



# WEST CHESTER GREEN TEAM NEWS

July 2025

*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:

Volunteer of the Month, Celebrating Sunshine event, an Outing, Legendary Lenape Activities, Fewer Plastic Bags, Green Wagons, Food Bank Donations, Unusual Things You Can Eat, and much more!



# WCGT Calendar of Upcoming Events

## When – What – Where.



**July 26:** Lenape dinner at Camp Linden near Marshallton If you would like to attend, please sign up [here](#)! More info on page 7.

**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 2025 issue is July 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](mailto:LDwalsh318@gmail.com).**

## *This and That*

### More Coming Attractions

**July 10, 6-7:30PM, Live Webinar. Native Tree and Shrub Sale Species Overview and Q & A. Register by July 10, free of charge**

Transform your yard into a thriving habitat for wildlife while supporting cleaner, healthier waterways—one native plant at a time. Planting native trees and shrubs not only enhances biodiversity but also plays a vital role in improving local stream health and water quality. In this interactive webinar, a Penn State Extension Urban Forester and Master Watershed Stewards will guide you through selecting the right species for your unique landscape conditions. You'll also learn more about the carefully curated selections available in this year's Annual Native Tree and Shrub Fundraiser, helping you make informed choices that benefit both your backyard and the broader environment.

All species discussed will be available for purchase through our annual sale until August 27—or while supplies last. You'll learn about our recommended species for a variety of conditions, from sunny to shady spots and dry to wet soils. No matter the conditions of your yard or landscape, there's a beneficial native tree or shrub that's just right for the space. Participants are encouraged to submit questions for the webinar in advance and to help make the right tree and shrub selections for your property.

Visit this page to find out how to register: <https://extension.psu.edu/master-watershed-steward-q-a-for-native-tree-and-shrub-sale>

**July 12, 10AM – 2PM Repair Café in  
Downingtown at Central Presbyterian  
Church**



**REPAIR CAFE**  
**DOWNINGTOWN**

**July 12th, 2025 10am -2pm**

**Central Presbyterian Church**  
**100 W. Uwchlan Ave. Downingtown, PA 19335**

**Bring Your Beloved  
But Broken Items and  
Get Them Fixed... for FREE\***

Everyone is welcome, you don't have to be a Downingtown resident.

**AVAILABLE REPAIRS**  
Soft Toys - Dolls & Stuffed Animals  
Computers & Electronics  
Jewelry  
Sharpening  
Mechanical & Electrical  
Things Made of Wood  
Clothing & Textiles  
Bikes

**Limit TWO items per person!**  
\*Lamp and bike parts available for purchase at our cost

**MORE INFORMATION**

  [repaircafedowningtown.com](http://repaircafedowningtown.com)  
 [repaircafe165@gmail.com](mailto:repaircafe165@gmail.com)  
 [@RepairCafeDowningtown](https://www.facebook.com/RepairCafeDowningtown)



Flyer design by Upward Arrow.

## July 18, 7-9PM, Everhart Park: Firefly Friends Celebration

Friends of Everhart Park will dedicate the Firefly Sanctuary in the park with a special celebration on July 18. Come and bring a heavy appetizer or dessert to share, your own chair or blanket, and a friend or neighbor. Beer, wine, water and seltzer water will be provided. Just for kids, Senator Carolyn Comitta will read a book and there will be a special craft. Please RSVP to [friendsofeverhartpark@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofeverhartpark@gmail.com)

In park news, the Borough has repaired the doggie drinking fountain at last! If you have a dog and don't know where the fountain is, look on the east wall of the restroom building under the human drinking fountain. Also, we lost a horse chestnut tree near Jack's entrance in a recent storm—but the good news is that 10 new trees have been planted!

Parks and Recreation Director, Keith Kurowski has agreed to move the Turk's Head festival food trucks out of the park and onto West Union Street next year. FOEP has been concerned about the documented damage heavy trucks cause to tree roots in the park so they are very pleased with this decision.



FRIENDS OF EVERHART PARK

# FIREFLY FRIENDS CELEBRATION

Help us dedicate the Firefly Sanctuary in Everhart Park.

**JULY 18TH, 7-9PM, 430 WEST BARNARD STREET**

*(best firefly viewing may be 9:30-10 depending on the moon and skies)*

Please bring:

- A heavy appetizer or dessert to share
- Your own chair or blanket
- A friend or neighbor

**BEER, WINE, WATER, AND SELTZER WATER WILL BE PROVIDED.**

*This year we're going to offer a special Firefly cocktail*

**ALSO just for kids:**

*Special book reading by Senator Carolyn Comitta and a firefly craft!*

RSVP: [friendsofeverhartpark@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofeverhartpark@gmail.com)



**August 23: Annual Green Team Gathering** at West Chester Friends Meeting, N. High St., West Chester. Honorees for the evening will be John Suplee and Josh Maxwell. Mae's will once again be providing boxed dinners for us with the sandwich choices of roast veggies, chicken salad, or roast turkey with fig jam, along with potato chips. We will have apples from Barnard's Orchard and cake from the Master's Baker that says Congratulations! There will also be gelato from D'Ascenzo's, and water or lemonade to drink. \$15 per person. Tickets will be available soon on our website at [wcgreenteam.com](http://wcgreenteam.com)

## ***Celebrating Sunshine***

### A West Chester Green Team Annual Gathering

**When:** Saturday, August 23rd. Green Fair at **4pm**. Dinner at **5pm**.

**Where:** West Chester Friends Meeting House, **424 N High St., West Chester, PA**

**All Are Welcome!!!**

**What:** Celebrating County Commissioner **Josh Maxwell** (right) with the *Environmental Leadership Award* and Chester County artist **John Suplee** (art pictured left) with the *Philip Jamison Art & Nature Award*.

Join us at **4pm** for the **Green Fair** featuring:

- West Chester Coop's baked goods table
- Take it slow Tai Chi demonstration by Sifu Tim Niiler
- Live Music by The White Feathers
- Games on the Lawn & Lenape Crafts

Join us at **5pm** for a **dinner and awards ceremony!**



Get tickets now by going to [wcgreenteam.com](http://wcgreenteam.com)

## Volunteer of the Month: Molly Hanford

*By Mateo Niiler*

This month, the West Chester Green Team would like to recognize Molly Hanford for her work with the Green Team. Molly has helped in planting a pollinator friendly garden at the Justice Center, run our Bourbon Street Jam fundraiser, purchased china for dinners organized by the Green Team, and taught Lenape journey stick making at West Chester Friends School. However, Molly's main responsibility is organizing West Chester Porchfest. Molly has been working with the Green Team for several years on the Porchfest Committee, and I had the opportunity to interview her about her response to being recognized as volunteer of the month.

I asked Molly about when and why she joined the Green Team, and she responded, "The first West Chester Green Team Porchfest was held on Saturday, May 21, 2022. I was outside... the next day and Margaret Hudgings walked by. I thanked her and the Green Team for the wonderful event. We started talking and she asked me if I would like to join the Porchfest Committee... I didn't hesitate and said, 'Absolutely'. That was the beginning of my involvement with the Green Team."



When I asked Molly about how it felt to be recognized for the volunteer of the month, she said "I am honored to be recognized...for my work organizing the West Chester Green Team Porchfest! I believe that I am not alone in this honor and would like to thank the other Porchfest Committee Members: Brian Egan, Dianne Horvath, Kevin Quain, Renee Perna, Whitney Pfeffer, and Kathleen Tierney. I would also like to thank Green Team members Margeret Hudgings, and Elizabeth Cunningham for their immense contributions... West Chester Green Team Porchfest could not happen without the support of the porch hosts, volunteers, sponsors, and the wonderful community of the Borough of West Chester."

Molly puts in a lot of work with the rest of the Porchfest Committee to ensure that the event runs smoothly, and the work grows each year as Porchfest expands in scale. Since the first Porchfest in 2022, the number of performances have doubled. I asked Molly what aspect of organizing Porchfest she was most proud of. "To me, the most important factor is assuring that when multiple musical groups are playing in the same block they don't interfere with each other. This is by far the most complicated part of the event but also the most rewarding when it works."

As someone who has performed at all four Porchfests, I can personally attest to how effective the work done by Molly is. Not to mention all the other work she puts in on a regular basis to help keep the Green Team going. Congratulations, Molly Hanford for being our volunteer of the month!



## Legendary Lenape Activities

### Braiding Sweetgrass and Canoeing at Westtown Lake

Saturday, June 21, the summer solstice dawned hot and murky. Our summer programming that day began by honoring the native American people who lived on this land, the Lenape. Once again this year, programming at Westtown Lake was cosponsored by the West Chester Green Team and Westtown Meeting (Society of Friends.)

Incoming Green Team president, Karen Slossburg led an art activity: braiding sweet grass.



Our popular journey stick craft was also featured. Event organizer, Tim James, assisted by WCGT summer intern Mateo Niiler, by launching our canoes into Westtown Lake.

The Legendary Lenape series continues and concludes--with fire-building activities and a Lenape dinner at Camp Linden near Marshallton on July 26.

If you would like to attend, please sign up [here](#)!

*(Photos show our crafting activities.)*

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## Support Pollinators by Using Less Landscape Lighting

*From Horticulture Magazine*

Landscape lighting has many practical purposes, but it can also cause problems for pollinators and plants. Learn about this issue and how to adjust your outdoor lights accordingly by clicking this link:

<https://www.hortmag.com/support-pollinators-by-using-less-landscape-lighting>



# Green Team Outing to Backyard Nature Preserve

*By Nathaniel Smith*

On a Saturday morning in June, 14 of us, gardeners all, journeyed to Backyard Nature Preserve and Native Plant Nursery near the Bryn Coed Preserve in Chester Springs. Donna Delany ably and entertainingly implemented [their website](#)'s guiding principle:

"We are happy to share with you what we have learned, so that, together, we can create safe places for bees and butterflies, songbirds and frogs, and all the members of our natural community. Together, we can reverse the tide of species decline, while enriching our own lives with the beauty and wonder of the natural world."



*Donna Delany speaking to GT group*

It was a drippy morning at times and that was fine. Gardeners don't mind a little moisture—a slight inconvenience to

people, a necessity to plants! And speaking of rain, Donna recounted someone complaining to her that this year a certain plant had grown far taller than the height Donna had predicted; it's all in the rainfall!

Donna's philosophy of living with and within the natural world came through in all her comments as she led us among myriad plantings of trees, shrubs, and flowers. Each species, including the large and small fauna that depend on the flora, has its own personality, its own likes and dislikes, that we humans tend to define in terms of sun and shade, damp, and dry, or soil quality. But as gardeners, we learn that we can't outsmart the plants; we can only give them every opportunity to thrive and then observe their response.

And, Donna said species can learn. Some deal with climate change better than others; some adapt to new conditions or food sources. Do you recall the spotted lantern fly infestation that a few years ago was said to threaten many trees and crops, spreading outward from its first sighting in Berks County? Donna has observed that some birds, which earlier eschewed this exotic invasive, have now become accustomed to devouring these probably succulent protein sources. Nature generally adapts to change, as long as she has time.

Some of us also purchased plants from the garden's excess. I am eager to see how my new ground cover (a species of *Packera*, AKA Ragwort) succeeds in an alley where I've had trouble establishing suitable growth. If it comes to resemble Backyard Nature Preserve's several clumps of large attractive leaves, my goal will be met.

Here's hoping for a return visit someday. And many thanks to Donna and Dave for making their gardens and experience accessible to others!





*Columbine*



*Canada Anemone*

Some of the plants seen during our outing.

## I Can Eat THAT!?!

*By Dianne Walsh (one of a series on edible plants)*

Those ubiquitous hostas are not only attractive perennials in many of our gardens, but they are also tasty. Yes, you can eat them. While the leaves can be eaten almost any time, they are best early in the season while still tender. Even better, cut the hosta shoots when they appear in the spring and cook them as you would asparagus. The taste is similar to asparagus because hostas are related to—guess what—  
asparagus!

A side benefit to harvesting the shoots is that it will cut down on the need to divide your hostas—and we all know hostas are the gift that keeps on giving. Let them give you a new veggie to try!



*Sauteed Hosta shoots*

## 25 to 47 Percent Fewer Plastic Bags

*From the NY Times:*

At places throughout the United States where plastic bags require a fee or have been banned, fewer bags end up at the water's edge, according to research published in Science.

Areas that adopted plastic bag policies saw a **25 to 47 percent reduction in the share of plastic bag litter on shorelines**, when compared with areas without policies. The longer a policy was in place, the greater the reduction.

Using data compiled by the nonprofit Ocean Conservancy, researchers analyzed results from 45,067 shoreline cleanups from 2016 to 2023, along with a sample of 182 local and state policies enacted to regulate plastic shopping bags between 2017 and 2023. — *Christina Kelso*



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We are not at the beach, but we too have benefitted from our plastic bag ban. Thank you, West Chester Borough, for being #2 municipality in the state of PA to ban single-use plastic bags. The WC Green Team along with WC Friends School spearheaded this effort.

Narberth came first and then West Chester! WCGT board member and WC borough council member Don Braceland, cast the deciding vote for the measure. He then worked with politicians in Philadelphia guiding them as they pursued their own ban.

Maurice Sampson II from Clean Water Watch in Philadelphia summed it up when he said, "Who would have thought that little West Chester would be leading the way!"



*Maurice Sampson II from Clean Water Watch. Photo by Taka Nagai*

The Green Team thanked Maurice and honored him at our Earth Day banquet in 2024, presenting him with our Environmental Justice Award. And more good news: our Plastic Free, Please Committee is becoming active again under the leadership of Elizabeth Gombosi. To learn more about their work or to volunteer to help, contact her at [elgombosi@gmail.com](mailto:elgombosi@gmail.com)

Malvern's single-use plastic ordinance goes into effect July 16;

see <https://www.malvern.org/environmental-advisory-council/news/malvern-borough-bans-single-use-plastic-bags-starting-july-16>



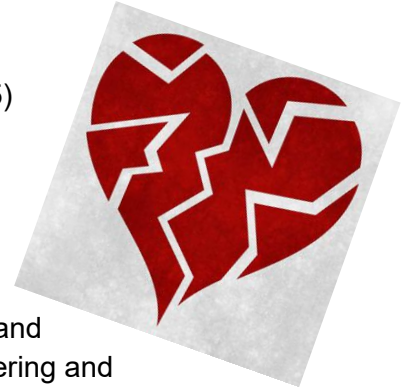
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## The Problems with Phthalates

The threat posed by plastics to human health is even worse than has been feared. An article in the journal [eBioMedicine](#) (vol. 117, July 2025) focuses on phthalates, a group of chemicals often used to soften plastics in flexible pipes, medical tubing, package and food wrappings, electrical wires, electronics, vinyl flooring, toys, clothing, insect repellents, and many other products in everyday life. Highly processed and fast foods are notable sources of human intake.

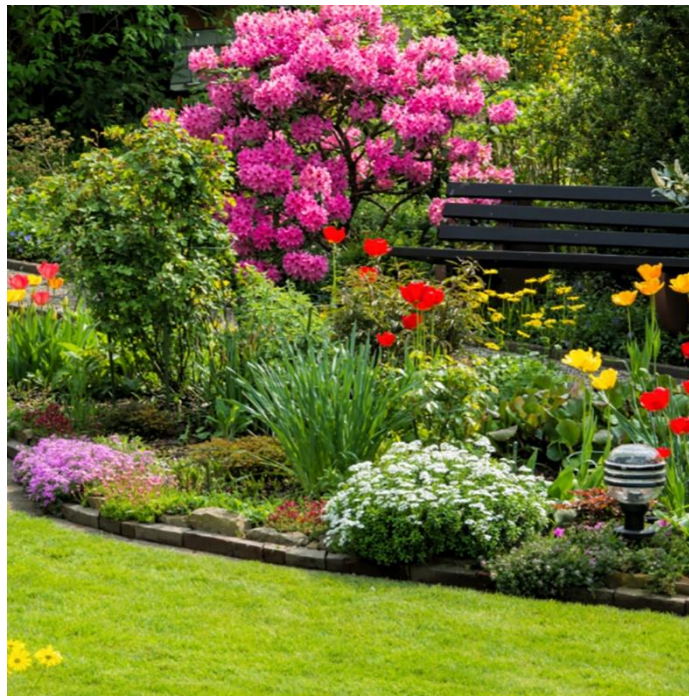
Phthalates are believed to contribute to inflammation, ADHD, obesity, and especially heart disease. According to the current study, in 2018 (gathering and analyzing data is a slow process!), "In 2018, an estimated 356,238 deaths globally were attributed to DEHP exposure, representing 13.497% of all cardiovascular deaths among individuals aged 55–64." (DEHP is a widely-used phthalate.) And of course, phthalates and other such chemicals cause health problems short of death as well. Sad to say, most of us have detectable levels of phthalates in our bodies. What is the moral? To reduce production of plastics and to do all we can to avoid contact between plastics and items in our daily lives, particularly food and drink.

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## The Four Ecologically Crucial Things You Should Do in Your Garden

The ecologist Douglas Tallamy says your landscape can help manage the watershed, support pollinators, bolster a viable food web, and sequester carbon. Read the article here at <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/06/18/realestate/gardens-plants-wildlife.html/>





## Green Wagons: Have You Seen Them?



Did I just spy one of our three Green Wagons tucked into a yard or park down the street?

If so, stop by and check it out — it's full of plants and a whole lot of green inspiration!

Help yourself to a free plant or two (choose native or non-native, as you prefer)... and the inspiration. You can also leave a plant (or plants) if your garden is overflowing.

The Green Wagons move around in different neighborhoods in West Chester Borough. Hint: for a few days you could find one in Marshall Square Park, as you see in the photo, near the well-known Tree Sculpture. Who knows where they'll be next!

If you'd like to help with this project, contact Anna Secrist at [annaisechrist@gmail.com](mailto:annaisechrist@gmail.com)

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## Donations Needed for W.C. Food Cupboard

*by Margaret Hudgings*

Veggie donations are needed for the WC Food Cupboard. Drop off is Tuesdays by 2:30PM on our porch at 409 W Union. We will take it over and have it weighed. We will continue until early Nov. All donations are welcome.

Dane Gray from Kildare's, one of our earliest and best supporters, has organized the local restaurants to donate. According to a volunteer I spoke with last week, thanks to overwhelming community response, they are meeting local demand for food despite \$1,000,000 in cuts so far.



We are hoping for donations from more folks in future. We have provided lots of greens which are very popular, according to the volunteers. Donors can leave produce in insulated bags on our porch and we will return the bags there for pick up. Or just drop your donation close to 2:30. If your garden is overflowing and you can't use it all, this is your chance to share with those who really need it.