

# LHVA Ambassadors' Update



INFORMATION FROM THE LACKAWANNA HERITAGE VALLEY AUTHORITY

FEBRUARY 2008

How can your site attract visitors and keep them coming back?

## New Workshop Offers Helpful Tips & Good Advice

LHVA and the Heritage Valley Roundtable are sponsoring the first annual Spring Symposium, "Through Our Visitors Eyes," on Monday, March 31, 2008, at Steamtown National Historic Site Theater in Scranton, PA.

The daylong professional enhancement workshop is geared to site professionals, docents, and volunteers at museums, historic properties, heritage areas, cultural and environmental organizations, visitor attractions, non-profit, and community organizations. Registration is \$20 per person.

The Symposium will provide tested techniques and approaches designed to help sites better serve the visiting public. By examining the site through the eyes of the visitor, staff and volunteers will be able to evaluate the experience, and to develop programs, customer service, and marketing that will increase visitation to the site or attraction.

The featured presenter will be John Veverka, a noted international consultant who specializes in heritage interpretation and heritage tourism planning and training. He has spent twenty-eight years as an interpretive planner, consultant and trainer with clients in the United States, Canada, England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, Korea, and Spain.

Registration and pre-payment are required for all attendees. Registration and payment MUST be received at LHVA's offices by Tuesday, March 25, 2008.

Registration forms and information are available online at [www.LHVA.org](http://www.LHVA.org).



Ranger Sue Rozdilski leads Ms. Byron's first grade class on a tour at Steamtown National Historic Site. LHVA photo.

### Topics Include

- Who is your audience?
- What are travelers' expectations when visiting your site?
- How do travelers decide on which sites to visit?
- Why do you need variety in your programs and services?
- How to increase visitation to your site.
- What goes into a marketing plan?
- How to develop cost effective marketing brochures.

### Symposium Info At-A-Glance

**Date:** Monday, March 31, 2008

**Time:** 8:30 am - Check-In & Refreshments  
9:00 am to 4:00 pm - Workshop

**Place:** Steamtown National Historic Site, Scranton, PA.  
Directions: [www.nps.gov/stea](http://www.nps.gov/stea)

**Fee:** \$20 per person - Includes lunch, refreshments & all materials.

**Registration & Payment Deadline:** **Tuesday, March 25, 2008**

**Registration Forms:** Available at [www.LHVA.org](http://www.LHVA.org) or click here.

**Payment:** Check/money order payable to "Lackawanna Heritage Valley Authority."

**Mail or Deliver Registration Form and Payment:**

Sarah Piccini, Program Officer  
Lackawanna Heritage Valley Authority  
538 Spruce Street, Suite 516, Scranton, PA 18503

**INFO:** Contact Sarah Piccini at [spiccini@LHVA.org](mailto:spiccini@LHVA.org) or (570) 963-6730 x8227.

# LHVA in Transition

Some significant changes have been happening at LHVA in the last few months. Many exciting projects are underway, and this issue of the "Ambassadors' Update" is filled with good news to report. Look for more updates in upcoming issues!

## Staff Changes



### Colleen Carter

Congratulations to Colleen, former LHVA Director of Public Education, who was promoted to LHVA's Director of Programs in November 2007. Colleen started at

LHVA in March 2005 as a part-time program officer in public education.



### Stephanie Milewski, RLA

Welcome to Stephanie, who joined our staff in November 2007 as Trail Manager and Environmental Program Officer. Stephanie is a

Registered Landscape Architect, and a welcome addition. She brings energy and enthusiasm to her role as the point person for the Lackawanna River Heritage Trail project, and she is working closely with our partners on the Conservation Alliance.



### Sarah Piccini

In January 2008, Sarah was promoted to the position of Program Officer- Interpretation and Preservation Specialist. An intern with LHVA since

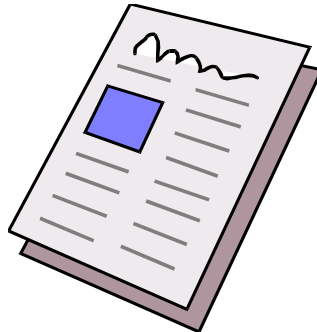
May 2005, Sarah recently earned her degrees in history and communications from the University of Scranton (summa cum laude!). She is working closely with Dan Perry on LHVA's historic preservation and cultural conservation projects, including the Spring Symposium.



### Margo Tomlinson

We bid a fond farewell to Margo, who began her retirement on February 1, 2008. Margo started at LHVA more than fourteen years ago,

when the new organization consisted of just she and Executive Director Bob Durkin were the entire staff! Her dedication and capable work contributed greatly to LHVA's growth and success, and she will be missed. Margo begins her retirement as the commissioned lay pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in Carbondale. We send our best wishes for her future.



## A New Editor for the "Ambassadors' Update" Newsletter

The newsletter resumes this month with Cheryl Kashuba on board as editor. Many of you may know Cheryl through her weekly local history column in the Sunday Times-Tribune as well as her other writing projects.

Under Cheryl's guidance, the newsletter resumes its monthly distribution. Welcome, Cheryl!



Lackawanna Heritage Valley  
— WHERE AMERICA'S STORY LIVES —

### Lackawanna Heritage Valley Authority

*A National and State Heritage Area*

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Web: [www.LHVA.org](http://www.LHVA.org)

The Lackawanna Heritage Valley Authority is a partnership of government, business, civic organizations, and individuals dedicated to the development of the region's historic, cultural, economic, and natural resources through preservation, education, and promotion of our heritage.

LHVA's goals are to tell the region's story; facilitate partnerships; preserve and enhance the physical character and economic vitality of the communities in the Lackawanna Valley; improve the visitor experience; and reconnect people to the Lackawanna River.

### Lackawanna County Commissioners

Michael J. Washo, Chair  
Corey O'Brien  
A.J. Munchak

### Board of Directors

Alan Sweeney, Chair  
Thom Welby, Vice Chair  
Atty. Julia Munley, Secretary  
Barbara Colangelo, Treasurer  
Thomas J. Bell, Asst. Secretary/Treasurer  
Marisa Bevilacqua  
Ella Rayburn  
Atty. Joseph O. Haggerty, Solicitor

### Staff

Natalie Gelb Solfanelli, Executive Director  
Daniel K. Perry, Chief Operating Officer  
Alice Sokoloski, Fiscal Director  
Colleen Carter, Director of Programs  
Stephanie Milewski, RLA, Trail Manager  
& Environmental Program Officer  
Sarah Piccini, Program Officer - Interpretation  
& Preservation  
Beverlyann Liuzzo, Administrative Assistant  
Diane Chelik, Administrative Assistant  
Jack Carling, Contracts Manager



# Trail Project Moving Ahead at Full Steam!

Since last fall, LHVA has devoted considerable time and effort to a new, more aggressive approach to the development of the forty-mile long Lackawanna River Heritage Trail project. Rather than working on the project piece-meal, executive director Natalie Gelb Solfanelli and LHVA staff now are pushing forward on the Trail as a whole. There are several sections that are moving through the development process.

### *First Steps*

In November, LHVA hired Stephanie Milewski, RLA, as the manager of the Trail project (see box on page two). In December, LHVA convened a strategic planning meeting of twenty key stakeholders including DCNR, PennDOT, Scranton Tomorrow, the Lackawanna River Corridor Association, and Lackawanna County. This meeting provided important information to move the project forward.

### *Legislative Breakfast*

In January, LHVA held a successful Legislative Breakfast to update elected officials on the Trail project and to enlist their support. Ms. Solfanelli, Ms. Milewski, and Chief Operating Officer Dan Perry have followed up this event with individual meetings with the elected officials. Our legislators' support is critical to the success of this project.

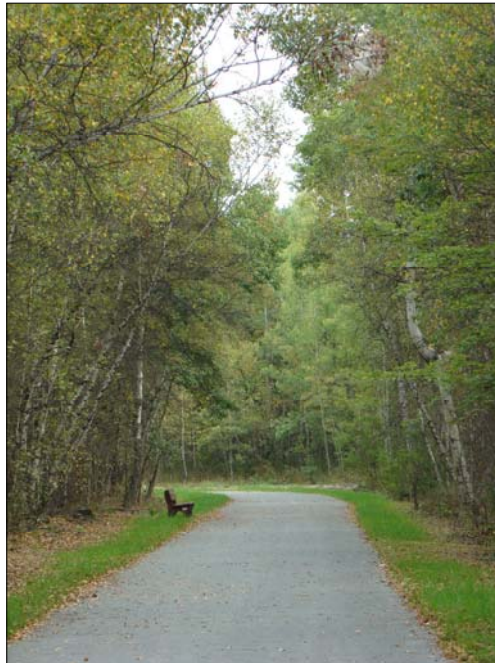
### *Trail Sections*

Each section has been identified by its stage of development: feasibility assessment, property or easement acquisition, site planning, site design, construction, and maintenance. Each piece has unique issues and, of course, funding is always a challenge. With this information in hand, LHVA is exploring new funding opportunities, and is meeting with partners about ideas for historic interpretation, environmental art, and recreation and wellness activities on the Trail.

### *Downtown Scranton Heritage Greenway and Master Plan*

LHVA is working closely with Scranton Tomorrow, the Lackawanna River Corridor Association, the City of Scranton, and other partners on Downtown Scranton Heritage Greenway trail section. Construction is anticipated to begin in summer 2008. In addition, significant progress has been made on the Greenway Master Plan, which has been extended to include the proposed Commonwealth Medical College and the Scranton Laceworks and Artspace projects. This Master Plan will provide a thoughtful and measured guide for community and economic development along the Greenway for the next several decades.

LHVA will continue to report on the progress of the LRHT project. For information about how multipurpose trails can provide significant economic, cultural, recreational, and environmental benefits for their communities, click on the [Fact Sheets](#) at the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy's website ([www.railtrails.org](http://www.railtrails.org)).



The newest section of the Lackawanna River Heritage Trail was completed in Carbondale Township and Mayfield Borough in September 2007. LHVA photo.

## Grants

### PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

DCNR's 2008 Community Conservation Partnerships Program (C2P2) Grants Program is now accepting applications for all project types: planning and technical assistance, acquisition, and development. PA municipalities, recreation and park directors and boards, county and regional planning commissions, pre-qualified land trusts, and nonprofit organizations are all eligible to apply. Prospective applicants are strongly encouraged to contact their DCNR Regional Recreation and Park Adviser to discuss their project in advance.

**DEADLINE: April 25, 2008**

#### **NEW GRANT MANUAL & FORMS:**

Visit [www.dcnr.state.pa.us/brc/grants](http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/brc/grants).

**INFO:** Call NEPA Regional Recreation and Park Advisers:

Dennis DeMara - (570) 963-4973

Lorne Possinger - (570) 963-4974



### Scranton Area Foundation

The Scranton Area Foundation makes grants to strengthen our community, to enrich the lives of the people of Scranton and Lackawanna County, and to advance the following objectives:

- Facilitate cooperation and collaboration;
- Support projects and people who demonstrate the opportunity for positive and significant change/results;
- Improve the range and effectiveness of charitable programs and services in the community;
- Take a well planned and timely approach to existing and emerging community issues.

Applicants should submit a letter of intent (1-2 pages), and the Foundation will provide an immediate response as to the project's potential for funding.

**DEADLINE:** Rolling

**INFO:** Call (570) 347-6203 or visit [www.safdn.org](http://www.safdn.org).

## Place-Based Education

# LHVA Awards Educational Mini-Grants

In November, LHVA announced its 2007-2008 Educational Mini-Grant awards at the PA Anthracite Heritage Museum in Scranton, PA. Each educator received a \$500 grant to fund an educational program focusing on heritage or environmental concerns. The following received grants:

- Clarks Summit Elementary School for *River Study*.
- Newton Ransom PTO for *Celebrating Our Native Heritage*.
- Blue Ridge School District for *Nature Trail, Phase II*.
- Lackawanna Trail Elem. Center for *Caring for Our Earth's Resources*.
- Lackawanna Trail Junior/Senior High School for *Family Histories: Sharing Our Stories with the Community*.
- NEIU 19 for *A Trolley Trip Introducing Children to their Heritage*.
- Scranton Public Library for *The Richardsonian Experience: Scranton Architecture through Photography*.
- Robert Morris Elem. School for *Four Seasons on the Lackawanna River*.
- Scranton Senior High School for *I Am of Scranton*.
- Valley View High School for *PA Coal Mining Through the Eyes of a Preschool Child*.



Teachers from the Blue Ridge School District in New Milford, PA, show the entrance to the Nature Trail they are developing at their school campus with funding from an Educational Mini-Grant. LHVA photo.

## LHVA Partner Events

### Ice Harvest Train a Sell-Out Event

By Dominic Keating, LHVA Volunteer



In 1895, residents in the village of Tobyhanna began cutting ice on the man-made lakes where saw mills once stood. Each summer day, an average of 60 railcars of ice left the village for New York City. However, by 1952, the widespread conversion to mechanical refrigerators ended ice house operations in Tobyhanna.

On Saturday, January 19, 2008, Steamtown National Historic Site operated the Ice Harvest Special to Tobyhanna with Engine #3254 and five coaches. The event was a sell out.

Despite the cool temperatures that day, a preceding warm spell precluded an actual ice harvest. So LHVA's tremendous partnership at Tobyhanna presented three different activities that engaged 327 participants.

Three Propst Transportation buses and their excellent drivers were utilized to reach the ice house and box car, where the Mill Pond #1 Icehouse crew gave talks on the ice harvest. The buses also

shuttled to the Wills Mansion Museum, where many took the tour provided by the Coolbaugh Township Historical Association. At 1:00 p.m., many stalwarts joined Ruth Rorick, Bill Grumbine, and myself on the Tobyhanna Village Walking Tour.

The Pocono Mountain Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society had a great set up at Tobyhanna Station (now in its centennial year) with the model trains and hot dogs for train riders. Steamtown ran its usual great operation, with engineers Aaron Stout and Bernie O'Brien both making on-time runs. D.L. Railroad Dispatcher Betsy King deftly passed a grain train in each direction through Tobyhanna during our stay there, which entertained many of our visitors.

What a fun day! Thanks to LHVA, Executive Director Natalie Gelb Solfanelli, and everyone who made this day possible.

## Heritage Ambassadors' Program

LHVA is pleased to announce the return of the popular Heritage Ambassador's Program for summer 2008. Currently in its seventh year, the program gives area residents and visitors a full day of local history and fun. The program is so successful that LHVA will conduct tours on Saturdays during the 2008 summer season to accommodate a greater number of residents, visitors, and tourists. Currently, the tours are scheduled for three Saturdays: June 28, July 26, and August 30. Watch for more information in upcoming newsletters!

