

## Celebrating Arbor Day

The McKean County Conservation District celebrated Arbor Day by sponsoring the “My Growing Tree” program with the assistance of area foresters, Stan Hess with Bureau of Forestry, Ed Konwinski from Hancock Forest Management, and the County Commissioners. Students within the county schools received an Eastern Hemlock seedling and a poster that included charts to enable the students to monitor their own height as well as the growth of their tree. The program taught the students about Arbor Day and the importance trees play in our lives. Financial support for this project was provided through the Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts’ mini-grant program.



Heather McKean, Watershed Conservationist, left, spoke about the importance of Arbor Day and how trees help protect and improve our water resources. Students learned about the water cycle and the different ways trees help decrease pollution in streams by providing a protective barrier call a riparian buffer and stabilizing streambanks with their roots.

Stan Hess, right, taught the students that the Eastern Hemlock is Pennsylvania’s state tree, and also dicussed the parts of the tree and how to plant a tree as well as doing an activity the illustrates forest being renewable which points out that cutting trees is not bad when practiced in a sustainable manner.



“Smokey the Bear” was also on hand to encourage the students to do their part to take care of our trees and prevent forest fires.

Below Left - McKean County Commissioners, Joe DeMott, Judy Church, Al Pingie and “Smokey the Bear” with first grade students in Port Allegany. Below Right—Ed Konwinski speaks to second grade students from Bradford.

