

Conservancy makes pitch to Mars board

Hands-on opportunities are available

Paula Grubbs, *Butler Eagle*, October 6, 2012

ADAMS TWP — The Glade Run Lake Conservancy wants to team up with the Mars School District to provide hands-on learning opportunities in various areas of curriculum.

Siggy Pehel, president of the conservancy, attended the Mars School Board meeting on Wednesday night along with several conservancy board members to ask the school board to join the effort to restore the lake while taking advantage of the many learning opportunities there. Pehel and his group have been working since August 2011 toward having the 52-acre Glade Run Lake in Middlesex Township refilled after it was drained in July 2011 due to structural deficiencies in the dam.

Pehel has enlisted the help of many in the effort to raise the \$4.2 million needed to rebuild the dam, but he offered the school board a unique partnership that could see students earning credits while gaining hands-on experience in multiple subjects.

Conservancy member Becky Miller told the board that rich opportunities exist for students at the lake, which could double as a current event, a hometown laboratory for various science classes, a subject for a written piece, an engineering and geographical study, or other uses.

She said students could learn important lessons about community service, government or grant-writing.

"And it may inspire future activism where community action is called for," Miller said. Miller asked principals to make teachers aware of subject matter regarding the lake during in-service days and asked teachers to donate their time to the cause of repairing and refilling the lake.

Miller also asked the board to consider allowing the conservancy to use district facilities for future concerts and sporting events that serve as conservancy fundraisers and to put lake-related notices into school publications.

She said in addition to providing learning opportunities, a partnership with the district would help restore the watery resource to the students who formerly fished, walked their dog or boated there.

"The kids want the lake back," Miller said.

Matt Friedman, assistant superintendent and director of curriculum at Mars, said he was delighted with the conservancy's offer and plans to make an appointment to meet with Miller and Pehel soon. He agreed the lake would serve as an excellent venue for hands-on learning, especially in the science subjects.

"It's exciting," Friedman said. "I look forward to meeting with them." More information on the Glade Run Lake Conservancy is available at www.gladerunlakeconservancy.org.