



WESTMORELAND CONSERVANCY NEWSLETTER

www.westmorelandconservancy.org

April 2006 Editor: Shelly Tichy (724) 325-5523 newsletter@westmorelandconservancy.org

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2006 Annual Conservancy Dinner

The [2006 Annual Conservancy Dinner](#) will be held **Sunday, May 7th from 5-9 PM** at The Willowbrook Country Club.



Invite your friends, as everyone is welcome! Menu, map and reservation information are being made available via a separate insert in this issue of the newsletter and on our website. [A detailed map is on the back of the reservation insert.](#)

Our guest and speaker for the evening is James C. Finley, Associate Professor of Forest Resources at The Pennsylvania State University School of Forest Resources. "Our forests provide diverse and important values to our lives and the places where we live. Conserving and managing forests and other greenspaces is critical as they are under increasing parcelization and development threats. The evening's program will help us explore these threats, look at forest values, and allow us to consider reasons and approaches for conserving forests in the landscape so that they continue to provide the ecological, social, and economic values that we must conserve for today and for tomorrow."

Reservations must be made by **Friday, April 21st** and are \$25/per person. The evening's menu will be your choice of Stuffed Pork Chop with mushroom sauce, Chicken Cordon Bleu or Scrod Florentine. All dinners include soup, salad, rolls, potato, vegetable, dessert and non-alcoholic beverage. There will be a cash bar.

After our featured presentation we will award the door prize and the 50/50 raffle winner. Throughout the evening you will be able to participate in a Chinese-type auction. This entails purchase of tickets which you will place in the box for the desired items. The winning ticket will then be drawn to determine the winner. These items will include a "pampered pet" basket, a wine basket, a "spa" basket with massage & manicure and a restaurant certificate package. We will also hold a silent auction of items donated by local artisans and including the wildlife prints "*Great Horned Owl*" by Richard Evans Younger and "*Saw-Whet Owls*" by Don Whitlatch. The latter is numbered and signed. Both were generously donated to this event by Susan Dunbar and are similar to the "Bald Eagle" print on display in the Murrysville Library. There will be lovely paintings and photographs and a spectacular piece of glass art as well. Fair retail value of these items will be posted along with a minimum opening bid. You write your name and bid, then watch the fun!

Please fill out and return the enclosed Reservation form with your check before the April 21st deadline. Mail your remittance to: The Westmoreland Conservancy, P.O. Box 446, Murrysville, PA 15668 and mark it "Annual Dinner". Bring your checkbooks and be ready for good food, interesting conversation and a great time!

2006 Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the Westmoreland Conservancy will be held **April 26th at 7:30 pm** in the Municipal Conference Room adjacent to the Library. It is very important that members be there to participate in the election of new Governors. Following the election of Governors will be the election of Officers, then the monthly meeting. The more the merrier!

Spring Migration Road Trip

It's that time of year again! Anyone interested in going up to Crane Creek May 13th Please call Shelly Tichy at 724-325-5523. We'll decide whether to leave Friday evening or Saturday morning (at 3:30 am) when we see how many will attend. Crane Creek is an important location, as this is where the birds stop to rest and eat before a long, dangerous flight over the Great Lakes on their way North. You'll be amazed at the variety of birds to be seen here, so bring binoculars & cameras.

WHEN IS EARTH DAY?

By Jan Fitzpatrick

Is it March 21st or April 22nd? Actually both dates are used to encourage active participation in programs designed to protect, enhance and improve the condition of our planet.

On March 21, 1970, the first Earth Day celebration was held in San Francisco. On this date (the Vernal Equinox) night and day are equal lengths throughout the earth. It was John McConnell's idea to use this date to symbolize the balance among the systems in nature and call attention to the danger of upsetting that balance by abusive practices. In selecting this date, Margaret Mead noted that "...Earth Day attaches no local or divisive set of symbols, no statement of the truth or superiority of one way of life over another. But the selection of the March equinox makes planetary observance of a shared event possible". To acknowledge the global commitment to work for the protection and care of our planet, the United Nations has staged an Earth Day ceremony on the Spring Equinox since 1971. At the first ceremony, U Thant, Secretary General of the U.N., called on all the peoples of the earth to consider their role in the "nurturing of Earth and their commitment to its care". In 1975, Congress and President Gerald Ford also proclaimed the observance of Earth Day on March 21st.

If this is the 'authentic' date, then why do we celebrate Earth Day on April 22nd? For the answer to this question, we must look back to 1969, when Senator Gaylord Nelson proposed a nationwide grassroots demonstration, the Environmental Teach-In, to be held in the Spring of the following year. It was to be the first environmental protest, challenging citizens and the government to cooperate in reducing pollution and improving the health of the ecosystems. April 22nd, a date chosen for convenience of the college students, became known as Earth Day. Twenty years later, what had been an American activist movement went global. By 2000, an estimated 184 countries observed Earth Day on April 22nd. In 1995, Gaylord Nelson was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in recognition of his efforts to establish an Earth Day.

Is the date really that important? Shouldn't every day be a celebration of earth's bounty, a time to reflect on our role as stewards of the environment, an opportunity to recommit ourselves to the restoration and/or preservation of the ecosystems?

Margaret Mead's dictum from 1969 still rings true: *"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."*

Another reason to donate to the Westmoreland Conservancy.

by Doug Bauman

Our web page indicates:

"Membership dues are needed to keep the Conservancy running. They pay for postage, insurance, signage, and the other expenses of maintaining the nature reserves and the organization."

But I'll bet that most people don't realize that there are other big costs associated with the acquisition of land to be set aside as nature reserves.

When a gift of land is made to the Westmoreland Conservancy the gift doesn't end there. Bringing this transaction to fruition involves many considerations and incurs many costs. The major consideration is usually the cost of a survey. This can often run into the tens of thousands of dollars. Factors include the size of land, subdivision requirements and multiple neighboring parcels which sometimes have to be demarked in a way that may involve additional fees.

The good news is that once past all that initial up-front expense the land becomes a nature reserve which is not taxed and is set aside for all the reasons we know.

Thanks again for your continuing support.

Mark Your Calendar!

Several members have expressed interest in becoming more familiar with the Conservancy nature reserves. Accordingly, walks have been scheduled, initially for the King-Potter reserves, and later for the McGinnis reserve. Although the walks will be leisurely, there are some steep slopes along the path.

The King-Potter reserve walk is scheduled to start Saturday morning, May 27th, at 9:00 AM, rain or shine.

The McGinnis reserve walk will start Saturday afternoon, June 17th, at 2:00 PM, again irrespective of the weather.

Because there are only a limited number of parking spaces, consider sharing a ride with a friend. Please call Clara Feibelman at (724)327-3454 as soon as possible if you are planning to attend. Directions to the Reserves can be found on the website: www.westmorelandconservancy.org.

The Municipality has released their schedule for the Park-Chat walks which are held the 3rd Wednesday of the month at 8:30 AM, rain or shine. Three of our reserves are included: King Reserve on Wednesday, May 17th, McGinnis Reserve Wednesday, July 19th, and Walters Reserve Wednesday, September 20th.

Editor's note

I would like to challenge our membership to let us in on your experiences with and/or observations of nature. Is there a bird or some wildlife that visits frequently? Do you have a photograph or a story to share? We're interested! Send your stories and pictures to : Westmoreland Conservancy, P.O. Box 446, Murrysville, PA 15668 **OR** email them to newsletter@westmorelandconservancy.org.

Awaken Spring

Listen to the dawn chorus,
as early birds sing their song,
sung perhaps not just for us,

yet believed as we belong.

And I perceive not randomness,
but music to my ears,
I hear an oral symphony,
methinks pure thought appears.

Happy Spring!
Doug Bauman



Who Made These Tracks?



What about these?



Here are some more to identify.



Answers on page 4.



Westmoreland Conservancy

An all volunteer, non-profit, 501c-3 Corporation dedicated to acquiring and preserving rural and rustic lands for the public good.



Westmoreland Conservancy

P.O. Box 446

Murrysville, PA 15668

contact@westmorelandconservancy.org



Schedule of Upcoming Events

Wednesday, April 26th: Annual Elections/ Monthly meeting

Sunday, May 7th: 5-9 PM: Annual Dinner. Willowbrook Country Club. **See front page and insert for details, menu & map.**

Wednesday, May 17th, 8:30 AM Park Chat Walk, King Reserve, rain or shine

Wednesday, May 24th: Monthly Meeting

Saturday, May 27th: 9:00 AM, King-Potter reserve walk rain or shine.

Saturday, June 17th: 2 PM: McGinnis reserve walk, rain or shine

Wednesday, June 28th: Monthly Meeting

2005 Board of Governors/Officers

Officers: President – Mount Fitzpatrick

Vice President – Shelly Tichy

Secretary – Doug Bauman

Treasurer - Bjoerg Granger

Governors: Dick Byers, Doug Bauman, Charlie Conway, Theo van de Venne, Don Harrison, Richard Wagner, Cary Bohl, Katie Blackmore, Hank Kendall

The meetings are open, and we look forward to seeing you there. Meetings are held the 4th Wednesday of each month at the Murrysville Library at 7:30 pm.

April 26th

May 24th

June 28th



Westmoreland Conservancy

Membership Application

P.O. Box 446

Murrysville, PA 15668

Membership Levels

Individual.....\$15.00

Family.....20.00

Business membership.....40.00

Additional Donation.....\$_____

Name_____

Address_____

City_____

State _____ Zip Code_____

e-mail_____

For your convenience, you may also renew your membership or give donations through our website at www.westmorelandconservancy.org



The next Newsletter is scheduled for **April 2006**.

Opossum, wild turkey, raccoon

[January, 2006 Newsletter](#)

[Home](#)



Eco-fun for Kids



TAKE A HIKE

You'll need transportation, so invite your parent to join you on a hike through one of the Conservancy's properties, the Walter Reserve, located next to the new Murrysville Community Park on Weistertown Road. For additional directions, log on to our website: www.westmorelandconservancy.org Try to identify ten natural features using the descriptions below. There are numbered, blue plastic ties on the items to be identified. As you follow the trail and make your identification, write the item next to the number at the bottom of this page. Mail the list to us. We will print the names of those who've correctly identified the items on the nature hike in the next newsletter. Remember to stay on the trail, leave behind only your footprints, and take away only litter that others have thoughtlessly discarded. Finally, watch out for the poison ivy!

SHAGBARK HICKORY: Identify this tree by its light gray bark which separates into long, narrow, loosely attached strips.

BLACK OAK: Look for the bronze leaves at the base of this tree with blackish, furrowed bark. Leaves are deeply divided into 7 lobes with pointed tips.

RED PINE: Reddish-brown, flat, scaly plates form the bark of this tree. Around the base find egg shaped cones and needles in bundles of two.

HAWTHORN: Be careful of the long spines found on the branches of this thicket-forming tree.

WHITE PINE: Look for bunches of 5 needles at the base of this evergreen. Cylindrical cones are 4"-8" in length.

WOODPECKER HOLES: In this rotting dead tree trunk are many holes made by a woodpecker searching for insects.

ROSA MULTIFLORA: This invasive shrub crowds out native plants with its dense arching stems. You may see white flowers.

GREEN SHIELD LICHEN: A fungus and green algae form greenish rosettes on tree trunks and branches.

HAIRCAP MOSS: Locate a green carpet of 3" stalks with stiff, pointed leaves. Look for fertile stalks topped with golden spore capsules.

CHRISTMAS FERN: This evergreen fern has deep green lustrous fronds. Leaflets have a prominent thumb-like projection at the base.

1.....4.....7.....10.....
2.....5.....8.....
3.....6.....9.....



YOUR NAME.....YOUR AGE.....

Mail to Westmoreland Conservancy, P.O. Box 446, Murrysville, PA 15668

by Jan Fitzpatrick 3/06



Butterflies in Western PA



N V M T X F C R D H L L E R O M I T L A B G B F N M C T M F
 X A M F N H A R P S J L I T T L E W O O D S A T Y R R R R V W
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 A R B N A F E P M S E E M I R A E S K N Y J G T N C R W E O
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 I X J R C K T B E C E A W T M K D T H I D D D O M M A M T P
 N D O X N S F H R S R T R F R V X G C N T A E C L H R V B H
 R Y X J A Y T X C O M T K G D W L Y M N X E S R Z X Y Z W H
 U G Y E G R P E C C M K Y L T D M Z J M T C Z H Y X D G Y R
 O X L K O L N N J B X B D T K R A M N O I T S E U Q T K G Y
 M H D N K T W N T E A S T E R N T A I L E D B L U E F N M Y



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American Copper	Compton Tortoiseshell	Harvester	Question Mark
American Lady	Coral Hair streak	Hoary Edge	Red Admiral
American Snout	Duskywings	Little Glasswing	Silver Spotted Skipper
Azures	Eastern Comma	Little Wood Satyr	Silvery Checkerspot
Baltimore	Eastern Pine Elfin	Long Dash	Sulphurs
Bronze Copper	Eastern Tailed Blue	Monarch	Swallowtails
Buckeye	Eastern tiger	Mourning Cloak	Variiegated Fritillary
Cabbage White	Emperor	Northern Pearly Eye	Viceroy
Common Wood Nymph	Great Spangled Fritillary	Pearl Crescent	West Virginia white