



WESTMORELAND CONSERVANCY NEWSLETTER

www.westmorelandconservancy.org

October 2007 Editor: Shelly Tichy (724) 325-5523 shellytichy@comcast.net

[.....jump to activities page.....](#)

Westmoreland Conservancy Display at Murrysville Community Day 2007

by Mark Emerson

The 2007 Murrysville Community Day took place on Saturday, August 25th. Displays were set up at the Public Works municipal garage area near the municipal building. In addition an artwork show and plant displays were held in the Municipal Building itself over the same weekend.



The Conservancy display included a selection of invasive plants, a

discussion by a wildlife rehabilitator, pass out information of a variety of Conservancy-related topics, and a display of photos and Maps showing Conservancy involvement and opportunities.



The Conservancy has joined a municipality-sponsored drive to rid, or at least control, the spread of invasive plant species in municipal parks. Although the accent is on public lands, private owners are encouraged to consider their own backyards as well. In order to more completely inform the public a sampling of actual plants was provided by Pia Van de Venne, the municipality's Coordinator of Park Volunteers. The display added some 'reality' to the vegetation that citizens may have been reading about but haven't really had the opportunity to see. Plants were provided with a name tag applied. More than once comments were heard like "Gee, I have that plant all over my backyard but didn't realize..." or "I know someone that actually bought that plant!".

Beth Shoaf, representing Wildlife Works, Inc., near Youngwood, brought along two box turtles (Doc and 3 Toes) and a corn snake, aptly named 'Niblets'. She spoke for quite awhile on the subtle details of the reptiles, including their habitat range, food likes, and other information. She also gave a very interested group of visitors some insight into the specific life history of each of the animals on display. Her presentation was informal, generally a question and answer period. The animals were very well received, and discussions were held concerning her returning with additional specimens at a later date, perhaps next year.



Most of the photos were taken by Conservancy members. If other members have taken photos relevant to Conservancy activities and goals, and would like to share them, arrangements can be made to include some in next year's display

“Honorable Mention” For Young Conservancy Member’s Art

The sixth grade daughter of one of our governors had an entry in the Murrysville Art show which took place in conjunction with Community Day in the nearby Municipal building. It was a fun way to show off her art, a pastel drawing of various forms of fruit taken from her art teacher's garden. The young lady has always been a nature lover and a supporter of the Westmoreland Conservancy at other community day presentations. A few years ago she was the one to tally the ballots in our own local photography show! She was pleased when she learned the judge had awarded her entry with 'honorable mention'!



“Fruit” by Tracin Bauman

December 2007 Meeting Date Change

The 4th Wednesday of December 2007, falls on the 26th. **In order to avoid this holiday time the December meeting has been changed to December 19.** The time and place are as previously: 7:30 pm, 2nd floor conference room in the Municipal building

Not Every Visit to Our Reserves is an Organized 'Outing'

by Doug Bauman



The other day I rode my bike around Murrysville. First I rode by the McGinnis Reserve on Hunter Drive. Then I rode down Wallace and down Twin Oaks Lane right by the Tomer Reserve. Twin Oaks Lane is one of my favorite places to ride. Then I rode up Mamont Road and via Steele and Hilty to Wiestertown, where I found a few chestnut seeds. They are just beginning to come out of their jagged shells. Soon I was whizzing down the road toward the Walter Nature Reserve. I stopped there for a short visit. I visited the location of the grove of Paw Paw trees; every year I keep hoping, but I still have not been able to see any fruit up in that dense vegetation. Next to the path I observed some mushroom. I took out my camera and took a few pictures of the fungi in various lights, sun and shade. One mushroom looked like a creature from Star Wars! On my way back I rode by the King Nature Reserve off of Crowfoot. Well for me this was a short ride, one filled with joy with my desire to combine bicycling with observing and photographing nature!



Submit Your E-mail Address to Receive Up-to-Date Information on Conservancy Outings & Events

During the year the Conservancy is involved in a number of events open to the general membership as well as to the general public. Such events include chat walks in reserves or at municipal parks, work details for cleaning up reserve trails, photo outings, and special events such as Community Day.

Typically such events are discussed at Conservancy meetings but may also be announced in the 4-times-per-year newsletter and/or in the Penn Franklin or other local papers. Depending upon what you read the event schedules may be missed. The membership is invited not only to participate in such events, but is also invited to take part in the carrying out of the activity by volunteering some time, and maybe effort, to help out.

If you are interested in being more closely informed about such events please provide your E-mail address on the attached form and mail it to the address provided. You can also [E-mail](#) it to the Conservancy website, also provided in this Newsletter.

Footprint Fertilizer

by Betsy Aiken

Was it Thomas Jefferson or Confucius who observed that the best fertilizer for a piece of land is the footprints of its owner? Within the Westmoreland Conservancy, Dick Byers has described that the best and easiest way to maintain a trail is for it to be used by walkers.

Maintaining trails can be a challenge for any large landowner. Some time ago the Conservancy initiated the use of Reserve Stewards to address this challenge. Reserve Stewards are volunteers, each of whom has agreed to take on a Reserve, walk through it from time to time, and report whether trailwork is needed or any problems are observed. It is not uncommon for a Steward to report that a fallen branch or a tree is blocking a trail.



Our Reserve Stewards are:

Flinn Nature Reserve (no trails or parking area): Don Harrison

King Nature Reserve: Lisa Hyland

McGinnis Nature Reserve: Doug Bauman

Tomer Nature Reserve: Joanne Kendall and Frank and Trish Muzika

Walter Nature Reserve: Betsy Aiken, Diane Conway, and Gary McClosky

From time to time, a Reserve becomes available for adoption. If you would like to take on "ownership" of an attractive parcel of land - and have a good reason to enjoy an occasional short hike - call Mount Fitzpatrick at 724 327-6517.

Our Reserves provide many other opportunities for volunteer activities. Some efforts like chain-sawing or digging up multiflora rose bushes that have grown over a path are strenuous. Some, like building boxes for trail guides, can test one's skills and creativity. Most of the Conservancy's trail work, though, is very easy - just clearing the occasional short branch that has fallen on a trail, or collecting a stray piece or two of litter.



You can help maintain our trails by walking through any Reserve, anytime, and clearing the stray branch and carrying out any trash - or calling the Reserve Steward if you observe that more work is needed. Information about each Reserve and its location may be found at <http://www.westmorelandconservancy.org>. This Fall will be a fine time to use your footprints to enrich any of the Conservancy's Reserves, and enjoy some lovely scenery while doing so.

I think the environment should be put in the category of our national security. Defense of our resources is just as important as defense abroad. Otherwise what is there to defend?

~Robert Redford,

Yosemite National Park dedication, 1985

Westmoreland Conservancy

P.O. Box 446

Murrysville, PA 15668

contact@westmorelandconservancy.org

Schedule of Upcoming Events

Saturday, October 13th: 10 AM: Scavenger Hunt, lead by Doug Bauman in the King Reserve on Crowfoot Rd. Please respond if attending to: contact@westmorelandconservancy.org

Sunday, October 14th: 7:30 AM Fall Colors Photo Outing, Ohiopyle. Contact: shellytichy@comcast.net

Wednesday, October 24th: Monthly meeting, 7:30 PM

Sunday, November 4th: Photo Outing at Brennan Property. Meet at Murrysville Panera at 8:45 AM.

Wednesday, November 28th: Monthly meeting

Wednesday, December 19th: Monthly Meeting,

2007 Board of Governors/Officers

Officers: President – Mark Emerson

Vice President – Betsy Aiken

Secretary – Joanne Kendall

Treasurer - Bjoerg Granger

Governors: Dick Byers, Doug Bauman, Cary Bohl, Katie Blackmore, Lisa Hyland, Charles Conway, Maury Hanes

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.

October 24th

November 28th

December 19th** Holiday Schedule

The next Newsletter is scheduled for **January 2008**.

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

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

Eco-Fun Page

Salt Dough Leaf Magnets

Difficulty: **Very Easy** Age: 4 and up

Now that the kids are back in school, the need for hanging things on the fridge has returned. Why not make your own magnets for hanging that precious artwork? A fun project for any age!

What you'll need:

- Leaf shaped cookie cutters
- Acrylic paint in red, yellow, green, orange and brown
- Paint brush
- Toothpick
- Acrylic spray sealer, matte
- ½" round magnets
- Hot glue gun

How to make it:

1. Preheat the oven to 250 degrees F.
2. Mix together, salt, flour, and water until a dough is formed.
3. Knead the dough on a floured surface until the mixture is elastic and smooth. If dough is too sticky, sprinkle with flour, continue to do so until stickiness is gone. Do not add too much flour, this will dry out the dough and will cause it to crack before you get a chance to bake it.
4. Roll out the dough to about ¼" thick with a rolling pin that has been dusted with flour.
5. Use different sized cookie cutters to create as many shapes and sizes of leaves that you want.
6. For smaller children, use a single shape to make it easier at painting time. For older children, you can double up and even triple some of the leaves for a 3D effect.
7. If desired, use the toothpick to draw lines in the leaves.
8. Place all leaves onto an ungreased cookie sheet and place into the preheated oven.
9. Bake for two hours.
10. Remove from oven and allow to cool completely.
11. Paint with acrylic paints and spray finished leaves with acrylic sealer.
12. Hot glue a round magnet to the back of each leaf and hang on the fridge!

Tips:

- Parents should not allow small children to handle a glue gun as burns can occur. Older children should be closely supervised if allowed to handle themselves.
 - Instead of a toothpick you can use the sharp edge and point of a small kitchen paring knife, but again, only parents should handle these types of utensils.
 - Salt dough will not keep for a later project, it will get hard and crack. Depending on how many ornaments you plan to make, you can either halve the recipe or double it.
-



Western PA Trees



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

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*American **Eastern

American Hornbeam

Basswood*

Black Tupelo

Black Willow

Butternut

Chokecherry

Common Juniper

Cottonwood**

Eastern Wahoo



Hackberry

Hawthorn

Hemlock ‡

Hophornbeam**

Locust

Mountain Ash*

Mountain Laurel

Persimmon

Pussy Willow



Redcedar**

Red Mulberry

Sassafrass

Serviceberry

Shagbark Hickory

Slippery Elm

Sugar Maple

Sycamore*

Walnut