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FEATURED

EDITOR'S PICK

WVU Tech students replant butterfly garden at soccer complex

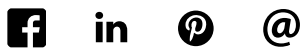
By Josephine E. Moore The Register-Herald
Apr 23, 2024

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Makayleigh Blankenship and other students in WVU Tech's Organismal Botany class assisted in creating a butterfly po Youth Sports Complex, just above the soccer field.

Rick Barbero/The Register-Herald



In recognition of Earth Day, West Virginia University Institute of Technology students aided the Piney Creek Watershed Association in reestablishing a butterfly garden at the

YMCA Paul Cline Memorial Youth Sports Complex in Beckley.

Nate Sydnor, executive director of the Piney Creek Watershed Association, said the project will help the association achieve its primary goal of improving water quality in the Piney Creek basin.

“The backside of this hill just drops directly into the Piney Creek Gorge, so if we can get a little plant life in here to filter some of this water as it moves downhill and then of course getting more pollinators,” Sydnor said, highlighting the crucial role of the butterfly garden in improving water quality and increasing pollinators.

Sydnor said the Piney Creek Watershed Association established the butterfly garden in 2017, but many plants have since died.

The plants were provided by the Green River Garden Center and paid for through a roughly \$5,400 grant from the Beckley Area Foundation.

The butterfly garden is located on the hillside opposite the soccer fields on YMCA Drive. Sydnor said they plan to add signage letting people know about it and its important purpose.

He added that students from WVU Tech were a huge help in digging dozens of holes for all the new plants.

Jay Raymond, assistant professor of biology at WVU Tech, said the students participating in the project were part of his botany class.

Raymond said these types of service-learning projects are part of his course and help students get a better understanding of what they’re learning in the classroom.

“It definitely makes an impact on the students,” he said. “I think it’s important for them, and most of our students are from the local area.”

Furthering its Earth Week activities, the Piney Creek Watershed Association, along with the Beckley Raleigh County Chamber of Commerce Make It Shine Committee, will host a litter sweep Wednesday morning.

Volunteers are asked to meet in Glen Morgan along U.S. 19, Ritter Drive, near Sullivan Road to Tank Branch Road at 9 a.m.

Park and meet at the car wash near the train bridge. Supplies such as vests, litter sticks, bags and gloves will be provided. Traffic control and officers will be monitoring the sweep area.


RSVP to Beckley-Raleigh County Chamber of Commerce for the litter sweep by calling 304-252-7328 or emailing chamber@brccc.com.

Email: jmoore@register-herald.com

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