

DCVA and its Community Partners Help to Clean Radnor and Glenolden

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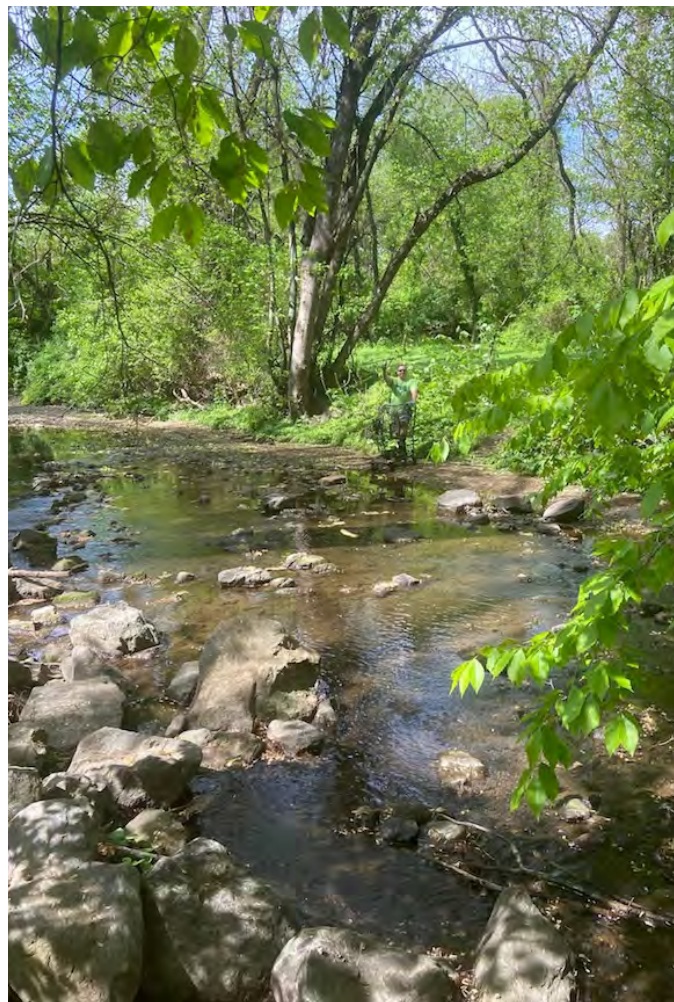
It was a busy couple of weekends for the Darby Creek Valley Association, its members, and its partners in the community in the spring of 2023. DCVA celebrated Earth Day and the weeks around it by organizing cleanups all throughout the Darby Creek watershed in Delaware County. This was the organization's 39th Annual Watershed Wide Cleanup. Despite the seemingly constant threat of rain on recent weekends, I was able to attend two of these cleanups, one in Radnor Township. and the other in Glenolden Borough.

It was a spirited group that volunteered for the DCVA cleanup co-organized by State Representative (and former DCVA Board member) Lisa Borowski and the Radnor Conservancy at Skunk Hollow Park in Radnor on April 15th. With the mild din of cows at a rare Delco farm sounding in the background, volunteers took to scouring Darby Creek and the paths around it looking for any sort of litter. Ultimately, 15 bags of trash were collected by some 18 volunteers, which included both adults and children. There was also a group of boy scouts engaged in a separate event, and they and their families took an interest in the DCVA cleanup.

In addition to humans, dogs were very appreciative of the efforts. Skunk Hollow is known for being a popular park for dog walkers, and they were out in force on Saturday. Many volunteers reported dogs would come up to them and bark their profound appreciation for the clean paths. Some of the humans walking the dogs also made sure to thank the volunteers and tell them how much they appreciated having a tidy park.

The most interesting item that was found was an enigma for volunteers. It was a metal object wedged deep in the ground that appeared to have been in the park for years. Some of the volunteers believed it was an old bear trap. Definitely an odd item to be found in a greater Philadelphia Park! Others thought the object may have been a small old bed frame. No matter what it was, thankfully, volunteers were able to safely remove and dispose of the item.

The next Saturday, on Earth Day itself, I was lucky to be able to help with a cleanup in Glenolden Park. Again, we were under the threat of rain, but luckily it held off until later in the day. DCVA volunteer James Labonski organized this cleanup along the banks of the mighty Muckinipattis Creek (a tributary of the lower Darby Creek) in the small Delco town. About a half-dozen volunteers, both adults and children, jumped in the creek and removed diverse types of trash, including a shopping cart. The popular gazebo in Glenolden Park served as the launching point for this, although volunteers wandered way down the creek.



Radnor Conservancy at Skunk Hollow Park in Radnor Cleanup

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It was a busy day in Glenolden, as the Glenolden Borough Shade Tree Commission (which is not affiliated with DCVA) was also planting trees in the park. They ultimately planted six trees on Earth Day, four of which were in a part of the park dedicated to fallen soldiers and the other two of which were located along Glenolden's popular new walking trail. State Representative Dave Dellosa was on hand for the tree planting and planted one of the trees himself. Also, a number of Interboro High School students lent a hand, providing help while learning about conservation and community cleanliness at the same time.

In an encouraging sign, both the Radnor and Glenolden sites didn't yield as much trash as expected. It appears people are increasingly getting the message not to litter and are actually following that message. While 15 bags of trash in Radnor and a shopping cart in Glenolden might seem like a lot, both were actually less trash than in years past. It's also unclear how much of the trash was locally dumped, and how much of it came from upstream. While heavy items like a shopping cart were definitely dumped near where they were found, much smaller items could easily have drifted from another area with the creek's current.

It was also encouraging to see how many children helped at both sites. This included both teenagers and younger kids helping with their parents. Teens were given certificates confirming their community service hours at both sites. In Glenolden, teens played an important role, including a group of high schoolers from the Interboro football team, who are getting ready to graduate and go to college. With so much negativity in the news about teens, this certainly makes you feel much better about our next generation.

The weekends of April 15th and 22nd make it clear that, while there may be less trash in some areas, the desire to clean up



Glenolden Park Cleanup

local communities is as strong as ever. This year was the 39th annual cleanup, but it's clear there will be many, many more years in various sections of the Darby Creek watershed. In Radnor and Glenolden in particular, there is already talk of building on the work over Earth Day and organizing more independent cleanups in the summer. While these cleanups might not be official DCVA events, you can guarantee that DCVA members will be out in force. DCVA members in Glenolden, Radnor, and elsewhere are definitely dedicated to keeping their communities clean!