

# CountryViews

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE COUNTRYSIDE CONSERVANCY



## Annual Auction on the Way

Our Sixth Annual Auction is just around the corner! The evening starts at 6 pm on Saturday, July 9 at the Waverly Country Club. The evening includes cocktails and dinner, great live music, and of course the Silent and Live Auctions. This event is open to the public, and we love a big crowd, so call the office now to book your reservation!

A dizzying variety of items will be up for bidding this year. A small sampling of the lineup includes a fly fishing package, a flat-screen TV, wine tasting, a cruise on the St. Lawrence, expert-led birdwatching, original works by local artists, and too many more to mention—from sports gear to concert tickets to a Yuletide sleigh ride! Our ever-popular getaways to vacation homes in Stone Harbor, the Hamptons, the Pacific Northwest and elsewhere will once again be featured. Above all, a special antiques display is not to be missed. The Live Auction will be led by professional auctioneer Ken Rivenburg, while Masters of Ceremonies Curt and Phil Stevens will keep the crowd lively with their double act.

This year's Auction Chairs are Amy T. Broadbent, Polly Metzger and Erin Kane. Rounding out the committee are Lisa Buranich, Penny Davis, Kathleen Graff, and Beth Taylor. Susan Scranton Dawson and Eleanore Ginader are also supplying their invaluable assistance. Floral arrangements are courtesy of Raisa Statuto. We thank the Auction chairs and their wonderful team of volunteers who work so hard to make this event such a success.

In addition to our wonderful local merchants and artists who support the event through their donations, corporate sponsors also provide vital support for the Auction. Sponsors for this year's Auction include Marworth, Penn Security Bank, PNC Bank, Gentex Corporation, Keystone College, Knowles Associates, Merrill Lynch Erickson/Greco Group, and Oliver, Price & Rhodes.

The Auction is a very important fundraiser for Conservancy operations and programs as well as a great night out. As Auction chair Amy Broadbent says, "Anyone who cares about preserving land and keeping our region beautiful should join the fun on July 9!" Tickets are \$50 per person, \$75 for Patron listing. To make reservations or to become a sponsor, please contact the office at (570) 945-6995 or [cconserv@epix.net](mailto:cconserv@epix.net). See you there!



*2005 Auction Committee members (clockwise from top right): Polly Metzger, Beth Taylor, Amy T. Broadbent, Penny Davis and Kathleen Graff at the Conservancy office. Not pictured: Erin Kane and Lisa Buranich.*

## Parade of Ponds...

Creekside Gardens of Tunkhannock has selected Countryside Conservancy and the Tunkhannock Public Library as the beneficiaries of this year's Second Annual Parade of Ponds. See page 4 for details.

## New Conservation Easement

This property in rural Susquehanna County was recently protected through a conservation easement. We'll talk with the owner in our next issue of CountryViews.



*(Photo by Kathryn LeSoine)*

## Stewardship Award Winners Announced

Countryside Conservancy honored the winners of its 2005 Stewardship Awards at its standing-room-only Annual Meeting on April 20 at Keystone College. Board member Sandra Boyle presented the awards. Ten property owners in and around the Tunkhannock Creek watershed were recognized as outstanding stewards of their farms, homes, buildings and lands.

Winners in the Working Farm category were Thomas and Sandy Henry and family for their Quarter Horse breeding operation in Tunkhannock; Robert and Darlene Longmore and family for their beef cattle and Morgan Horse farm in Monroe Township, Wyoming County; and Lloyd and Denise Pease and family for their "Sweet-Peas" dairy farm in Jackson Township, Susquehanna County. These farming families demonstrated both commitment to the traditional farming values of our region and respect for the environmental sensitivity of the lands they work.



*Barn on the Pease family's "Sweet-Peas" Holstein farm.*

Residential winners were Robert and Susan Caterson for their home in Montrose; Danny Seamans for his home, gardens and blueberry patch in Jackson Township, Susquehanna County; and Donald and Wendy Sweppenheiser for their Audubon-certified Backyard Bird Habitat in Tunkhannock.

In Montrose, the Community Foundation of Susquehanna County, the Rosemont Inn, and the Self-Discovery Wellness Arts Center all received awards for outstanding restoration and adaptive use of traditional buildings on Lake Avenue. The Tunkhannock Tree Association was recognized for 35 years of commitment to maintaining beautiful and healthy trees in Tunkhannock Borough. All award winners received framed photo certificates with descriptions of their good stewardship practices.

The Stewardship Awards have been awarded annually since 1997, to express the Conservancy's appreciation for the efforts of good stewards of the land. This year's Stewardship Awards Committee members were Lydia Coulter, Margaret Hull, Cheryl Kaiser, Ernie Keller, Gerald Kenjorski, Mary Rhodes, Joanne Smith, and Ed Zygmunt. Sandra Boyle chaired the committee.

Also at the Annual Meeting, Board member Dorrance Belin stepped down after two years as President, and Margaret Hull was elected as the Conservancy's new President. We thank Dorrance for his steady guidance over the past two years, and welcome Margaret into her new role! Sandra Boyle replaces Margaret as chair of the Land and Water Protection Committee.

Nominations are now invited for the 2006 Stewardship Awards! Jo-Ellen Greene and Susan Scranton Dawson will chair this year's awards committee. Please contact the office at (570) 945-6995 to request a nomination form.

## Special Report THE NORTHERN ELECTRIC: FROM TROLLEY TO TRAIL

From 1908 to 1932, an interurban trolley line known as the Northern Electric Railway ran from Scranton to Lake Winola and points between. Although the trolley closed down in the Great Depression, the route that it once took is still evident in many places. Countryside Conservancy founder Rosamond "Roz" Peck saw in this abandoned trolley route the potential for a non-motorized trail that would link Clarks Summit, Glenburn, Dalton, La Plume, Factoryville and beyond, providing a safe and scenic recreational route for local communities. The Countryside Conservancy, under the guidance of Roz and other Board members, has been working for a number of years to develop a "Trolley Trail" to link these Lackawanna and Wyoming County communities.

Five years ago, Roz helped the Conservancy launch a study, funded in part by the state Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, on the feasibility of re-creating the old

trolley route as a trail. This study, now underway, is looking at the seven miles of right-of-way between Clarks Summit and Factoryville. Some sections of the old trolley route that can easily be converted to a trail are already in Conservancy ownership, thanks to the vision and generosity of the Peck family. In other places, the original right-of-way is obscured by newer development, or for other reasons it is not practical for a new trail to follow the trolley's route exactly. In these cases, the study will seek to identify alternative routes.

The feasibility study has already generated detailed maps of the study area, surveyed landowner opinions, and identified key engineering, traffic, legal and other issues to be addressed. The second Public Meeting for this feasibility study took place on May 24 at Keystone College. A third and final public meeting for this study is planned for late summer 2005.

While Roz was initiating the feasibility study, she was also seeking a spot where she could start to realize her vision of the

Trail on the ground. The former Ackerly Fairgrounds in Glenburn Township suggested itself. This site had once been a stop on the trolley line, and the Abington Little League had recently taken it over in order to develop playing fields. In 1999, the Conservancy began an ongoing relationship with the Little League. With the help of Glenburn



*The Clarks Summit Special*

Township, generous grant support and countless volunteer hours from the community, these partners started to clean up, plant and restore extensive areas around the ballfields and the old trolley route.

In the past six years, the Little League and Countryside Conservancy, with the support of several grants from the Northeast Pennsylvania Urban and Community Forestry Program and others, have removed over 35 tons of garbage and an entire abandoned house from the vicinity of Ackerly Field; planted a natural area and butterfly garden at the former Ackerly Hunt Club site; planted the ball-field complex and a buffer zone along Ackerly Creek with native trees and shrubs for beauty and shade; and removed uncounted non-native invasive plants. These projects have restored a sore and abused area for hundreds of local children and adults to enjoy in a pressured area with few natural recreational areas for the public. In 2004, the Abington Little League received the NEPA Environmental Partnership Award for its good work.

*Continued on page 4.*



*Planting trees at the old Ackerly Hunt Club*

## Conservancy to Reissue Northern Electric History

The Countryside Conservancy is proud to announce that it is reprinting Norm Brauer's 1987 history *The Northern Electric: A Narrative of the Dalton Street Railway Company, Northern Electric Street Railway Co., Scranton & Binghamton Railway Company*. This invaluable guide to our area's own trolley line contains rare photos, documents, accounts and individual recollections of the Trolley in its heyday. Call the office today to reserve your copy!

## Parade of Ponds

Creekside Gardens of Tunkhannock has selected Countryside Conservancy and the Tunkhannock Public Library as the beneficiaries of this year's Second Annual Parade of Ponds. Dozens of pond enthusiasts in Tunkhannock, Clarks Summit, Dallas, and surrounding areas will showcase their water gardens on Saturday and Sunday, July 9 and 10.

The self-guided tour features scenic gardens and ponds containing beautiful koi, lily pads and other flowering water plants. Nature lovers will appreciate the abundance of birds, butterflies, toads, frogs and dragonflies that inhabit these treasured spaces. To support the Conservancy, buy your tickets from Countryside Conservancy supporters (570) 945-6995 or from Creekside Gardens (570) 836-3595. Tickets are \$10.00 per person (12 and under free), and tour hours are 9 am to 5 pm on Saturday and 10am to 4pm on Sunday.

Start your weekend with a "dip" into a beautiful series of ponds, and then dive into the fast and furious bidding at the Summer Auction. We hope you'll join us for both events!

## Call for nominations

The Northeast Pennsylvania Environmental Partners invite nominations for the Fifteenth Annual Environmental Partnership Awards and the Eleventh Annual Thomas P. Shelburne Environmental Leadership Award. Roz Peck is a past winner of both of these awards, which are given to environmental leaders and partnering efforts in northeast Pennsylvania. Please call the Pennsylvania Environmental Council's Northeast office at 570-718-6507 to request a nomination packet.

## Welcome Lois!

The Conservancy welcomes Lois Yeust, our new part-time administrative assistant. Lois, a resident of Tunkhannock Township, started work in February this year. She puts in a few days every week to help keep the office running smoothly, and her friendly and efficient style makes her a joy to have around!

## Special Report THE NORTHERN ELECTRIC: FROM TROLLEY TO TRAIL

*Continued from Page 3*

On Saturday, April 16, some forty volunteers came out to help with our most recent tree and shrub planting. The team included parents and players of the Abington Little League, Boy Scouts, and community members. Our thanks to Ellen Bugno and the Little League, Donna Murphy, Penn State Cooperative Extension, Ashwin Baikadi and his team from Scout Troop 251, Rave Landscaping, and all our other volunteers for their help in making this day such a success.

The Conservancy is now working to secure agreements from the Little League to formally designate the Hunt Club site as a rest area and picnic place, and to develop a scenic loop trail that will take trail users from the Hunt Club area around the fields to a future crossing of Ackerly Road and the next trail segment.

Sections of trail beyond the confines of the Little League have also received attention. One Urban and Community

Forestry grant supported the clearing and planting of half a mile of trail along the former trolley route between Ackerly and Waverly Roads, next to the Little League fields. This area was overgrown with invasive plants and contained two major drainage problem areas. Numerous volunteers and a specially formed Trail Committee worked to plant trees, restore a substantial segment of trail, and address the drainage problems.

Another project funded by the same program landscaped the planned trailhead at Clarks Summit, near the Summit Cigar Store on Routes 6 & 11. Earthworks and plantings were laid out to create a visually appealing entrance and improve safety along this part of the trail.

All these small steps, made with the cooperation and support of volunteers, local governments and community members, are carrying us steadily forward toward our vision of the Trolley Trail. We wish to pay tribute to the following friends, partners and volunteers who have given untold hours of labor, thought and energy to the realization of the Trail:

Pat Acker, James Baker, Derry Bird, Amy



*Planting at the Abington Little League fields in April 2005.*

T. Broadbent, Ellen Bugno, Gregory Ellsworth, Dianne and Judd Fitze, Jeff Fleming and family, Kathleen Graff, Margaret Hull, Donna Murphy, Joe Janichko, Dave Jennings, Polly Metzger, Carol Miller, Jack and Gayle Muller, Abby Peck and the Peck Family, Jack Pittman, Jim Reid, Willard Sturdevant and family, Maribeth Woody and especially **Rosamond R. "Roz" Peck**. Roz passed away in April 2004, but she is still with us in so many ways. Her vision of the Trolley Trail continues to inspire us.

Key partners and supporters for the Conservancy in its Trail planning have been the Abington Little League Glenburn Township, Keystone College, the Overlook Estate Foundation, the Willary Foundation, the Garden Exchange, the Abington Rotary, Stillmeadow Inc., the Dalton Fire Company, the Tunkhannock Environmental Club, Baptist Bible College, the Clarks Green and Lake Winola Boy Scout Troops, Milo Enterprises, Kettel Construction, Down to Earth Rentals, Mackin Engineering, Rave Landscaping, PennDOT District #4, PNC Bank, Dalton Borough, Factoryville Borough, Liz Ratchford and



the Factoryville Shade Tree Commission, Abington Township, La Plume Township, and North Abington Township. We thank all our friends who have given and continue to give their time and energy to Roz Peck's and the Conservancy's dream.

The Northeast Pennsylvania Urban and Community Forestry Program is a cooperative effort of: the Pennsylvania Urban and Community Forestry Council; the Pennsylvania DCNR Bureau of Forestry, Rural and Community Forestry Section; the USDA Forest Service, Northeastern Area, State and Private Forestry; the Mid-Atlantic Center for Urban and Community Forestry at Keystone College; and Penn State Cooperative Extension Service. Our thanks to Congressman Don Sherwood for making this program possible.

## Roz Peck Memorial Trail Fund

The Conservancy recently received a heartfelt gift from the family of Roz Peck. The Peck family has given the Conservancy a generous cash contribution to establish a Memorial Trail Fund in her memory. Turning the route of the old Northern Electric Railway into a non-motorized recreational trail was a project near and dear to Roz's heart, and one on which she lavished countless hours and much ingenuity. Gifts to this new Trail fund from the Peck family and others will help her dream move closer to realization. We express our deep appreciation for the Peck family's generosity, and encourage donors interested in the Trail to consider adding their contributions to this Fund.

## Memorials

We offer our thanks to the following individuals who made gifts to the Conservancy in memory of individuals who have passed away. These gifts will go to the Conservancy's Land Fund to support our land protection activities throughout the region.

*In memory of Robert Messimer:* Sally Bohlin

*In memory of Rosamond R. Peck:*

Mr. and Mrs. James Burnett

*In memory of Lowell J. Stevens:*

Mr. and Mrs. Dorrance Belin

Mr. Dale Wise

*In memory of Betty Ann Wise:*

Mr. and Mrs. Phillip Stevens

Our sincere apologies to Dr. John McGeehan, who is happily still with us! The memorial gift from Dr. and Mrs. Richard Emanuelson was actually in memory of Mrs. Pauline McGeehan.

## Congratulations!

*In honor of the wedding of Samuel W. Lambert III and Karen Hegener:*

Mr. and Mrs. Dorrance Belin

*In honor of Kathleen Graff's birthday:*  
Bill Welles

*In honor of Margaret Hull:*  
Susan Scranton Dawson



*Friends and volunteers at the Little League fields.*

## Thank You to Our Members!

We wish to welcome all the new and renewing members who have supported our Annual Campaign 2005 since the date of our last newsletter! We thank the following individuals whose contributions will help keep the Conservancy healthy and active in the coming year:

Will and Pat Acker  
Benjamin Adams and Amy Adams  
Lois S. Bagley  
Gethine Baldwin  
Mr. and Mrs. Paul Bartoletti  
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Dr. and Mrs. Melvyn Wolk  
June and Earle Wootton  
George Wrightnour  
Cynthia Zujkowski  
Dr. and Mrs. Thomas Zukoski

We also extend our warm thanks to Michael and Margi Cowley, who kindly offered their services as Chairs for the 2005 Annual Campaign. Your good work is appreciated! If you haven't already, please join or renew your membership. Your gift is what makes our work possible! Members who renew before press time of the next CountryViews will be acknowledged in the Summer 2005 issue.

## Watershed Events

### News from the South Branch Tunkhannock Creek Watershed Coalition

The Coalition held a litter pick-up as part of the statewide Great Pennsylvania Cleanup on April 23. Our event took place at Little Rocky Glen and a neighboring property on the creek. Thirteen volunteers, led by Coalition Chair Bill Tersteeg, braved the unpredictable weather to collect at least 25 bags of rubbish, 13 tires, yards of barbed wire, assorted construction waste and assorted oddments. Thanks to our volunteers for making this section of the stream and Lithia Valley Road much more enjoyable for anglers and passersby!

Monthly monitoring of stream water quality in the South Branch was resumed on May 7, after the scheduled April kickoff date was cancelled due to a flood watch. (Our volunteers are brave, but not foolhardy!)

Training in the collection and identification of "bugs," or stream macroinvertebrates, took place on Saturday, April 30 in a chilly stretch of the South Branch near Penn Brook Park. This training course was led by Kristen Travers of the Stroud Water Research Center. The ten volunteers (collector's permit from the Fish & Boat Commission in hand) set up kick nets, turned over rocks, and collected organisms from the stream bottom which were then taken to the Willary Water Resource Center, which kindly provided space for the identification part of the course.

The group learned how to identify the immature forms of stoneflies, mayflies, dragonflies, different caddisflies, midges, blackflies and more. Despite a large representation of blackfly and midge larvae, our sampling site rated "acceptable" in terms of stream life present based on the "Save Our Streams" rating system, and Kristen advised that our results suggested a healthy stream.

The Coalition plans to monitor stream life twice a year, to help us keep a finger on the pulse of the stream environment. Thanks to Jeff Aronsohn for setting up this training opportunity, and thanks to the Stroud Water Research Center for providing the instructor and materials!



*Volunteers Burr Hamilton, Jeff Aronsohn and Jackson Stroud inspect their catch.*

## Planning

The Conservancy sponsored a short course on community planning in March. The course trained up members of local planning commissions and zoning hearing boards in the principles and proper implementation of planning, and the duties and powers of planning and zoning hearing authorities. Most members of these local bodies in Pennsylvania are private citizens who come into their positions with minimal preparation or training, and are expected to learn as they go. The Conservancy was happy to provide this opportunity to sharpen the skills of our local citizen planners.

The course attracted some thirty members of municipal planning commissions from Lackawanna and Wyoming Counties and beyond. The course was organized by the Pennsylvania Planning Association (Northeast Section), and taught by Peter Wulfhorst of Penn State and local planning consultant Marv Brotter.

One topic the course touched briefly on was **multi-municipal planning**, a process whereby several municipalities can plan and zone jointly, with increased efficiency and benefits for all parties. Given the small size and population of most of our boroughs and townships, there is plenty of room for economies of scale! We will carry more on this approach in a coming issue of *CountryViews*.

According to a recent report on land use and development, four-fifths of Pennsylvanians surveyed feel that the state needs a coordinated statewide growth and development plan, while eighty-six percent support promoting more coordinated planning between cities, towns, and the state. The time is right to pursue coordinated planning and growth!

**Join Countryside Conservancy's efforts to preserve the fragile natural beauty of our area.  
The future depends on us. Please join us today.**

\_\_\_\_\_ Family \$35

\_\_\_\_\_ Friend \$70

\_\_\_\_\_ Founder \$100

\_\_\_\_\_ Patron \$250

\_\_\_\_\_ Benefactor \$500

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Consider a gift to the Countryside Conservancy in honor of someone you care about. The gift of conservation will last forever.  
For more information contact Mary Felley at P.O. Box 55, La Plume PA 18440. (570) 945-6995 or cconserv@epix.net

**Countryside Conservancy Board of Directors**

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