

Message from the PWA by Randy Walker

As newly elected President of the Pootatuck Watershed Association (PWA), one of my first objectives in my PWA leadership role is to reach out to other groups that align with the PWA's mission to:

- Promote and preserve the Pootatuck River, its drainage basin and underlying aquifer
- Promote the reasonable and prudent use of water
- Protect, preserve, and enhance the environmental health of the land and water
- Encourage and promote sustainable land use and development
- Educate the public and engage students

If it takes a village to raise a child, in similar fashion it takes a community to create a healthy watershed. Everyone in the Watershed needs to preserve and protect it. Much of the damage past and present is often well meaning but destructive all the same. PWA wants to support Protect Our Pollinators (POP) and other aligned groups to educate and encourage everyone in the Watershed to use landscape and water practices that provide beautiful landscapes which help the Watershed stay healthy and heal. Pollinators, food-webs, eco-systems, watersheds are not just words, they are necessities like clean water for us to maintain and support all forms of life in Newtown, which is nice but could be nicer, but only if we all work together.

Members Mary Wilson, Holly Kocet and Sarah Middleleer were kind enough to talk with me about Protect Our Pollinators and their mission. The depth of knowledge and understanding of pollinators, plants and chemicals shared by these three people was impressive. Your book *Earth-Friendly Gardening – One yard at a time* is a wonderful resource and full of helpful information. I want to share this guide plus brochures for *Pesticide Free Care for Yards*, *Newtown Pollinator Pathway*, and *Planting a Pollinator Garden*, with the whole Watershed. Yes, the whole Watershed. The path ahead to make things better in the watershed is captured in the book's title – "One yard at a time."

In closing, I laud POP's support of the Newtown Conservation Commission's successful effort to have the Town adopt a "Native Plant Policy" for all Town properties. Support of native plants to promote healthy

watersheds, filter pollutants and stabilize banks, illustrates the alignment of POP's initiative and the PWA. Thankyou POP, for bee-ing such an effective organization that is making our Watershed better. I look forward to learning more from you and working together.

For more information about PWA, the work we do and how to become a member, please go to pootatuckwatershed.org.