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Tuesday, January 09, 2007

Volunteers sought for second Dunlap Creek cleanup

By Christine Haines, Herald-Standard
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BROWNSVILLE - On Saturday, 20 volunteers at a cleanup day filled two large trash bins with the things other people had thrown over hillsides into Dunlap Creek.

They also gathered a stack of tires that will be recycled, and they have plans to turn out again this Saturday to tackle another section of the stream bank.

At the Greater Brownsville Area Chamber of Commerce meeting Tuesday, officials said volunteers are still needed for the cleanup. Anyone interested in volunteering should meet in the parking lot on Brown Street behind Sunset Discounts at 9 a.m. Saturday.

"It's not hard work. PA CleanWays has a system, with big bags and they winch the trash up the bank. And the township came in with their front loader, so all you have to do is put it in a big pile," said Ray Koffler, a chamber director and organizer of the local chapter of the Izaak Walton League.

Koffler said he would like to see more Brownsville residents show up for the cleanup this week. Many of last Saturday's volunteers came from outside Brownsville, including a woman and her daughter who came from Perryopolis, Norma Ryan said.

"The people that would benefit most from this cleanup were not there," Koffler said. "If we want this town back...we need to show some initiative. We've got to get it cleaned up before we

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invite business and industry in."

Ryan said crews picked up three refrigerators and a couch from one section of the stream bank, and baby cribs, box springs and tires also had been dumped in the area.

"We need to have citizens caring. When you see someone doing something like that, get a license number," Ryan urged.

Ryan said the Fayette County Redevelopment Authority is providing funds for birdhouses for martins. The martins are noted for eating mosquitoes and for frightening away crows, which have created a problem in the area over the past several years.

In other matters, the chamber voted to donate \$1,000 to the Brownsville-Luzerne Park Board for park operations. The chamber uses the park for a fireworks display each July 3. Ricco, who is president of both the chamber and the park board, said the park has been losing income over the past several years due to a reduced motocross race schedule. Ricco said some additional fund-raising might be needed to meet the operating expenses at the park.

Ricco also reported that Conrail has given permission for the borough to make façade improvements to a railroad retaining wall behind the new Brownsville wharf. Ryan said the grand opening celebration for the wharf is scheduled for 11 a.m. April 20, with a full day of activities planned on the wharf and on the water.

Additionally, Ryan said she will work with the redevelopment authority for a permanent location in Brownsville's Central Park for a paddle wheel and ship's smokestacks that will be on permanent loan to the community from the Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Association.

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