



## Newsletter, #80 Spring 2026

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

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### Barbara Peace Selected as 2026 Evergreen Award Recipient

Commissioner Sherene Hess nominated Barbara Peace of Conemaugh Township to be the 2026 Evergreen Award recipient. The Evergreen Conservancy board approved this nomination unanimously.



Barb, along with her husband Dr. Matt Klain, are owners of Peace Farm which is a working model of environmentally responsible agriculture. The farm humanely raises animals and produces high-quality goods for local farmers markets.

Aside from the farm, Barb is the former Southwest Region Director of the Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts. She is now Executive Board VP. She advocates for the adoption of innovative technologies and conservation practices among farmers. She supports practices that reduce nutrient and sediment pollution.

She also has served five years as a Farmer Director with the Indiana County Conservation District. Through the Agricultural Assistance Fund she helps guide the distribution of Clean Streams Funds to address critical environmental challenges.

Among Barb's other endeavors, she's a voice for conservation as a board member of the Indiana County Farm Bureau, and as Program Vice President of the Indiana County League of Women Voters.

Barb is also actively involved in the annual Indiana County Envirothon – a youth environmental education and leadership program. The Indiana County Apple Festival is another of her interests.

She is not just a farm girl, but gives leadership to the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation. The foundation strives for habitat protection, healthy ecosystems, and thriving wildlife populations

Barb's commitment to conservation parallels her dedication to justice – social, gender, racial and environmental, which is illustrated by her support of the Blairsville Underground Railroad. Barb promotes education and community engagement around the legacy of past struggles for justice with present-day efforts to build more equitable and sustainable communities.

Whether leading at Peace Farm, advancing conservation initiatives across the Southwest region, or supporting programs like ACAP, the Envirothon, and the Apple Festival, Barb consistently advocates for policies and programs that promote the conservation of resources, uplift education and opportunities to reach diverse audiences, and build a more inclusive agricultural and environmental community.

Evergreen Conservancy will present Barbara Peace with its Evergreen Award at its annual meeting of members and friends. This meeting will occur Tuesday July 14 at 5:30 pm at the Indiana County Conservation District office, 435 Hamill Road. Friends and family of Barb Peace are especially invited to attend. The meeting will begin with a potluck picnic. Attendees are requested to bring a side dish, salad, dessert and their own table service.

*Bob Lankard*

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### Board Members

Cindy Rogers - President • Shannon Jackson - Vice president • Becky Snyder - Treasurer  
Tara Binion - Secretary • Dan Boone • Bob Lankard • John Dudash  
David Janetski • Malcolm Hermann • Emily Rahalla • Joseph Lankard

### OUR MISSION:

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

## Annual Meeting: July 14th at ICCD at 5:30

The annual meeting of Evergreen Conservancy members and friends has been scheduled for Tuesday, July 14th 5:30pm at the Indiana County Conservation District Office, 435 Hamill Road, Indiana, PA.

Yes, we will begin with our usual pot luck picnic. The board will prepare hamburgers, hot dogs, and veggie burgers. We will provide buns, condiments, drink and a cake. If you plan to attend please bring a side dish, salad or dessert to share. Also bring your own table service.

Most years, during the annual meeting we present the Evergreen Award. This year we will be presenting Barbara Peace with the award. I don't know if Barbara was made for the Evergreen Award, or the Evergreen Award was made for Barbara. Barbara is co-owner of the Peace Farm, Director of Southwest Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts, Farmer Director at ICCD, active with Envirothon and Apple Fest. Also she is active with the Rocky Mountain Elk Association, and Blairsville Underground Rail Road.

Also on the agenda for the annual meeting will be a review of Evergreen Conservancy's activities for the past year.

Have you wondered about the greenhouse on the ICCD property? Blake Mauthe of the ICCD staff will give us a tour and discuss the food program.

Conservancy members will vote on board members – some returning and some new.

Members and friends are welcome to attend this event. At that time they will be given opportunity to join or rejoin Evergreen Conservancy.

Current Board Members Shannon Jackson, Bob Lankard and John Dudash are all up for reelection. Former Americorps worker Rebecca Caldwell has moved on to a job at the Indiana County Conservation District, and we look forward to her joining the Evergreen Board.

*Bob Lankard*

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## The Fascinating Story of The Johnstown Flood

It was a dark and rainy night at Blue Spruce Park on Friday April 10. Doug Bosley, Chief of Interpretation/ Site Manager of the Allegheny Portage Railroad National Historic Site and the Johnstown Flood National Memorial fascinated listeners with the story The Johnstown Flood of 1889.

Actually, there have been three Johnstown floods and Mr. Bosley caught the audience attention by stating he was a survivor of a Johnstown Flood. Bosley was a survivor of the 1977 flood and showed picture of him playing in the mud.

I'm sure the presentation corrected misunderstandings of the flood. I was under the assumption the flood wiped out poor people living in lower areas near the river while rich people on the hills escaped any damage. WRONG!!! The opposite was true.

Doug concluded his presentation by mentioning its effect on Southern Indiana County. Actually a lot of damage was done before the South Fork Dam broke.

Those attending asked a lot of questions especially two elementary aged kids sitting in the front row.

*Bob Lankard*

### Plant Patrol

Plant patrol is seeking volunteers to help remove invasive species. Check the website for information. [www.plantpatrol.org](http://www.plantpatrol.org)



## Annual Indiana County Envirothon

The Indiana County Conservation District recently hosted the 40th Annual Indiana County Envirothon at Blue Spruce Park, bringing together approximately 130 students, representing all seven school districts throughout Indiana County for a day of environmental competition and outdoor learning. Despite rainy conditions throughout the event, students demonstrated exceptional dedication, teamwork, and environmental knowledge while competing in the areas of wildlife, forestry, aquatics, soils, and current environmental issues.

This year's first-place team was Homeschoolers for Christ Co-op, followed by Marion Center Bee-Hive-Five in second place and United Pride of the Lions in third place. With their county victory, Homeschoolers for Christ Co-op will advance to the state Envirothon competition to represent Indiana County at the next level of competition.

Through the support of local sponsors, each student on the winning team received a \$500 scholarship toward future educational opportunities, further highlighting the community's commitment to investing in environmental education and student achievement.

A special highlight of this year's event was the introduction of the Robinson Award, established to recognize students who have participated in Envirothon during all four years

of high school. The award also honors Tammie Robinson for her remarkable dedication and leadership as coordinator of the Indiana County Envirothon for all 40 years of the program's history. Her efforts have helped shape decades of environmental education experiences for students across the county.

In recognition of the program's 40th anniversary milestone, Representatives Struzzi and Smith presented a citation honoring four decades of environmental education and student engagement through Envirothon. The Indiana County Commissioners also presented a proclamation recognizing the lasting impact the program has had on conservation education and youth involvement within the community.

The Indiana County Envirothon continues to serve as an important educational experience that encourages students to develop problem-solving skills, environmental awareness, and an appreciation for natural resource conservation through hands-on, real-world learning opportunities. The success of the event is made possible through the continued support of volunteers, educators, sponsors, conservation professionals, and community partners who dedicate their time and resources each year.

*Blake Mauthe*



## Donations Put to Good Use

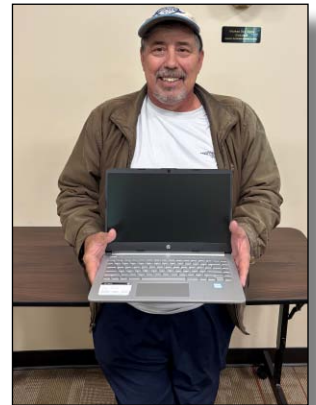
Thanks to a very generous donation from Nature’s Way Market in Greensburg, PA, Evergreen Conservancy was able to purchase four new Windows 11 HP Laptops. These laptops will replace our old computers that cannot be upgraded to Windows 11 – some laptops were over 14 years old! They will be used by our volunteers to download data from the 25 datalogger sites that are scattered throughout the County.

Nature’s Way Market made the commitment to join “1% For the Planet” and has donated 1% of its gross sales to local environmental groups

since 2005, and continues to do so today. We are very appreciative for their continued support! Please check out their website at [healthylivingatnatureswaymarket.com](http://healthylivingatnatureswaymarket.com).

In addition to Nature’s Way Market, we also received donations from the Fraternal Order of Eagles #1468, Indiana Moose Lodge 174, and BOP Elks Lodge 931. These funds will be used to purchase supplies for our educational programs. Again, thank you for your continued support of our organization.

*Becky Snyder*



## Family Nature Palooza!

If there is a drought this summer, we have a solution – the Evergreen Conservancy needs to schedule an event at Blue Spruce Park! Our Bat Program and our Johnstown Flood Program – both had rain during them (thankfully those presentations were inside the Blue Spruce Lodge). Board member Joseph Lankard’s shoes still squish from the Litter Clean-up in April. The forecast for this year’s Family Nature Palooza was calling for a major rainstorm to hit Indiana County about halfway through the event. Thankfully, rain held off until the event was almost over.



The Children’s Advisory Council of Indiana County estimated that nearly 400 people attended this year’s Family Nature Palooza at Blue Spruce Park. The Evergreen Conservancy was assigned to Pavilion #3, so we were going to be dry all day, even if the rain did come as predicted! We had children of all ages – including a one-month-old baby! We assembled three pelts – a red fox, a raccoon and a skunk – for the attendees to touch and

we brought our popular game of matching red, white or blue animals with their descriptions. Not only is the matching game fun, but we added a little patriotism in for America’s 250th birthday. Many of the kids took home coloring sheets to learn even more about some of the animals featured in our matching game. Another activity was learning about two robin’s nests that had been built on Board Members Bob and Joseph Lankard’s property. One nest had been built in a lilac bush near their house; another was built atop the electrical panel for their solar panels. The nest built on top of the electrical panel didn’t need to be as sturdy or

as big since it was using the structure of the house and the panel to help support the eggs!

Thank you to Board Members Tara Binion and Joseph Lankard for volunteering at this wonderful event!

*Joseph Lankard*

### Dates to Remember

July 14th . 5:30pm. . . . Evergreen’s Annual Meeting ICCD

### 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="#">on FaceBook The-Plant-It-Earth-Greenhouse-And-Gardens</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>
Artist Hand Gallery	12 oz. drip coffee \$1	<a href="http://theartistshandgallery.com">theartistshandgallery.com</a>



**JOIN OR RENEW your membership TODAY if you have not already done so for 2025-2026.**

Financial support for this newsletter is provided by BHE GT&S which is dedicated to the economic, physical, and social health of communities served by BHE GT&S companies. This grant program was administered by the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy in commitment to its core mission of conserving Pennsylvania's diverse ecosystems through science-based strategy, leadership, and collaboration.



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](http://www.onepercentfortheplanet.org/tell-us-about-your-organization) . 1% of the Planet brings dollars and doers 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 \_\_\_\_\_