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Monaca honored for conservation effort

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 By Diana Nelson Jones, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Monaca will be honored by the Ohio River Watershed Committee today at a celebration at Station Square.

Sandie Egley, a member of the committee, said the Beaver County borough is being recognized "as an exemplary local government making an effort to restore our region's rivers as a valuable resource."

The public portion of the Ohio River Watershed Celebration, "Our Rivers: Then and Now," is free from 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. A cruise for paid registrants runs from 1 to 4 p.m.

More than 700 people attended last year's event. This year's program features a talk about the past and present points of interest on the rivers and environmental education displays.

Monaca manager Mario Leone said "Monaca is honored to be recognized for our efforts. This award is very well deserved for our council's vision in promoting the Ohio River as the pioneers for the Ohio River Trails."

Last year, Monaca won one of 23 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency pilot grants of \$150,000 to remediate and convert brownfields along the river. It is working with Midland, Aliquippa and Coraopolis on an extensive Ohio River bike and pedestrian trail.

The watershed group is also rewarding Monaca's initiatives to save energy use in its buildings, its fleet and its water lines, with a new monitoring and metering system that Johnson Controls has guaranteed will save the borough \$2.6 million over 15 years.

In addition, the borough has zoned for windmills and replaced its municipal water tank with one that is elevated and gravity fed.

"As a Beaver County rivertown," said council president Norm Ely, "the borough is humbled to be recognized for our efforts in 'leading the way' in restoring our regions majestic Ohio River."

Diana Nelson Jones: djones@post-gazette.com or 412-263-1626. Read her blog City Walkabout at www.post-gazette.com/citywalk.

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