



WEST CHESTER GREEN TEAM NEWS

September 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:

Our Annual Dinner, Finding Your Happy Place, Volunteer of the Month, More Unusual Things You Can Eat, News From Homegrown National Park, Auction Announcement, and MORE!



WCGT Calendar of Upcoming Events

When – What – Where.



September 16: 6:30-8:00pm, Business and Public Management Center, WCU. Panel discussion on Transportation Equity in Chester County. See page 3 for details.

September 20: 12-2:00 pm, Sykes Ballrooms, Philips Memorial Bldg., WCU: Pawpaw Fest 2025.

For details on other September 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 October 2025 issue is September 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.

This and That

More Coming Attractions

Saturday, September 13: 10AM – 2PM, Central Presbyterian Church, Downingtown



REPAIR CAFE
DOWNINGTOWN

September 13th, 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

 repaircatedowningtown.com
 repaircafe165@gmail.com
 @RepairCafeDowningtown



**TRANSPORTATION EQUITY IN
CHESTER COUNTY**
A COMMUNITY PANEL DISCUSSION

SEPTEMBER 16TH 2025
6:30-8:00PM

Business and Public
Management Center
50 Sharpless St,
West Chester, PA

6:30pm Reception in Room 102
7:00pm Panel in Room 116

Join us for a moderated discussion about transportation systems in Chester County and how to make them more **accessible, affordable, safe, convenient, and equitable** for all residents, workers, and visitors, whether they **drive, carpool, use public transit, bicycle, or walk.**

Panelists will include representatives of **TMACC, Transit Forward Philly, the West Chester Rail Service Restoration Committee, WCU's Office of Sustainability, and other groups.**

More information: wcupa.edu/sustainability

Tuesday, September 16: 6:30-8:00PM
Business and Public Management Center, WCU:

Reception in Rm 102 at 6:60, Panel in Rm 116 at 7:00. Panelists scheduled so far are Jordan Norley, Stephen Bronskill, Alex Sankaran, Tim Phelps of TMACC, and Connor Descheemaker of Transit Forward Philly.

Join us for a moderated discussion about transportation systems in Chester County and how to make them more accessible, affordable, safe, convenient, and equitable for all residents, workers, and visitors, no matter how they get around. Co-hosted by the WCU Office of Sustainability and the West Chester Green Team.



Saturday, September 20, 12-2:00 pm, Sykes Ballrooms, Philips Memorial Bldg., WCU:
Pawpaw Fest 2025. Never eaten a Pawpaw? Here's your chance! Everyone is welcome.

September 26-27, As we head toward fall, another season of climate advocacy is ahead of us. It's the perfect time to connect with other climate advocates and get inspired for the work ahead. How? At our 2025 Inclusion Conference coming up Sept. 26-27! This year's Citizens' Climate Lobby Inclusion Conference, titled "[Rooted in Care, Growing in Community](#)," is a free, virtual event focused on powerful storytelling and practical tools to help you approach your climate work from a place of hope, curiosity, and justice. [Learn More & Register](#)



October 4, 2025, 7pm: Goose Creek Get-Down Join GCA for our annual event, the Goose Creek Get-Down, which will take place at the Melton Center in West Chester Borough. This event will celebrate the progress that we have made so far as an organization. We would not have been able to get this far without our community. Come out for a great night with food, drinks, raffles and live music! [Visit our website](#) to get your ticket or to sponsor the event!

Tuesday, October 7, 6:30 – 8:00 pm, Business and Public Management Center Rm 116, WCU:
 "Toward a Plastic-Free Future," A community panel moderated by Elizabeth Gombosi

October 11, 11 AM – 4 PM Art in the Woods at Chester County Art Association, Bradford Ave., West Chester. A day to celebrate creativity, community, and connection in a beautiful natural setting. Join us for an unforgettable afternoon featuring over 50 talented artists showcasing work in a wide variety of media. Enjoy a full schedule of activities including live music, a sound bath, children's programming, and of course, s'mores by the fire. A major highlight this year is the debut of our expanded walking trail, now featuring stunning new 2D and 3D artworks that harmonize with the surrounding landscape.



October 20: 6 PM, Business and Public Management Center, Room 110, WCU




Seeing Stars: Panel Discussion on Dark Skies

Featuring the presentation of the West Chester Green Team Environmental Leadership Award to State Representative Chris Pielli by Professor Marc Gagne



Monday, October 20th 6:30pm

Business and Public Management Center,
Room 110
50 Sharpless St,
West Chester, PA 19383

MODERATOR

- Timothy Lawlor, Penn State University

PANELISTS

- Jeff Buler, University of Delaware
- Marc Gagne, West Chester University
- Sandy Goodstein, The Pennsylvania Outdoor Lighting Council
- Mark Grosz, Dark Sky PA
- Bill McGeeney, Light Pollution News
- Suzanne Webster, Elizabethtown College

WCU OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY & THE WEST CHESTER GREEN TEAM

Fall 2025 Community/Campus Sustainability Events



Transportation Equity in Chester County Panel Discussion

September 16th 6:30-8:30pm
Business and Public Management Center Room 116

Toward a Plastic Free Future Panel Discussion

October 7th 6:30-8:30pm
Business and Public Management Center Room 116





Seeing Stars: Panel Discussion on Dark Skies

October 20th 6:30-8:30pm
Business and Public Management Center Room 110

Green Holiday Event

December 10th 5-7pm
Sykes Student Union Ballrooms



More information to come at wcupa.edu/sustainability

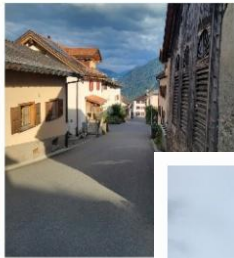
Fall Sustainability Events at WCU. This includes some events already described in this listing.

Save the Date: Our Annual Seasons Greenings Auction November 26 - December 6

Too early to think about the holidays? We say NO!! We are once again planning our annual auction and among our most popular items are the vacation homes here and abroad. Here is a testimonial and photos to whet your appetite for a vacation to remember:



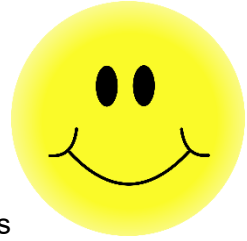
“As part of the Green Team auction, we won a week at a wonderful house in the small Swiss town of Seewis. Our family had a fantastic time exploring the Swiss countryside, taking in the culture, visiting towns and cities, hiking, exploring deep gorges, touring a chocolate factory and a 1000+ year old library, eating fondue, and relaxing on the train. As an added bonus, the house came with a very friendly cat! “
--Andrew Potts



Finding Your Happy Place

By Margaret Hudgings

Yes, flowers seem to promote happiness, and like fireflies and stars they are part of the environment. But why should a green team feature tai chi at its annual meeting?



The West Chester Green Team is a Transition Town. That means that part of our mission is to promote community happiness. We first went in the happiness direction back in 2016 when we were Don't Spray Me! in reaction to a suggestion from Margaret Westbrook, a founder of Buy Nothing West Chester, a Facebook group that offers used items free to members, promoting community connection, saving people money and reducing items taken to the landfill. See <https://www.facebook.com/groups/410482546156563/>



Westbrook said that environmental activities can be seen as tedious so why not make our events more fun. So, we offered a Strawberry Festival at Everhart Park. We had great food including a buffet dinner, and the West Chester Co-op offered its now famous strawberry shortcake for the first time. Sue Patterson masterminded the confection, a role she still plays, having overseen over a hundred servings at our most recent Porchfest event last May 17. Sue says, "Strawberry shortcake always brings a smile to people's faces! The shortcake is not only savored for its sweet, fresh deliciousness, but it also represents the start of the brief, local strawberry season and the hint of summer to come."

Porchfest is another of our community happiness events attended by an estimated 10,000 people this year. And it does its job. People of all ages love getting together to listen to music outdoors!

We offer meditation and mindfulness guided by member Dawn Mazzone. We celebrate art with our Philip Jamison Art and Nature award and through collaboration with many local artists including Nancy Salamon, Denise Vitollo, Stephen Marvin, Rachel Davis, Suzanne Kent, Mia and Catherine Bosna, Dianne Walsh, Vaughn Stadtmiller and John Suplee, and we honor the native people who lived on this land that we now call our home. All of this is to promote community health and happiness.

We advocate for physical health too by featuring bicycling, hiking in nature and the integrative arts of yoga and tai chi. Sifu (teacher) Tim Niiler, who has headed a school of Chinese martial arts for many years at WC Friends School, demonstrated a tai chi form that appeared as much ballet as self-defense at our annual meeting called "Celebrating Sunshine" which took place on August 23. In his mid-50's, Niiler presents as a decade or two younger with his flexibility and agility.

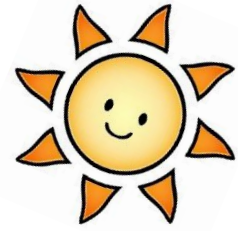
Accompanied by his son, Mateo Niiler, on guitar, Sifu Tim showed his art, an ancient method of calming and centering that is so useful in keeping us happy in challenging times. Thank you, Tim.



Celebrating Sunshine—Our 2025 Annual Meeting



On Saturday, August 23, the West Chester Green Team held its Annual Dinner Meeting and Green Fair at the West Chester Friends Meeting and School. It was a beautiful, pleasant evening and we all enjoyed dining outdoors on wonderful sandwiches and homemade potato chips from Mae's, a special, beautifully decorated cake from The Master's Baker, apples from Barnard's Orchard, and gelato from D'Ascenzo's. Highlights of the evening included the presentation of the Philip Jamison Art and Nature award to local artist and Church Street Gallery owner John Suplee (pictured left) and the WCGT Environmental Leadership



Award to County Commissioner Josh Maxwell.

Another highlight was a presentation of Tai Chi by Sifu Tim Niiler (right) who was trained in martial arts in China and is an internationally certified kung fu judge, with musical accompaniment by his son Mateo on guitar. Mateo also provided music throughout the evening.

Crafts were available for sale and a special activity for kids, making Lenape-style journey sticks (pictured below), kept the younger set busy and happy. One of our plant wagons was there, too, and several people took advantage of the free greenery.



I Can Eat THAT!?!

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

What's up, Dock?

Ok, I couldn't resist that pun, but Dock, sometimes called Dock weed, can be found almost anywhere, growing under any and all conditions. I get a bumper crop of it every year in my backyard, despite all efforts to eradicate it. With tall seed heads that ripen to dark brown, then scatter everywhere, it is invasive and hard to get rid of, not to mention it's ugly. But it's entirely edible. Dock leaves can be eaten raw in salads or can be cooked as you would any green leafy vegetable. The leaves are best when they are young, as is the case with most edible plants, and have a mild, lemony taste similar to sorrel. However, dock leaves contain oxalic acid, so they should be eaten raw in moderation to avoid health issues, but cooking reduces their oxalic acid content. You can also grind those seed heads into a flour which is essentially buckwheat flour. Yes, Dock is a relative of buckwheat and rhubarb. To be honest, I have not yet sampled it, but I am curious about it and may soon try a leaf or two. Considering how prolific this plant is, I often wonder if it could be an answer to world hunger!



Indigenous Wisdom Is the Earth's Oldest Climate Education

From earthday.org

On August 9 every year, [the world marks International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples](https://www.earthday.org/indigenous-wisdom-is-the-earths-oldest-climate-education/). A day that reminds us that Indigenous peoples are some of the world's oldest and most successful environmental guardians. Before "*climate education*" was a term in classrooms, First and [Indigenous](#) people were educating through generations of lived experience and embedding their profound cultural connections to land, water, and biodiversity into everyday life. Indigenous knowledge is not only the past. It is alive, adapting, and urgently present.

Read more at <https://www.earthday.org/indigenous-wisdom-is-the-earths-oldest-climate-education/>

Also from earthday.org:

The Dirty Dozen: How Plastic Has Infected Everything

Once thought to be inert, all plastics degrade over time and through wear and tear break into smaller pieces called [micro or nanoplastics](#). These in turn leach out the toxic plastic chemicals used to make them and enter both the environment and all living things. Both the microplastics and their toxic chemicals are dangerous for human health.

Find out more at <https://www.earthday.org/the-dirty-dozen-how-plastic-has-infected-everything/>

Volunteer of the Month: Kim Stack

Soft spoken and self-effacing with a bit of a twinkle, that is Kim Stack, our multi-talented and always gracious volunteer of the month. From researching Lenape recipes for summer banquets featuring Three Sisters Stew, to cooking up batches of soup for various occasions from cookouts at Camp Linden to Bourbon Street Jam, a fundraiser for Porchfest, from ringing up sales of tee shirts and posters at that event to offering to bake your dream dessert for the Season's Greenings auctions, Kim has lent her cooking talents and interpersonal skills to the Green team with great results.

Kim and her family give generously to the Green Team auction with quarts of her soup a competitive bid item. She also joins a group of bakers in offering your dream dessert. Another hit year after year is a tour, with desserts provided by Kim, of her family's Antique Ice Tools Museum on Sconnelltown Rd. Kim's father's family was in the ice business here in West Chester and in upstate NY before that. Her parents bought an 1834 stone barn back in 2012 to display their vast collection of ice related tools and vehicles, the largest in the US. Touring it is a look back at the US and the West Chester of long ago.

Jim Hudgings, who won the tour at the GT auction a few years ago, remarked, " As a child, I remember that we had ice delivered and my mom always called our refrigerator which replaced it 'the icebox.' It was fascinating to hear Pete Stack lead the museum tour. He is a man who knows and enjoys his task!"

Bill Rettew writing for the Daily Local News, visited the museum in 2022 and stated

"This world-class museum features colorful trucks and wagons, ice boxes, augers, saws, a casket to keep them "on ice" and my favorites, 450 ice picks." Yes, the museum even has a cool coffin.

As a member of an important local family and a hero in her own right, we would like to thank Kim for her many contributions to the Green Team. Thank you, Kim, we really appreciate all you do for all of us.



*Antique Ice Tools
Museum*

News From Homegrown National Park



This summer, we launched the very first [Mosquito Bucket Challenge](#)—a fun, pollinator-safe way to reduce fogging without harming biodiversity. And what a response it was!

- **130,000+ people** visited the challenge landing page
- **Thousands participated** by building their own mosquito buckets
- Communities hosted **painting parties, giveaways, and tabling events**
- And the challenge even made the news, **featured on [NBC in multiple cities](#), [ABC Indianapolis](#)**, and in a variety of print articles

Your efforts didn't just help reduce fogging, they opened up conversations in neighborhoods, classrooms, and local groups about how we can shift our relationship with nature, starting right in our own yards. We loved seeing your creativity...



Buckets coming to life: community painting event by Barrington Green Team, New Jersey

We also heard from many of you! Feedback poured in with questions, suggestions, and ideas to make the challenge even better. While some of those ideas have already led to small additions like a handout and sticker, what excites us most is the bigger picture: you've shown how eager people are for practical, doable ways to create healthier yards.

We're taking all your input to heart as we prepare for next year's challenge. Expect more detail, more science, and even more ways to get involved.

Read the Full Recap Here <https://homegrownnationalpark.org/mosquito-bucket-challenge-2025/>

News From CRC Watersheds Association

Fertilizer and Our Creeks

It is that time of year when many landowners are applying fertilizer, hoping for a last blast of growth at the end of summer. How can we grow beautiful plants while also maintaining healthy stream habitats?

What even is fertilizer?

additives used to increase soil fertility (and therefore increase plant growth)

can be organic (ex. manure) or inorganic (AKA "synthetic")



So what?

Fertilizer not only increases plant growth on land but also **increases plant growth in water**. As aquatic plants decompose, they remove dissolved oxygen from our waterways, making streams uninhabitable. **More nutrients = more plant growth = less oxygen. This process is called eutrophication.** Have you ever heard of dead zones in the ocean? These are oxygen-deprived areas commonly caused by excess nutrients. Nutrients wash from creeks into the ocean, leading to algal blooms which may then form these "dead zone" areas.

If you opt to use fertilizer, keep in mind these quick tips...

Diagnose Your Plant Prior to Opting for Fertilizer

Fertilizer is not always the solution for a sad-looking plant. Do some research as to what else could be damaging your plant before using fertilizer.

Stay Away from Water

If you are in close proximity to a body of water, avoid use of fertilizers. Fertilizer cannot by law be applied within 15 feet of a body of water. [More information here.](#)

Follow the Instructions on the Label

It is important to only use the amount you need. The label will let you know everything you need to know for applying the appropriate amount of fertilizer.

Use Proper Tools

Use a calibrated spreader to evenly disburse your fertilizer and ensure that you are not using too much for your project.

Sweep Up Don't Wash Away

If fertilizer ends up on a hard surface, sweep up the fertilizer and reuse it. Washing the fertilizer away is not only wasteful but damaging to our creeks!

