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## Calendar of Events

- June (various) Community Conservation Partnerships Program Workshops**  
Workshops consist of three hours from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Nearby Locations and dates include: Pittsburgh, 6/19/06; Clarion 6/20/06; Harrisburg, 6/29/06. For more information please contact the Pennsylvania Recreation & Park Society at 814-234-4272.
- August 17-20 1st Annual Oil Region Bicycle Tour**  
Registration begins at 3:00 p.m. on Thursday, August 17, 2006 at the Perry Street Station in Titusville, PA. For more information please contact the Oil region Alliance at 814-677-3152.
- August 19 3rd Annual Southwest Venango County Community Day**  
Venango County Community Day in Clintonville from 9:30 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. For more information please call Gladys Tarr at 814-385-6052 or Frenzel Alcorn at 814-385-6202.

For more information on joining the Regional Planning Commission, please contact Judith Downs at 814-432-4555. By using a joint planning approach, a municipality can more effectively address issues that extend beyond its municipal boundary. Among the advantages to this type of planning, municipalities may:

- provide training resources to municipalities and council of governments;
- provide professional staff to assist with plan and ordinance preparation;
- provide professional services on an as needed basis; subdivision and land development plan review land use ordinance administration
- reduce redundancy in infrastructure projects; Growing Greener projects Recreation plans and projects PIDA projects
- promote transportation improvement projects;
- protect and preserve productive farmland, woodlands and other natural resources, and
- promote cooperative economic development projects and programs.

Projects with multi-municipal partners are often viewed more favorably for grant funds than single municipality projects.

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## Oil Creek State Park Clean Up

On April 29, 2006, the Venango County Regional Planning Commission hosted an Earth Day Event with a new high tech twist. Participants in this event were no ordinary volunteers. The Oil Creek State Park Clean Up was setup through the Web site [www.geocaching.com](http://www.geocaching.com) as a Cache In Trash Out Event (CITO). Geocaching is, in essence, a treasure hunting recreational activity using GPS technology. Participants in the event cleaned a dump site along one of Oil Creek State Park's many trails. There were a total of 38 people who participated in the event! Five truckloads of trash were removed as a result of the clean up efforts. Following the clean up, participants were given coordinates to three new geocaches placed in the park for this event. Each cache was associated



with a prize donated by local businesses and organizations; a \$25 gift card donated by Walmart, two \$5 gift certificates donated by Maurer's Trading Post and a free bike rental donated by Oil Creek State Park. Each participant was also offered a composting bin donated by PennState Cooperative Extension in Venango County.

"My first CITO event! I have to admit, the place sure looked a lot better when we left than when we came. Thanks for organizing it and also for the composter!!" - Posted on the event Web site by Dorothy Gruber. Donations for the event also included Central Electric Cooperative, Kmart and Venango County PennDOT.

## Grants

Planning Commission staff are currently developing grant proposals to fund:

- Recreation plan: "Recreation, Parks and Open Space in Venango County: A plan for attractive, livable communities, a healthy, high quality of life and related economic development". Funding will be requested from DCNR. Contacts have been made with the municipalities, ORA, watershed groups and local land trusts, school districts and others for support.
- Phase I Storm Water Management Plan
- Regional Greenways Plan
- Housing Market Inventory
- Historic Site Survey
- 2005 DEP 904 recycling performance grant application

## Subdivisions and Land Developments

22 subdivisions were approved in the first quarter 2006. They are distributed throughout the county in the following municipalities:

- Cornplanter Twp.
- Cranberry Twp.
- French Creek Twp.
- Irwin Twp.
- Jackson Twp.
- Oakland Twp.
- Oil Creek Twp.
- Pinegrove Twp.
- Richland Twp.
- Rockland Twp.
- Rouseville Borough
- Scrubgrass Twp.
- Sugarcreek Borough
- Victory Twp.

VCRPC also reviewed and commented on subdivision plans located in municipalities with their own SALDOS.

- 2 in Sandycreek Twp.
- 1 in Oil City
- 1 in Franklin

### Land Developments

Plans for a new land development in Cranberry Township were submitted by Byzantine, Inc. for the "Oil Creek Plaza"

## Southern Venango Project

Seven communities in southern Venango County have come together to plan for their future and for the economy of the region and have asked the Venango County Regional Planning Commission to coordinate the effort. A 2-year grant was obtained from the PA Department of Community and Economic Development to facilitate this Comprehensive Development Plan effort. The goals of this project are to plan for the present and future of each community and the region as a whole. In October 2005,



Photograph by Debra Frawley © 1997

three regional visioning sessions were held. Attendance was a little lower than at the first round of meetings, but in total about 150 interested citizens have spoken up and are helping to plan the present and future of their communities. The discussion this time focused on the assets of the area and where the citizens would like to see development. Maps will be created for review that indicate where infrastructure such as water and sewer currently exists, active agricultural land, open space and recreational opportunities, current distribution of businesses, and much more. From what exists, we can decide how and where to encourage development. Drawing on the maps that were displayed at the meetings, the focus stayed on the currently designated industrial sites for industry and the I-80 interchanges for businesses. Current businesses along Route 208 could be expanded or related businesses brought in and grouped together. This can also happen "in town" in Emlenton, Clintonville and Barkeyville. An active citizen's group has formed to do some of the leg work to get projects on the ground in Victory Township. Many citizens have been working on ideas and starting businesses.

## Venango County Statistics at a glance

2004 population estimate	56,285
Land area in square miles	675
Population per square mile	85
Municipalities	31
Urban Population	46%
Rural Population	54%
Median Age	41.9 years
Housing Units	26,904
Homeownership Rate	76.4%
Average annual wage 2004	\$29,239
Estimated 2003 poverty rate	13.1%
High school diploma	49.5%
2004 Average unemployment rate	6.3%



## Historic Barn Inventory

Owners of Pennsylvania barns built before 1960 are encouraged to participate in a statewide inventory of historic barns. On October 24, 2005, The Pennsylvania House of Representatives and Senate unanimously passed resolutions recognizing the importance of the state's historic barns. The Center for Rural Pennsylvania is assisting the department and PHMC with the inventory. The Center is asking owners of barns built before 1960 to contact the Center and provide their name, address, and county of residence. Barn owners are also asked to name the style or architecture of the barn, if possible, and to indicate if the barn is currently being used for farming operations. To participate in the inventory, barn owners should mail the information noted above to the Center for Rural Pennsylvania, 200 North Third Street, Suite 600, Harrisburg, PA 17101. Barn owners may also submit the information by calling the Center at (717) 787-9555 or emailing [info@ruralpa.org](mailto:info@ruralpa.org). Information on the inventory is also available on the Center's Web Site at [www.ruralpa.org](http://www.ruralpa.org).