level. Also, a calendar was made from winning art work this year and given to teachers who promote the contest as well as students whose winning art work was included.



Pictured: Mrs. Suzanne Snoddy, Science Teacher, Chelsey Gregory and Mrs. Patti Branch, Principal Buckingham High School. To view FARMVILLE HERALD article: [Buckingham student clinches win in statewide contest | Farmville \(farmvilleherald.com\)](https://www.farmvilleherald.com)

GRADE	PLACE	STUDENT NAME	COUNTY/SCHOOL	Gift Card
K-1	1 st	Matalyn Hall	Central Va. Christian	\$15
K-1	2 nd	Ivan Davis	Buckingham Primary	\$10
4-6	Tie 1 st	Jeremiah Miller	Buckingham Middle	\$25
4-6	Tie 1 st	Brilynn Houchens	Buckingham Middle	\$25
4-6	2 nd	Kinsley Baggett	Cumberland Middle	\$15
7-9	1 st	Ben Gilliam	Buckingham High	\$25
7-9	2 nd	Cadence Jones	Buckingham High	\$15
7-9	3 rd	Cassidy Ahart	Buckingham High	\$10
7-9	Hon Mention	Piper Scialdo	Buckingham High	\$10
7-9	Hon Mention	Alexandra Morris	Buckingham High	\$10
10-12	Tie 1 st	Lillian McConkey	Cumberland High	\$50
10-12	Tie 1 st	Hannah Nuckols	Cumberland High	\$50
10-12	2 nd	Levi Dayton	Cumberland High	\$30
Digital	1 st	Chelsey Gregory	Buckingham High	\$40
Digital	2 nd	Callie Dominick	Cumberland High	\$30



Kindergarten/1st Grade Winner, Matalyn Hall,
Central Virginia Christian School



1st Place tie for Grades 4-6, Jeremiah Miller,
Buckingham Middle School



Tie 1st Place Grades 4-6 Brilynn Houchens,
Buckingham Middle School



Winning poster Grades 7-9, Ben Gilliam, Buckingham High School



Tie 1st Place Grades 10-12, Hannah Nuckols, Cumberland High School



2nd & 3rd Grade Winner, Evan Shumaker, Central Virginia Christian School

Tie 1st Place Grades 10-12, Lillian McConkey, Cumberland High School



1st Place local and state level for digital category, Chelsey Gregory, Buckingham High School

A special thanks to Buckingham and Cumberland Cooperative Extension Staff for serving as judges.

For more information about the contest and to see other winning artwork, visit the PFSWCD website at <http://peterfranciscoswcd.org/poster-contest/>

Free SOL-based Environmental Programs



*The District would like to thank you for investing in our youth and support your educational efforts by offering **free** SOL-based environmental programs in Buckingham and Cumberland Counties. Our programs always have a hands-on component to make learning fun for the students. During the month of August, we distributed information by grade to all lead teachers and science teachers in Buckingham and Cumberland Counties outlining the programs we offer. If you would like your own copy, let me know and I'll be happy forward the information to you. Remember, we can tailor a program to meet your needs. Also, if you want a field day with several stations for an entire grade level, we will be happy to coordinate with Buckingham and Cumberland Cooperative Extension Offices, Virginia Game and Inland Fisheries, Virginia State Parks and Virginia Department of Forestry to make it happen in the school yard or at a local State Park. The District also has a wealth of conservation education resources available for teachers to check out and use for their classrooms. For more information on the programs and resources we offer, visit our website at <http://peterfranciscoswcd.org/education/education-resources-links/>*

Congratulations on completing 1st Semester

We look forward to working with you in the New Year.

Questions & Comments

Want a program, have an idea, suggestion, or comment? We're always looking for feedback on how we can better support you.

Email Peter Francisco SWCD Conservation Education Coordinator, Elise Corbin, at elise.corbin@vaswcd.org or call 434-983-7923.

Virginia's Envirothon program and Peter Francisco's educational programs are also supported through the Chesapeake Bay Restoration Fund.

Proceeds from the sale of the Bay license plates help citizens keep the bay healthy by restoring wetlands, planting buffers around waterways, promoting marine life restoration, decreasing pollution and providing educational programs like Envirothon. To purchase a Bay license plate visit: <http://www.dmv.state.va.us/vehicles/#splates/info.asp?idnm=CB>

The Peter Francisco Soil and Water Conservation District prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs or marital status.

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