

# Linn Log

**The Newsletter of the  
Merrill W. Linn  
Land & Waterways  
Conservancy**

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## *Spring 2005*

### *Educational Events:*

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#### **Annual Dinner set for May 4 in Mifflinburg**

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Please join us for the Conservancy's annual dinner held at the Carriage Corner restaurant in Mifflinburg on Wednesday, May 4. The annual dinner will feature an evening of good food and fellowship shared with members and friends of the Linn Conservancy. The menu includes salad, 2 entrees, 3 vegetables, dessert and a beverage, all for \$17.50, tax and tip included. A vegetarian option will be available. Social time begins at 6 pm with punch, cheese, and crackers, and a cash wine bar will be available; dinner is at 6:45 pm.

Our guest speaker this year will be R. Craig Kochel, PhD, Professor of Geology at Bucknell University. Craig will share his thoughts in a talk entitled "Attitude Adjustment Needed in the Watershed--Let the Earth Breathe!" The annual dinner will be the finale of our "Caring for Communities" events held in the month of April (see next page). Please send the enclosed dinner reservation form **by April 25**. We hope to see you there!

## \*\*\* Caring for Communities \*\*\*

Caring for Communities, a series of fun, family-oriented educational events, enters its second year with a full month of exciting activities. These activities are held throughout the Conservancy's Union County and Upper Northumberland County service area. The activities explore critical animal, plant, and habitat issues that reflect the environmental well-being of our communities. Most of the events are held on Sunday afternoons.

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### \* Caring for Communities Events Start April 3 \*

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**Shamokin Mt. Walk at 1:30 PM** This new event is the kick off to the Conservancy's month-long Caring for Communities events. Join the Conservancy's President and biologist Wayne McDiffett for a walk along the Shamokin Mountain Trail, an area he knows well, to see one of the Conservancy's trails in a season of transition. Directions to Shamokin Mtn Trail: From Lewisburg drive south on Stein Lane 1.1 miles past Furnace Road to top of hill; turn left onto Forest House Lane and proceed approx. 0.3 miles to trail head.

Earlier in the day tune in to radio commentator Mark Lawrence's "Roundtable" discussion with Conservancy Coordinator Sue Auman and other guests: Neal Fogle of Penn State Cooperative Extension, Bill Deitrick of Union County's AgLand Preservation, and Shawn McLaughlin, the Union County Director of Planning. That environmental panel's thoughts can be heard on **Sunday at 6am on Eagle 107.3FM; 9am and 5pm on WKOK (1070AM); and 11pm on 94KX (94.1FM).**

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### \* Invasive Plant Exhibit Opens April 10, along with NATIVE PLANT SALE 1-3 pm \*

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Caring for Communities enters its second week of activities with a special opening of the Conservancy's "Invasive Plant Exhibit" starting at **1 pm** at the Dale/Engle/Walker House on Strawbridge Road off Rte. 192 just west of Lewisburg. The exhibit was designed by board member Clyde Peeling and includes many free materials about native plants and the care of trees in particular that were gathered for the Conservancy by Dogwood Hill Nursery. A **native plant sale**, sponsored by the Lewisburg Garden Club, Country Cupboard, and the Mifflinburg Garden Club, will be held on the porch of the DEW House at the same time, offering an environmentally friendly alternative to invasive plants for garden enthusiasts. The Invasive Plant Exhibit can be viewed again on April 24 during the Caring for Communities grand event and also during the Dale/Engle/Walker house tours on Sundays in June and July. Current Conservancy members are eligible for a discount on house tour admission. DEW house will be closed the 4<sup>th</sup> of July weekend.

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### \* ORGANIC ANIMAL FARM VISIT April 10, at 2 pm \*

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**At 2 pm** learn all about organic animal farming from an expert. Back by popular demand, Bucky Zeigler, owner of **Paradise Valley Organic Farm**, will talk about what it means to farm organically and how his operation is distinguished from others. Walk the pastures, see up close a variety of farm animals, and learn what Zeigler's farm has done to protect the waterways and to control soil erosion. Directions to Bucky Zeigler's Paradise Valley Organic Farm: From Milton drive east on Route 254, past the I 80 truck stop. Continue another 2 ½ miles to Strick Road. (Look on the right for a garage with red doors.) Turn left at Strick Road and drive north on Strick Road through Limestoneville. Continue another ½ mile north to Zeigler Road (where Strick Road makes a sharp right turn). Drive north on Zeigler Road for approximately ¼ mile. Look for Box 51 on the left; turn left and follow the driveway into the farm.

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### \* CANOE BUFFALO CREEK April 17, 8 am \*

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Register Early!! This event was sold out last year! This is a great opportunity to learn about the vital role this waterway plays in the ecological health of the central Susquehanna Valley and have fun at the same time. The canoe ride is conducted by the Quant Family of Canoe Susquehanna and hosted by the Buffalo Creek Watershed Alliance of the Conservancy. Registered participants will assemble at the Dale's Ridge Trail parking lot on Strawbridge Road. Advance paid reservations are required; call 523-4912 for more information.

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**\* TOUR GAMELANDS April 17, 12:30 pm \***

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Participants will car pool from the Union County Courthouse at 2<sup>nd</sup> & St. Louis Streets, departing at **12:30 pm** sharp for a special experience that is less than a 20-minute ride from Lewisburg. The 3,017-acre State Game Land 252, west of Allenwood, was created from the Susquehanna Ordinance Depot Property. It is unusual among the 275 State game lands in PA as there are about 33 miles of road, 3 cemeteries, 149 concrete bunkers used to store dynamite during World War II, 18 ponds, and 658 acres under cultivation.

This is where John Eason first settled in 1812 and where Conrad M. Richter, an American Pulitzer Prize winning novelist, called "home." The small town of Alvira once stood on the property. Today all that remains of the town are the foundations of homes which, except for the blooming of daffodils and tulips, would be lost in the brush. The two PA Game Lands staff members who will be our guides have 30 and 10 years of experience at this location. With them we will cover a large portion of the 33 miles of roads, much of which is not generally open to motor vehicles. We will ride in the back of State trucks, seated on bales of hay. Call board member Lettie Davis who has made these arrangements at 713-1157 ASAP to make your reservation. This trip is limited to the first 15 persons who sign up. Bring your binoculars.

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**\* April 23 EARTH DAY BIKE RIDES 10 am and WILDFLOWER WALK 1: 30 pm \***

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Beginning at **10 am**, interested cyclists will assemble at the house parking area of the Dale/Engle/Walker Property on Strawbridge Road off Route 192 and choose among the 10-, 20-, or 30-mile rides being offered. Each ride will be led by a Conservancy member and will wind through gently rolling farm land in Union County, skirting bodies of water such as Spruce Run Reservoir and Buffalo Creek and passing covered bridges, old mills, and Amish farms. Choose your level of difficulty when the groups assemble. Helmets are required.

Later, at **1:30 pm**, those interested in looking at and learning about the area's spring wildflowers should assemble in the parking area at the rear of the Four Bells Church west of Mifflinburg for a trip to the Glen Iron area. This new event will feature parts of a permanently protected area in Hartley Twp; it is not normally open to the public. Conservancy member Dahle Bingaman will lead participants along White Thorn Run and Penns Creek at this site. What you will see will be nature's pleasure, but might include early saxifrage, spotted wintergreen, rattlesnake weed, pussy toes, winterberry, baby toes, and pyrolas seen there in the past. You may wish to bring binoculars for sighting of birds and mammals.

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**\* April 24 CARING GRAND EVENTS Noon - 5 pm and EVENING CREEK WALK 7:30 pm \***

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An afternoon of educational, hands-on activities and exciting live animal presentations will be held at the Dale/Engle/Walker property. If you missed this multi-faceted event last year, be sure to come this year with your family and friends. It is a rain-or-shine event that **starts at noon with a lunch or with snacks** that will be served all afternoon.

Starting at 1 pm, in the red shed, will be hourly presentations that center on aspects of our habitat as they pertain to animals. New to this Caring for Communities event are the 1 pm and 2 pm presentations.

**At 1 pm**, Robyn Graboski, founder and director of Centre Wildlife Care near State College, will speak of her experience with bats, a much misunderstood and important mammal plentiful in central Pennsylvania. Not only does Robyn serve as the organization's director, who manages daily operations, she has also pursued extensive training and certification in wildlife rehabilitation, including endangered species and oil spill response. Her background includes a bachelor's degree in Animal Science from Penn State and work as a veterinary technician and lab technician at Penn State University. Graboski has presented at national conferences, has published articles in professional journals, and teaches classes on wildlife rehabilitation in the United States, Canada, and the Middle East.

**At 2 pm**, participants will have an opportunity to build their own wooden bat houses under the supervision of Union County Conservation District's environmental educator Greg Bonsall. Greg has researched the different styles of bat houses. All pre-cut and pre-drilled materials will be provided.

The **3 pm and 4 pm** presentations are back by popular demand. **At 3 pm**, veteran animal rehabilitator Ed Reish of the Farragut Wildlife Rehabilitation Center near Montoursville will present and talk about his owls and other birds of prey. Ed has been working with wild animals for many years and his bird presentations have been featured here and at the RB Winter State Park, among other places. **At 4 pm**, Clyde

Peeling of Reptiland in Allenwood will make the closing presentation. Reptiland has been featured nationally on television and, for decades, Clyde and his staff have presented many programs. Clyde will discuss and present a wide variety of live reptiles and amphibians, some native to the area, which will be another crowd-pleaser for all ages.

**At 7:30 pm** return to the Dale/Engle/Walker house for a very special "Evening Sounds and Owl Prowl" with Mifflinburg science teacher Joe Southerton, who will interpret the sounds and sights of the night along the Buffalo Creek section of the property. The group will park at the house and assemble porcheside. Last year's participants learned to listen carefully and look differently as it became dark. They were rewarded with the sounds and sightings of numerous owls and birds. Binoculars may help.

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**\* ARBOR DAY TREE WALK in Lewisburg Friday April 29 at 6 pm \***

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Again, back by popular demand, is the Lewisburg Tree Walk conducted by the Lewisburg Shade Tree Commission. This walking tour, beginning at **6 pm**, will feature some of Lewisburg's finest shade trees, from a Heritage Magnolia to an ancient Elm tree. Assembling at Kidsburg (St. Louis Street between 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Streets), participants will wind through town to see examples of well planted and well cared for specimens, as well as to see trees poorly located or ill-chosen. Past and present members of the Shade Tree Commission will be on hand to take questions and provide insights. The tour will end at Soldier's Park at approximately 7 pm.

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**Montandon Community Day May 28**

**8 am Bird Walk in Marsh , Video Presentations 11 am through 3 pm**

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The Conservancy will host the lead-off event again for the 2nd Montandon Community Days: May 28-29. Members Wayne McDiffett or Allen Schweinsberg will be leading an **8 am** walk into the Montandon Marsh (assemble by 8 am at the front visitor parking area of the Montandon Elementary School on Rte. 45). Bring binoculars and wear sensible walking shoes. Food stands and craft booths will be operating by 9 AM and the Conservancy will be showing the video about the Marsh in the West Chillisquaque Township Building, behind the Post office, on the hour from **11 am to 3 pm** (last showing). Come learn about this special habitat and enjoy an old-fashioned community event at the same time. A Memorial Day parade will be held the next day.

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**Halfway Run Environmental Center Events at RB Winter State Park**

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**FISHING SKILLS FOR KIDS**

**Saturday May 28, 10:00 am to Noon:** Children and their parents are encouraged to learn about the basics of fishing at this fun program. The children may borrow equipment, so they need bring nothing but an interested parent! This is one of two days adults may fish for free in Pennsylvania, so no license is required for this event. Participants should meet at the Beach House.

**AMPHIBIANS**

**Saturday May 28, 4:00 pm – 4:45 pm:** Kids of all ages who love frogs and salamanders! Join in the fun with a short story and a peek into a park pond as we discover more about these fascinating critters at the **Sheary-Linn Amphitheater** next to the Halfway Run Environmental Learning Center.

**SONGBIRD WALK**

**Sunday May 29, 8:30 am – 9:45 am:** This program for adults or older children will begin with a quick look at birds attracted to the Center's feeding station and will include a morning stroll about the day-use area of the park in search of nesting and migrating birds. Please meet at the Halfway Run Environmental Learning Center. Bring binoculars and a field guide, if you have them.

A complete schedule of Halfway Run Environmental Center Events is available by calling the Park at 570-966-1455, weekdays between 8 am and 4 pm or via <http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/stateparks/calendar/calendar.aspx> . All programs are free and open to the public.

## *Our Environment Matters:*

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### **Montandon Marsh Complex: Opportunities Realized, Opportunities Lost**

*by Jeannette Lasansky*

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A public information meeting in West Chillisquaque Township (Montandon) conducted by the Army Corps on January 24, 2005, produced coverage in the *Daily Item* that read: "Several members of the Linn Land & Waterways Conservancy took the [Milton] industrial development authority [MAIDA] to task, noting 'missed opportunities' to work cooperatively to preserve wetlands adjoining the Montandon Marsh Area." Yes, we did and here is why. You, as members, will want to be informed.



*Montandon Marsh*

opportunities' to work cooperatively to preserve wetlands adjoining the Montandon Marsh Area." Yes, we did and here is why. You, as members, will want to be informed.

Our interest and work in the 500-plus acre wetlands complex began with the conservancy's founding in 1988. We have worked slowly and steadily to learn more about the area and to educate others, including local government officials, businesses, and residents. With the assistance of Milton attorney William Belford, we successfully purchased over 33 acres north of Route 45, in addition to permanently protecting over 77 acres south of Rte. 45 with a perpetual conservation easement. The latter is part of about 200 acres owned by Central Builders Supply Company, a local family-owned company. Voluntary stewardship practices by the Markunas family on an adjoining 10 acres creates a buffer along the

western side of our conservation easement. Positive discussions with adjacent land owners include those with Pennsylvania Gas & Electric (owner of the former canal and tow path bordering the southern section of the wetlands) which will likely create another buffer and walk way on the eastern edge of our conservation easement.

Additional long-term interest in the Montandon Marsh Complex is evidenced by support from the scientific community at Bucknell. Advanced students working with faculty have conducted studies on the hydrology of the area, its breeding birds, and its very special plants. Some of that work has been financially supported by Central Builders Supply and the McKenna Foundation. The Conservancy also secured other funding for the Natural Diversity Inventory of Northumberland County – work that was done by the Pennsylvania science office of The Nature Conservancy. Other business and foundation support produced our video on the Montandon complex, *A Wonder in Our Back Yard*. This educational tool is appreciated by area teachers. The video was viewed by the Montandon community at its first annual "Community Days" last May.

These are but a few of the opportunities "realized." By no means have our efforts been hidden under a basket. In 1993 we received the Northumberland County Conservation District's Swank Award at the NCCD's annual dinner in recognition of the Linn Conservancy's work in the Montandon Marsh. So it came as a surprise to those of us present at January's public meeting when it was said "there was no suitable party to hold a deed restriction on nearly 100 acres of wetlands swamp." This was the same land that in 1996 a former MAIDA staff person had asked the Conservancy to state its interest in. Written correspondence in 1996 indicating our interest was followed by a meeting and more correspondence two years later. While the Conservancy felt there was still opportunity for land purchase, gifting, or a conservation easement, it now appears that MAIDA has closed the door to such avenues of permanent protection with meaningful oversight. Opportunities were "lost."

Does this happen in other arenas? Of course. But the disappointment in this case was keen and the contrast with "opportunities realized" was stark.

Is the story of land protection and education in the Montandon wetlands complex over? No, our work and our cooperation with interested parties will continue and more opportunities will be realized.

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## Woodland Wildflowers Are A Sign of Spring and Healthy Forests

*by Rance Scott Harmon, Penn State Forest Resources Extension*

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After months of drab winter hues, wildflowers are brightening Penn's Woods and proclaiming the arrival of spring. Many woodland wildflowers take advantage of the few weeks when the forest floor is awash in sunlight after the soil thaws. Soon leaves from shrubs and trees will cast shade over low growing plants for the remainder of the growing season. To take advantage of this brief window of opportunity, many woodland wildflowers use energy stored in underground bulbs, roots, or root stalks to jump-start the rapid growth of leaves and flowers. Many bloom for only a week or two, although the leaves may persist longer.

Here are some flowering gems to look for in Pennsylvania woodlands this month. Most bloom sometime between late March and early May:

- Harbinger of spring is one of our first wildflowers to bloom. Its clusters of tiny white flowers, sprinkled with reddish brown anthers gives it another common name: pepper-and-salt.
- Trout lily leaves have blotches of color reminiscent of the fish of the same name. The nodding flowers can be white or yellow.
- Hepatica flowers may be white, pink, or blue. Each flower grows on a separate stalk and has between 5 and 12 parts. Because of its lobed leaves, hepatica is also known as liver leaf.
- Dutchman's breeches has white flowers that dangle from the stem, reminding some folks of pantaloons hanging on a clothesline.
- Spring beauty has narrow leaves and 5-parted white flowers, often with pink veins.
- Trillium has large petals and showy flowers that, as its name suggests, come in three parts. Our three common native species have white or purple flowers.
- Bloodroot has white flowers with 8-10 delicate petals around a golden-yellow center. The deeply lobed leaf often curls around the flower-stalk. As the name implies, the root, which is actually an underground stem, produces a red juice.

A rich mix of native wildflowers is one indication of healthy conditions in the lower layer of the forest, which is known as the understory. Healthy forests contain a variety of flowers, shrubs, trees, and other plants, which occur in layers, from ground level to the treetops. This variety and complexity allows many different animals to thrive and fosters environmental stability. When strands of this intricate web of life are missing, the entire ecosystem can be altered. Predicting the effect of missing species on the whole system can be very complicated, if not impossible.

However, in some Pennsylvania woodlands, the lack of tree seedlings, wildflowers, and other plants leaves little doubt that there is a problem. Two of the culprits behind a dearth of understory growth are an overabundance of white-tailed deer and invasive plants. Like most humans, deer are selective eaters. They browse on their favorite forest plants when they are available and resort to less-preferred foods when their favorites can't be found. Long-term studies in the Allegheny National Forest show that as deer increase in an area, wildflowers and other ground cover species decrease. To compound the problem, deer generally avoid eating most ferns. As a result, large expanses of ferns cover the forest floor in many Pennsylvania woodlands. To many people, a verdant blanket of ferns in an open, park-like forest is a beautiful site to behold. However, these conditions are signs that something is very wrong, ecologically speaking. Without a vigorous growth of

new tree seedlings, the future of the forest is in jeopardy, and animals that depended on the missing plants for food and shelter may not find what they need to survive. Studies in the Allegheny Forest show that high deer density causes a decrease in songbird diversity, in addition to the decreases in wildflower and ground cover species mentioned previously.

Invasive plants are another cause of decreased plant diversity in the forest understory. Most invasive plants come from other parts of the globe. In their new home in Penn's Woods, they proliferate because the natural controls that keep the plants in check in their homelands do not occur here. Such natural controls include specific kinds of diseases and insects. Like ferns, introduced species can take over a site, displacing native plants and preventing seedlings from developing into trees.

If you are one of Pennsylvania's half-million forest landowners, take another look at your woodlands. Do you see a diverse array of native wildflowers and other low-growing plants? If not, do you have a sea of ferns or a predominance of just one or two types of plants? If so, chances are that deer or invasive plants are affecting your woodlands. While these are tough problems to address, there are resources available to assist you.

The Pennsylvania Forest Stewardship Program provides private forestland owners with information and assistance to promote healthy and productive forests. To request publications or to learn more about the Forest Stewardship Program, call 1-800-235-WISE (toll-free), send e-mail to RNRext@psu.edu, or write to Forest Stewardship Program, Forest Resources Extension, The Pennsylvania State University, 7 Ferguson Building, University Park, PA 16802. The Pennsylvania Bureau of Forestry and USDA Forest Service, in partnership with the Penn State's Forest Resources Extension, sponsor the Pennsylvania Forest Stewardship Program.

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**The Conservancy's Caring for Communities events will feature several opportunities to learn more about woodland wildflowers and the invasive plants that threaten them. For an opportunity to appreciate wildflowers first-hand, join us for a wildflower walk led by Dahle Bingaman at the site of one of our permanently protected properties. The walk will be held on Earth Day, Saturday, April 23, at 1:30 pm. The Conservancy's Invasive Plant Exhibit opens on April 10 from 1-3 pm with a Native Plant Sale on the porch of the Walker House. For details, see the special Caring section on pages 2-4 of this newsletter.**

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### Conservation Easements Under Attack

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A recent report by Congress's Joint Committee on Taxation recommends dismantling tax deductions for landowners who volunteer to conserve their land—a program that has been essential to private and public conservation efforts.

Those tax incentives, in place for more than 25 years, have led to voluntary conservation of more than 34 million acres of working agricultural lands, working forests, wildlife habitats, historic landscapes, and parklands across the nation. Locally, the Linn Conservancy has placed Voluntary Conservation Easements on properties in Union County and Upper Northumberland County.



*Walker Property, a Linn Conservation Easement Site*

### The New Tax Proposals

The Joint Committee has proposed that *deductions for conservation easements be limited to 33% of appraised value. No deduction will be allowed for the donation of an easement on land used for a personal residence.* The Committee also proposes *changing the deductions associated with donations or bargain sales of land by limiting such donations to the owner's "basis" — that is, the cost of the land plus any capital improvements made over the years.*

At a time when development and sprawl threaten much of what makes our communities livable—clean air and water, open space, parks, and wildlife habitat—private landowners have a critical role to play in conservation. With state and federal budget deficits limiting government purchase of conservation land, one of the best ways to conserve America's natural legacy is through incentives to private landowners. This approach is working because it encourages voluntary charitable gifts, respects private property rights, and keeps land on the tax rolls.

## Linn Conservancy Is Taking Action

Linn Conservancy Coordinator Sue Auman will be traveling to Harrisburg along with representatives of neighboring conservancies to meet with key Senators and Congressmen to inform them about the impact that this proposal will have on their constituents. Sue will share stories of local landowners who have been able to preserve the resource values of their land through conservation easements. Showing the tangible public benefits of easements is one of the most critical things we can do to help lawmakers understand the issues and shape legislation supporting this important conservation tool.

### How You Can Help

Because our organization depends on the tax incentives the Joint Committee on taxation has attacked, letters to our US Senators and Representative asking them to help in fighting these proposals could prove beneficial. Our local opinion does count. Draft letters and more information—including how to email or write our elected officials are available through the Land Trust Alliance on the LTA Web Site at [www.lta.org](http://www.lta.org). For more information, go to <http://www.lta.org/publicpolicy/ppc.htm>. Watch future *Linn Logs* for updated information on this important legislative issue.

## *People, Businesses, and Organizations Effect Change:*

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### Attendees, Volunteers Sought for “Beer, Brats and Brass” Fund Raiser

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The Linn Conservancy is sponsoring “Beer, Brats and Brass” at the Packwood House courtyard from 12 noon to 4 pm on Saturday, April 30, 2005, the opening day of the Lewisburg Arts Festival. Admission includes beer tasting—3 oz. samples of four beers—conducted by Bullfrog Brewery of Williamsport, PA, and bratwurst sandwiches, accompanied by a brass musical group. Non-alcoholic beverages, baked goods and other food items will also be offered. Beer, Brats and Brass is a family event, and those who choose to sample beer will be screened for age.

The event, which is being coordinated by the Conservancy Development Committee, recalls the museum’s earlier days when the Packwood House served as a tavern and a hotel for travelers in the Susquehanna Valley. Educational materials, such as those emphasizing the value of clean water, will be available. All Linn Conservancy members are encouraged to join us for this festive event. Volunteers are also needed to ensure the success of the fund raiser. Volunteers may email John Fernsler at [jjfern@jd.web](mailto:jjfern@jd.web), Roger Curran at [rdcnrc@evenlink.com](mailto:rdcnrc@evenlink.com), or call 524-8666.

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### Making Tracks *by Neal Woodruff*

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Those of us who have held environmental values for a while, perhaps for years, might well sometimes wonder who will succeed us. If not a function of a professional choice, we may have luckily chanced upon our values through camping or fishing or reading something like Rachel Carson's **Silent Spring**. But there has been no recent quantum leap in environmental awareness and concern, such as that book produced. So we may wonder--especially in these times when environmental values are not officially celebrated--who will follow us to affirm them? And where will they get the values and the skill to advocate them?



*Saskia Madelener, Bucknell Student  
and Conservancy Intern*

A welcome and exemplary answer is embodied in an idealistic, energetic young woman who fortunately serves as an intern this year with the Conservancy, Saskia Madelener. She is a first-year student at Bucknell. Born in Belgium, she grew up on Long Island. At Bucknell, she hopes to concentrate in environmental studies, art, and film studies.

She is the only freshman among 12 students doing volunteer work in an AmeriCorps program called Scholars in Service. A member of its environmental group, she discovered the Conservancy through Caring for Communities, and her offer to volunteer met an enthusiastic response by our past and present coordinators.

Saskia's aim is to experience how non-profit organizations work, and to learn how, through such organizations, one may advocate effectively for the environment. Her concern arose naturally as she was growing up. Her Long Island community was, she says, conscious of a need to preserve and foster nature. Her mother is especially environmentally sensitive.

Agriculture in the area is extensively organic farming. But beyond her personal setting, a special experience made her an enthusiastic born-again environmentalist. During her senior year, her high school was visited by Jean-Michel Cousteau, son of the famous oceanologist, who exposed to students the manifold problems produced by human intrusions in the oceans. Her interest and concern kindled by Cousteau, she interned last summer with Renewable Energy Long Island, where she did extensive research on sustainable energy and began observing a non-profit at work.

She will proceed beyond her experience with Linn by going to Washington next fall, where she has been accepted—one of ten students of environmental studies—into a Greenpeace program where she expects to learn a great deal about the advocacy and the politics of environmentalism. She says she wants to find out how good she is at doing these things. Her exploratory spirit seems a mature and admirable tentativeness guiding a strong and fine ambition.

She has helped to organize and run a number of Linn Conservancy activities—clean-ups, outreach booths on public occasions, a native plant sale, the annual dinner—and she hopes she can get more Bucknell students involved in the Conservancy. She also has a lively wish to make an impact at Bucknell through its student Environmental Club by helping to introduce more environmentally sound practices to the campus. One ambition is to see that more of the food served to students is grown locally—and if possible, also grown organically. Another is to encourage more recycling. She frowns and shakes her head when she speaks of all the recyclable refuse that goes straight into the trash from the buildings where students live, and of the fact that many students unnecessarily leave their lights on all the time.

When we environmentalists of mature years contemplate the hopeful ambition and energetic activity Saskia gifts us with, it is easier to believe that, indeed, others will succeed us. The Conservancy could scarcely be luckier than for her to have sought us out and be making her contribution to and through our organization. We owe her our gratitude and any generous encouragement we can offer her.

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### **Buffalo Creek Watershed Work Underway**

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The Buffalo Creek Watershed Alliance (BCWA) has two major projects underway this winter, implementation of a stream monitoring program and the submission of a proposal for a Growing Greener (GG) grant to remediate the high acid levels of the headwaters of the main Branch of Buffalo Creek.

The group will implement a stream monitoring program with funds provided by a previously issued GG grant for monitoring and assessing the creek. BCWA has purchased kits that will allow volunteers to conduct monthly water quality measurements at eight key points on the stream.

Volunteers include: Thom Fantaskey & George Matthews, Judy & Richard Ellis, Sue Goddard and family, Geoff Goodenow's and Elizabeth Sterling's Lewisburg Area High School students, Karen Musser and Mifflinburg Area High School students, Alice Hanselman and family, Kim and Chris Wheeler, Jacob Engle, Mr. and Mrs. Tim Morris, Tom Duck and BSA Troop 538. Thom Fantaskey will coordinate the volunteers, who will receive training at a workshop at R.B. Winter State Park on Saturday, March 19. Collected information will be databased to provide, over time, a view of water quality changes under different conditions. These data will help indicate areas that need remediation. BCWA is grateful to the volunteers who are making this project possible.

BCWA is also preparing a Growing Greener grant proposal to research and design a means to reduce high acid levels in the headwaters of Buffalo Creek. This section has been identified as a 303d impaired stream by the EPA, so remediation of acid deposited there by rainwater is a high priority. BCWA has engaged Dietz et al Consulting, Inc. to provide technical expertise. If BCWA receives the grant, the group will complete the design and be in position to apply for construction funds at this time next year. This is the BCWA's first attempt at a major intervention to improve the quality of the stream. The construction of acid reducing ponds may, in time, assure the return of fish to these waters.

Other BCWA events include a riparian buffer planting on April 23, the planting of a tree in memory of its first chairman, Jeff Bowers, on April 29th, and a streamside cleanup on May 7. BCWA will also host its second annual canoe trip on Buffalo Creek as part of Caring for Communities Month.

BCWA welcomes new board member Hannah Holm, who was elected at the group's March membership meeting.

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### Montandon Wetlands Work Party

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The Montandon wetlands complex saw a large work party on an Indian summer type day in early December. A group of students from Bucknell University gathered together with Linn Conservancy members and board members to clean up debris at the Montandon wetlands complex adjacent to the Village Green trailer park. Saskia Madelener, freshman at Bucknell and Linn Conservancy intern (see *Making Tracks* section of this newsletter), gathered together a number of energetic students to remove a broken down shed and clean up debris.

The Conservancy appreciates the hard work and dedication of these students and volunteers to continue the preservation of Montandon Marsh.

Volunteers included (alphabetically): Owen Anderson, Jack Bierwirth, Jenny Bohrman, Bryan Bzdek, Roger Curran, Graham Douds, Tom Duck, Cordy Elkins, Judy Ellis, Arthur Harrison, Nicholas Hertz, Tyler Kidder, Jeannette Lasansky, Courtney Luzzi, Saskia Madelener, Liz Marut, Wayne McDiffett, Allen and Joanne Schweinsberg, Martha Shaunessy and her son, John Tonzetich, Tom Travis, Brittany Vogt, Risa Wright, Greg Yankee, Gillian Young, and Shereef Zaki.



*Montandon Wetlands Work Party Volunteers*

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### Adopt-a-Highway Clean-up Dates Set for April 17, June 5, August 14 and October 16

*by Jo Reilly*

During the warmer months of the year, volunteers from the Conservancy participate in the Adopt-A-Highway Program sponsored by PENN DOT. The volunteers pick up litter along a mile stretch of Wildwood Road, located along Penns Creek west of Route 104. Beyond the pavilion, Wildwood Road then stretches for another mile winding its way up to Red Ridge Road. These two miles of roadway are part of the Commonwealth's collective 'front yard, 150,000 acres of roadside.'

This anti-litter program serves to clean the highways for Pennsylvania citizens, highway users, and for the millions of tourists who visit our state each year. The program allows us to become special "caretakers" of the state roadways. The two signs located at the beginning and end of the route proudly announce the Conservancy efforts over the past 10 years of service.

Our efforts are also appreciated by those who live or recreate along the roadway. This area along the creek is used frequently by walkers and bikers, as well as by people enjoying picnics at the pavilion. As they drive, walk, or bike past the workers, many individuals thank the volunteers for their work. The scenery along this area of the creek is beautiful during all the seasons of the year and is bountiful with wildlife that excites those who reside in or visit this area. Keeping this area of highway litter-free has been an important contribution from Conservancy volunteers.

We appreciate the help given over the past years from those individuals who regularly volunteer. We would welcome new people who would like to join us. We meet at 1:00pm at the pavilion and finish our work in an hour or two. The clean-up dates for this year are April 17, June 5, August 14, and October 16. The Sunday of April 17 will require a large clean-up effort due to the huge amount of debris left from the flood last year. We hope to see you there.

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## Members Help Linn Conservancy Meet Its Goals through Gifts and Time

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Thanks to board member Diane Specht who has agreed to chair the Conservancy's busy Education Committee. Diane brings her experience in communications and working on last year's Caring for Communities events to this new responsibility. She joins fellow committee chairs: Geoff Goodenow (Site/Stewardship) and Roger Curran (Development) on the Conservancy's Executive Committee.

Thanks to Geoff Goodenow, Jan Peterson, Edwina Eldridge, Saskia Madelener, Courtney Luzzi, Pete Macky Jr. and Pete Macky Sr for representing Linn Conservancy at the annual *RB Winter State Park Snowfest* held on January 30.

Thanks to Nancy Curran and Celia Peterson for organizing and overseeing the Annual Dinner to be held at the Carriage Corner restaurant on May 5.

Thanks to members Lettie Davis and Jeannette Lasansky who have been participating all year in the planning for and the execution of *Montandon Community Days 2005*.

Thanks to the Lewisburg Garden Club, Country Cupboard, and the Mifflinburg Garden Club for sponsoring the Native Plant Sale.

Thanks to Bucknell University participants, Linn Conservancy board members and Linn Conservancy members for help with the clean up day at the Montandon Wetlands Complex in December. See the work party volunteers in a picture on page ten.

Thanks to the Union County Conservation District and the Union County Planning Commission for helping to underwrite the costs of Caring for Communities events.

Thanks to David & Vicki Heberlig and DJ Keen who prepared this newsletter for mailing.

Thanks to the Mifflinburg Garden Club for a donation to the Conservancy.

Several persons have made contributions to the Conservancy in memory of Lewisburg resident Charlotte J. Brown: Mr. & Mrs. John Hancock; Theodore G. Hills; Anna M. Hull; Mr. & Mrs. Lee Karayusuf; Mr. & Mrs. Dan Hills.

A gift in honor of Joyce Kunkle was given to the Conservancy by Ella Jane and Gerry Kunkle.

Memorial gifts were received from members Shirley & Dahle Bingaman and Connie Timm for Dorothy Jeannette Sheppard Mehrer, the recently deceased mother of Jeannette Mehrer Lasansky.

Thanks to members who, from mid- December to early March, have made additional financial gifts, and/or increased their level of giving in order to help better support the Conservancy's work: Margaret Lauver; the Peter Matson family; Martin Ligare; Jean Ruhl; the Daniel Clement family; Beatrice Spielman; Preston & Margaret Davis; Andrew Mack & Debra Wright; Linda Minium; Christopher Snyder & Kathryn Lesslie; Barbara Zeiders; Carol Ingald; and Gail & John Dunlop.

Thanks to the Mifflinburg Kiwanis Club for mowing at the Koons Trail.

Welcome to new members: the Auman family; Andrea Bashore; Clare and Michael Coyne; and G. Ellsworth Harris.

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**PLEASE NOTE: We can now send you the *Linn Log* as a PDF file instead of through the mail (and inserts as well). If you are interested in receiving the newsletter in a PDF format instead of through the mail let us know and will start sending them that way starting with the next *Log*.**

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Thanks to the following members who have said they would like to receive their newsletter mailing electronically in PDF format: Donald & Dorothy Douglas, Rosaria Gabriele and Arlyne Hoyt, Diana Lasansky, William & Jeannette Lasansky, and Dotti & Terry Zimmerman.

Thanks to the following for their work on *Caring for Communities Events*: Caring events chair Jeannette Lasansky, who secured contributions from the Union County Planning Commission and the Union County Conservation District for underwriting costs. Also, fellow event planners: Publicity Chair Diane Specht, Mark Berg, Lettie Davis, Dotti Zimmerman, Geoff Goodenow, Bob Deffner from RB Winter State Park, Shanon Burkland from the Union County Conservation District; Neal Fogle from Penn State Cooperative Extension; and Shawn McLaughlin from the Union County Planning Commission.

Thanks to those who have served as event hosts or on subcommittees: Wayne McDiffett; Mark Lawrence at WKOK and Bill Deitrick of the UCCD; the Native Plant Sale sponsors, the Country Cupboard, the Lewisburg Garden Club, and the Mifflinburg Garden Club, and Team members Andrea Bashore; Mandy Burbage, Juli Cooper, Lewisburg Garden Club President and Native Plant Sale Team Leader; Clare Coyne, Saskia Madelener, Debby Meade, and Mark Spiro for helping organize the first ever Linn Conservancy Native Plant Sale Fund Raiser; Bucky Zeigler, owner of Paradise Valley Organic Farm, and Conservancy member Hannah Holm for arrangements and publicity; Buffalo Creek Watershed Alliance and Alliance Board member Hannah Holm for arrangements for the Buffalo Creek canoe trip with Betsy and Allen Quant; the staff at the Allenwood State Gamelands and Conservancy board member Lettie Davis for the overall organization and publicity of that event; Conservancy member and cyclist Tom Gibson for organizing the three cycling tours to be led by himself and members Pete Macky and John Fernsler; Conservancy members Dahle Bingaman and Carl Oberheim for the Hartley Township wildflower walk; Conservancy members Terry and Dotti Zimmerman, Roy Fontaine, and Lettie Davis for the food stand at the grand event, Neal Fogle from the Penn State Extension Service, Mark Berg from the Lewisburg Middle School, and Jennifer Bergy from the Milton Middle School, as well as presenters Robyn Graboski from State College, UCCD environmental educator Greg Bonsall, Ed Reish of the Farragut Wildlife Rehabilitation Center, and Conservancy member, Clyde Peeling of Reptiland; Conservancy member Joe Southerton for the evening sounds walk on the Dale's Ridge Trail, and the Lewisburg Shade Tree Commission for the tree walk on Arbor Day.

Member Ed Culver can always be counted on when there is a photo assignment. Just recently he helped members of the board prepare a special photographic gift for Jeannette Lasansky who completed 17 years of serving the Merrill W. Linn Land & Waterways as its first President from 1988-1993 and its first coordinator from 1995-2004. Wayne McDiffett, current President, made the presentation at the late November board meeting and, as usual, Ed was there to photographically record the event.

**If your dues for this year are due, a handy business reply envelope is enclosed for your convenience. Please help us meet our goals by replying as quickly and as generously as you possibly can this year. Thank you for your support in the past! Giving to the Linn Conservancy makes a difference that matters. Membership support is our major financial underpinning.**

