



Newsletter, #44  
Winter 2016/17

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

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### April 28th - Save the Date for Evergreen Conservancy's Spring Program

### What Was it Like to Work as a Coal Miner in Indiana County

Evergreen Conservancy is very closely tied to the coal industry in Indiana County. Our Tanoma site's purpose is to treat abandoned mine drainage of Indiana County mines. But what about the miners themselves? What was their job? Their working conditions? What was it like to live in a company house in a company town? How was shopping at the company store different from shopping today?

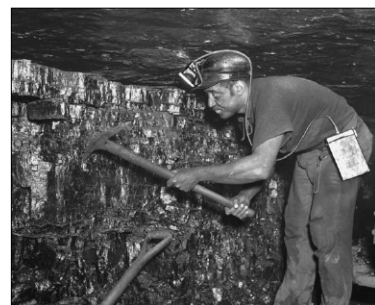
That is the subject of Evergreen Conservancy's spring program to be held Friday, April 28th at 6 pm at Blue Spruce Park. We hope to have a number of former coal miners attend this program.

One of the presenters will be Herb Gleditsch – a volunteer at the Indiana County Historical Society. Herb worked for R&P Coal for 30 years. He will discuss mining in Indiana County and bring a number of artifacts with him. He will also talk about mining towns and the company stores.

Dr. Jim Dougherty will be another presenter. He will discuss how technology affected the jobs of coal miners. Did you ever wonder what happened to mining jobs in the 80s and 90s? Jim will have answers to that question. Several years ago Jim did a program for us on Appalachia.

Jim Dougherty, PhD is a former IUP sociology professor and the founder of the IUP Center for Northern Appalachian Studies and the Northern Appalachian Folk Festival. He has produced documentaries that have focused on the history of steel workers and mine workers, coordinated numerous oral history projects in many of the former mining communities in the region and has authored articles related to the region and is an editor of two books, "The Global Economy" and "American Dreams: The Future of Education in America."

*Please note that this program will start earlier than usual, with two presenters.*



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### Nominations Needed for Evergreen Award

At our last annual meeting held in June Nancy Lezark accepted Evergreen Conservancy's Evergreen Award for her husband Alex Lezark.

Alex received the award because he was nominated by PASEC and backed up by a letter of support from the Kiski-Conemaugh Stream Team. So for someone to receive this award they have to be nominated.

What is the Evergreen Award anyhow? A volunteer, organization, business, or an employed person can be nominated for the award. The conservancy is seeking to recognize a nominee who has demonstrated grass-roots leadership in the following areas:

- New or innovative technology to prevent harm to our environment
- Participation in activities that show a direct positive effect on our environment.
- Participation in activities that resulted in the preservation of a historical, cultural, or natural resource.
- Participation in activities of notable stewardship of the environment

The narrative should not exceed 2 pages, be single spaced, font size 12 and include a maximum of three supporting documents. The nomination form can be found on our Web page: [www.evergreenconservancy.org](http://www.evergreenconservancy.org). The nomination should be mailed to Evergreen Conservancy, PO Box 783, Indiana, PA 15701. It could also be Emailed to [info@evergreenconservancy.org](mailto:info@evergreenconservancy.org). If you desire further information call 724-349-4333. *The deadline for submitting nominations is April 30, 2017.*

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### Board Members

Cindy Rogers - President • Malcolm Hermann -Vice president • Becky Snyder -Treasurer  
Tara Binion - Secretary • Dan Boone • Bob Lankard • John Dudash • Mike Tyree  
Paul Yacovone • Stacey Robertson • Tim Slippy • David Janetski

### OUR MISSION:

To advance the preservation, protection and stewardship of Natural, Cultural and Historical Resources in and around Indiana County, PA

## Membership Benefits

We are pleased to announce the following partners who have supported Evergreen Conservancy by giving discounts to card-carrying members of Evergreen Conservancy. Visit them, get your discount and thank them for supporting Evergreen Conservancy!

Spaghetti Benders	15% discount	<a href="http://spaghettibenders.com">spaghettibenders.com</a>
Michael B's Shoe Store	\$10 off any purchase	<a href="http://www.michaelbshoes.com">www.michaelbshoes.com</a>
Plant-it Earth	15% discount	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/The-Plant-It-Earth-Greenhouse-And-Gardens">on FaceBook The-Plant-It-Earth-Greenhouse-And-Gardens</a>
Doughnut Connection/ Portia's Bistro	15% discount	<a href="http://www.portiasdonutconnection.com">www.portiasdonutconnection.com</a>
Little Mahoning Creek Pottery	10% discount	<a href="http://www.nancysmeltzer.etsy.com">www.nancysmeltzer.etsy.com</a>
		<a href="http://littlemahoningcreekpottery.blogspot.com">littlemahoningcreekpottery.blogspot.com</a>
Homemade Restaurant	10% off total bill	<a href="http://www.thehomemaderestaurantpa.com">www.thehomemaderestaurantpa.com</a>

**Artist Hand Gallery has joined us with their support!**  
They will give a 12 oz. (Med) drip coffee for \$1 to Evergreen members.  
[theartistshandgallery.com](http://theartistshandgallery.com) or like them on facebook.



The Artists Hand Gallery  
& Espresso Bar

## ECO Tour Update

The Eco Tour is moving steadily along. We continue to add relevant sites to our list, and are always looking for suggestions! The Eco Tour Committee has decided to pursue the creation of a GeoTrail as a part of the Tour. The Trail will highlight 20 sites with geocaches, focusing primarily on water and healthy communities. Participants will be given a passport, which they will fill out as they visit each cache. After successfully finding all 20 geocaches, the passport can be turned in to the Tourist Bureau in exchange for a trackable Indiana County Geocoin.

In addition to the GeoTrail, the Committee is also looking into the creation of a short video highlighting environmentally significant projects and locations in Indiana County. Such a video will be used as promotional and educational material that can be easily accessible to all members of the community.

We are always open to suggestions and ideas, and encourage attendance at our monthly meetings. We gather the first Wednesday of every month at 10am in the PaSEC meeting room at Aging Services. Please join us!

Contact Jamie at [jamedouthit5@gmail.com](mailto:jamedouthit5@gmail.com) with any questions.

## After Coal

A screening of the film After Coal was held in the new IUP Humanities Building following a panel discussion by the Chair of Sustainability Studies and Community leaders. The February 3rd film and discussion focused on a sustainable economy following decline of the coal industry. President, Cindy Rogers represented Evergreen Conservancy.



## Trail Clean Up Scheduled For April 29

It must be spring because Evergreen Conservancy is talking about picking up litter along the Hoodlebug trail and adjoining Highway 119 areas. But wait; it is not until April 29th at 9 am. We are hoping to avoid last year's cancellation because of snow.

To get to the meeting place (the Homer City Ball Field) take old Highway 119 South through Homer City (Main Street) go past the high school. Take first right and follow about ¼ mile to a stop sign. Turn right and cross the Hoodlebug Trail and follow the trail to the parking lot.

Those wishing to help should go to the parking lot with gloves. Garbage bags will be supplied. In past years we have been able to finish in two hours or less.

## Tanoma Updates

- The Trompe is up and running and seems to be helping the system increase the dissolved oxygen in the ponds. Our numbers continue to be better this winter than last.
- The winter light show is still operating, Sea Monster Rennie and her little one.
- The planned expansion of the renewable energy system includes six additional solar panels of higher wattage and extra batteries. This will allow for more time running the aeration pump, as well as approximately doubling power supply for use of lights, power tools, and the decorative light display. Thanks to the Max and Victoria Dreyfus Foundation for the grant to fund this expansion.

## Grants in Progress

Max and Victoria Dreyfus Foundation Grant. We have purchased additional solar panels and batteries to expand our renewable energy demonstration project and were able to pay our cost share for our VISTA position with the support of this grant. Thank you!!

## Tree News

### Leaf Arrangement

Say I were to give you 15 sheets of regular notebook paper and ask you to calculate the known surface area of all those sheets. After you looked up the typical dimensions you would arrive at approximately 10 square feet of area. Now imagine I gave you scissors and tape and asked you to cut the paper into any shape and attach them to a coat rack with only five hanging pegs. Easy so far; right? Now, what if I told you to arrange them so that you maximize the amount of light that can be intercepted from above, by minimizing paper waste and overlap. This has now become a more difficult task. But this is exactly what plants have to do. They have a limited amount of energy to create leaf area and stems and they have to maximize light interception so they can make sugars (i.e., photosynthesize), while protecting against water loss, herbivory, and the many other potential hazards plants encounter. Over hundreds of millions of years, plants have experimented with many clever ways of arranging their leaves such as leaf shape, size, canopy architecture, and many more.

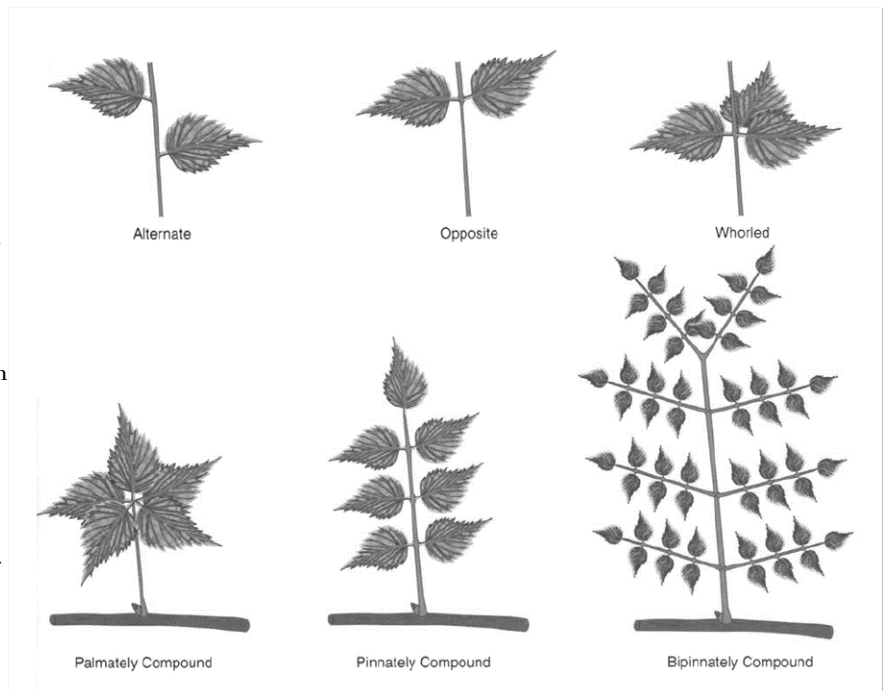
Next time you are looking at plants pay close attention to their leaf arrangement. You will notice it is far from random, but in fact, unique to that particular species. For example some plants have their leaves attached to the stem oppositely, alternately, or whorled. Additionally, some plants have a single leaf blade while other subdivide their leaf area into leaflets (compound leaves) that are variously arranged. These unique patterns make terrific identifying characteristics, which is a different article all together.



Simple, alternately arranged leaf from a quaking aspen

One interesting adaptation to increasing light interception is to allow the leaves to move or quake in the wind. This allows light to penetrate deep into the tree canopy while minimizing the need to for extra stems. This is exactly the strategy we see with quaking aspen (*Populus tremuloides*). This plant has a laterally flattened petiole (stem-like structure that attaches the leaf to the stem) that allows the leaf to move with the slightest breeze, which is where its common name “quaking aspen” is derived.

Finally, canopy architectures (arrangement of leaves that make up the plant canopy) are adapted to maximize light from specific angles that correspond with how light hits that part of the earth. For example tropical plants growing along the equator have their leaves arranged to intercept light from straight above while conifers that grow in high latitudes have a tall, spire-like form that allows light to hit them on a steep angle from the side. Hopefully, the next time you look at a plant you can recognize that it is not just a random assemblage of leaves, but are able to marvel at the elegant, uniqueness that the plant employs to capture light energy.



## Plants to be on the Lookout for

Squirrel Corn and Dutchman's Breeches – which is which?

Squirrel Corn (*Dicentra Canadensis*) and Dutchman's Breeches (*Dicentra cucullaria*) are both are spring plants that usually bloom in late March and go into April or early May depending on the weather. Squirrel corn usually blooms a little later than Dutchman's Breeches. The foliage is so similar it is hard to tell them apart. They are both relatives of bleeding heart (*Dicentra*) and are in the Papaveraceae (Poppy) Family. They both like rich, humusy soils.

But, you can tell them apart by the flowers and the bulblets. There is no yellow bottom on Squirrel Corn's flowers, and they have rounded tops that look heart-shaped. Dutchman's Breeches flowers have curved petals on the top, forming spurs, and a collar of yellow on the bottom of the flower. Squirrel corn has small yellow clustered bulblets that look like little kernels of corn. Dutchman's breeches bulbs are described as looking like rice. The name Dutchman's Breeches comes from the flower shape that look like tiny upside down pantaloons. Bumble bees are perfect pollinators for this plant and enter from the bottom of the flower for the nectar. Honey bees cannot access the nectar because they do not have the mouth parts that can reach into the flower but can spread the pollen. Interestingly, ants help to spread these plants. They take it to their nests where they eat a sweet coating on the seed, then discard the seed so it can grow new plants. Deer and other critters do not like to eat them because they contain chemicals that can be toxic to mammals if eaten in enough quantity.

They are toxic to humans but medicinally both plants were used for various ailments. An alkaloid present in the plant suppresses the central nervous system, so it was used to treat paralysis and tremors. It was used to treat skin ailments, as an ointment, as a diuretic and diaphoretic, as an analgesic, as a sleep-aid, and for menstrual complications, including painful cramps. It was used as a "blood cleanser", providing support for the body's own defense systems.

They are both beautiful little flowers that you can find many places in Indiana County. Look for them as you take spring walks and you will be richly rewarded if you find them!

Happy wild flower hunting!



Dutchman's Breeches



Squirrel Corn

By Cindy Rogers

## Dates to Remember: Mark your Calendars!

- 3/4/17 Family Fun Festival at the Indiana mall – Come on out and visit our table.
- 3/9/17 Evergreen Board meeting 7pm
- 3/24–25/17 Potential Stream Clean up in the Borough and Township on Marsh, Stoney and Whites Runs... more to be announced. Stay tuned.
- 4/22/17 Earth Day
- 4/28/17 Spring Program on Coal Mining Life at Blue Spruce Lodge, 6pm
- 4/29/17 Spring Hoodle Bug trail clean up
- 5/4/17 Evergreen Board Meeting 7pm
- 5/6/17 Wildflower Walk at Blacklick Natural Area led by Cindy Rogers 10:30
- 5/14/17 Mothers Day Walk and tea for Friends of the Parks at Yellow Creek led by Cindy Rogers

## Join Evergreen Conservancy Today!

Support the all-volunteer Evergreen Conservancy and its mission through your membership.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Membership Levels:

\_\_\_\_\_ \$15: Student \_\_\_\_\_ \$25 \_\_\_\_\_ \$45 \_\_\_\_\_ \$70 \_\_\_\_\_ \$100

\_\_\_\_\_ \$1 Youth (17 and under) \_\_\_\_\_ \$ Other \_\_\_\_\_ \$75: Business/Org

Additional Donation: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Complete this form and send check to:

Evergreen Conservancy, PO Box 0783, Indiana, PA 15701

I am interested in volunteering:

\_\_\_ as a board member \_\_\_ on a committee (finance, PR fundraising) \_\_\_ with water monitoring field work  
 \_\_\_ on Legal issues \_\_\_ with grant writing \_\_\_ environmental education \_\_\_ social media \_\_\_ Homer City gardens plots  
 \_\_\_ with fundraising activities (making crafts or manning a table at sales) \_\_\_ other \_\_\_\_\_

