



WEST CHESTER GREEN TEAM NEWS

July 2024

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:

Alley Beautification, New folks at Green Team, Legendary Lenape program continues, Dark Skies and Fireflies dinner next month, Crabs are causing trouble—and bees have been busy!



WCGT Calendar of Upcoming Events

When – What – Where.



Monday, July 8 at 6:30 pm: WCGT Board meeting at 409 W Union St. All welcome. Please contact Margaret Hudgings at mhudgings@gmail.com if you would like to attend as a guest.

Saturday, July 13, rain date July 14: Legendary Lenape series--Canoeing and Lenape activities at Westtown Lake.

Saturday, July 20, rain date July 21: LL series--Stream and Butterfly study at Bondsville Mill Park--led by Penn State Extension

Saturday, July 27: LL series--Display of Lenape artifacts and lecture by Chris Applegate from the Museum of Indian Culture in Allentown at Marshallton United Methodist Church in Marshallton

For details on other July and later events, see listings beginning page 3.

Related groups and committees:

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, 401 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 August 2024 issue is July 31! 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.

This and That

More Coming Attractions

July 19, 8 a.m. to approximately 9:30 a.m.

From *Plastic Free Delaware*:

Get a look behind the scenes at Longwood Gardens' Composting Initiatives

Spots limited. No cost. Meeting location provided upon registration using button below.

Through its extensive recycling and composting operations, Longwood Gardens has dramatically reduced the volume of material it sends to landfill.

In Longwood's comprehensive compost facility materials are sorted and processed, including all recyclable materials used or generated by the Gardens, the Terrace Restaurant, and its guests. These materials include:

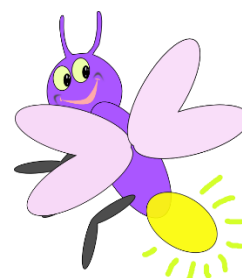
- Cardboard
- Light bulbs
- Batteries
- Metal
- Asphalt
- Glass
- Petroleum-based products
- Plastics (1-7)
- Tires
- PCs and monitors
- Organic material including food waste

Longwood began composting in the early 1990s. Today, approximately 8,000 cubic yards of organic waste is processed annually on its five-acre composting facility and returned for use in the Gardens as mulch and compost to promote healthy soils. Managing this site is an intensive process and special equipment is needed to turn the massive 6- by 10-foot rows of decomposing brown and green materials. It's estimated that composting saves between \$50,000-\$200,000 annually in landfill expenses.



[RSVP NOW](#)

Wednesday, August 28, 5 PM: Dark Skies and Fireflies Celebration at West Chester Friends Meetinghouse. This is Green Team's annual gathering and awards presentations. This year we are featuring State Senator Carolyn Comitta as our keynote speaker and recipient of the WCGT Environmental Leadership award. Also honoring Vaughn Stadtmiller and Rev. Dayna Spence with awards for art and innovation, respectively.



Dinners will be from Mae's, cake from the Master's Baker and gelato once again donated by D'Ascenzo's. Come celebrate with the WC Green Team and meet the leaders. Children are welcome. A link to register will be coming soon to our website and Facebook page.

September 9 at 7 PM: The film "Common Ground," free and open to the public at WCU. Co-sponsored by WCGT and WCU Office of Sustainability. Celebrities explore how many of the problems that ail humans connect to the state of the world's soil. Independent farmers implementing historic indigenous techniques demonstrate how changing agricultural practices could potentially save the world to come. Location to be determined.

From the Website: "***Common Ground** is the highly anticipated sequel to the juggernaut success documentary, **Kiss the Ground**, which touched over 1 billion people globally and inspired the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to put \$20 billion toward soil health. By fusing journalistic exposé with deeply personal stories from those on the front lines of the food movement, **Common Ground** unveils a dark web of money, power, and politics behind our broken food system. The film reveals how unjust practices forged our current farm system in which farmers of all colors are literally dying to feed us. The film profiles a hopeful and uplifting movement of white, black, and indigenous farmers who are using alternative "regenerative" models of agriculture that could balance the climate, save our health, and stabilize America's economy – before it's too late.*"

September 23: Spotlight on tree planting enthusiast Ryan Davis from the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay, speaking at WCU on September 23. A program jointly sponsored by WCU Office of Sustainability and the WCGT. Davis will also speak on meadows. We will also be honoring outstanding male gardeners at this event. Read more about Davis at:

<https://www.greenzine.org/post/alliance-for-chesapeake-bay-ryan-davis>

Time and location to be determined.



October 22. Coming to WCU in October is a poet with an environmental focus. Ramya Ramana, is an American poet based in New York who was named Youth Poet Laureate in 2014. The Green Team has been invited to help welcome Ms Ramana to WCU. More details will be coming soon.



LEGENDARY LENAPE SUMMER PROGRAM 2024



This is our second year of programming for families about the Lenape, the Indigenous people who lived here before European settlers arrived. Their place names and ways of growing and cooking live with us and often go unrecognized. During this 4 week program, we will be learning more about the Lenape and honoring their legacy. The sessions will take place at locations around Chester County, on Saturdays from July 13 to August 3, at varying times. Please double check dates, times, and locations!

SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

Week 1: Canoeing, Clay Pots and Lenape Language; Westtown Lake, July 13, 10-12pm
 Week 2: Streams and Butterflies; Bondsville Mill Park, July 20 10-12pm
 Week 3: Culture & Crafts of Woodland Native Americans; Marshallton United Methodist Church, July 27, 10-12pm
 Week 4: Campfire & Lenape Banquet; Camp Linden, August 3 5-7pm

FOR SESSION REGISTRATION AND MORE INFO
 VISIT WWW.WCGREENTeam.COM



streams and the diverse species that call streams home; a tour of a butterfly nursery; traditional Lenape crafts like journey sticks; a presentation of the clothes, tools, weapons and toys; and a banquet with Lenape dishes, storytelling and campfire songs.

Those who wish to sign up do not need to commit to every session. Pick and choose what events you want to attend!

More information and rain dates can be found at wgreenteam.com. Registration for any of the sessions is [here](#). We hope to see you there!

Reminder: Legendary Lenape Program

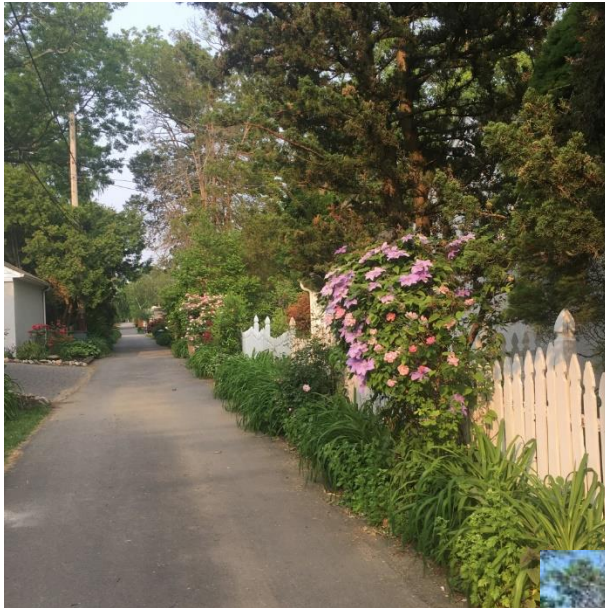
Our Legendary Lenape Series is back! This free, family-friendly summer program will explore the Indigenous people who lived here before European settlers arrived. Their place names and ways of life are still used today and often go unrecognized. Each session will honor and teach how the Lenape lived with the natural world.

The first session is on July 13 from 10-12pm at Westtown Lake. Tim James will help get us out on the water and canoe around the lake. We will also have rock painting to help us learn words from the Lenape language and a clay pit to explore. Families are welcome to bring a picnic!

The program's other sessions will meet at various spots in Chester County and have a variety of activities. Families will explore



The Green Team and Alley Beautification



In 2023 we launched a pilot project for alley beautification in West Chester and wherever else they exist.

Why are alleys important? The more urban type of alley creates an outdoor “room,” bounded by fences and the walls of buildings, offering small, unexpected areas for planting flowers, bushes, and vines, either in the ground or in strategically placed containers.

The “country lane” type of alley is more open, with low fences, few adjacent buildings, plentiful alleyside plantings, and attractive views into back yards.

All alleys allow comfortable dog-walking, family recreation space, public places for neighbors to catch up with each other, and relatively car-free terrain for joggers and strollers.



Who's New at Green Team

We're pleased to announce we have some new folks at Green Team! We'll let them introduce themselves:



Ellie Kissin:

I grew up in a very environmentally-conscious family, where my mom would make sure all recyclables were cleaned and in the recycling and my dad quizzed me and my siblings on trees and constellations. When I first moved to West Chester, one of the first things on my to-do list to become a part of the community was to find out where and when the farmers market is, and I spent the first summer getting fresh produce there every week. Aside from being a data analyst at the Stroud Water Research Center while working on my master's degree, I've also campaigned to join a composting program during my time in food service, and now have a balcony container garden. I

Who's New, con't.

am thrilled to be joining the West Chester Green Team as a co-treasurer and look forward to participating in the work there is to be done.



Finn Lawrence, Intern:

Hello! My name is Finn Lawrence, I'm a student at WC working towards my graphic design degree. I'm interested in helping and getting to know more about my community! I have a special interest for plant life and animals in the environment, as well as wanting to learn more about sustainability and how I can incorporate that more into my life. I'm looking forward to meeting more people in my community and finding out more ways I can contribute at the same time.

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News From Our Living Landscapes Committee

By Chris Pugliese

Planting Projects:

May 11- Lasko YMCA- hell strip planting went well. We had about 6-7 volunteers and completed the planting in about 3 hours. Wood chips were delivered by WCDPW. (Plants are doing fairly well to date- I have had to water about 3 times since planting.)

Chester County Art Association- the GT (me) assisted with continued restoration/ cleanup of woodland area west of the CCAA parking lot. E. Bradford Township (EBT) offered 20 trees which were planted randomly in May throughout the wooded area. Clean up process is ongoing and will pick up again in the fall.



The larger-scale, collaborative trail project involving CCAA/ EBT and WC School District will apply for a grant for 2025. Most of the funding needed will be going towards the creation of a large meadow behind Hillsdale Elementary School. Project coordination meetings are occurring as needed. All parties are still optimistic about getting this underway.

Future projects:

I met with Rachael Griffith (Sustainability Director for ChesCo) and George Martynick (ChesCo Director of Facilities) to review and brainstorm the opportunities for planting another pollinator garden in front of the Justice Center – (currently all lawn). The meeting went well- although maintenance concerns exist and are a priority. ChesCo can provide staff assistance with limited maintenance (watering).

The GT can assist with design and initial installation. There is the possibility to also recruit gardeners from the ChesCo Master Gardening program to also help out. There was no specific discussion as to funding the project; ChesCo is prepared to provide money for plants, although asked if the Downtown Foundation would donate something as well. Ultimately, the funding sources will depend on the scale/ budget cost of the project. George also mentioned the desire to do some interpretive signage once the project is completed.

Living Landscapes, con't.

I will develop a couple concept options which will take a first stab at locating and defining the overall area(s) of the gardens, this plan will also be used for determining a budget number for the installation.

It is probable that an outside contractor may be hired to do the lawn removal and soil preparation; the earliest time the garden could be installed would be Spring of 2025.

Community Gardens:

No gardeners from 2023 returned to the garden sites this year; we had 3 new gardeners requested garden beds (one at Lockhards' and two at The Barclay). Subsequently, only one gardener showed up at Barclay.

Plant Wagon:

By all accounts, this project was a success. We had a good number of plant donations from outside the GT which helped keep the wagons full. If this continues in years to come and we are sticking to the WC Parks as a distribution point, we may consider alternating the park locations for the giveaway (six one year, followed by the remaining six the next). It will be hard to predict how many plants we will have donated on a year-to-year basis. We should also create a specific sign for the Wagon which includes the QR code for the WCGT, so we can extend outreach.

A special thanks to Anna Sechrist for all her work.

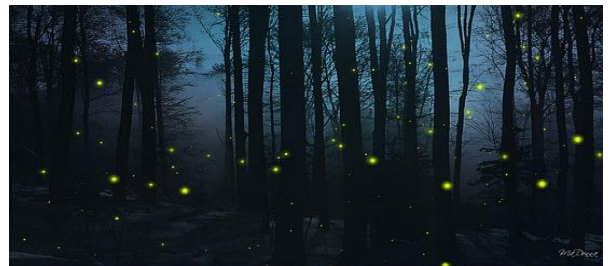
From Our Dark Skies Committee

By Tim Lawlor

Our efforts on HB1803 (the Dark Skies Legislation) won't see a full State House vote until the Fall session. We'll know more then.

We hope that everyone will attend the Green Team's August 28 **Dark Skies and Fireflies Celebration**

which will feature State Senator Carolyn Comitta speaking about dark skies. Rep. Chris Pielli will also be in attendance. See page 4 for more information on this event.



Perhaps they need lessons in preparing crab cakes and hot crab dip?

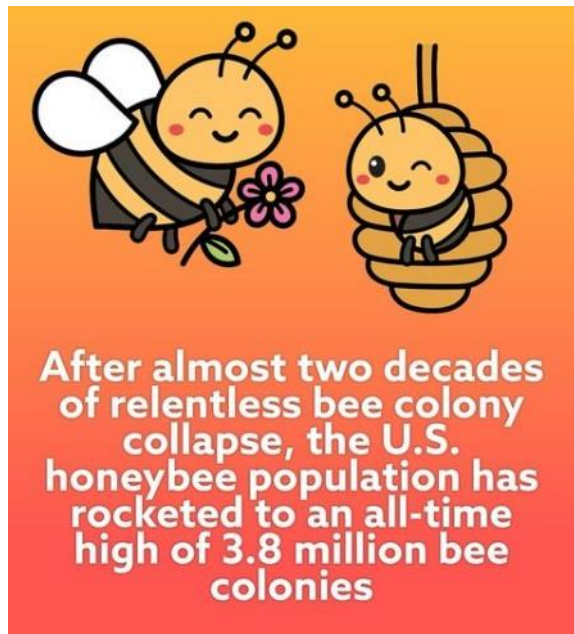
An oyster farmer in the south of France last summer spoke to the news about a marauding invasive species that he likened to "serial killers," eating anything that swam or crawled. The species in question?

Callinectes sapidus, the same Atlantic blue crab that is so beloved in the Chesapeake Bay. It's just another twist in the **complicated saga of blue crabs**. While the latest survey shows the crabs are still struggling in the Bay (despite this, Virginia regulators just this week opened the door to a controversial **reopening of the winter crab harvest**), they are becoming a menace in new waterways from Maine to Croatia.



Source: *Save the Bay Newsletter*

Here “Bee” Good News!



The new Census of Agriculture shows that America's honeybee population has rocketed to an all-time high.

The U.S. added almost a million bee colonies in the past five years. There are now 3.8 million, the census shows. Since 2007, the first census after alarming bee die-offs began in 2006, the honeybee has been the fastest-growing livestock segment in the country! And that doesn't count feral honeybees, which may outnumber their captive cousins several times over.

Source: *Washington Post*

Keep Off the Grass

By Terry Wallace

From: *On the Kendal Journey*, blog post published July 3, 2024

I just came in from the garden with my basket full of fresh strawberries. I often stand in the strawberry bed and eat a few—sometimes quite a few. There's nothing like a ripe strawberry fresh from the garden, juicy, fragrant, sweet, and safe. Commercially grown strawberries are at the top of the “dirty dozen” list of plants that are laced with pesticides. I am safe eating mine in the garden because no pesticide has ever touched them.

Growing healthy organic vegetables is not as hard as you might believe. Taking care of the soil and selecting appropriate varieties for your area ensure a successful harvest. There is a special joy in eating vegetables and fruits when you have taken part in the process, from sprouting seeds to serving them. They taste better, are higher in nutrients, and they're free from pesticides and herbicides. Not all of us can grow our own produce, but we can support farms that adhere to safe, sustainable practices.



Unfortunately, the pesticide industry has convinced consumers that their products are safe and healthy, as well as harmless for people and pets. As a result, pesticides are readily available in our country. They are cheap and easy to use. Pesticides are sold in big box stores, grocery stores, hardware stores, and even large pharmacies. Easy access to pesticides reinforces the message that pesticides are harmless. Pesticides with the highest level of toxicity are registered for commercial use.

Continue reading here: <https://kendaljourney.com/2024/07/03/keep-off-the-grass/>