



Newsletter, #74 Fall 2024

www.evergreenconservancy.org

PO Box 0783, Indiana, PA 15701 evergreenconservancy@gmail.com

Lisa Meadows is the 2024 Evergreen Award Winner

On October 8, 2024 the annual Evergreen Award was presented to Lisa Meadows by Cindy Rogers, President of the Evergreen Conservancy. This annual recognition is awarded to an individual who has shown leadership in the preservation and protection of the environment or natural resources. Lisa is the Yellow Creek State Park Educator and conducts the environmental programs at the Park, as well as working closely with other environmental organizations and the Indiana County Conservation District.

Blake Mauthe, who is the Educator for the Indiana County Conservation District and was an intern for Lisa at Yellow Creek State Park, notes that "As a former intern of Lisa's, I can personally attest to the professional, passionate, and kind-hearted approach she brings to every aspect of her work. She continues to support us long after we've moved on from Yellow Creek. In fact, I know of two other interns, in addition to myself, who are now employed in their field, thanks to Lisa's guidance. She also maintains connections with many of her former interns, helping us network with each other and beyond.

Thanks to Lisa, people like me have found their path. I wouldn't be where I am today, doing what I love, without her mentorship".

Tammie Robinson, in her letter of support for Lisa's nomination writes the following:

Hello,

Thank you so much for the Evergreen Conservancy Award. I've treasured nearly every day of my career as a park educator for Yellow Creek & working with great interns and partners like Blake, Cindy, Tammi, Jessica, etc. It's been amazing to work with so many great people and partners.

Lisa



"I am writing to support the well-deserved nomination of Lisa Meadows for the Evergreen Award. I had the pleasure of meeting Lisa many years ago when she became the Environmental Education Specialist at Yellow Creek State Park. At that time, I was a board member on the Friends of the Parks board, was involved in the initial stages of development of the Friends of Yellow Creek State Park, as well as serving in my current role as Administrator with the Indiana County Conservation District. Lisa has been deeply involved in all three of these organizations and has generously given her time to develop and elevate educational projects and assist with making them successful.

Lisa brings a passion to youth and adult education. She has been and remains dedicated to bringing quality education through both Yellow Creek State Park educational programming and Friends of the Parks. She is exceptionally knowledgeable about Pennsylvania's flora and fauna and never hesitates to do all she can to share the value of our natural environment and instill an appreciation for the world around us. She puts all her effort into making each event the best it can be and goes out of her way to

make it interesting, interactive, educational, and memorable. It would be hard to measure the valuable lessons gained by the many folks who have had the opportunity to hear Lisa's presentations, attend one of her hikes, or take advantage of a workshop. You cannot help but take away an appreciation for nature, conservation, and respect for the environment through her efforts."

Board Members

Cindy Rogers - President • Shannon Kundla - Vice president • Becky Snyder - Treasurer
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David Janetski • Malcolm Hermann • Monica Lee • Emily Rahalla

OUR MISSION:

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

Attendees Learned About Chronic Wasting Disease at Our September Event

"Chronic Wasting Disease is a threat to Pennsylvania's white tailed deer population without significant prospects for elimination. It is always fatal when a deer contracts this condition", proclaimed Indiana County Game Warden J.D. Walker at Blue Spruce Lodge September 13. A deer can be infected for two years before any symptoms show – It could contaminate other deer during that time. CWD contaminants are found in saliva, urine and feces. It is long lasting. During the 2023-2024 seasons 472 deer tested positive for Chronic Wasting Disease.

At the present time there is no known danger to humans in consuming deer meat that is contaminated.

Containment is the main weapon against Chronic Wasting Disease that has no cure. This is the thought behind efforts to identify infected deer and take action in that area. It is also forbidden for humans to feed or put out salt for the deer. If an infected deer eats at a human feed source its saliva may infect other deer. The Game Commission is prepared to test harvested deer for Chronic Wasting Disease.

"Deer are not going to line up to be vaccinated" said

Mr. Walker de-emphasizing the hopes for a cure. They will not wear a mask. If infected they will not isolate.

PERSONAL NOTE During the presentation I was impressed with how 2024 Pennsylvania deer hunting experience has changed since my father hunted. 50 years ago there was one two-week antlered deer season and two days "doe" season. Now there are multiple seasons –bow and arrow, long bow, flintlock etc. My father agonized about being able to get a "doe" license now a hunter can get multiple.

These extended seasons are part of the management strategy. Walker said "It is possible for a person legally to shoot deer every month of the year."

The Evergreen Conservancy fall event was billed as geared to hunters. Where were the young hunters -No one under 50 attended the event at Blue Spruce Lodge.

A possible topic for our Spring Program is American Chestnut.

Bob Lankard

Evergreen Conservancy's Annual Meeting

The annual meeting of Evergreen Conservancy members and friends was held on September 18th. It had been postponed due to the heat wave this summer. It was held at the Indiana County Conservation District building, 435 Hamill Road with about 30 people in attendance. It was an indoor version of our usual pot luck picnic. Board members and volunteers cooked hamburgers, hot dogs and vegetarian items. Attendees' side dishes made it a memorable dinner.

A program on riparian buffer zones was presented by Monica Lee. Our volunteers were acknowledged for the many hours of help they provide. Conservancy board President Cindy Rogers updated everyone on the activities of the conservancy over the past year.

As usual, members voted on board members; Dan Boone and Tara Binion were reinstated. A significant number of people renewed membership.

Dates to Remember:

January 7th . . . 6:00PM Board Meeting, ICCD Building

February 11th . . 5:30 & 6:30PM Public Relations & Finance Committees meetings, ICCD Building

March 29th . . . 9:00AM. Trash Pick Up Blue Spruce, Weather Permitting

April 12th 9:00AM. Back Up Date for Trash Collection

Plant Patrol

Plant patrol is seeking volunteers to help remove invasive species.

Check the website for information. www.plantpatrol.org

Ride the 'Clean Swell' Wave!

Join a global community of volunteers making a difference for our oceans. With Ocean Conservancy's 'Clean Swell' app, anyone can contribute to the International Coastal Cleanup (ICC) and combat marine debris year-round.

Here's how:

1. Install the App: Clean Swell is available for free on iOS and Android mobile devices. Simply download it from your app store. The app is available in 12 languages and can be used offline once downloaded.
2. Use It Anytime: Pick up trash in your local neighborhood, park or along any waterway, not just during organized ICC events. Users earn badges for reaching cleanup milestones and share their achievements on social media to inspire others.
3. Add Your Data: Use Clean Swell to record the trash you collect. The app helps you categorize and tally the types of debris you find. Clean Swell data instantly uploads to Ocean Conservancy's global Ocean Trash Index, the largest database of its kind to help scientists and others working on ocean plastic solutions.

Since its launch in 2016, Clean Swell has crowd-sourced millions of data points collected by volunteers around the globe. New features this year include an improved interface for easier data recording. You can also connect directly to Ocean Conservancy's action center through the app to further support ocean conservation.

Bench Dedicated to for Paul Hicks

One of the more successful efforts Evergreen Conservancy has done is the recycling of soft plastics. Soft plastics include grocery bags, bread bags, soft drink case overwraps, newspaper sleeves, ice bags, wood pellet bags, etc. Evergreen collects these bags and sends them off to TREX – a recycling business. TREX in return sends us a bench after we have collected 1000 pounds of soft plastic.



One of the benches we've received will be dedicated to the memory of Paul Hicks. Paul and his wife Doris regularly picked up litter on the Baker Trail. Fittingly this bench will be placed somewhere on the Baker Trail; Paul's bench was the 11th one Evergreen has been earned. They also helped when we cleaned the Hoodlebug Trail. Newsletter recipients will be notified when Paul's bench dedication is scheduled.

Future benches are slated to be donated to the Ernest Mine Memorial and the Tourist Bureau.



If you are not already participating in soft plastic recycling you may take these items to The YMCA, Indiana Borough Building, and S & T Arena.

The plastics pick up continues and we are working on our 13th bench.

Trash Clean Up Was Completed September 14th Next Round in March or April

We were able to pick up trash from 110 to the park office and the ring road around the park. Thanks to those who came out to help!

Our next trash collection is scheduled for March 28th, with April 12th as a backup date.



Satellite Data Loggers

In 2011, Evergreen Conservancy started our water quality monitoring initiative in Indiana County. This project has been a huge success. By providing continuous data to detect a spill or contamination, we've managed to provide profiles of our creeks with great accuracy and precision. However, no matter what precautions we may take, we're faced with both surprising and frustrating obstacles.

Current data logger activity has revolved around an ongoing battle with weather and technology. The saying "it's great until it doesn't work" really speaks volumes to the obstacles encountered as of recent. The Yellow Creek telemetry site has notoriously had problems. It's been unsuccessful in reliably recording data or rather, refused to work. Consulting the satellite company resulted in consulting the data logger company resulting in a vicious cycle of pointing fingers at each other to no avail. At the end of the day, a simple change to the delay time between the device and the satellite suddenly made the Yellow Creek data logger work like it's been running from day one.

Unlike Yellow Creek, Laurel Run has consistently been uploading data with no issues. The last visit to this site was in the spring of 2024, under completely normal conditions. Until the most recent visit six months later, when the data logger was found yards away from the stream, wrapped around a tree that was lifted completely out of the water, pushing the concrete set solar panel out of place. Needless to say, we were surprised to be digging a data logger out from under a tree topped with muddy sand. Although, it was agreed that the power of a summer storm certainly was impressive. After two visits to Laurel Run and a more robust inventory of equipment, the data logger was freed without damage and the solar panel was reset in the ground. Evergreen Conservancy continues to monitor these data loggers and manages to keep their volunteers on their toes in the field".

Rebecca Caldwell

Work Done at the Tanoma Site Groundhog Solar Once More to the Rescue

The Renewable Energy System at Tanoma has provided electrical power to the pavilion for all kinds of activities, allowed charging the batteries for mowers and equipment, powered a security light for the parking lot, and provided a small but continuous aeration through an electric air pump to aerators in Pond 1.

From the beginning it has been a DIY project, cutting corners to save money and stay within the limits of grant-funded expansions. That went well until recent years when aging components began to fail. It was reported in an earlier edition of this Newsletter how a broken underground cable disconnected the main power sources from the central power shed and basically rendered the system useless.

At that time, free of charge and as a generous donation to Evergreen, Groundhog Solar of Altoona, PA sent in a crew to install a professional underground line with full conduit protections to restore the service. And now, I am happy to report, they've come through again.

The original set of four solar panels was mounted on wooden frames that were now collapsing from rot and decay. Mysteriously, almost like the fairy tale of the shoemaker's elves that would appear magically in the night, those rotten wooden frames were replaced by professional metal solar panel frames, as seen in the picture here. Not only were the panels now mounted on new frames, but the underground connections were restored with improved weatherproof connection boxes.

We owe major gratitude to Groundhog Solar and its owner, Richard Flarend, for their kindness and generosity. Thanks to them, at least major parts of our system are now updated past the DIY status to that of a professional installation.



groundhogsolar.com



Dan Boone

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	spaghettibenders.com
Michael B's Shoe Store	\$10 off any purchase	www.michaelbshoes.com
Plant-it Earth	15% discount	on FaceBook The-Plant-It-Earth-Greenhouse-And-Gardens
Little Mahoning Creek Pottery	10% discount	www.nancysmeltzer.etsy.com
		littlemahoningcreekpottery.blogspot.com
Artist Hand Gallery	12 oz. drip coffee \$1	theartistshandgallery.com



JOIN OR RENEW your membership TODAY if you have not already done so for 2024.



Please support Nature's Way market in Greensburg. They support us with a generous donation!



Thanks again for the generous donation from Nature's Way of Greensburg who belongs to 1% of the Planet. Next time you are in Greensburg stop by and say thanks to them!

1% of the Planet is a global network of businesses, nonprofits and individuals working together for a healthy planet. Businesses that join 1% for the Planet commit to giving 1% of total sales each year to your choice of our approved nonprofit partners. You can get involved! Joining is easy – go to www.onepercentfortheplanet.org/tell-us-about-your-organization. 1% of the Planet brings dollars and does together to accelerate smart environmental giving. The Planet needs you NOW.

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 _____