

The Columbia Paper

Students test water quality of Roe Jan Creek

May 31, 2017 by DAVID LEE

GALLATIN – The second season of water quality testing of the Roe Jan Creek was conducted with assistance, and for the edification of, students from Hudson and Germantown high schools on the morning of Saturday, May 13.

Four students from each of the schools with their advisors gathered at the Academy Hill Bridge fishing access near Jackson's Corners for the first sampling of the day. There they were met by Roe Jan Watershed Community founder Kaare Christian. He acted as host for the morning, introducing them to Colleen Lutz who is a water quality assessment volunteer evaluator (WAVE). She showed the students how she used a "kick-net" to gather a sampling of tiny insects and crustaceans that live in the stream bed. The success of various species can be important indicators of a stream's health.



Roe Jan Watershed Community founder Kaare Christian watched as Germantown student David Fix collected a water sample, Saturday, May 13. Photo by David Lee

Then Mr. Christian talked to them about the microscopic sampling of the stream. Germantown student David Fix dipped a sterile bottle to collect a water sample that would be analyzed by the Bard Water Lab for the fecal indicator known as *Enterococcus*. It will also be evaluated for turbidity. David also used a meter to determine the water's temperature and conductivity, the latter being a further indicator of water clarity.

The sampling is conducted on the second weekend of each month. Mr. Christian explained that this is only the second year of this controlled sampling, so there is not yet a large data base from which to make predictions, but in general, the Roeliff Jansen Kill is one of the cleanest Hudson River tributaries.

Mr. Christian brought the students to three other sampling stations along the lower half of the 55-mile creek where they met other people for whom the health of the Roe Jan is of great importance. In Elizaville, they met Vince DuBois who is president of the Columbia-Greene chapter of Trout Unlimited. He talked to them about trout fishing in the stream. At the Bingham Mills Dam they met Michael Hamilton who talked about stream connectivity and the role of dams and natural barriers in the stream. And at the Roe Jan Boat Club, where the stream enters the Hudson River, they met Chris Lindner, director of the Bard Archaeology Field School, who told them about 5,000 years of human settlement along the Roeliff Jansen Kill.

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