



WEST CHESTER GREEN TEAM NEWS

May 2022

Mission: The West Chester Green Team is a civic organization in West Chester, PA, that works to educate the local public and to establish and nourish green initiatives in the community in harmony with nature and each other, promoting the health of all living things and of planet Earth.

Inside:

Porchfest is Almost Here, Our Unsung Hero, Earth Day in West Chester, Northern Chesco EAC/SAC Meeting Report, and more!



WCGT Calendar of Upcoming Events



When – What – Where.

May 14: 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., Chestnut Street Parking Garage, West Chester. Second round of planting to help fill in the garden. See more information on page 6.

May 21: 1 – 7 pm, Rain date May 22. PORCHFEST! See page 3 for more details.

May 24: 7 PM, Green Team Board meeting at the home of Gillian and Carmelo Alicea, 319 W. Miner St., West Chester.

4th Monday of every month: East Bradford Environmental Advisory Council (EAC), 7 – 8:30pm, East Bradford Township Bldg, 676 Copeland School Rd.

4th Monday of every month: East Goshen Sustainability Advisory Committee, 7 – 8:30pm, East Goshen Township Bldg, 1580 Paoli Pike

4th Tuesday of every month: West Goshen Sustainability Advisory Committee, 6 – 8 pm, West Goshen Township Bldg., 1025 Paoli Pike

4th Tuesday of every month: Westtown Environmental Advisory Council, 7 – 8:30pm, Westtown Township Bldg, 1039 Wilmington Pike (Rt. 202)

4th Thursday of every month: West Chester Sustainability Advisory Committee, 6:30 – 8 pm, Room 240, Borough Hall, E. Gay St.

Be sure to visit our Web site at <https://wcgreenteam.com/> and our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/WCGTeam/> (all are welcome to post environment- and sustainability-related items there). If you wish to support our work, please donate here: <https://wcgreenteam.com/contact-2/>

NOTE: Deadline for the June issue is May 30! We welcome contributions and suggestions from our readers for possible inclusion in a future issue. E-mail your ideas to Dianne Walsh at LDwalsh318@gmail.com.

It's Almost Here:

PORCHFEST!

From: Daily Local News

On May 21 in West Chester, 35 homeowners and 52 bands and solo performers will come together to organize a “Porchfest,” live music on front porches. Porchfest will feature many genres, from Phil Jamison’s Victorian music box collection to jazz piano, Japanese folk songs and rock bands. And classical quartets, and something for everyone.

For a homespun touch, the local food co-op will be offering fresh local strawberry shortcake to the community. Gary Hewitt and his wife Sun are offering the front porch of their 19th century home as the serving area for the treats.

“I love sitting on the porch and waving to my neighbors walking down Union Street,” said Hewitt. “It will even be better with a live performance right on my porch.”

Matched with this location is a folk and traditional musical group, Sweet Potato Fries, organized by Pete Lane, banjo player. Sue Patterson from the WC Co-op will organize the baking of the shortcake and preparing of the fresh berries – local ones she is hoping.

“The West Chester Co-op is all about fostering community and making connections, so supporting and being involved with Porchfest is in keeping with our mission,” Patterson said. “We have a group of Co-op volunteers who will be making strawberry shortcake to share with the Porchfest attendees.”

Porchfest will also feature many children’s activities at Everhart Park – from face painting by Stefanie Heron-Birl to a zoo of musical instruments belonging to Don Braceland. Braceland is a recently retired West Chester Borough Council member and a music graduate of West Chester University. Chester County Art Association will also be offering children’s crafts and Rob Montgomery, owner of a landscape nursery, will be doing planting activities. All activities are family friendly and free.

Another old-fashioned touch at Porchfest is a “white elephant” fishing pond. Margaret Westbrook, founder of Buy Nothing West Chester, is offering the side porch of her New Street home for this event. People will be given a pole and can drop their line onto Westbrook’s porch. Porchfest volunteers will size up the fisher and put an appropriate gift on the hook. Susan Loumagne will be providing the “catch” – with items such as a Beatles puzzle, fancy hot chocolate, and games some of the surprises given to lucky fishers.

Porchfest is set for **May 21** with May 22 the rain date. The hours are **1 p.m. to 7 p.m.** and the location east of and around Everhart Park. Signs will be posted, and visitors can enter a QR code to see all the activities specified by location.



Our Unsung Hero: Christiane Torres

These are the remarks given by Courtney Finneran when presenting the 2022 Unsung Hero Award to Christiane Torres:

This morning, I have the privilege and honor of introducing Christiane Torres as one of our guests of honor, and to say a few words about her.

As you know the West Chester green team is a group of committees which is where all the real work takes place. I am the chair of the Living Landscapes Committee and have known Christiane for almost 4 years.

The goal of the Living Landscapes Committee is to find opportunities in our community to transform our landscape into native habitats that provide ecological value, pollinator resources, and of course, beauty and diversity.



Christiane Torres (L) and Courtney Finneran

To achieve this goal it takes commitment from key volunteers. Volunteers who share a passion for this transformative Vision for our environment. Volunteers who understand the horticultural needs of a given landscape; Volunteers who understand the value of stretching a budget, Volunteers who know how to be creative with limited resources, and Volunteers who aren't afraid to roll up their sleeves and dig in the dirt.

Christiane is one of our key volunteers who has led us to make exceptional progress and helped us achieve our Living Landscapes goals.

And when she's not digging in the dirt and planting native species in hard to manage areas between the curb and the sidewalk, she's helping our organization in other, equally as important ways.

Christiane has taken on the lion share of the technical work for the West Chester Green Team's annual auction, which has been held online for the last couple of years.

Christiane organizes all the photos and descriptions for the auction items and works on the back end of the website for a smooth user experience.

On top of that, there is a lot of coordination needed between a lot of people, and Christiane handles it all with kindness and efficiency.

And let's not forget she does this volunteering while juggling the needs of her husband Gilbert, and 2 children, Mateo and Mia, as well as holding down a full-time job.

In closing, the WCGT would be absolutely nothing without our volunteers. Volunteers are at the heart of the progress we have made in our community.

Christiane Torres epitomizes the values needed for volunteers to be effective in our organization. With a resourceful attitude, a kind heart and clever wit, Christiana makes our group stronger, better, and brighter.

We would like to recognize and confer this Unsung Hero award to Christiane Torres and offer our deep gratitude for her service.

This and That:

No Mow May—Do More by Working Less

From: *Beyond Pesticides*

Lawns occupy 40 million acres, or 2% of the land in the U.S. Their maintenance typically involves pesticides and fertilizers that kill pollinators and soil life and wash into streams, where they do more damage. Lawn maintenance also involves a lot of mowing. While mowing is an effective way to encourage grasses over most broadleaved plants, it also has broader ecological impacts.

The 3,600 species of bees in the U.S. and Canada range from large bumblebees to tiny sweat bees. There are many things you can do in your yard and community to protect these bees—starting with managing lawns and landscapes organically and planting flowers favored by bees and other pollinators. This one—No Mow May—requires less work.



No Mow May began with research by Plantlife in the UK and was taken up by property owners in Appleton, WI, who demonstrated that “homes that participated in No Mow May had more diverse and abundant flora than regularly mowed green spaces throughout the city.”

May is the month when many bees emerge from hibernation throughout the U.S. and seek sources of pollen and nectar. By allowing your lawn to grow during May, more flowering plants will bloom, feeding the bees and other pollinators. The longer grass also provides a more diversified habitat for ground beetles and some butterflies. Mowing may still be advisable if ticks are a problem (mow paths!) or ground-nesting bees are present.

One obstacle that many people face in taking a break from mowing is that some communities have weed ordinances that prohibit tall vegetation. After years of fines for allowing his grass on his Prairie Street lot to grow, Michael Almon of Lawrence, KS collaborated with the Lawrence Sustainability Advisory Board in drafting a new natural landscaping ordinance to replace the old weed ordinance. See Beyond Pesticides' [Tools for Change](#) for help in changing your city's outdated ordinance.



Planting at Chestnut Street Garage

On May 14, from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., at the Chestnut Street Parking Garage, West Chester, there will be a second round of planting to help fill in the garden. The first round was held back in October. This is a project of the Business Improvement District (BID) and the Green Team.



Volunteers are needed to help plant! Sign up using this link:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0E4FAAAD2EA6FFCE9-chestnut>

There are two goals with this garden. The first is to make an ecologically sustainable garden that helps to spur more greenery in the downtown using native pollinating plants. The second is to create a visually appealing garden in an area that serves as a first touch for visitors to West Chester. Any help is appreciated!

Town Tour Kickoff: Humphry Marshall 300th Birthday Bash



Humphry Marshall House, Marshalton, Pa.

On Thursday, June 9, Chester County's 28th Town Tour program will kick off in West Chester at the Chester County History Center. Registration, followed by the program, begins at 5:30 pm and tours will depart at 6:30. The County's overall theme for the tours this year is "Founding Mothers and Fathers." West Chester's tour will focus on the 300th birthday of Quaker botanist Humphry Marshall of West Bradford with the "Humphry Marshall Birthday Bash." Tour the northeast quadrant of the Borough with a focus on Marshall Square Park and Marshall Street, both namesakes of Mr. Marshall. Learn about the botanical work of Dr. William Darlington, David

Townsend, Dr. Joseph Rothrock, plus the Hoopes Nursery. As always, the Town Tour is free.

This is one of many Humphry Marshall events happening in West Chester and West Bradford this summer and fall. We'll keep you updated!

From HuffPost: NEARLY 30% OF AMERICANS AREN'T WORRIED ABOUT CLIMATE CRISIS

"In an international survey of people's responses to the climate crisis and other pressing issues, the country with the highest percentage of people who say they're not worried about climate change "at all" turned out to be the United States....."

Meanwhile, the climate crisis, which is very much real, is still ravaging the U.S. and other nations, bringing deadly — and worsening — droughts, fires, extreme heat, storms and floods."

See article at: https://www.huffpost.com/entry/climate-change-survey-americans-ipsos_n_625f2267e4b052d2bd67438f

Earth Day in West Chester: Opening Ceremony

The Green Team is grateful to the many businesses and institutions that participated by chalking on their own sidewalks or letting our talented team of West Chester University students create their own works honoring Mother Earth on the 53rd annual Earth Day, Friday April 22, 2022.

Our event started at 9am, with some chalkers hard at work and others resting from their previous artistic labors. The official opening ceremony was held at 11am at the archway at Philips Memorial Hall, West Chester University, moderated by Dr. Bradley Flamm, Director of the Office of Sustainability.

West Chester Mayor Lillian DeBaptiste welcomed the crowd of about 40 people, spoke to the importance of environment in the Borough and beyond, and also unveiled the WC Green Team's yard sign for 2022.

For more details on this event—and more photos, visit our website at <https://wcgreenteam.com/2022/05/01/earth-day-in-west-chester-opening-ceremony/>



Participants and honorees gather under the cherry tree at WCU on Earth Day 2022.



Some of the many chalk drawings seen around West Chester on Earth Day

Northern Chesco EAC/SAC Meeting Report

By Christi Marshall

Two members of the West Chester Green Team attended the spring meeting of the Northern Chester County EAC/SAC gathering at the beautiful Welkinweir mansion on Saturday, April 30th.

Lucy Bauman delivered a warmly received report on the Green Team's upcoming Porchfest. Chester County Commissioner Josh Maxwell reported on numerous projects throughout the county. Of particular interest to many participants is the upcoming deadline for the distribution of Covid relief funds received by Chester County. The grants are available through the American Rescue Plan Act. Chester County received \$200 million, of which \$120 million remain to be distributed and for which applications are actively encouraged.

Cory Trego, Water Resources Planner for the Chester County Water Resources Authority, explained how to apply for stormwater management funds by May 16th, the deadline for applications.

Members of several EACs and SACs reported on their activities over the last three months, including sharing indigenous plants with the WC Green Team for use in our pocket gardens on sidewalks in West Chester. Our Green Team has enjoyed this mutually supportive association with the members of EACs and SACs in northern Chester County!

