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# Linn Log

## SPRING 2022



## ARTISTS & PHOTOGRAPHERS WILL CAPTURE NATURE AT PLEIN AIR EVENT

On Sunday, May 1, artists and photographers will work *en plein air*—in the outdoors, rather than in a studio—at a time of year when nature is most vibrant and alive. The annual Plein Air Event, introduced in 2014, is sponsored by the Lewisburg Arts Council, Merrill Linn Conservancy, the Lewisburg Photography Club and Union County Historical Society.

Artists participating in the opening day of Plein Air are invited to work from 9 am to 5 pm at Dale's Ridge (the Dale-Engle-Walker

property) at 1471 Strawbridge Road and the Koons Trail on N. 4th Street in Mifflinburg. Photographers may attend one or more Nature Photo Hikes on Dale's Ridge Trail. Eight hikes, leaving from the Dale's Ridge parking area, are scheduled from 6 am to 6 pm. They will be led by Lewisburg Photography Club president Dan Hyde, and advanced members of the club.

Volunteers will be posted at the DEW site to assist artists and (Continued on page 3.)



## Linn Log SPRING 2022

Mission of the Merrill W. Linn  
Land & Waterways Conservancy

To preserve and protect significant  
ecological sites in Union, upper  
Northumberland, and neighboring  
counties and to engage the public  
with conservation issues that affect  
the health of our environment.

### Board of Directors

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The Merrill W. Linn Land and  
Waterways Conservancy was founded  
in April 1988 in memory of Merrill  
W. Linn, a local attorney and avid  
outdoorsman who spent much of  
his life exploring the woods, streams,  
fields, and byways surrounding his  
native Lewisburg, and sharing that  
experience and knowledge with others.

Merrill Linn Conservancy  
PO Box 501  
Lewisburg, PA 17837  
570-524-8666

[www.linnconservancy.org](http://www.linnconservancy.org)  
[info@linnconservancy.org](mailto:info@linnconservancy.org)



## LINN CONSERVANCY GEARING UP FOR AN ACTIVE YEAR

Our gratitude goes out to all who  
sustained the Merrill Linn Conser-  
vancy's mission by donating to our  
**2022 Raise the Region** campaign.  
Though the accounting is not final,  
donations to the Conservancy totaled  
**\$6,900** by the end of the 30-hour  
event. That is close to a 50 percent  
increase over 2021. The annual fund-  
raiser is sponsored by the First Com-  
munity Foundation of Pennsylvania.

We are thankful to again have con-  
fidence in hosting in-person activi-  
ties. In April we are excited to offer  
nature walks on two of our protected  
properties—**Glacier Pools Preserve**  
on **April 2** and the **Montandon Wet-  
land** on **April 16**. Read more about  
these events on page 8 or at [www.linnconservancy.org](http://www.linnconservancy.org). Then mark your  
calendar.

Our **Buffalo Creek Watershed Alli-  
ance** division will mark **20 years** of  
amazing accomplishments (see page  
4.) on **April 9** with a major cele-  
bration at **Rusty Rail**. And we are  
planning—after a two-year pause—to  
return to Shade Mountain Winery for  
a May 4 Spring Dinner.

More public engagement events will  
come throughout the year, including  
a series of bird walks on protected  
properties. For Conservancy board  
members, these are opportunities to  
thank members and friends for their  
ongoing support as well as oppor-



tunities for us all to reconnect with  
others who have a passion for land  
and waterways conservation.

### A CALL FOR SITE STEWARDS

We have one more ask. Allen  
Schweinsberg, our longtime Site/  
Stewardship Chair, is seeking addi-  
tional volunteers for monitoring and  
stewardship activities. If helping the  
Conservancy fulfill its promises to  
easement owners and donating a few  
hours in the outdoors appeals, call  
570.524.8666 or email [info@linncon-  
servancy.org](mailto:info@linnconservancy.org) to learn more.

Buffalo Creek Watershed Alliance  
is also recruiting volunteers to serve  
as stewards of riparian buffers that  
are being installed at targeted stream  
sites in central Pennsylvania. Contact  
Gerald Heckler at [geraldheckler@  
gmail.com](mailto:geraldheckler@gmail.com) for more information.  
Or get all the details on Saturday,  
April 9, 12 noon to 2 pm, at BCWA's  
anniversary celebration at Rusty Rail.  
(See page 6.)

—Diane Donato, *President*

## WEDNESDAY MAY 4 CONSERVANCY ANNUAL DINNER

The Linn Conservancy has reserved  
**Shade Mountain Winery on Wednes-  
day, May 4**, for the return of our an-  
nual dinner after a two-year hiatus.  
Shade Mountain has requested that  
we limit attendance to 60 guests and  
the hours to **5:30 to 8:30 pm**.

As in past years, social time, featur-  
ing Shade Mountain wines and hors  
d'oeuvres, will begin at 5:30 pm with  
formal festivities kicking off at 6:15  
and dinner at 6:45. Some details of  
the event are still in the planning  
stage, but we will keep our mem-  
bers and friends posted as we move  
forward.

Shade Mountain Vineyard/Winery is  
located 6 miles south of Mifflinburg  
on Route 104 between Penns Creek  
and Middleburg. The street address  
is 16140 PA Route 104, Middleburg.





## PLEIN AIR EVENT

*Continued from page 1*

with instructions for participating in Plein Air activities and additional art and photography opportunities in the following days. Light refreshments, including finger foods, will be offered to all from 4 to 5 pm.

Artists and photographers are invited to return to Dale's Ridge and the Koons Trail from May 2 to 8 to complete their work. They are also welcome to work at Shikellamy State Park. Detailed descriptions and directions for each site, along with guidelines for artists and general information about the Plein Air Event are available online at [www.lewisburgartscouncil.com](http://www.lewisburgartscouncil.com) and on [www.linnconservancy.org](http://www.linnconservancy.org).

Bellefonte-based artist Susan Nicholas Gephart will lead this year's outdoor Plein Air workshop, from 9 am to 11 am in an area adjacent to the Dale-Engle-Walker House. The artist, who works primarily in pastels and oils, will share how her passion to explore the landscape is expressed through a unique use of color, texture, and atmosphere, capturing the emotion of a moment with spontaneity and directness. Participants are invited to bring coffee and breakfast snacks to the workshop.

Registration is required for participation in the Plein Air Event. To attend, email [workshops@lewisburgartscouncil.com](mailto:workshops@lewisburgartscouncil.com)

## SUSAN NICHOLAS GEPHART LEADS PLEIN AIR WORKSHOP

Susan Nicholas Gephart, who has been exhibiting and painting award-winning pastel and oil landscapes for over fifty years, will present the 2022 Plein Air Workshop at the Dale-Engle-Walker property on Sunday, May 1 beginning at 9 a.m. This optional workshop is a popular feature of the day, attracting an audience eager to learn how a fellow artist approaches painting *en plein air*.

Susan works in all mediums and has a BFA from Penn State. Her passion to explore the landscape is expressed through a unique use of color, texture, and atmosphere, capturing the emotion of a moment with spontaneity and directness. Her teaching philosophy is to, "Connect, Inspire, Support"—whether working with a beginner or an experienced painter.

This demonstration will feature the pastel medium with an underpainting done in watercolor. On display and for sale, Susan will have works created on location in watercolor, oil, acrylic, and the pastel mediums. Her goal will be to connect the plein air process to all attendees and mediums. She will also share her plein air tried and true tips and tricks.

Working "*en plein air*" allows for spontaneity and directness, she says. "Responding to the sound, smell, and light of the environment influences each interpretation. I strive to capture and convey a spiritual message of nature's importance and connection to man."



Susan has been instructing pastels since the mid 80's and organizing the Hameau Farm Studio Artist Retreats for all levels and mediums for 24 years. She is a cofounder of the Plein Air Painters of Central Pennsylvania and has her own S. Nicholas Signature line of hand-rolled soft pastels called "Earth, Water, Sky."

Her colorful, impressionistic studio and plein air paintings are in private and permanent collections internationally.

*More about Susan Nicholas Gephart and her work can be viewed at* [www.SNicholasArt.com](http://www.SNicholasArt.com).





# BCWA: 20 YEAR CAMPAIGN TO REVIVE BUFFALO CREEK

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The formation of the Buffalo Creek Watershed Alliance (BCWA) of Merrill Linn Conservancy 20 years ago, grew out of Pennsylvania's Growing Greener Initiative that provided \$1.3 billion to meet Pennsylvania's environmental needs.

Along with funding came a new approach to addressing environmental problems—the notion that the citizens of the Commonwealth, not just bureaucrats and advocates, had a stake in improving the environment and could be recruited to do it.

The PA Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) pledged to provide the tools, training, and funding needed to form citizen-volunteer groups that could take on issues such as watershed restoration.

**2001** DEP grants Linn Conservancy \$5,000 Growing Greener grant to establish a volunteer watershed protection group for Buffalo Creek.

**October 2001—April 2002** Buffalo Creek Watershed group holds series of public meetings leading to formation of Buffalo Creek Watershed Alliance (BCWA) as a division of the Conservancy.

**Fall 2003:** BCWA's initial public education and outreach activities—first newsletter published, [www.buffalocreek.org](http://www.buffalocreek.org) website designed, BCWA's first stream cleanup at Campbell Mill Road, BCWA logo contest. Watershed Specialist positions created at PA Conservation Districts. Shanon Burkland Stamm named in Union County.

**Winter 2004:** BCWA mounts membership drive.

**Fall 2004:** Buffalo Creek watershed video and DVD—*You Are What You Drink*—released. BCWA plants riparian buffer along north shore of Buffalo Creek, north of Mifflinburg.

**Winter 2005:** BCWA applies for \$35,000 Growing Greener grant for design of acid remediation site in headwaters of Buffalo Creek.

**Spring 2005:** BCWA begins Buffalo Creek stream monitoring program measuring water quality, including pH, from headwaters of Buffalo Creek in Bald Eagle State Forest to St. Anthony Street in Lewisburg. BCWA sponsors first canoe float on lower portion of Buffalo Creek.

**Fall 2005:** BCWA receives grant from League of Women Voters of PA to educate watershed residents about water quality issues and protection efforts.

**Fall 2006:** BCWA submits \$290,000 grant application for construction of passive acid remediation facility in Buffalo Creek headwaters on 2.8 acres in Bald Eagle Forest.

**Spring 2007:** Bucknell volunteers help BCWA clear out a tire dam obstructing the flow of Buffalo Creek. BCWA creates watershed restoration plan for Buffalo Creek watershed.

**Fall 2009:** Acid remediation site completed and dedicated on September 12, 2009.

**Spring 2010:** BCWA sponsors public tour of acid remediation site.

**Spring 2011:** US Fish and Wildlife Service releases 32,000 small eels into Buffalo Creek to re-establish populations of freshwater mussels and eels, which are hosts of the mussel larvae. As they mature, the mussels drop to the bottom and serve as natural filters of stream water.

**Spring 2012:** BCWA celebrates 10th anniversary, establishes Jeff Bowers Award in memory of the founding chair of the Alliances board.





PHOTO: ALLAN GRUNDSTROM

**Winter 2013:** BCWA partners with Union County Conservation District (UCCD), US Fish and Wildlife Service, PA Game Commission, and Bucknell to create 1.5-acre wetland on Ard's Farm Market property, which is in the greater Limestone Run watershed. The wetland is used as a study area for Bucknell biology and engineering students.

**Spring 2013:** PA Department DEP noted a significant increase in the fish population downstream of BCWA's acid rain remediation site. BCWA publishes a Buffalo Creek Water Trail brochure designed to increase the public's use of the creek.

**Spring 2014:** BCWA, under the direction of David Pearson, presented a Bucknell Institute of Lifelong Learning course about stewardship of streams.



**Summer 2017:** BCWA partners with UCCD and DEP on a stream bank restoration project along Conley Run, a small tributary to Buffalo Creek.

**2018:** BCWA presents a drone video *A Journey on Buffalo Creek: From Headwaters to the Susquehanna*.

**Fall 2019:** BCWA takes on its first stream buffer maintenance project at Jim Sanders property. Seasonal maintenance controls invasive plants and repairs damage to the stream buffer's native tree and shrub plantings. In 2019, BCWA also celebrated its acid remediation site's 10th anniversary and the return of life to Buffalo Creek. Brook trout and an array of insects flourished once again in the first seven miles of the stream. But downstream, agricultural runoff, soil erosion, dumping, and other assaults continue to plague the stream.

**In 2022 and beyond,** Buffalo Creek and similarly impaired streams will benefit from a major central Pennsylvania restoration initiative funded by National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. Grant recipients Chesapeake Conservancy and the Precision Conservation Partnership are targeting critical stream sites for riparian buffer installations—with 11 sites approved to date. Buffer installation within the Buffalo Creek watershed will be led by Union County Conservation District (UCCD) and its watershed specialist Shanon Stamm.

These buffers stabilize stream banks, reducing erosion, a major issue throughout the Susquehanna Basin. Buffers also help remove excess nutrients and provide shade and habitats for wildlife—but only if they are maintained and kept alive.



## CELEBRATE BCWA'S 20TH APRIL 9TH AT RUSTY RAIL

The Buffalo Creek Watershed Alliance (BCWA), a division of Merrill Linn Conservancy, is celebrating its 20th anniversary at Rusty Rail in Mifflinburg on Saturday, April 9 from 12 to 5 pm.

Rusty Rail has created a new beer—a tea-lemon shandy—for a BCWA can release marking the occasion. The can design will include the BCWA logo and a picture of Buffalo Creek. BCWA has reserved the mill shed—at the west end of the Rusty Rail parking area—from 12 pm to 2:00 pm for a BCWA meeting and presentation by Ben Hayes, Director of the Watershed Scie

The April 9 event, which will include tours of the brewery, outdoor games, and the live band, Route 15, will support both BCWA and Freedom Fighters Outdoors, an organization that engages disabled veterans in outdoor activities.

The watershed group will introduce its new Streambank Buffer Stewardship program (See BCWA's Buffer Stewardship, page x) and recruit volunteers for the program during the event, according to BCWA president David Staebler.



BCWA volunteers will provide that essential maintenance through its Eyes-on-the-Ground Buffer Stewardship Program, led by BCWA's Gerald Heckler. Volunteers are being recruited and will be assigned a buffer site to maintain either individually or as part of a group, depending on buffer size, type of land, and landowners.

The volunteer buffer stewards will visit the property monthly, keep up communications with the landowner, identify maintenance needs and either perform or secure others to perform maintenance. Training for stewards is planned for May. A training session will be provided for landowners in July BCWA is reaching out now for

program volunteers. For more information contact: [buffalocreekalliance@gmail.com](mailto:buffalocreekalliance@gmail.com) or talk with BCWA members at the group's 20th anniversary celebration on Saturday, April 9 at Rusty Rail.

## BCWA BUFFER STEWARDS WILL SUPPORT PA STREAM RESTORATION INITIATIVE

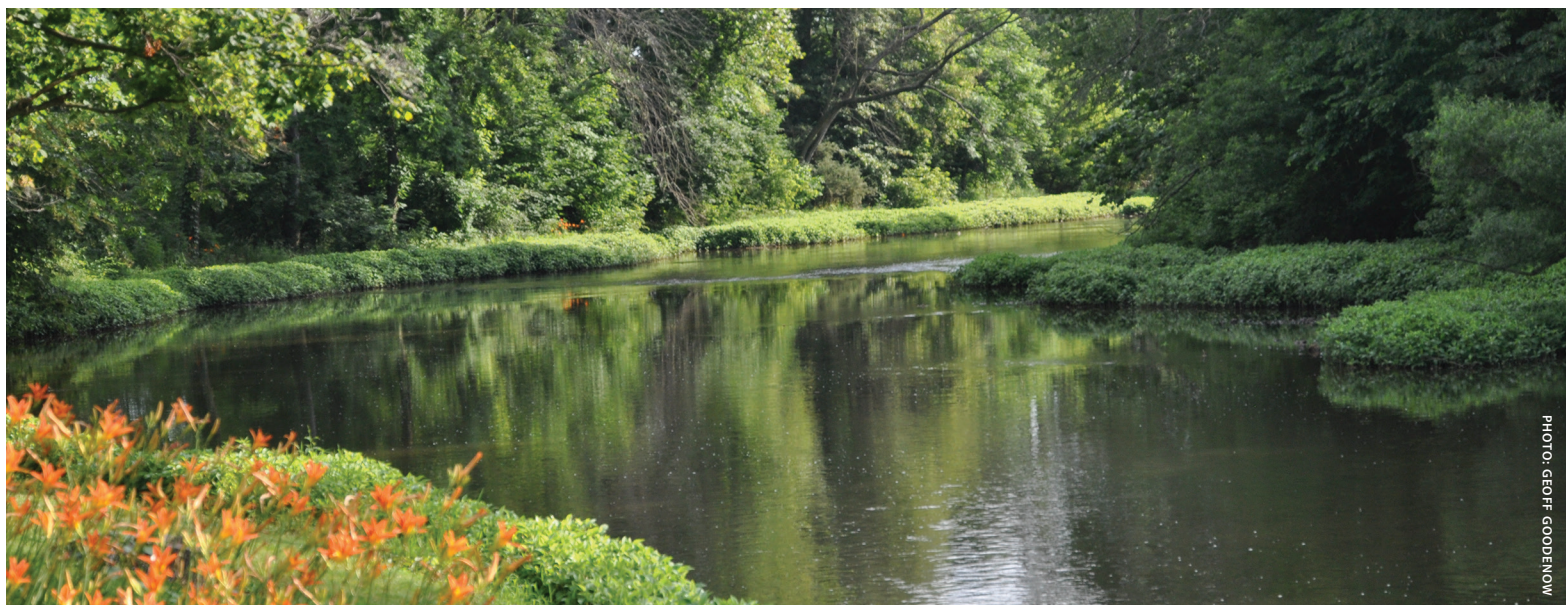


PHOTO: GEOFF GOODENOW

## SHHH! LET'S PRESERVE QUIET PLACES

As a tune of the 60s reminds us, "Silence is golden." But today it is more and more difficult to find. Noise—think vehicle engines, lawn mowers, leaf blowers—disrupts sleep and concentration, decreases property values, and increases stress and irritability.

Animals, too, are negatively impacted by the noise of our modern lifestyles. Those that communicate by sound

(bird song), those that locate their prey by sound, those that rely on sound as warning of danger are all at risk

### Let Nature Speak

The relative silence of natural settings is calming, soothing. By helping preserve sites where nature's voices—rippling water, bird song, rustling leaves—fill the air, you are providing a healthier environment for ourselves and the living things that share the world with us. A family outing on a Linn Conservancy trail or a paddle/float on a nearby waterway can provide the refreshing escape one might be seeking.

### Support the Vision

Let the Linn Conservancy be your vehicle toward this vision—your vision—of protecting quiet places. Want to do more? Here are a couple websites you might like to visit:

Noise Free America: [www.noisefree.org](http://www.noisefree.org)

PA Association for Noise Pollution Abatement [www.panpa.org](http://www.panpa.org)

*This was inspired by an article about noise pollution in local communities written by Mike Molesevich, an environmental consultant and Linn Conservancy supporter.*



## LIVE STAKE HARVEST AT WARD-LEMON

On March 2, Shannon Thomas, Chesapeake Conservancy's live stake coordinator, led volunteers in harvesting live stakes at the Ward-Lemon property near Koons Trail. In the spring and summer, the living tree and shrub branches will be planted in stream banks to protect against erosion and to filter nutrients and other runoff pollution. Tom Duck (below) carries branches that will be trimmed into live stakes. The red paint signifies the specie of the stakes. For information about how to get involved email Thomas at [sthomas@chesapeakeconservancy.org](mailto:sthomas@chesapeakeconservancy.org) or call 570.372.4707.



## SNOWFEST

Merrill Linn Conservancy brought "snowballs" to Snowfest 2022, the winter celebration held at R.B. Winter State Park on Sunday, February 27. The fizzy snowballs—baking soda formed into balls and frozen—intrigued both adults and their children who poured colored vinegar onto the snowballs and watched the fizzy chemical reaction as carbon dioxide was released. Our thanks to the volunteers who engaged the children in the scientific experiment: Mackenzie Flynn, Bucknell University's Acting Assistant Director of Student Learning Support and longtime Conservancy volunteers Brent and Amanda Kline.



## FOR YOUR CALENDAR

**Sat., April 2** Glacier Pools Preserve Guided Nature Walk at 11 am with Bucknell Professor Mizuki Takahashi and conservation easement owner Michael Gross. Visit the property's vernal pools to see amphibian egg masses.

**Sat. April 9** Buffalo Creek Watershed Alliance celebrates 20th anniversary at Rusty Rail. 5 North 8th Street, Mifflinburg from 1pm–5 pm. Presentation by Ben Hayes 12 pm–2:00 pm in the mill shed.

**Sat. April 16** Montandon Wetland complex, Guided walk examining the human and environmental history of site. Bucknell professors Jeff Trop/Claire Campbell will lead the walk. Time to be determined.

**Fri. April 22 Earth Day** "Invest in our Planet"

**Fri. & Sat. April 22-23 9th Annual Sustainability Symposium** at Bucknell University, *Is it really too late? Hope, Agency, and Change.*

**Sun. May 1 Plein Air Day** from 9 am–5 pm. Plein Air Workshop at 9 am and Nature Photo Hikes, 6 am–6 pm at Dale-Engle-Walker and Koons Trail properties

**Wed. May 4 MLC Annual Dinner** at Shade Mountain Winery 5:30 pm–8:30 pm

**Sat. June 4 Susquehanna Greenways Partnership Outdoors Expo**, 10 am–4 pm at Shikellamy State Park, Sunbury

## NEW MEMBER:

Paul Lin, Lewisburg

## THANK YOU

**Donors to MLC during 2022 Raise the Region**

To volunteers at Snowfest 2022:

**Amanda and Brent Kline, Mackenzie Flynn**

**Bucknell University** for donating the printing of the new Koons Trail brochure.



## Chris Baylor, Country Cupboard

With the closing of Country Cupboard, a Union County tradition for 49 years, CEO Chris Baylor chose to donate Country Cupboard's office furniture to area non-profits. Desks, tables, chairs, filing cabinets, shelves, and other storage items were free for the taking. Baylor even offered the use of a Country Cupboard cargo van to transport the furniture.