



## WESTMORELAND CONSERVANCY NEWSLETTER

[www.westmorelandconservancy.org](http://www.westmorelandconservancy.org)

July 2008 Editors: Shelly Tichy & Kate Blackmore (724) 325-5523  
[wcnewsletter@comcast.net](mailto:wcnewsletter@comcast.net)

### Conservation Connection at the Zoo

*Conservation Connection at the Zoo* was hosted by the Westmoreland Conservancy on **Saturday, May 3, 2008**. This event was planned to provide the opportunity for conservation-minded people and organizations throughout the greater Pittsburgh region to *Gather, Share and Celebrate Conservation*. The **Pittsburgh Zoo & PPG Aquarium** provided the perfect venue.

Beginning at 5 pm guests were able to enjoy *Behind-the-Scenes* tours with the tigers, lions and giraffes. There were also *Zoo Animal Appearances*, including a snake, a great horned owl and a prehensile-tailed porcupine. The buffet was served in the Garden Tent at 6:30 pm.

The perimeter of the tent was lined with displays from various organizations representing water (Watersheds), land (stewardship) and air conservation as well as a few corporate participants. There were fun projects, electric bikes, wilderness cameras and lots of information available to help introduce people to the world of green living!

Our introductory speaker was **Margie Marks, Curator of Conservation Education at the Pittsburgh Zoo & PPG Aquarium**. Margie has enjoyed a long partnership with the Pittsburgh Zoo, having begun her career as an animal keeper and having worked with the elephants, large cats and bears. She now oversees Conservation Education and more than 30 different programs!



**Davitt Woodwell, Vice-President of the Pennsylvania Environmental Council (PEC)** was our keynote speaker for the evening. Focusing on land and water conservation, his presentation was about co-operation and the future of conservation in the region. He was very excited about this event and the potential for future collaborative programs.

**Jeremy Smith, director of Development and Communications at Riverlife Task Force** was our last speaker. Riverlife is the driving force implementing a comprehensive master plan for use of the region's most valuable asset. Flood control, ecological restoration, brownfield reclamation, developing recreational amenities and restoring fish population are all part of the plan for "Three Rivers Park".

We would like to express our gratitude to our sponsors. Donations at **Sponsors** level were **Respironics, Dynamic Leadership, Ltd.** and **Acusis**, as well as two private donors, Richard Wagner and William M. Aiken, Jr. There were numerous **Supporters** and **Friends**, all of whom were recognized in our event program. There are a few additional event programs available for anyone wanting a souvenir from the occasion.

The Planning Committee for *Conservation Connection at the Zoo* : Co-chairs: Cary Bohl, Betsy Aiken, Shelly Tichy; Treasurer: Joanne Kendall; Katie Blackmore; Doug Bauman; Richard Wagner; Geri Mitchell; Mark Emerson; and Bjoerg Granger.

## April 2008 Elections Meeting

Our April 23, 2008 meeting included the election of one-third of our board of 12 governors. The general membership elects the board of governors, who in turn elect the officers. Members elected Mount Fitzpatrick, Richard Wagner, Bjoerg Granger and Shelly Tichy to join Maury Hanes, Joanne Kendall, Kate Blackmore, Mark Emerson, Cary Bohl, Betsy Aiken, Doug Bauman and Charles Conway on the 2008 board. The governors then elected the 2008 officers: President: Shelly Tichy; Vice Pres: Kate Blackmore; Treasurer: Bjoerg Granger and Secretary: Joanne Kendall.

*"Something will have gone out of us as a people if we ever let the remaining wilderness be destroyed; if we permit the last virgin forests to be turned into comic books and plastic cigarette cases; if we drive the few remaining members of the wild species into zoos or to extinction; if we pollute the last clear air and dirty the last clean streams and push our paved roads through the last of the silence, so that never again will Americans be free in their own country from the noise, the exhausts, the stinks of human and automotive waste."* ~Wallace Stegner, letter to David E. Pesonen of the Wildland Research Center, 3 December 1960.

## Spring Quarter Activities

**Saturday, May 31<sup>st</sup>**: Rockland Furnace/Freedom Falls/McConnell's Mills.

Westmoreland Conservancy will be participating in the Land Trust Alliance's (LTA)



Rally 2008 in September. In preparation for this event we put together a trial run of our field excursion, titled: *Western PA Falls and Furnaces: Powerhouse of Historic Industry*. Western Pennsylvania has long been a center of American Industry even before the modern Steel Mills. Our trip focuses on this historic past, beginning at Rockland Furnace (1860s) & Freedom Falls along the Allegheny River Trail in Rockland, PA. While there we also get to explore the ½ mile long Rockland Tunnel, a 1915 railroad tunnel now part of the Rails-to-Trails system.

After stopping for lunch we have a stop at Springfield Falls and the recently excavated Springfield Furnace before we head for Volant Mills. The 1812 Grain Mill in Amish Country has been converted to shops and has preserved machinery of the period on display for viewing.

Our final stop is McConnell's Mills and a beautiful walk to Alpha Falls. The Grist Mill is situated above a lovely covered bridge and allows for great photo opportunities. This particular trip had a Great Blue Heron fishing (successfully!) for lunch. A nice conclusion to a great day!

### **Saturday, June 14<sup>th</sup>: Roaring Run/Apollo.**

Sometimes Mother Nature changes our plans. Our group gathered on an overcast morning and headed out to Apollo and Roaring Run. After making the 1 ½ mile walk out to the foot bridge the skies opened up. This brought about a rather brisk hike back to the pavilion near the parking area.

As you walk along the trail there is evidence of beaver activity to be seen if you look for it. We even found some serious chewing on the picnic tables in the pavilion!

The steady rain brought our day to an early end, but it was enjoyable nonetheless.

## **Upcoming Summer/Fall Activities**

**Saturday, July 12:** Buck Skena will lead a 10 AM walk along the Skena Farm property adjacent to the Kellman Nature Reserve. Meet at 3561 North Hills Rd., Murrysville. Balloons will mark the mailbox. Sturdy shoes are strongly recommended.

**Saturday, August 9<sup>th</sup>:** Meet at 9AM at the Sardis Fire Hall (Rte 286) to join a hike along the Saltsburg section of the West Penn Trails along the Conemaugh River.

**Saturday, August 23<sup>rd</sup>:** Murrysville Community Day

11AM – 6PM at the Public Works Complex on Sardis Road just north of the Municipal Building. Join the fun!

**Saturday, September 13<sup>th</sup>:** Geo-cache Treasure Hunt. Summer vacations are over, but there is still a lot to discover close to home! Explore all of our reserves! Collect the markers as you locate each cache. Finish with a picnic! More details to follow on our website: [www.westmorelandconservancy.org](http://www.westmorelandconservancy.org)

**RALLY 2008: The National Land Conservation Conference, September 18 – 21 at the David L.**

**Lawrence Convention Center, Pittsburgh.** The Westmoreland Conservancy has the honor of being members of the Host Committee for this important National event. The Alliance recognizes that Pittsburgh has made dramatic environmental changes and is one of the top 3 cities in the U.S. in respect to certified “green building” square-footage. The DLLCC is, in fact, the largest “green building” in the world. Rally provides the opportunity for members of land trust organizations to come together and share ideas through seminars and workshops. It offers an in-depth program of conservation education and training. There are field trips scheduled for Thursday and Friday, and the Westmoreland Conservancy is leading one of them! It’s a tremendous learning opportunity and an exciting time to be involved in conservation. More information is available at [www.lta.org](http://www.lta.org).

**IN PLANNING:** Weekend of October 18: Fall Color Excursion to **Pine Creek Gorge**, otherwise known as the **Pennsylvania Grand Canyon**. This will likely be an overnight or 2-day trip. Watch for details on our website: [www.westmorelandconservancy.org](http://www.westmorelandconservancy.org) or in our October 2008 Newsletter.

*"Is civilization progress? The challenge, I think, is clear; and, as clearly, the final answer will be given not by our amassing of knowledge, or by the discoveries of our science, or by the speed of our aircraft, but by the effect our civilized activities as a whole have upon the quality of our planet's life - the life of plants and animals as well as that of men."*

~Charles A. Lindbergh, Jr.

## **Submit Your E-Mail Address To Have Event Updates & Information Delivered**

If you are interested in being more closely informed about events, walks and excursions 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.

## **Westmoreland Conservancy**

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



### **2008 Board of Governors/Officers**

**Officers: President – Shelly Tichy**

**Vice President – Katie Blackmore**

**Secretary – Joanne Kendall**

**Treasurer - Bjoerg Granger**

**Governors: Mount Fitzpatrick, Doug Bauman,**

**Cary Bohl, Charles Conway,**

**Richard Wagner, Maury Hanes,**

**Mark Emerson, Betsy Aiken**

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

**July 23<sup>rd</sup>**

**August 27<sup>th</sup>**

**September 24<sup>th</sup>**

The next Newsletter is scheduled for **October 2008**

**Westmoreland Conservancy**

**P.O. Box 446**

**Murrysville, PA 15668**

[contact@westmorelandconservancy.org](mailto:contact@westmorelandconservancy.org)



**Schedule of Upcoming Events**



Please respond if attending an outing to: [wcnewsletter@comcast.net](mailto:wcnewsletter@comcast.net)

**Saturday, July 12<sup>th</sup>:** 10 AM, Walk on the Skena Farm. Meet at 3561 North Hills Rd., Murrysville.

**Wednesday, July 23:** Monthly meeting 7:30 PM at the Murrysville Library Municipal Room.

**Saturday, August 9<sup>th</sup>:** West Penn Trails/Saltsburg hike. Meet at 9AM at the Sardis Fire Hall, Rte 286.

**Saturday, August 23<sup>rd</sup>:** Murrysville Community Day

11AM – 6PM at the Public Works Complex on Sardis Road just north of the Municipal Building.

**Wednesday, August 27<sup>th</sup>:** Monthly meeting 7:30 PM at the Murrysville Library Municipal Room.

**Saturday, September 13<sup>th</sup>:** Geo-cache Treasure Hunt. Find the caches at each reserve, then finish the day at our picnic!

**Wednesday, September 24<sup>th</sup>:** Monthly Meeting, 7:30 PM at the Murrysville Library Municipal Room.



**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](http://www.westmorelandconservancy.org)

# ECO-FUN PAGE

## Building a Flower Pot Bird Bath

### Materials Needed:

- One each: 12", 14" and 16" Terra Cotta Flower Pots
- One 20" diameter clay saucer, waterproof (glazed) if possible. If you choose to use other sizes for your pots and saucer, be sure the saucer is 4" bigger than the largest pot so that the proportions are correct.
- Durable, weather-resistant paints to decorate. Sponges, paint brushes or stencils, too. Be creative!
- Water-based polyurethane to protect from water damage.

- Oil-based polyurethane to seal insides of pots.
- Liquid Nails Construction Adhesive. (Small tube should be less than \$5.00)

### Get Started:

- Sand off any rough spots from the pots and saucer: rims, bottoms & outside.
- Stack the pots: largest on bottom with the rim down, then the medium pot sliding down over the first, followed by the smallest. You should have a pyramid-like base.
- Draw a line below the rims on the body of the underlying pot. That way you know where to decorate and glue once you un-stack them.
- Disassemble and seal the inside of each pot and the rim of the largest pot (and the saucer if it's not glazed) with 2 or 3 coats of the oil-based polyurethane. Allow them to dry completely before moving on to the next step.
- Paint the pots with a good base coat. Paint about an inch higher than the lines you drew so that the base has continuous color. You can stop here and seal, OR.....
- DECORATE THEM! Once the base coat has dried (letting them "bake" in the warm sun speeds the process somewhat) let your imagination run wild! Flowers, ducks, patterns or just plain colors... whatever makes you happy! Don't paint above those lines, since the pots will overlap and hide anything up there. You can continue a design from one pot into the next, so be creative!
- Allow your creation to dry thoroughly, then seal the entire outside (even the unpainted parts) with 3 – 4 coats of the water-based polyurethane (it won't yellow).
- GLUE the bottom (small closed end) of the smallest pot to the center of the underside of the saucer. Do this by turning the saucer rim-side down and center the small pot upright. Mark where they'll be in contact and apply a generous amount of the liquid nails within the circle. DO NOT PRESS DOWN. The saucer will crack. More drying time.

Place your birdbath on a patio stone or on gravel... try not to put it directly onto the ground. Start with the largest pot and assemble as before, handling the saucer/smallest pot carefully. Don't press down; just allow the pots to settle gently. Fill the saucer with water and *voila!* Birdbath! Wash with a soft rag so you don't scratch the finish. Disassemble and store for winter months.