

CountryViews

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE COUNTRYSIDE CONSERVANCY



Trolley Talk—2012—The Year of the Trolley Trail!

By Cheryl Ellsworth, Trail Coordinator



On December 14, 2011, the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) announced the award of \$566,000.00, to Countryside Conservancy through the Community Conservation Partnerships Program. The grant will fund the development of approximately 2.8 miles of the Trolley Trail from South Turnpike Road in Dalton to Lackawanna Trail in South Abington Township. This award will be used to complete trail design, trail construction, fencing, bollards, erosion and sedimentation controls, ADA access, retaining walls, landscaping, trailhead facilities and signage on this first phase of the Trolley Trail. The Conservancy is responsible for raising an additional \$141,000.00 to match DCNR's funding, and is currently soliciting and accepting donations.

"This trail will become a great gift to the community, and I anticipate ongoing community support once folks see the actual construction begin," said Bill Lewis, President of the Conservancy's Board of Directors. Board member Abigail Peck added, *"I'm thrilled that construction will finally begin on this long awaited dream, first envisioned by my mother, Rosamond "Roz" Peck."*

DCNR is the primary source of state support for Pennsylvania recreation, parks and conservation initiatives. DCNR grant funding assists hundreds of communities and organizations across Pennsylvania plan, acquire, and develop recreation and park facilities, create trails, and conserve open space.

"Our grant investments work to bolster our vision for the health of our families, the vibrancy of our communities, the strength of our economy, and our quality of life in Pennsylvania," DCNR Deputy Secretary Cindy Dunn said. *"These grants allow us to partner with communities so that they can expand and improve the wonderful assets that make the places we call home vibrant and attractive."*

Good news always bears repeating! On behalf of the Trolley Trail Committee, and the Board of Directors of the Countryside Conservancy, we would like to say thank you to all those partners, members and believers in this visionary project which has been in the works since 1999! The Conservancy will now engage the services of Arora & Associates PC to complete final design plans and permits necessary to prepare for actual construction. It is anticipated that construction will begin in earnest before year end and will continue throughout 2013.

We ask that interested parties please continue to check the website for the myriad of activities and events that will be held in relationship to the trail building.

(Continued on Page 3.)



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Upcoming Events

Adopt A Highway Cleanup: Date & time to be determined; watch our website for details. Location will be Route 632 from Dalton to Waverly. Organized by the South Branch Tunkhannock Creek Watershed Coalition.

Annual Meeting and Stewardship Awards: Thursday, April 5, at 7 pm in Evans Hall, Keystone College. Come and meet outstanding caretakers of our region's lands who will be honored at this year's Stewardship Awards! Enjoy coffee and a delicious assortment of desserts, and catch up on the Conservancy's activities over the past year. Free and open to the public.

Hull Conservation Easement Dedication: Sunday, April 15, at 2pm at the Messimer Preserve on Grist Mill Road, Dalton. Join us for a celebration of our most recent conservation easement on Margaret Hull's 33 acres. A hike along the South Branch Tunkhannock Creek will follow the dedication ceremony.

Trolley Trail Cleanup: Saturday, April 21, at 9am near the Trail entrance at the intersection of Old State Road and Routes 6 & 11 in Clarks Summit

First Friday Hikes: Starting Friday, June 1, the Conservancy will lead monthly hikes at each of its preserves throughout the year. Email william.kern@keystone.edu to get info on each of the hikes.

Stone Wall Workshop: Friday, June 8, for historical slide show presentation at Lackawanna State Park, and Saturday June 9, at the Conservancy's Ziegler Preserve for the hands-on workshop. See the full article on page 7 for more details.

18th Annual Tailgate Picnic Potluck: Sunday, September 16 at Little Rocky Glen Preserve, Lithia Valley Road, just off of Route 6 in Clinton Township, Wyoming County, from 3pm till dusk. For a new twist on an old favorite, please bring a dish to share! Free to Conservancy members.

Go Green Bike Tour: Sunday, October 7 at Lackawanna State Park. Watch our website and future newsletters for more information on this event.

Please visit our website www.countrysideconservancy.org for more information on these events, or call our office at 570.945.6995.

Women Teaching Women Workshop Beginning in April 2012

Who: Women ages 21 and up, up, up

Where: Venues in Lackawanna, Wyoming, and Susquehanna Counties including Rail Trail in Forest City, Lackawanna State Park, and dirt or paved roads with low traffic.

Why: To gain fitness, confidence, and the pleasure of being outdoors.

How: By becoming familiar with basics, riding in a group with individualized help, and working on skills and endurance.

Contact Caroline Seamans at carolinerose@epix.net to get more information.

Mission:

The Countryside Conservancy is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to protecting lands and waters in and near the Tunkhannock Creek Watershed for the public benefit now, and for the future.

The Countryside Conservancy is a tax-exempt organization as provided by IRS regulations. A copy of the official registration and financial information may be obtained by calling toll free, within Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

Trolley Talk *(Continued)*

(Continued from Page 1.)

The Trail Committee is also excited to present a Trolley Trail logo which will accompany the standard Conservancy tree logo for all things trail. The logo, pictured above, depicts an actual Northern Electric car as taken from a stellar black and white photograph from Norm Brauer's trolley memorabilia. Future informational signage will seek to incorporate as much history and original photos as possible to make this project both educational and recreational.

The following list of committee members, partners and friends are gratefully acknowledged by Countryside Conservancy for their efforts, support and continued commitment as this project moves forward.

Countryside Conservancy Trolley Trail Committee

Conservancy Staff

Cheryl Ellsworth	Trail Coordinator
William Kern	Executive Director

Committee Chair & Attorney

C. H. (Ty) Welles, IV

President Dalton Street Railway Company

Abigail Peck*

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*(*Current Conservancy Board member; **Past Board member)*

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Whitney Chamberlin Memorial Fund

Conservancy Auction Postponed for 2012

By: Bill Kern, Executive Director

In reading through our upcoming events list, you might have noticed that there is no auction scheduled for 2012. In what would have been our 13th year for the event (lucky 13?), we have decided to try something different. As a member-supported organization with a limited staff, we strive to maximize our conservation efforts and make your generous donations go as far as possible. To that end, we are excited to have the opportunity this year to explore some new fundraising ideas and at the same time allocate more energy to fulfilling our mission of protecting the lands and waters of the Tunkhannock Creek Watershed.

To those of you that have supported the auction in the past, we sincerely thank you and encourage you to take full advantage of our other fine events like the Annual Meeting & Stewardship Awards, First Friday Hikes, Stonewall Workshop, Tailgate Picnic Potluck and Go Green Bike Tour. We also have some other events that are in the planning process and we will keep you updated in future newsletters. Taking this year off from the auction will ultimately allow us to reevaluate our sources of support, experiment with an alternative fundraising strategy and retool the auction for 2013, making it better than ever!



Go Green Bike Tour 2011

By Bill Kern, Executive Director



Ranger Richard Bacon, New Milford Bike raffle winner

After what was already shaping up to be the rainiest year on record, fingers were crossed and breaths were being held for good weather leading up to the 2011 Go Green Bike Tour. With a rare sunny day on Thursday before the event, volunteers were able to mark more than 100 miles of roadway and 26 miles of trails with directional arrows for riders. Although the day of the bike tour was overcast and a little chilly, the rain held off until just after the last riders rolled in.

We had a good turnout from the road biking community and the mountain bikers seemed to relish the muddy trail conditions. "Hiking" Jane Frye led a hearty group of non-bikers on a trek around the lake, Mike Lambert and Bob Strunk of High Falls kept the crowd entertained with their classic rock tunes and hungry bikers enjoyed a well-deserved hot meal. Prudential volunteers, led by Mike Williamson, kept the registration and traffic moving smoothly and we are indebted for their help at what some called, "an ungodly hour for a Saturday morning!"

Hop Bottom Fire Hall once again opened their doors for restroom and snack breaks, Bob Ide with the Great Outdoors provided our event with great coverage, and Sickler's Bike & Sport Shop helped riders with free tune-ups. Also, this year we added leaders to each of the rides and I want to thank them for helping us out.

There are many aspects to an event of this magnitude, and it was great to see the willingness of so many people to lend a hand. Without all of the generous donors, sponsors and volunteers, we would never be able to pull-off an event like this. Thank you all so much and a special thanks to Dustin Drew and Lackawanna State Park for hosting the Go Green Bike Tour at your amazing recreational gem, right here in our backyards!

Sponsors for the event included:

Bluestone U.S.
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Bike Tour Committee Members:

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Mark Ralston
Caroline Seamans
Joe Tierney
Mike Williamson
Ali Wilson
Doug Wilson



High Falls Band

Go Green Bike Tour 2011 *(Continued)*



Bill & Jeff Booth



Pinoy Free Riders



Sickler's Bike raffle winner



Prudential volunteers



Mountain bikers

33 Acres Conserved in North Abington Township



In November, the Conservancy closed on a conservation easement of 33 acres of scenic, forested riparian corridor along the South Branch of the Tunkhannock Creek in North Abington Township, Lackawanna County. This easement on Margaret Hull's property is a key parcel lying between Lackawanna State Park and the Conservancy's 44-acre Messimer Preserve.

Included in the easement is a public-access trail that connects the Messimer Preserve to the

State Park, thereby linking the two and expanding the park's trail system. The easement also protects the south bank and riparian zone of the South Branch Tunkhannock Creek and ensures that the land remains undeveloped. Access will be available from the State Park and the Messimer Preserve, both of which have parking areas.

The Conservancy would like to thank Margaret Hull for her strong commitment to land conservation; Attorney Dorrance Belin for his generous and wise legal expertise, and the Conservancy's Land & Water Protection Committee, chaired by Pat Acker, for their guidance and oversight.

Funding for the conservation easement was provided by grants from Lackawanna Environmental Conservation & Outdoor Recreation (LECOR) Partnership Program and the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR). The dedication ceremony for this easement will take place on Sunday, April 15, at 2pm at the Messimer Preserve on Grist Mill Road, Dalton. Join us for a celebration of this permanently protected property and for a hike along the South Branch Tunkhannock Creek!

Conservation Easement:

A legal agreement between a private landowner and a nonprofit land-conservation organization such as Countryside Conservancy. The agreement permanently and legally restricts the types of subdivision, development, and activities allowed on a property. It is a powerful tool for preserving the important natural, scenic or recreational values of a property.

Under a conservation easement, the landowner retains ownership of the land and all rights not covered by the easement, while the Conservancy takes on legal responsibility for enforcing the easement restrictions.

A conservation easement is a voluntary initiative on the landowner's part. The easement document itself is tailored through discussions between the landowner and the Conservancy, and is designed to protect the values of the land in a way that reflects the owner's needs and wishes.

The landowner benefits from an easement through the assurance that the important values of the land will be protected permanently, even after it passes into other hands. In certain cases, the landowner can take a Federal income tax deduction for donating a conservation easement.

2011 Tailgate Picnic Potluck



Stonewall Workshop Set for June 8th & 9th

Countryside Conservancy is pleased to host its fourth annual Stonewall Workshop on Friday, June 8, and Saturday, June 9. Starting at 8:30pm on Friday evening, Ken Ely will present his slide show on the history of stonewalls in northern PA at Lackawanna State Park's outdoor amphitheater near the campground. This portion of the event will be free and open to the public. The hands-on portion of the workshop will be on Saturday, June 9, at

the Conservancy's Ziegler Preserve. The cost for Conservancy members is \$15 and \$20 for non-members. Call the Conservancy office at (570) 945-6995 to register.

Ken, a Commonwealth Speaker for the Pennsylvania Humanities Council, is a native of Susquehanna County and has been involved in stonewall building and restoration since his teenage years. He founded Good Neighbor Walls in 1996

and has completed projects in Susquehanna, Wyoming, Luzerne, Bradford and Broome (NY) counties.

This event is made possible by the Pennsylvania Humanities Council and the National Endowment for the Humanities. Co-sponsoring this year's stonewall workshop is the Wayne-Lackawanna Forest Landowners Association.



Gifts in Honor, Memory and Celebration

We offer our thanks to the following individuals who have made gifts to the Conservancy in honor of friends passing a special milestone in their lives, or in memory of friends and family members who are no longer with us. These gifts are placed in the Conservancy's Land Fund to support our land protection activities throughout the region.

In memory of Ralph Lomma:

Ann Chamberlin
Kathleen Graff

In memory of Donald L. Felley:

Susan and Dorrance Belin
Lisa Bang and Scot Tanner

In honor of Whitney L. Chamberlin, W. Lawson Chamberlin, and Ann Kip Reilly:
Kathleen Graff

In memory of Jean Noble Colombo:

Thomas and Barbara Rodes

In memory of Bruce Lockard:

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In honor of Jack Stroud's 80th birthday :
Dana and Daina Krivickas

In memory of Elisabeth Brooks Healy :

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In memory of Elsa Hazen:

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In honor of James and Corey Frankowski:
The Follansbee Family

In honor of Dorrance Belin receiving the Thomas B. Shelburne Environmental Leadership Award:

Ned and Regina Boehm
Charlotte Ravaioli

In honor of Kathleen Graff's dedication and support of Countryside Conservancy:
Will Chamberlin

In memory of Henri Deutsch Ph.D.:

Gretchen Ludders and Robert Fleese
Keystone Community Resources, Inc.

In honor of Peter and Sally Boblin's 20th Anniversary:

Joan Theilgard

In memory of Helen Hyde:
Arlene McHale

In memory of Roz Peck:

Chris Gardner

COUNTRYSIDE CONSERVANCY

ANNUAL REPORT 2011

The Countryside Conservancy is a nationally accredited, non-profit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to conserving lands and waters in and around the Tunkhannock Creek Watershed for the public benefit now, and for the future.

Growth and Sources of Support

Memberships and appeal gifts from over 450 active members contributed over \$54,000 toward Conservancy operations and programs in calendar year 2011. The Auction attracted approximately 150 guests and netted almost \$18,000.

Grants of over \$87,000 from government agencies, private and corporate foundations were disbursed to support acquisition and planning for the Trolley Trail, improvements and stewardship at Little Rocky Glen, capacity building and public outreach in 2011. Private grant funders included the Overlook Estate Foundation, the Ross Family Foundation, the Sordoni Foundation, the Frances Fuller Charitable Lead Trust, the Scranton Area Foundation, and Karl Herzog. Corporate support was received from Marworth, Prudential, and Precision National Plating Services. Additionally, in 2011, Countryside Conservancy was awarded a grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) for the Trolley Trail project in the amount of \$566,000.00; however, the Conservancy will not receive these funds until the actual construction begins on the Trolley Trail sometime in 2012.

At year's end 2011, Conservancy assets stood at over \$1.6 million dollars, almost two-thirds of which is non-liquid assets representing the value of preserved land. Approximately \$400,000 of the remainder are funds temporarily restricted for land or easement purchase, and funds restricted for land and easement stewardship.

Please continue to support Countryside Conservancy, or join if you have not yet taken the opportunity, as we strive to further our efforts in this most worthy endeavor. Opportunities abound through land conservation easements and the recreational Trolley Trail. With your assistance, financially and in volunteering in our many activities, we can achieve much in 2012 and into the future.



Gateway Preserve, Lackawanna County

Thanks To Our Supporters

We extend our heartfelt thanks to the following individuals and businesses who made membership contributions (including memorial and honor gifts) to the Countryside Conservancy in 2011.

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