As always, BWA has been busy.

In 2016, we continued to use William Penn Foundation grant funding to reach out beyond the Brodhead watershed to nearby watershed residents. Jackie Speicher headed that effort and trained more than 60 new Streamwatchers in Pike County and adjacent areas of New York state.

Why go so far afield, you ask? Remember, the Brodhead is just one of the subwatersheds that feeds the Delaware, and BWA is part of a larger effort of organizations involved in the Delaware River Watershed Initiative. Educational outreach is one of our areas of expertise, and by training residents of the surrounding areas, we raise the standards of environmental ethics and concerns in that broader area. Nearby municipalities around us pay attention, so our programs broaden the impact and the respect that BWA’s name carries.

Many of you attended our Members & Friends Celebration at Northampton Community College in September, and heard Andrew Johnson of the William Penn Foundation thank us for the work we are doing for residents along the Delaware.

Also with the grant money from William Penn, the Get Outdoors Poconos program has continued to generate quite a buzz in 2016, with more than 300 participants in the series of monthly hikes. Look to the website for information and photographs, and please read the special series of wonderfully informative articles that Carol Hillestad has written about these local hiking locations: brodheadwatershed.org/gopoconos/index.html.
to all of our supporters in 2016

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Stay tuned, as the best is yet to come: A booklet is in the works, featuring the hikes with photos and maps.

The Green Infrastructure Project, funded by a National Fish and Wildlife Foundation grant, can boast the addition of new rain gardens at Retro Fitness, Ann Street, Sarah Street Grill, East Stroudsburg Firehouse, historic Dansbury Depot, East Stroudsburg High School South, and Glen Brook Golf Course. These gardens are possible because of the hard work of our BWA Rain Garden Guardians: Carol Daniels, Marilyn Rousseau, Jan Snukis and Jeff Feick. You all deserve a native flower in your cap.

We are growing – now at 441 members – but we need to grow more! I and other board members have each sponsored two new members to join BWA. I decided to give family memberships to two people serving on my property owners association, because they are respected leaders who have expressed an interest in what BWA does. I hope they get involved.

Now ... who do you know that should also be a member? Have you invited them? We are setting a goal for our new executive director, Bob Heil, and the board to increase our membership by 10 percent. We try hard to use the membership funds efficiently in our programs – and as programs grow, the need for members does, too. It should be doable, but we could use your help.

Please ask someone you respect and think needs to know more about the watershed to join us.

Thank you, BWA members – without you, we don’t exist!

In 2016, the Get Outdoors Poconos hiking series, funded by the William Penn Foundation, helped more than 300 people discover preserved lands in the Brodhead watershed.