



LEEDS LETTER

SEPT-OCT 2018

UPCOMING EVENTS

OCTOBER 16, Tuesday
**DEVIL'S DEN TO LICKINGWATER
BOOK LAUNCH - COME HEAR
JOHN SINTON TALK ABOUT HIS
NEW BOOK ON THE MILL RIVER**
7:00 PM

Florence Civic Association
90 Park St., at the Corner of
North Main in Florence

OCTOBER 27, Saturday
PUMPKIN CONTEST AND PARTY
4:30 - 8:00

Pumpkin entry drop-off: **3:30 - 5:00**
Corner of Chestnut and Upland

NOVEMBER 6, Tuesday
Please remember to VOTE!
7:00am - 8:00pm

NOVEMBER 13, Tuesday,
LCA Monthly Meeting
7:00 PM
Leeds School Teacher's Lounge
Everyone is welcome!

WE REORDERED!

LEEDS HATS FOR SALE

Stonewashed, canvas baseball caps
with adjustable metal clasp

\$20 each

Proceeds go to the
Hotel Bridge Restoration Fund

Reserve hats at LeedsCivic.org

To arrange for pick-up, contact Heidi at:
heidistevens.com, or 585-9923

Choose from **Gray • Blue • Green**

LEEDS CIVIC ASSOCIATION

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LeedsCivicAssoc@gmail.com
LeedsCivic.org

**LEEDS
PUMPKIN
PARTY AND
CONTEST
2018**

**OCT
27** Saturday
4:30 - 8:00, Corner of
Chestnut Ave. and Upland Rd
Rain date - Sunday, October 28th

3:30 - 5:00 - Drop off pumpkin
4:30 sharp - Kids Pumpkin Roll
4:30 - 5:45 - Food drop off
4:30 - 7:30 - Party and voting
7:30 - 8:00 - Prizes

IT'S THAT TIME AGAIN! Join us for this fun family friendly event that the Leeds Civic Association has held annually for the Leeds community for nearly a quarter century! Enjoy the amazing display of carved and decorated pumpkins, the pumpkin roll excitement (for kids 12 and under), music, raffle, delicious food, soups and cider.

Bring your carved or decorated pumpkin to enter in the contest. There are 5 pumpkin categories so any pumpkin could be a winner— from a very basic traditional pumpkin to an elaborately designed pumpkin! Everyone gets one vote in each of the 5 contest categories: Most Gross, Funniest, Most Scary, Best Classic, Master Artist. There will also be “Jim’s Choice”. What the heck is Jim’s Choice? Only Jim Mias knows the answer! It might be your pumpkin!

Please sign up to contribute a food item by going to the LCA website, LeedsCivic.org and clicking on the food sign-up graphic. It will bring you to the Sign-Up Genius link. For those who do not have internet access, you may contact Tom or Amy Quinn at 413-586-0283. Please drop off food by 5:45pm. There will be plenty of grills to keep the soups warm until the food area opens at 6pm. Please label your serving utensils and bowls with your name in case you accidentally leave them behind!

CALLING ALL PUMPKINS....

Big, small, funny or scary;
We want your pumpkin,
even if it is hairy!
It might be ugly,
or maybe it's gross.
Bring your best,
So that you may boast!
It could have finesse
with an artisan flare;
Go ahead, take the challenge,
if you dare!
Make it a Jack-o-Lantern,
classically simple;
A goblin, a ghost
or a witch with a pimple.
We want them all,
pumpkins galore;
Bring one, two, three
or even more!
Let's gather, eat soup
and bask in their glow,
Cast our votes
and watch the kids roll!
Five lucky winners
will say farewell and goodbye;
As they head back home
with delicious homemade pie!

— Amy Quinn, 2018

A HODGE PODGE MEETS THE LONG TIME RIVER RESIDENT

On a picture perfect day in July and on a somewhat rare trash-less day down at the Mill River, a hodgepodge of some 30 people, all shapes and sizes were treated to an unscheduled nature show of local interest.

A female snapping turtle around 40 years old has been residing in our river for quite some time, but it took a random stranger from Alabama, a self-described turtle and rattlesnake wrangler, to go beyond the mere sighting. Dressed in work boots, thick jeans, flannel shirt and sporting a big beard, the burly Alabamian reached knee high into the river and pulled out the snapper from its resting spot.

Handling it like a pro, he proceeded to carry the enormous creature to shore. It hissed for a bit but once he started tickling it beneath the throat it calmed right down. Everyone got to touch the shell, feel its web-like feet, scratch its belly (upside down), and touch its tail. The burly man assured the crowd that this snapper was at ease with us. She was even hesitant to snap out at a stick he dangled in front of her. When angered or threatened in a more forceful way a snapper will reach out and snap.

The turtle wrangler let everyone have their share of amazement, then asked to give the snapper some space and he set her down. Just as calmly as ever, the turtle moved toward the water and swam off, smoothly and quietly – all of us following along – to her deep hidden space where she's been among us for so long.

UNIFORMS IN THE WOODS By Heidi Stevens

It's natural for people to want to be near water when the temperature rises. Internet sites list Orange Dam (Chartpak Dam) and the Mill River in Leeds as a great place to swim, so people who have no water near them trek out here. The problem is they don't spend their time quietly and don't have the courtesy to take all of their trash with them when they leave. For the past three summers, the LCA has been coordinating actions with the City and Chartpak to try and address the matter.

One photo from a late June Mill River trail clean up got more attention from City department heads. Erin Mahon-Moore's photo, which showed the wooded trail strewn with cans, a grill, a styrofoam cooler and other trash was sent to DPW director, Donna LaScaleia and the Mayor to help illustrate the situation along the river. Donna was horrified by what she saw in the photo and immediately understood the magnitude of the problem and granted the request for the DPW to contribute bags for the ongoing volunteer clean-up efforts.

In mid-July, the LCA scheduled an on-site meeting with City officials to see if anyone had any new ideas about what to do.

If you were out walking on that hot afternoon, you may have seen a few nicely dressed people and a couple in uniforms standing and talking with a few LCA members (not dressed up) on a path in the middle of the woods. Mayor Narcowicz, Police Chief Kasper, DPW Director LaScaleia, Sarah LaValley from the Planning Department and Duane Wyant from Chartpak all walked the trails with us and saw the problem spots. Unfortunately, few new solutions came from the meeting. In regards to trespassers at Chartpak Dam, Chief Kasper suggested that Chartpak post signs with stronger language than just "No Trespassing". The Planning Department will continue work on identifying and gaining ownership of the "unknown owner

parcel" (a popular section that draws crowds) in hopes of making it conservation land. This action will allow the police to enforce the conservation land rules and regulations ie; no alcohol, littering, camp fires, loud noise, loitering, etc. in that location. People can still swim and fish on conservation land. A few volunteers continued throughout the summer to clean the trails and river's edge.

A total of 39 bags of trash was cleared from Chartpak Dam up to Beaver Brook during the summer.

TRAIL HERO FINDS POCKETS ON THE RIVER By Heidi Stevens



Shawn Drewitz is a local Leeds guy who is an avid hiker and loves the outdoors and Leeds. I have had the pleasure of his company on many early summer mornings as we picked up trash along the river north of Chartpak dam. One summer morning after we finished our route, even though it was

quite hot and humid (I headed home to cool down), Shawn continued past his Water Street house to a couple of other spots where trash piles up – above and below Cook's Dam.

It was above Cook's Dam where Shawn not only found a whole case of empty "spiked iced tea" but all sorts of clothing ranging from the base layer on out. Among the abandoned clothing was a pair of ladies' rolled-cuff shorts. Shawn turned out the pockets before putting them in the trash bag and found two bucks, a set of keys, a driver's license and a bank card. All that spiked ice tea must have fogged someone's mind! Makes one wonder if anyone was stopped while walking home naked!

With a bit of sleuthing on Facebook, Shawn found the person listed on the license and contacted her right away. Shortly after, a very grateful young lady came by and collected her shorts and the pocket's contents.

Along with all the river trail users who appreciate trash-free trails, the girl in rolled-cuff shorts was another beneficiary of Shawn's efforts. Thank you Shawn for your dedication!

SOLAR ACCESS By Amy Stamm

For those of you who have considered solar power but thought you wouldn't be able to afford it, there is a new program designed for you and funded by the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center and the Department of Energy Resources. Offered by the Center for Eco Technology, the program provides affordable solar systems and mini-split heat pumps to middle-income homeowners and guides you through all the steps of the installation process. Additionally, the program adds a Solar Access subsidy to existing incentives so that the first six months of the UMassFive College Credit Union loan that funds your system is paid for you. Even after that, the loan enables you to pay less per month than you spend now on heating and cooling your home as you pay it back. For more information about this innovative program, email solaraccess@cetonline.org or call 413-341-0418