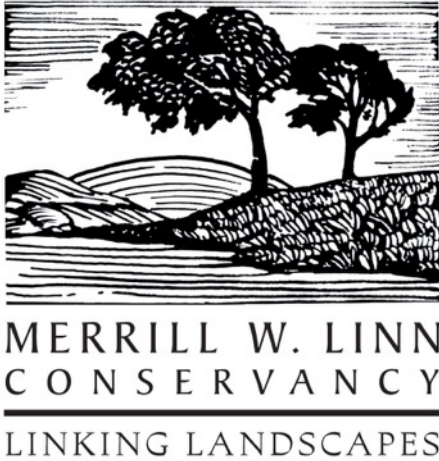


# Linn Log

newsletter of the Merrill W. Linn Land & Waterways Conservancy

fall 2016



## Mission of the Linn Conservancy

To preserve and protect significant ecological sites in Union, upper Northumberland, and contiguous counties and to educate the public on conservation issues critical to the health of our environment.

## Board of Directors

Susan Warner-Mills, President  
Bob VanHorn, Treasurer  
Owen Floody, Secretary  
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Geoff Goodenow, Coordinator  
Diane Donato, Editor  
Patricia Arduini, Facebook and Webmaster  
Ann Gelnett, Historian

## for your calendar

the short list of public events; details for many listed inside

**Shikellamy Bluffs Celebration**, Shikellamy State Park Overlook. Time and date TBD.

**September 11:** Otz in the Park, 1:00 - 3:00 pm, (Morning hike at 11:00 am) R.B. Winter State Park, Pavilion #1

**September 24:** Stahl easement celebration, 10 am, 138 Indian Ridge Road, Lewisburg.

**September 30:** Conservation Union meeting, 7 am, location TBD.

**October 15:** West End hike. beginning at 10 am.

**October 15:** Woolly Worm Festival, 9:30 am - 4 pm, Hufnagle Park, Lewisburg.

**October 15:** Riverkeeper boat trip on the Hiawatha Riverboat in Williamsport, 6 pm.

**October 16:** Highway cleanup along Penns Creek, 1 pm. Call Conservancy office at 524-8666 for details.

**October 28:** Conservation Union meeting, 7 am, location TBD.

**November 11-12:** Susquehanna River Symposium, Bucknell University

**Seven Mountains Audubon Society** first Saturday walks and monthly meetings (3rd Wed.). Visit [www.sevenmountainsaudubon.org](http://www.sevenmountainsaudubon.org) for details.

*"The care of the Earth is our most ancient and most worthy, and after all, our most pleasing responsibility. To cherish what remains of it, and to foster its renewal, is our only legitimate hope."*

Wendell Berry

## Conservancy, Commissioners, Planning Office Sponsor West End Hike

Due to the success of two previous outings, one to Chimney Rocks and another to the Hook Natural Area, the Conservancy, along with the Union County Commissioners and Planning Office, will host another on October 15 (October 22 rain date). Autumn leaves should be hanging on as we hike to the railroad tunnel and trestle along the former rail line at the west end of Union County. Join us for this event, which will begin at 10 am, in the company of human and natural history interpreters from Bucknell University and the PA Dept. of Forestry. Watch Conservancy and County websites and local newspapers for specific details.



## Tali MacArthur Joins Conservancy Board

Tali MacArthur is the newest member of the Linn Conservancy board. Tali recently moved to Lewisburg from Philadelphia. She spent 12 years working for the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, first in Coastal Zone Management, then in the Office of Organizational Training and Development, and finally in the Office of Watershed Management. Prior to that, Tali was a NOAA Coastal Zone Management Fellow at the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources. She has served on the Boards of both the New Jersey and Greater Philadelphia chapters of the Society of Women Environmental Professionals. Tali earned her Master of Marine Science from the University of Washington and her Bachelor of Science in Marine Science from University of South Carolina. She is a senior fellow with the Environmental Leadership Program.

Tali recently accepted a position with the Pennsylvania Council of Trout Unlimited in its Bellefonte, PA office. As Program Director she coordinates the Coldwater Heritage Partnership Program. The Coldwater Heritage Partnership is a collaborative effort between the PA Fish & Boat Commission, PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Foundation for Pennsylvania Watersheds and Pennsylvania Council of Trout Unlimited to

provide leadership, coordination, technical assistance, and funding support for the evaluation, conservation, and protection of Pennsylvania's coldwater streams. She also manages a mini-grant program for Trout In the Classroom programs throughout the Commonwealth. She is a member of the R.B. Winter Trout Unlimited chapter.

Though her children are still young, Tali wants to instill in them a sense of civic responsibility and an understanding that to protect and conserve the elements of our community that we cherish, we must each do our part. Therefore, she looks forward to working with the Conservancy's Education/PR committee and contributing her expertise in membership and development.

She will also, when possible, volunteer to help the Conservancy meet additional goals as well as its responsibilities to members, easement donors, financial supporters, and members of the greater community in and around Lewisburg. She looks forward to learning more about the environmental and conservation issues of concern in her new watershed and community.

When not working or volunteering with the Linn Conservancy, Tali enjoys cooking and baking "healthy" meals for her family, reading, cycling, and "hiking" (read: walking about 100 yards on a trail with her 2 and 4 year old until pleas for snacks become unbearable and the gang takes a break) local trails. She and her family have fallen in love with Lewisburg and enjoy walking around town, attending local events, and showing their support for the community they now call home.

## Otz In The Park

*From Nicole Faraguna*

The Otzinachson Regional Group of the Sierra Club invites members and friends to attend the 4th annual Otz in the Park — its annual get-together at R.B. Winter State Park—on Sunday, September 11 from 1 pm to 3 pm. Meet other like-thinking people to informally share ideas and conversation. Plenty of refreshments will be provided and you are welcome to bring your own special treat to share if you wish. Carol Parenzan, Middle Susquehanna Riverkeeper will be the speaker and will discuss her efforts to promote the health and protection of the Middle Susquehanna River Watershed Region. Morning hike: Roy Fontaine will lead a short hike beginning at 11 am. Meet at Pavilion #1.

## president's message

### connecting partners/linking landscapes

#### SHIKELLAMY BLUFFS PROJECT: LINN CONSERVANCY MEETS MAJOR CONSERVATION CHALLENGE FOR OUR REGION

Dear Linn Conservancy Members and Friends,

I have been waiting over two years to tell you what I am now in a position to report: the Merrill Linn Conservancy—OUR CONSERVANCY!!!—has successfully protected 36 of the most highly ecologically-valued acres in Union County by, for the first time, preemptively purchasing the property and then donating it to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Bureau of State Parks.

In July of 2014 the Conservancy executed an agreement to purchase the property, which sits adjacent to Shikellamy State Park and features numerous ecologically significant features, including several threatened or endangered species of plants and a history of hosting nesting Peregrine falcons. By October of 2015, we had received sufficient grant monies and financial support from individuals and businesses in our region, along with a loan from Mifflinburg Bank and Trust, to purchase the property. In the spring of 2016 we received a second grant allowing us to repay our loan, own the property free and clear, and finally, on September 1 of this year, to transfer ownership of the property to the State of Pennsylvania.

We are so grateful to all of you who stood behind the Conservancy board and me, month after month, as each stage of this process played out. You have probably read numerous times all the people and organizations who have provided logistical, moral and financial support throughout. There are so many, and we thank them once again, now that we have successfully completed this project:

- \* Grant provider: PA Dept. of Community and Economic Dev't. Commonwealth Financing Authority
- \* Grant provider: PA Dept. of Conservation and Natural Resources
- \* Union County Commissioners Preston Boop, John Mathias and John Showers
- \* Union County Planning Department and its Director Shawn McLaughlin
- \* Susquehanna Greenways Partnership and its Director Trish Carothers
- \* Union Township Supervisors
- \* State legislators Fred Keller and Gene Yaw
- \* The Degenstein Foundation
- \* PPL Electric Utilities
- \* Mifflinburg Bank and Trust Company
- \* Coldwell Banker Penn One Real Estate
- \* Attorneys Thomas C. Clark and Andrew D. Lyons
- \* Numerous other generous friends in our region

I want to take a moment to single out one of the above in particular. If Shawn McLaughlin, Director of the Union County Planning Department, had not identified and provided massive logistical support for our two major grant applications, and had he not spurred on and motivated me personally, as well as the Conservancy board as a whole, when the hurdles of this project appeared insurmountable, it would never have come to fruition. He has not only supported our organization through this project, but is a long-standing champion and defender of the environment in our region. I assure you: some positive aspect of your life here in Central Pennsylvania owes its existence to Shawn. Please thank him when you see him.

Finally, IT'S TIME TO CELEBRATE! Many of you joined us at our Conservancy Banquet in May and were able to meet and hear PA DCNR Secretary Cindy Dunn address our gathering. She has promised to join us at the newly expanded Shikellamy State Park. (Date and time to be determined. Check our website for details.) Together we will celebrate the PA Bureau of State Parks' acquisition of the 36 acres we have transferred to it and, in addition, an 82-acre tract adjacent to its northern boundary that DCNR was also able to acquire in 2015. All in all, working together, we have almost tripled the acreage of the Union County portion of the Park and the amount of ecologically significant land that will be protected in perpetuity for us and future generations to enjoy. SEE YOU AT THE BLUFFS!!



*Susan Warner-Mills, President*



## **Draft of Greenway & Open Space Plan Available**

*by Shawn McLaughlin, Union County  
Planning and Development Director*

A draft of the Union County Greenway and Open Space Plan is now available for public review and comment. A copy of the plan can be found at the three public libraries, the Union County Government Center on N. 15th Street in Lewisburg, or viewed on the county website at [www.unioncountypa.org](http://www.unioncountypa.org). The plan and its recommendations reflect nearly two years of work by the volunteer steering committee which attempted to balance the desires of the public with future fiscal and political realities. Conservancy board member Warren Abrahamson and coordinator Geoff Goodenow, among others served, on this committee.

The plan goals are:

- \* Preserve high-quality open space;
- \* Establish and expand greenway and multi-modal trail systems to improve quality of life and transportation options;
- \* Increase the quality and quantity of riparian buffers in the county;
- \* Improve access, use, and connection to the Susquehanna River and other waterways;
- \* Conserve the county's natural resources and ecosystem functions; and
- \* Facilitate healthy lifestyles for County residents and visitors by providing opportunities to enjoy greenways, parks, trails, and other open space.

The plan is organized into five chapters that provide an introduction, overview of Union County, a description of greenway and open space resources, a proposed framework for greenways and open space conservation, and 54 specific actions to implement the plan goals. The plan contains recommendations on conservation measures, education and outreach, land preservation, parks and recreation, and trails/non-motorized transportation. Also identified are 15 implementation priorities along with five early demonstration projects.

Public comments on the draft plan will be accepted through Friday, October 14th, 2016 and can be submitted by emailing to [jdvecchio@unionco.org](mailto:jdvecchio@unionco.org) or in writing to Union County Planning Commission, 155. N 15th Street, Lewisburg, PA 17837.

## **Enrollment Time for Northumberland County Ag Land Preservation**

The Northumberland County Agricultural Land Preservation program will be holding open enrollment for applications this fall. A date has not yet been set, so please visit [www.nccdpa.org](http://www.nccdpa.org) for an announcement by the end of August. To qualify for the program farms must be in agricultural production, a minimum of 50 acres, and located in an Agricultural Security Area within a township. At the end of the application period, all new applications will be scored, and all applications on file will then be ranked accordingly. The Agland Preservation Program is a State and County funded program that buys the development rights for agricultural land. Land placed in the program must remain in farmland for perpetuity.

To date, 20 landowners in Northumberland County have sold agricultural conservation easements to the Commonwealth of PA and Northumberland County, representing a total of 2,288 acres. For questions about Agland preservation in Northumberland County, please call 570-495-4665 or visit [www.nccdpa.org](http://www.nccdpa.org).

## **Koons Trail Temporary Closure**

Due to hazards from dead or dying trees in the vicinity of the Harry Haney ball fields along North 8th St. in Mifflinburg, the borough has closed that area. Efforts are underway to remove the trees that endanger users of the park, although a definite time line for such has not been established. This closure affects the west access to the Koons Trail. Until the situation is resolved to the borough's satisfaction, there is no entrance to or exit from the Koons Trail at its 8th Street trailhead. As an additional safety precaution, the trail has also been closed between 4th Street and 3rd Street.



*The Lewisburg staff of HRG Engineering replaces the split rail fence at the Dale's Ridge parking lot.*

## Wayne Stahl Protects 240-Acre Property in Buffalo Township

*In a letter to his neighbors, Wayne Stahl announced his conservation easement agreement with the Conservancy. Here is Wayne's letter:*

"I am pleased to announce that I have recently concluded a conservation agreement with the Merrill Linn Conservancy that will keep over 240 acres rural and beautiful forever. As it appears now, as productive farmland and woodland, so it will be for all future generations. The agreement permits a minimum of agricultural development, but it will never have 'factory' farming, that is, no giant hog or chicken barns.

"Since my land is adjacent to the Zimmerman farm, which is in Ag Preservation, this means we will always have about 330 acres of green space side by side in Buffalo Township.

"In addition to agriculture, my goal has been to foster and perpetuate old-growth forest, meadow, and wetland for wildlife habitat. Woodlands will remain as they are, and tree-line hedgerows that border cropland will be preserved for an additional benefit to wildlife. Biologists have identified over

150 different plant species on the property, and over 80 different bird species are known to nest in the vicinity. Many others migrate through here.

"A portion of the land is designated as the 'Velma M. Stahl Wildlife Sanctuary.' This area contains a magnificent stand of mature forest. It will remain wild, a true sanctuary. In the remaining woods and agricultural areas hunting will be permitted with permission of future owners.

"Our rural land in Union County can remain both productive and scenic. I am delighted with the conservation agreement, and I hope you are pleased as well."

### Celebrate with us on September 24

A celebration of Wayne's easement will take place on Saturday, September 24 at 10 am.

Everyone is welcome to join us for refreshments and a walking tour of this beautiful property.

The property address is 138 Indian Ridge Road, Lewisburg. This is between Mazeppa and Forest Hill on the north side of Colonel John Kelly Road.



*(Top left) Jeff Trop introduces Montandon wetland walkers to area geology; (top right) Jeff is joined by Warren Abrahamson, who described wetland ecology; (left) Diane Donato staffs Conservancy display at Montandon Day.*



# Linking Landscapes

## Working for Waterways, Wildlife and Us

### Making the Landscape Work for You

*Union County, Pennsylvania, August, 2016* – The Union County Conservation District would like to share the long-term goals of our new riparian buffer program with the community. We would like to see riparian buffer zones become working landscapes. Meaning, the buffer zone would supply a source of profit for the landowner. Initially buffer zones require time to grow and mature. However, once the buffer is mature it can produce goods that can be sold for profit.

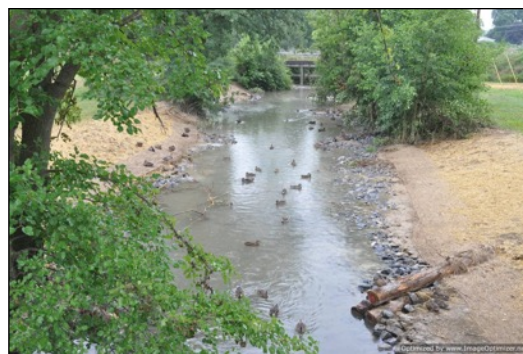
By deciding early on what you want your buffer zone to produce you can gain the benefits sooner. Bushes and trees that produce fruits and nuts are a great choice for landowners looking to make a profit on their buffer zone. Looking into the future even farther riparian zones can be managed to produce timber, and vegetation created from the buffer zone can also be used for biomass fuel.

Riparian buffer zones are great for stream banks and reduce runoff entering streams. However, they can also be used for financial gain. If you rent or own land in Union County and are interested in learning more about this program, please contact the Union County Conservation District at 570-524-3860 or visit our website at [www.unioncountypa.org](http://www.unioncountypa.org).



### UCCD's Stream Bank Restoration Projects

The Union County Conservation District in cooperation with Northcentral Pa. Stream Restoration Partnership has taken on several stream bank restoration projects this summer. Pictured above is a site along Limestone Run in East Buffalo Twp., Union County. It is on the east side of Old Schoolhouse Road between Smoketown Rd and Pheasant Ridge Road. The riparian buffer was seeded with a wildflower mix



called Bayer Pollinator Mix in mid June and has already blossomed into a beautiful wildlife habitat. In time sycamore trees and other native trees will provide shade for the waterway and further stabilize the stream bank thus reducing sediment pollution of the waterway. Another section of Limestone Run on the East Buffalo Twp. municipal grounds on Fairground Road (shown above) was also on this summer's project list and planted with this same seed mix, but is not yet in bloom.



Board member Matt Roberts seeded 2.5 acres of his land in Union Twp., Union County. The work started in spring of 2015 and should conclude in spring of 2017 with a total of around 3 acres. The result is the beautiful mix of both annual and perennial wildflowers as well as warm season grasses. The combination of wildflowers and grasses provides nesting sites for birds, pollinator habitat for bees and butterflies and other wildlife and environmental benefits. To maintain this meadow condition, Matt plans to either burn or mow the field in spring 2017.

## News from Middle Susquehanna Riverkeeper



### Riverkeeper Awarded Environmental Grant

Join us in congratulating our Middle Susquehanna Riverkeeper Carol Parenzan who, in partnership with Lewisburg Neighborhoods Corp. (Sam Pearson) and Susquehanna River Clean-up Project (Zach Stotter), was awarded a PA American Water Environmental Grant to develop a best practices manual for planning and measuring stream clean-up projects, as well as provide training via webinars for watershed associations and environmental organizations, and a webpage to house the manual and a calendar of clean-up projects. The project also includes plans to develop a children's book about taking care of the river.

### Susquehanna Life Magazine Donates Office Space to Middle Susquehanna Riverkeeper

The Linn Conservancy commends Erica Shames for generously offering office space to Carol Parenzan, Middle Susquehanna Riverkeeper. Below are the details as reported in *The Daily Item* a few months ago.

**LEWISBURG (July 13, 2016)** – Two like-minded and river-focused local business leaders will now share common office space in downtown Lewisburg. *Susquehanna Life Magazine* has gifted office space to the recently formed Middle Susquehanna Riverkeeper Association, Inc. at 217 Market Street.

"When Carol mentioned she was looking for a business to donate office space for a year, I immediately thought of sharing the *Susquehanna Life* magazine office with her," said Erica Shames, publisher, *Susquehanna Life* magazine. "Her work to promote and protect the Susquehanna River is very much in alignment with the magazine's mission -- to educate readers about the high quality

of life in the region, and the positive efforts on behalf of it. I look forward to being inspired by her energy and passion as we share the same space for the next year!"

As part of her licensing agreement with Waterkeeper Alliance, the environmental organization that spearheads the efforts of over 300 waterkeepers around the world on 6 continents and in 34 countries, Middle Susquehanna Riverkeeper Carol Parenzan is required to have physical office space within the watershed she works.

"My working relationship with Erica and *Susquehanna Life* goes back almost 20 years when I wrote a series of articles for the magazine about emerging entrepreneurs in the Susquehanna River region," explains Parenzan. "Rekindling this working relationship and collaborating side-by-side on issues important to the river and the communities she connects is a win-win not only for *Susquehanna Life Magazine* and Middle Susquehanna Riverkeeper but for the entire Susquehanna River watershed. I am truly honored and appreciative of the gifted space and time with Erica."

Middle Susquehanna Riverkeeper Carol Parenzan spends much of her day out in the 10,000-square mile watershed she serves to protect and preserve. To schedule an appointment with her at the Lewisburg office, please contact her at 570-768-6300 or [midsusriver@gmail.com](mailto:midsusriver@gmail.com).

### Cruise the Susquehanna With Riverkeeper Carol Parenzan

Middle Susquehanna Riverkeeper Association, Inc. is hosting "Dumplings at Dusk" on Saturday, October 15, at 6 pm. Please support the work of your Middle Susquehanna Riverkeeper by joining her for a one-hour cruise aboard the Hiawatha Riverboat out of Williamsport, featuring Bissinger's Apple Dumplings with cinnamon or vanilla ice cream, a picturesque sunset from the deck as you cruise the West Branch of the Susquehanna River, and information about the work your Middle Susquehanna Riverkeeper is doing to protect, improve, and preserve your Middle Susquehanna River watershed.

RESERVATIONS ARE REQUIRED. Cost is \$25 per person. Please send a check with name(s) and contact information to: Middle Susquehanna Riverkeeper Association, Inc., PO Box 252, Lewisburg, PA 17837. Limited to 100.

## **PA Land Trust Association (PaLTA) Reports Conservation Successes for 2015**

*By Warren Abrahamson*

The hard work and successes of Pennsylvania's land trusts were so very evident in the statistics offered in the most recent PaLTA newsletter. For example, between January 2006 and December 2015, Pennsylvania land trusts conserved 223,000 acres of land while increasing the acreage protected by 64 percent and the acreage owned in fee by 112 percent!!

But the newsletter statistics that struck me most were those that demonstrated the accomplishments and success of our Merrill W. Linn Land and Waterways Conservancy. For example, the Linn Conservancy ranks 24th in total land protected among the 66 conservation organizations protecting land in Pennsylvania. And, we rank 30th among those 66 Pennsylvania organizations in the number of perpetual conservation easements held.

We've accomplished this with great part-time help and a Board and Committees staffed by committed and energetic volunteers. Of course, there remains much more to accomplish, but let's take a moment to reflect on all that we have accomplished and then continue our work on behalf of conservation.

## **Lower Penns Creek Watershed Association**

Thanks to the efforts of Snyder County and Union County Conservation Districts and professors from Susquehanna University, another quality educational Ecology Day was held at the New Berlin Commons. The biodiversity of Penns Creek is amazing – yellow bullheads, catfish, tadpoles, damsel and dragonfly larvae, ...etc. Of course there were many rusty crayfish too. It is wonderful to see how much the boys and girls become mesmerized by what they find. This fall the LPCWA will be doing our roadside cleanups, rain



garden clearing, and educational programs. Join us at the Penns Creek Adult Resource Center in Penns Creek on the third Thursday of the month at 7 pm. We welcome new people and new ideas.



## **Conservancy, Partners To Construct Native Plant Garden On EBT Property**

The Linn Conservancy will partner with area conservation organizations, government agencies, educational institutions, youth groups, and gardening enthusiasts to create a native plant garden at the East Buffalo Township (EBT) property on Fairground Road west of Lewisburg.

The garden, an extension of the Conservancy's Linking Landscapes Initiative, will be a setting where visitors can learn about the benefits of native plant gardening, develop an appreciation for the aesthetics of native landscapes, and understand the essential role native gardens can play in providing habitat for threatened species, particularly pollinators.

In late 2015, the East Buffalo Township Supervisors voted to allow development of the garden in a plot located between the EBT municipal building and the township's recycling center. The site is highly visible to the many residents visiting the EBT property and is located close to Lewisburg's intermediate and middle schools. It is also near the Wednesday Farmer's Market and two ball fields.

"We will seek to engage the intermediate and middle school students in environmental education with an emphasis on the role of native plants in the ecosystem and how native flora defines this place we call the Central Susquehanna Valley," said Diane Donato, the Conservancy's Publicity Chair. "We will also provide adult educational opportunities with the objective of inspiring community members to create their own native plant gardens."

Signage in the garden will communicate the objectives of the garden, why native plants are essential to biodiversity, and why we should care about the preservation of native species. The Conservancy will publicize the garden in the local media, on our website and Facebook page and through our internal publications.

The Conservancy is looking to engage our members and others in the community in this project. Any donations, including time, expertise, and plants, are welcome. Call 570-523-6327 or email [diane@windstream.net](mailto:diane@windstream.net) if you would like to know more about the project.



## INVASIVE PLANTS

by John Tonzetich, board member and Bucknell University professor emeritus of biology

We live in a world constantly impacted by cultural and environmental change as a consequence of our human endeavors. One result is the development of new ecosystems in disturbed areas with consequences that are often unknown in terms of erosion, water quality, habitability and biodiversity. Our use of the land pays little attention to the benefits and needs of native plant communities and often results in opportunistic weeds invading a given landscape whether it be a backyard, agricultural field or a natural ecosystem.

These weeds are unwanted because they may simply disturb a garden aesthetic or more seriously damage agricultural crops, public health or natural resources. In 1975 the US legislature authorized the USDA to designate as noxious weeds a select group of species that had a major impact on agriculture, the economy and public health. As a result the Federal Noxious Weed Act made it illegal to import, sell, cultivate, or transport these species. Since then each of the states has followed with their own list of noxious weeds with comparable legal restrictions. Pennsylvania has 13 plant species designated as noxious. The list includes such species as mile-a minute weed, purple loosestrife, thistles, and Jimsonweed.



*bush honeysuckle*

However, there is a much larger array of aggressive species creating a threat to the biodiversity and stability of our native plant and animal communities in addition to affecting human health and the economy to a varied extent. These plants are termed invasive species because they can

quickly spread into both disturbed and natural landscapes and upset the complex structure of our natural ecosystems. Like many noxious weeds they are often alien or exotic species first introduced by humans by a variety of activities including horticulture, agriculture, food for wildlife, and by accident. Pennsylvania lists over 90 species but unlike noxious weeds they do not have legal restrictions. They are invasive because they are able to quickly colonize disturbed landscapes such as roadways, trails, agricultural fields, and logged or cleared areas. Furthermore they can outcompete native plants for nutrients,



*Japanese stiltgrass*

water and light once they gain a foothold in a native landscape.

Since they are from other continents or other regions of our own continent, they

have fewer or no natural enemies, diseases or competitors in their new environment. As they proliferate they displace native plants resulting in a decrease in native plant species diversity and a degeneration of wildlife habitat. Some common invasives include bush honeysuckle, Japanese barberry, autumn olive, Japanese knotweed, multiflora rose, Japanese stiltgrass and burning bush.

A local example of this problem is evident in the spread of garlic mustard in our backyards and forests. Garlic mustard, a European species, was first introduced on Long Island in the 1800's as a food and herbal plant. It has gradually spread to 30 eastern and midwest states. Like many successful invasives, it produces vast numbers of long lasting seeds, has few natural enemies and is tolerant of many growing conditions. Herbivores such as deer and rabbits avoid the plant favoring the native plants. The result is a displacement of native woodland plants such as Dutchman's breeches, Solomon's seal, bloodroot, hepatica, trilliums, and spring beauty to name a few.

*continued on page 10*



*garlic mustard*

Furthermore the roots are known to secrete a phytotoxin that suppresses the growth of hardwood seedlings. The plant also has a lethal effect on a native butterfly species, the Virginia white. The Virginia white typically lays its eggs on a native relative of garlic mustard, toothwort. However, it will mistakenly identify garlic mustard as a host plant and lay its eggs on the plant. Unlike toothwort the chemicals in garlic mustard are toxic to the butterfly and the caterpillars fail to survive. Thus the plant has

several destabilizing effects on our natural ecosystems. Removal of the plant is labor intensive as it must be uprooted before it flowers. This is but one example of the 90 invasive plants listed by the PA Department of Natural Resources that are becoming a threat to our natural landscapes. Control of invasive plants is an ongoing process and involves early detection, restricting their spread, and continual monitoring once restoration is attempted. Since removal of invasives is very difficult once they are established, special attention should be given to areas of natural diversity. For further information on this issue two good sites are: <http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/conservationscience/invasivespecies/index.htm> <http://www.nps.gov/plants/alien/pubs/midatlantic/midatlantic.pdf>

Becoming aware of invasive plants and their prevention and choosing natives to plant in one's yard are steps towards preserving our natural environments and sustaining biodiversity.

## Conservancy Banquet Celebrates Purchase and Ag Preservation Program

The Conservancy's annual banquet in May attracted a capacity crowd while several latecomers had to be placed on a waiting list. The event



*Cindy Dunn with Jeff Coup*

celebrated the Conservancy's purchase of 36 acres of woodland adjacent to the Shikellamy Overlook in southern Union County. (See Susan Warner-Mills' message on page 3 for complete details.) This parcel has been of

great interest to the state park system for many years. Through acquisition of some state grant money, the Conservancy was able to purchase the land, which will soon be turned over to the park system. In recognition of this accomplishment, PA DCNR secretary Cindy Dunn joined us for the event and provided the keynote address for the evening. In her remarks, the Secretary noted the need to engage youth in conservation efforts, to adapt parks to more diverse communities as demographics change and to protect enough large landscapes so that plants and animals can migrate in light of climate change.

Other special guests for the evening included Bob and Barbara Koch and Christopher Lee and Dawn Warren. These families, along with Peggy Lauver (unable to join us due to prior engagements), have

each made an outright donation of their agricultural easement rights to Union County's Agricultural Land Preservation Program. Their desire to know that their land will forever be protected as farmland made this an easy decision for them in spite of forgoing possible financial incentives offered by the program's formal application and review process. In total, over 260 acres have been donated to the program in Union County.

In recognition of the Union County Conservation District's ongoing efforts to preserve our farmland, the Conservancy recognized the work of Bill Deitrick, conservation district manager, and his staff with its Environmental Stewardship Award.



*The Conservancy honored farmland donors at the Union County Conservation District's annual dinner in April. From left to right: Peggy Lauver, Dawn Warren, Christopher Lee and their son Landon, and Bob Koch.*

# thank you!

## Welcome new members:

**Lewisburg:** Tali MacArthur; Dorothy Hvozda; Mary Zimmerman; Susana Picada & Joe Layan; James, Beth and Elizabeth Mauch; Simonne Roy

**New Berlin:** Elaine Hopkins

## Thank yous:

Our thanks to these donors of items to our **banquet auction:** Campus Theatre, Canoe Susquehanna, Rusty Rail, Vargo Outdoors, Barbara Thomas, Warren and Chris Abrahamson, Andrea Bashore, Ruth Burnham, Massage... Naturally (Laura Wolfberg), ProCare Physical Fitness and Performance, Sushihanna Japanese Cuisine, Barbara Allison, Shaffer Landscapes, Reba and Pancho's Restaurant.

**June Adopt a Highway** cleanup along Penns Creek: Duane, Ann and Bic Griffin, Geoff Goodenow, Denise Brittain

**Plain Air** Simonne Roy, donation from sale of some of her plain air art pieces

**BU Volunteer:** Nicole Certo, BU student who assisted with some projects this summer

**Grants:** PPL Foundation and Marta Heflin Foundation grants of \$2500 and \$7500 respectively

**Dale's Ridge Trail** Thanks to HRG for fence installation and Scott Kerstetter, staff, and clients from the Union County Probation Office for tree planting at Dale's Ridge parking area.

## Our Business Partners for 2016

We thank these local businesses that joined us in supporting our Business Partner card that was enclosed with your membership materials sent to you last November. Each offers a specific discount to Conservancy members on particular items. Please patronize these businesses and thank them for their support of the Conservancy's mission.

In Montandon: **Bertoni's Pizza**, just east of the railroad crossing; **Ard's Farm Market**, Rte 45 west of Lewisburg; in Lewisburg: **Cherry Alley Café**, **Lewisburg Studio**, **Vargo Outdoors**, **Canoe Susquehanna**; in Middleburg: **Shaffer Landscapes, Inc.**

## Thank you Alexa and Keerthana

If you've attended a Conservancy event during the past few years, chances are you met our Bucknell work-study interns—Alexa Gorski and Keerthana Krishnaraja. Alexa worked with us for three years; Keerthana, for two, supporting our efforts in the office and staffing our booths at Woolly Worm, Cabin Fever, WinterFest, and many more events. Both graduated in June and have moved on with their lives. Alexa, Keerthana—thank you for all you have done for the Conservancy. You will be missed!



Alexa (left) and Keerthana (right) with Josh Custer at the annual dinner.

## Bucknell Environmental Studies Group Focus on Dale's Ridge/Bridge Redesign

This spring the Conservancy challenged students in Bucknell Professor Amanda Wooden's Environmental Studies class to redesign the Dale's Ridge Trail parking lot, trail access, and creekside area at the Dale/Engle /Walker property.

Graduating seniors Evan Quille, Griffin Robertson, and Bryan Horowitz took on the project, producing a comprehensive redesign. We thank them for their outstanding work and wish them well in their careers. A PowerPoint version of the project report is available. Email your request to linn@ptd.net with Dale's Ridge Design in the subject line.



Geoff Goodenow listens as Evan Quille and Bryan Horowitz present their recommendations for Dale's Ridge parking area.



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fall 2016

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- New Easement Celebration
- 'Invasive Plants' by John Tonzetich
- News from the Middle Susquehanna Riverkeeper

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