

Linn Log



MERRILL W. LINN
LAND & WATERWAYS
CONSERVANCY

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www.linnconservancy.org

The Newsletter of the Merrill W. Linn Land & Waterways Conservancy

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Mission of the Linn Conservancy

To preserve land and waterways in Union, Snyder, upper Northumberland and contiguous counties for scientific, historic, educational, ecological, recreational, agricultural, scenic, or open space opportunities.

Fall 2011

For your calendar:

All events open to the general public. Specific details (locations, times) about some of these events appear within the newsletter or at associated websites noted within.

Linn Conservancy www.linnconservancy.org

- **October 16:** Highway cleanup
- **October 22:** Conservancy/BCWA Fall Family event at Ard's Farm Market
- **November 5:** Fall cleanup at Dale/Engle/Walker property; rain date November 12
- **November:** R. B. Winter State Park forest trails cleanup; date to be determined

Buffalo Creek Watershed Alliance of the Merrill W. Linn Land & Waterways Conservancy (BCWA)
www.buffalocreek.org meets on the first Thursday of each month at 7 p.m. at the Union County Government Center

Seven Mountains Audubon Society www.sevenmountainsaudubon.org

- Programs are held on the third Wednesday of the month at the Kelly Township Municipal Building at 7:30 p.m. Free and open to everyone. Take Rte. 15 North of Lewisburg to Zeigler Road (first light north of the Sheetz store). Turn left (west). The building will be on your left within about ¼ mile.
- Audubon's first Saturday (of each month) outings: Meet in the parking area on the south side of the CVS Pharmacy near the northwest corner of Rtes. 15 and 192 in Lewisburg at 7:30 a.m. Destinations TBA.

www.linnconservancy.org

- **September: Extreme Islands of the Atlantic** with **Walt Pomeroy**
- **October: A Week in Costa Rica: Stalking the Wild Quetzal** with **Wayne Laubscher**
- **November: Why are Amphibians So Attractive?** with **Mizuki Takahashi**
- **December: Camaraderie and Dessert: Presented by Everyone.** Presentations by any member
- **January: Atacama** with **Craig Kochel**

Sierra Club (Otzinachson Chapter) www.pennsylvania.sierraclub.org/otzinachson

- Meets first Wed every other month. Next is October 5, 7 p.m., at Mondragon Bookstore, 111 Market St, Lewisburg

Organizations United for the Environment (O.U.E.) www.ouenews.org

- First Monday of every month 7 p.m., at Mondragon Bookstore, 111 Market St, Lewisburg.

Lower Penns Creek Watershed Association www.pennscreekwatershed.org

- Meets third Thursday monthly; 7 p.m.; Adult Resource Center, 100 Richard Road, Penns Creek

“Those who dwell among the beauties and mysteries of the Earth are never alone or weary of life.” ~Rachel Carson

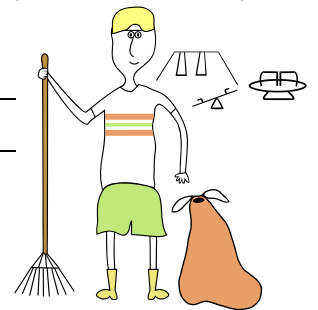
Events and Activities

November Projects

Each fall members and friends of the Linn Conservancy and Union County Historical Society gather on a Saturday morning to tend to outdoor maintenance needs at the Dale/Engle/Walker (DEW) property. This might involve raking leaves, repairing the driveway, mulching, trimming and perhaps some planting. We usually work from 9 a.m. till noon. Scheduled for November 5; rain date November 12.

Over the past couple of years, we have also arranged with R. B. Winter State Park staff to assist in clearing some forest trails in or near the park. To avoid safety issues with regard to hunting seasons, this has often been done on Sunday afternoons. With good turnouts of eager students from Bucknell and under the guidance of adult supervision, we have opened several miles of trails in the area over the years. It's a fun day if you like to be outdoors and enjoy helping open trails for all to enjoy.

Please watch our website for posting of specific dates for these events.



News and Notes

Highway Cleanup

Thank-yous are extended to **Jo Reilly, Joe Keller, Jack Smith** and **Geoff Goodenow** for assisting with the spring cleanup along Penns Creek. For August, a group of incoming first-year students from Bucknell was recruited to get the job done.

If you would like to help on Sunday, October 16 (our last cleanup for the year), contact Jo Reilly for details. She can be reached at 966-4272. We start at about 1 p.m. and the work takes about an hour. You'll enjoy this scenic location along Penns Creek and maybe even see a bald eagle, an osprey or blue heron hunting along the waterway.



Linn Conservancy and Buffalo Creek Watershed Alliance to Host Fall Family Festivities at Ard's

The Linn Conservancy and the Buffalo Creek Watershed Alliance will jointly host a family-oriented fall celebration at Ard's Farm on Route 45 west of Lewisburg on Saturday, October 22. The late afternoon

through evening event features traditional autumn activities including Ards' popular corn maze, a hayride, a bonfire and Ards' deluxe hotdog picnic, complete with lemonade and tasty "s'mores".

"This is a great opportunity for Conservancy and BCWA members to meet in a fun setting and for families to enjoy traditional fall activities," says **Pat Arduini**, chair of the Conservancy's education committee. The event will also have an educational aspect, with presentations on current Conservancy and BCWA projects such as the stream bank fencing program.

BCWA and Linn Conservancy members will receive a \$3 per person discount on the cost of the event. Non-members will be charged \$14 for adults and \$13 for each child. "We are happy that we can pass along a membership discount," Pat says. "The event offers a full slate of activities with entry to the Corn Maze at 3 p.m., the hayride to the picnic site at 5:30 p.m. and the bonfire at 6:30 p.m." The rain date is Sunday, October 23, with all activities starting one hour earlier.

The reservation deadline is Friday, October 14. Members can reserve online at the Conservancy website (www.linnconservancy.org) or by calling the Conservancy office at 570-524-8666.



Freshwater Eels Released in Buffalo Creek

In the Fall 2010 edition of the *Linn Log*, we introduced you to efforts of the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USF&WS) to monitor and reestablish freshwater mussel and eel populations in Buffalo Creek. Julie Devers (right) of USF&WS, Annapolis office, our speaker at the annual dinner in May, gave attendees an overview of the life cycles of these organisms and efforts to restore their populations in Buffalo Creek.



On June 21, 2011, USF&WS staff along with staff from the Wellsboro office of the US Geological Survey and a few onlookers gathered at the Dale's Ridge Trail trailhead to release 32,000 young eels, 3 to 4 inches in length, to the waters of Buffalo Creek. Julie explained that these eels had been collected near Ocean City, Maryland, then held for some time in Wellsboro. The eels released that day will wend their way upstream and spend 7 to 20 years (males/females respectively) in the creek before heading to breeding grounds in the Sargasso Sea. While in the creek, they will serve as preferred hosts of the larvae of the freshwater mussel known as the Eastern Elliptio. The mussels' larvae attach to eels' gills for part of their development. As the eels migrate within the freshwater system, they serve to transport the larvae, thus distributing the mussel as the larvae drop from the gills throughout the eels' habitat. Mussels then settle to the bottom and, throughout their lives, serve as natural filters of our streams' waters.

After the eels were released, the USF&WS team did some electro-shocking in Buffalo Creek. They found three eels that were released last year. They were taken back to the lab where one of them was dissected. It did indeed have freshwater mussel larvae attached to its gills. It was decided to hold the other two in tanks to determine how many juvenile mussels fell off the gills over the next few weeks. A second release occurred in late July, and additional work on the project was continued in late August.

Eventually, our local eels will head for the sea. Currently, a series of dams on the Susquehanna decimate migrating eels as they pass through power generation turbines. It will be at least seven years until some of these new Buffalo Creek juveniles mature sufficiently to head downstream. By then, officials hope to have safe passageways around the dams in place so that historic migrations of these animals to and from the sea can be restored.





Service Awards Presented at Annual Dinner

For the second year, the Merrill W. Linn Land & Waterways Conservancy held its annual dinner at the Shade Mountain Winery. Over 60 members and friends of the Conservancy joined us for an enjoyable and informative evening. This year, service awards were presented to current president, **Wayne McDiffett** (at right in photo to the left, with presenter



John Tonzetich) and to education/public relations co-chair, **Diane Donato** (center, above, with **Geoff Goodenow**, left, and **Pat Arduini**, right) for their dedication to the mission of our organization.



Caring for Communities Recap by Tom Gibson, events chair

The Caring for Communities Earth Month Celebration committee met in June to review this year's activities. Most of the events were well attended, and we had a record 268 people attend all our activities. We are most grateful to the many individuals who donated their time and energy to planning and carrying out our events. Now we move on to planning for next year. As usual, we'll repeat the most popular events and tweak them to make them even better, and we'll conjure some new events to keep things fresh. When we reconvene in late August or early September, we'll select a theme for next year and then plan new events accordingly. So if you have any ideas for a theme, areas we should explore, or events you'd like to see, let us know.



Spring Wildflower Walk Held on New Snyder County Easement Property

Easement donors **Dick and Donna Constant** hosted an open house and wildflower walk at their Snyder County property in May. We thank Dick and Donna for their willingness to share their property's beauty with members and friends of the Conservancy.

Linn/BCWA member **Susan Waggoner** shared these words in describing the event: "The wildflower walk was GREAT! And what a wonderful addition to the Conservancy. I took two guests and they were very impressed. I hope some seeds of interest were sown with these folks, as one of them owns a huge area up here on the mountain. The Constants really outdid themselves on the 'snack' and their hospitality. It couldn't have been nicer."

Conservancy Participates in R. B. Winter State Park Summerfest

The Linn Conservancy celebrated Summerfest at R.B. Winter State Park on Sunday, June 12. Conservancy volunteers talked land conservation and Conservancy activities with attendees who visited the Conservancy booth. Education chair **Pat Arduini** introduced children to nature through art, helping the youngsters create leaf images on copper.



Board Members Attend PaLTA Conference

Each year the Pennsylvania Land Trust Association (PaLTA) hosts a three-day conference for its member land trusts. In May, board members **Diane Donato**, **Wayne McDiffett** and coordinator **Geoff Goodenow** attended the event. Seminar topics included those related to estate planning related to conservation easements and bequests to land trusts, updates on the conservation easement protection model, stewardship and enforcement issues, expanding volunteer networks and impacts of gas extraction from the Marcellus Shale. Attendees also heard an address by acting DCNR Secretary, Richard Allan and keynote speaker, Scott Weidensaul. The Conservancy representatives were able to attend a variety of seminars to gather materials and ideas that will help improve the effectiveness of our organization.



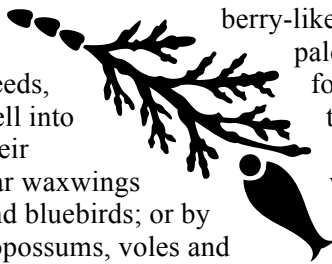
Dale's Ridge Trail Brochure Revised and Reprinted

The Dale's Ridge Trail brochure, originally produced in the early 1990s, has been revised and reprinted. Funding for this project was provided by donations made in memory of Conservancy co-founder, June Hoyle, and a grant from the Edna Sheary Trust.

Among the changes to the brochure is the addition of text for a twelfth trail signpost related to the stands of red cedar trees on the property. Our thanks to **Warren Abrahamson** for writing this informative text and to **Allen Schweinsberg**, who added to the piece by noting the presence of the olive hairstreak butterflies. Here is the brochure text for the new trail sign Post 12:

Individuals of eastern red cedar are common in the former pasturelands and old hedgerows near the trail. Although this native, evergreen, aromatic tree grows on a wide variety of soils ranging from swamps to dry limestone outcrops, it can be an aggressive early colonizer of abandoned pastures and can form dense stands on upland, limestone-derived soils of abandoned farmlands. In contrast to most conifers whose foliage makes soils more acidic red cedar's decomposing foliage makes surface soils more alkaline because its foliage concentrates calcium from the soil. This addition of calcium to surface soils can increase earthworm activity, which in turn can elevate soil organic matter and increase water-infiltration rates. However, competition with hardwood species including maple, oak and ash on sites with richer soils can limit red cedar's success. As a consequence, the red cedar stands in abandoned pastures are expanding while woodland stands with maple, oak and ash are contracting. In our area, red cedars typically persist only 60 to 80 years because of competition from hardwoods. There is ample evidence of such successional turnover on Dale's Ridge.

Red cedar trees are either male or female. Female trees are most evident during the fall when their berry-like shift from green to pale blue. The fleshy cones, containing one to four seeds, don't open but rather remain on the tree well into the winter unless they are consumed by their primary consumer, birds, including cedar waxwings (hence their name), robins, mockingbirds and bluebirds; or by small mammals such as chipmunks, opossums, voles and mice. Cedars are also a food plant for olive hairstreak butterflies, a Pennsylvania species of concern found on this property. Red cedar is important to wildlife not only for its fruits but also because its dense foliage provides valuable nest and roost sites for birds, including robins, bluejays, mockingbirds, juncos and several species of sparrows.



On a related note, trail users will notice that PP&L recently cleared the power line as it crosses the D/E/W property. Our chief steward for the trail, Tom Travis, has had to relocate one of our signposts and has laid some cuttings to better define the trail in the cutover area along the south side of the property.

2011 "What's In Your Back Yard" Youth Nature Photo Contest



Photo by Isaiah Trutt

More than 30 young people from Union, Snyder and Northumberland counties participated in the Linn Conservancy's first annual Youth Nature Photo Contest held this past spring. Going with the "What's In Your Back Yard" theme of the Caring for Communities program, students aged 6 to 18 were asked to photograph and write about what they saw in their backyards and beyond. The young photographers, who submitted



Photo by Collette Southerton

their best pictures of owls, robins, butterflies, flowers and streams, were honored with certificates and cash awards presented at the Conservancy's Celebration for Kids afternoon held at the DEW property on Sunday, May 1.

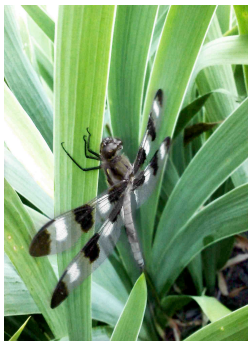


Photo by Taylor Kreamer

"Young people who do not experience the outdoors do not value nature; and those who don't value nature will not seek to protect and preserve it as adults," says **Pat Arduini**, the Conservancy's education chair. "Our photo contest exposed young people to nature and photography by encouraging their exploration of the outdoors." Participants, who submitted digital entries, competed in three divisions: ages 6 to 9, ages 10 to 13 and ages 14 to 18.

The winning entries in division one, ages 6 to 9, were **Isaiah Trutt** of Milton, 1st place winner; **Mikayla Carnathan** of Selinsgrove, 2nd place winner; and **Elijah Trutt**, Milton, 3rd place winner. **Collette Southerton** of Lewisburg won 1st

place in division two, ages 10 to 13. **Bernon Helbig** from Mifflinburg was 2nd place winner and **Cassidy Fegley** of Penns Creek was 3rd place winner in division two. In division three, ages 14 to 18, **Taylor Kreamer** of Middleburg took 1st place, **Sara Moyer** from Laurelton, 2nd place, and **Nick Osman** of Beavertown, 3rd place. First place winners received \$50; second place winners, \$25; and third place winners, \$15. All submitted photographs can be seen on the Linn Conservancy website, www.linnconservancy.org.



"What's in Your Backyard?" Photo Contest Photographers

Like-Minded Organizations

Bucknell Institute for Lifelong Learning (BILL): The Fall term of BILL begins September 26 and runs through November 4 and features fourteen three- five- and six-week courses on a wide variety of topics; membership is open to anyone regardless of prior education experience. One course focuses on understanding the Union County Master Plan and another features six sessions on different aspects of Union County history, including Lewisburg's Market Street, area grist mills (led by new member **Ted Strosser**), general history of Lewisburg, Mifflinburg and the West End, and more. Another course looks at environmental issues: "Cooking the Planet: The Basics of Global Climate Change". All courses are offered during the day at convenient Lewisburg locations. Check out www.bucknell.edu/lifelonglearning or phone 570-577-7006 for more information on courses, membership, and registration. Don't wait; some courses are already filled!



Watershed Protection

Summerfest at R. B. Winter State Park

BCWA participated in the annual Summerfest at R. B. Winter State Park on Sunday, June 12. Attendees were drawn to our display and handouts by an activity for children and a drawing for two gift certificates for guided river trips generously donated by Canoe Susquehanna. Forty-six children and eight adults made colorful bead bracelets symbolizing the water cycle and took home a card explaining it and giving tips for conserving water. Twenty-four people signed up for the drawing.

In other activities this spring, BCWA took its display and free water to both River Road holidays, the first Sundays in April and May, and to the Lewisburg Arts Festival.



Stream Bank Fencing

In our continuing effort to promote stream bank fencing on farms in the Buffalo Creek watershed, BCWA members contacted leaders of the Groffdale Conference Joe Wenger Mennonite community to discuss the issue. We created a brochure describing our project and emphasizing the funding from a private foundation. In early June, this brochure, with a cover letter and a BCWA pamphlet, was mailed to 127 Old Order Mennonite community members, all living in or near the watershed. The mailing invites these area farmers, who dominate the watershed, to participate in the BCWA stream bank fencing project. Stream bank fencing is key to cleaning up Buffalo Creek and reducing the pollution and sediment carried to the Susquehanna River and the Chesapeake Bay.

BCWA Welcomes New Board Members

Susan Mitchell, of Mifflinburg, is retired from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania with 36 years of service. She is a 1997 graduate of the Pennsylvania Rural Leadership Program (RULE). She has been a member of the West Buffalo Township Zoning Hearing Board since 1997. As an avid outdoor enthusiast with concern for the environment, her involvement with BCWA started as a water quality monitor.

Brad Newlin, of Lewisburg, has a Master's Degree in Civil Engineering from the University of California-Davis. While a Peace Corps Volunteer in the Dominican Republic, he designed a water system for 1,400 people. Since then, he has worked in storm water management, dam planning and operation, hydraulic modeling, stream modification and wastewater management. His expertise in water will be invaluable to BCWA.

Chris Bergesen-Peeling, raised and schooled in Williamsport, is very active on the Linn Conservancy Board of Directors, and has volunteered to sit as well on the BCWA Board. While on the Linn Board, Chris was instrumental in hosting "Rockin' with the Reptiles", a fundraiser for the Conservancy, at Clyde Peeling's Reptileland, north of Lewisburg on Route 15. BCWA looks forward to Chris's expertise in business and her knowledge of the local business community, as well as her already tested experience in fundraising.

Conservancy News & Notes

Planned Giving

Planned giving purposefully integrates a charitable gift into one's overall financial, tax and estate plans. It may involve gifts of assets other than outright cash and offers donors a variety of benefits that can help them reach their financial goals as well as provide support for the mission of the Merrill W. Linn Land & Waterways Conservancy. Means of giving to our organization include, but are not limited to, making charitable bequests in one's will; naming the Conservancy as a life insurance beneficiary; designating gifts from retirement plans. Significant tax saving may be possible for you, the donor, and/or your heirs. As always, you should seek the professional advice of your attorney, tax advisor or financial planner.

To learn more about land trusts and estate planning, we also recommend the website ConservationTools.org. Within it, open Comprehensive Guides on the top tool bar. Then, in the left margin find: Financing and Securing Contributions (Facilitating Contributions) and/or Landowner Incentives (Reducing Estate and Inheritance Taxes).

If you should choose to include the Merrill W. Linn Land & Waterways Conservancy in your estate planning, you might need additional information from us, including proper references to our organization, address, and tax identification numbers. We will be happy to provide that information to you.



Membership

In early November, we will be sending our annual membership renewal letter to our current members. In it we will request your continuing support for the 2012 calendar year. Within that mailing, we will include our new Business Partners card, a project of our Membership/Development Committee. Several merchants within our Union/Snyder and Northumberland County area have agreed to provide special discounts or offers to our members from November of this year through December 2012. Just like you, each of the participating merchants has been a generous supporter of the Conservancy's mission. This is one small way of thanking both you and them for that support. We hope you will enjoy patronizing these business partners.

Welcome to Our New Members

New members: **Paul Simington**, Sunbury; **Gerald Cooke**, Lewisburg; **Brent and Amanda Kline**, Milton; **Ted Strosser**, Lewisburg; **Robert and Barbara Thomas**, Lewisburg; **Tammy and Bud Hiller**, Lewisburg; **Julie Barna**, Lewisburg; **James Higbie** and **Wendy Chou**, Lewisburg; **Magdalena Pieters**, Mifflinburg; **Elizabeth Hackenberg**, Mifflinburg; **Betty Ann Bardell**, Alexandria, VA; **Bill and Betty Marlow**, Lewisburg.



Thank You

- **Carol Crichley** for assuming our newly created (volunteer) position of Coordinator of Volunteers
- **Thom Rippon**, for giving of his time to discuss membership/development ideas
- **Dick and Donna Constant** for hosting a wildflower walk on their property in Snyder County
- **Jeannette Lasansky** for review of content of the revised Dale's Ridge Trail (DRT) brochure
- **Becky Mapes**, summer office assistant, for her service to the Conservancy this summer;
- Our Dale's Ridge Trail monthly caretakers
- Shade Mountain Winery for providing complimentary wine for the annual dinner



Membership/Development Committee Update, by Susan Warner-Mills

- ❖ Members of the Conservancy's Membership/Development Committee have been working assiduously on achieving their 2011 goals:
- ❖ Conducted fundraising to support the Native Plant Sale in April
- ❖ Conducted a successful membership renewal follow-up campaign
- ❖ Worked with the Education Committee to put on another fun, delicious, and informational Annual Dinner—held again in May at the Shade Mountain Winery
- ❖ Developed the Linn Conservancy's Business Partners program, to be launched with this fall's annual membership renewal process, as the final component of our new Member Benefits Package
- ❖ Laid the groundwork for a new Volunteer Recruitment and Support function, including recruiting a new Linn Conservancy Volunteer Coordinator
- ❖ Launched a new Estate Planning initiative aimed at informing estate attorneys, financial planners and other related professionals about the potential benefits to their clients of working with and supporting the Linn Conservancy's efforts through land protection, bequests, etc.
- ❖ Added a membership renewal option to the Conservancy's website at www.linnconservancy.org

We continue to encourage all members to keep in ongoing touch with our activities, and to encourage their friends to do so, by frequently visiting our website (www.linnconservancy.org), which features photos and information as well as the opportunity to join, renew and donate online.

THANK YOU, EVERYONE!!!

Contributions and Donations Received

- The Conservancy appreciates the contribution made in memory of **Jeff Bowers** by **Cynthia Kessler**.
- Donations in memory of **June Hoyle** from **John and Martha Zeller, Roger and Nancy Curran, Elizabeth C. Anderson**
- For Koons Trail maintenance from the **Mifflinburg Middle School Builders Club**
- From **Robert Linn**, a donation in memory of his mother toward publication of our Rural Routes brochures
- From **West Milton State Bank**, an unrestricted donation
- Additional life member contributors for 2011: **Barbara Zeider, Thom Rippon, Mary and Ed Mastascusa**
- Plant Sale contributors: **Sally Nyquist, Lewisburg Garden Club, Don Bowman, Roy Fontaine, Susan Warner-Mills, Marilyn Brill, Wayne McDiffett, Carl Oberheim**



PDF Available for Your Next Linn Log

As you know, the *Linn Log* comes to you three times a year. Many of our members have requested to receive this newsletter electronically. We encourage others of you who would like to receive it in pdf format to request being added to that list.

What happens to your hard copy??? If you do receive a hard copy, consider passing it on to friends, neighbors, and new folks to the area when you finish with it. Help us increase our membership support by sharing the newsletter to spread the word about the mission and successes of the Conservancy. Thank you.

The Merrill W. Linn
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*This issue: **Photo Contest Results** and more . . .*
