



News *in* *Nature*

The Official Publication of Berks Nature

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Letter from the President...

Dear Members & Friends,

2017 was yet another amazing year for Berks Nature. We opened The Nature Place, developed the beautiful grounds, built a new teaching garden, pollinator meadow – and that was just at Angelica Park! We permanently protected several beautiful properties throughout Berks County, and we worked on many farms to help improve their conservation practices leading to better water quality. We are well on our way to making 2018 a great year as well. We are proud to share with you a sample of our many exciting accomplishments inside our 2017 annual report. In addition, we are honored to recognize our many donors and friends who help to make our work possible, and help to make Berks County a healthier place to live.

A major focus for Berks Nature is improving the water quality in Berks County and beyond. Strategic land protection activities help us do this, and we will continue with primary focusses in the Hay Creek watershed and along the Kittatinny Ridge. We recently completed a year-long plan for phase 2 of our work as part of the Delaware River Watershed Initiative. Our focus for the Middle Schuylkill cluster, along with our partners at the Stroud Water Research Center and the Partnership for The Delaware Estuary, is on improving water quality through agricultural land restoration. This is being achieved through direct landowner outreach and extensive best management practices (BMP) installations targeted in the Maiden Creek and Tulpehocken Creek watersheds. Our watershed associations and Berks Nature Ambassadors, along with water scientists, monitor and collect data about the effects the improvements have made in the watersheds. Page 5 talks more about the recent grant we received from the William Penn Foundation to continue this work. Visit www.4states.1source.org to learn more about this initiative, and what it means to you. If you're interested in helping to monitor our creeks and streams, contact us at info@berksnature.org, and we'll connect you with local volunteers.



Looking ahead, we are already planning the 10-year anniversary of our State of the Environment (SOTE) Report for Berks County. Watch for information over the coming months about this year's breakfast (November 8, 2018), where we'll look at updated indicators in the areas of Air, Land, Water, Waste, and Energy. SOTE helps us tell the story of how we compare in Berks County and what we need to improve upon to insure a healthy community.

This year's summer Eco-Camp registration is well underway. We are offering programs all summer for Preschool through 8th grade students, and look forward to breaking in our new classrooms. We will continue to connect children and their families to nature through activities in five areas: arts & crafts, science & nature, creative activity, technology and sustainable agriculture. And registrations for our new Nature Preschool at The Nature Place are rolling in. This unique, one of a kind program in Berks County will have our young students outside the majority of every day. Be sure to reserve your spot today.

Finally, thank you again to the many members and supporters of Berks Nature; we couldn't do our work without you. Please continue to share our message with friends, co-workers and family. Join us for one of our Saturday programs at The Nature Place, shop in the store and explore the Nature Play zone. Best wishes for an enjoyable spring. If you have any questions about Berks Nature, please feel free to contact me: kim.murphy@berksnature.org. 

Sincerely,



Kimberly J Murphy
President

Contact our Team: BerksNature.org | info@BerksNature.org | 575 St. Bernardine Street, Reading, PA 19607 | 610.372.4992

Where to Find Us

The staff of Berks Nature is busy all over Berks County!

But you can find us at our headquarters **The Nature Place** – at 575 St. Bernardine Street in Reading's Angelica Creek Park, between 8:30 am - 4 pm Monday through Friday.

For up to date information on Berks Nature, including events and other calendar happenings, visit us online at www.BerksNature.org.

Berks Nature Staff

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Tami J. Shimp, VP Development & Community Relations
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www.BerksNature.org

Questions? Call us at 610-372-4992 x100, or shoot us an email at info@BerksNature.org



Stop by and see The Nature Place for yourself during our open lobby hours- Tuesdays from 10 am - 7 pm, and Wednesday through Saturday, 10 am until 3 pm.

Berks Nature is excited to welcome Sarah Chudnovsky to our staff as our new Land Protection Specialist.

A Berks county native, Sarah is dedicated to working with landowners in Berks and Schuylkill counties to protect the unique values of our landscape. Prior to joining Berks Nature staff, Sarah worked as a Land Stewardship Intern at the Brandywine Conservancy. As a college student, Sarah worked at Berks Nature for the first two summers of Eco-Camp. Sarah received her Bachelor's degree from Boston University in International Relations, where she focused on environmental policy and developed environmentally-focused service learning programs for college students in the Boston area. Post-college, she worked in forest conservation with agricultural communities in western Uganda. She lives in the city of Reading, and enjoys hiking, biking, kayaking, and rock climbing around Berks County.





Conservation Easement Protects 34-acre Rentschler Arboretum

It was 93-years ago when Dr. Harry F. Rentschler purchased a tract of land at the foothills of the Blue Mountains – the same hills he'd roamed as a boy when his father owned the Eagle Hotel in Bernville.

Back then in 1925, Rentschler and his wife, Sadie, sought a retreat from his busy medical practice in Reading. And that 34-acre parcel on a high vista near Bernville fit the bill.

A founder of the Blue Mountain Eagle Climbing Club, Rentschler would go on to develop his property into a retreat of gardens, wildflower meadows, and farm fields, now known as the Rentschler Arboretum.

Now, the Penn Township land – which includes a walking trail, nature sanctuary and pavilions – will be permanently protected through a conservation easement completed between the climbing club and Berks Nature at the end of December.



BMECC founding fathers (l to r): Congressman Daniel Hoch; Dr. Harry Rentschler, benefactor of the Rentschler Arboretum and founder of BMECC; and Reading Mayor William Shanaman, first President of BMECC

This latest easement follows the protection of an additional 160-acres of Blue Mountain Eagle Climbing Club land in Bethel Township last fall. The September easement on three Bethel properties was aided by a grant from The Nature Conservancy. “The Blue Mountain Eagle Climbing Club has been at it for a hundred years,”

said Berks Nature Senior Ecologist Larry Lloyd, who worked with the climbing club on both easements.

The easement on the Rentschler Arboretum protects property in the Northkill Creek Watershed – a tributary to the Tulpehocken Creek, which flows into Blue Marsh Lake. “Open space is important for water quality, and since the drinking water supply is downstream, protecting this land is good,” Lloyd said.

With the easement, the property cannot be subdivided or built upon in the future.

“The big thing is, it's the climbing club's property,” Lloyd said. “And they're taking steps to be an asset for the community indefinitely.”



Want to experience this serene slice of nature for yourself?

The grounds of the Rentschler Arboretum are open to the public during daylight hours. Just take Route 183 north to Bernville. Make a right on to Washington Street, then continue a block to the stop sign. You'll cross Main Street and continue on Washington Street for just over a mile. Look for the Arboretum sign on the left

Berks Nature and DRWI Partners Working with Farmers for Cleaner Water

It's been called the "bread basket" of colonial America, containing some of the most fertile farmland in the Delaware River basin- of which the Schuylkill River is the largest tributary. The Middle Schuylkill Cluster covers more than 500,000 acres, including much of Berks and Montgomery counties, as well as parts of Bucks, Lebanon and Lehigh Counties.

Berks Nature is proud to be a partner in cleaning up its water through the Delaware River Water Initiative, a new chapter in a long, proud history of local leaders championing clean water. In the 1730s, Benjamin Franklin led a petition drive to stop tanneries from dumping chemicals into a tributary of the Delaware. In the 1800s, significant conservation efforts took root in the Brandywine Valley, the Poconos and the Catskills.

Now, local leaders are building on this legacy of conservation. The Delaware River Watershed Initiative unites more than fifty organizations, including Berks Nature, along with countless home and landowners working to protect forests and farms, clean up streams, and make our cities and suburbs greener. From the New Jersey Highlands to the Pine Barrens, Pennsylvania farm country to Philadelphia and the bay, the Delaware River Watershed Initiative is bringing people together to ensure swimmable, fishable, drinkable water for years to come.

Here in the Middle Schuylkill Cluster, Berks Nature is working on the ground with partners from Stroud Water Research Center and the Partnership for the Delaware Estuary, through grant support from the William Penn Foundation. Most importantly, our relationships with willing landowners makes all of this important restoration work possible.

The Schuylkill River that flows through this cluster is the Delaware River's largest tributary. Among the Schuylkill's largest tributaries, Perkiomen, Maiden, Tulpehocken, Manatawny and Monacacy creeks all flow through Berks County.

The Middle Schuylkill Cluster contains 1,191 miles of streams, including 182 miles of High-Quality and Exceptional-Value streams that drain from the most-heavily forested lands. These important ecological and recreational resources support the greatest diversity of aquatic and terrestrial plant and animal life, and are popular fisheries for wild and stocked trout. The cluster also provides drinking water to more than 350,000 people nearby and downstream in Philadelphia. Intense land and water use have so degraded 352 miles (29 percent) of these waterways that they are



on Pennsylvania's list of officially impaired streams. Hundreds of additional stream miles are also measurably degraded.

Agriculture, as the dominant land use, generates most of the impairments to Middle Schuylkill streams, in the form of nutrient loading, stormwater pollution and excessive sedimentation. Together with our partners at Stroud and PDE, we're working to reduce the environmental stressors associated with agricultural practices through better land and water use, and protection of priority areas. Focus watersheds include parts of Maiden Creek (including Saucony Creek), parts of Tulpehocken Creek (including Licking Creek, Spring Creek and Northkill Creek), Manatawny Creek and Upper Perkiomen Creek (home to the currently impaired Green Lane Reservoir).

Since the inception of the project, the Middle Schuylkill organizations and partners have worked with dozens of farms, installing hundreds of best management practices (BMPs) and forested stream buffers. We're looking forward to entering Phase II of our plan in the Middle Schuylkill, and working to make sure we all have access to clean water- from Berks to Philadelphia, and everywhere downstream.





Berks Nature Proud to Feature State of the Art, Bird Strike-reduction Glass at The Nature Place

It's a question often received from visitors to The Nature Place: "What are those lines etched into the windows?"

Here at Berks Nature, we're excited to feature state of the art bird strike-reduction glass on the windows at The Nature Place – so that we can observe our feathered friends throughout Angelica Park, but not present a danger to them.

Buildings- and window glass in particular- have long been a danger to birds. In the most comprehensive study of its kind, a 2014 study by scientists from the Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service found that between 365 and 988 million birds are likely killed in the United States each year as a result of collisions with buildings.

Unlike humans, birds are blind to glass, and consequently, unable to differentiate between a reflection and the real thing. Sleek windows are capable of reflecting nearby foliage or the sky, creating the illusion of an inviting place to fly. In other cases, birds notice their own reflection in the glass and recognize it as a threat, attacking the window during the spring and summer months in an attempt to defend their breeding territories.

An Ornithology professor at Muhlenberg College in Allentown, Dr. Daniel Klem Jr. has researched bird collisions since 1974. "Intensive studies at single homes reveal one out of every two strikes results in a fatality," he's said. He expands on his vast amount of data in "Glass: a Deadly Conservation Issue for Birds," stressing the importance in spreading awareness of this commonly ignored problem. Glass collisions take the lives of the fit as well as the unfit of a species' population.

Klem reviewed the specs and recommended the windows installed at The Nature Place, along with Peter G. Saenger of



Muhlenberg College's Acopian Center for Ornithology. Featuring some of the best anti-bird strike features on the market today, the windows installed at The Nature Place are AviProtek (pattern 213) by Walker Glass. An acid-etched glass with a horizontal-striped pattern, the windows feature stripes spaced 2-inches apart, to discourage bird strikes.

Locally owned and operated, **B&G Glass** installed the unique windows at The Nature Place in coordination with our local builder, **Burkey Construction**.

Looking for a solution to protect birds from impacting your home? Try the following ideas:

- Relocate feeders, birdbaths and other attractants to places where windows are not visible. Thirty-feet away is your safest bet, so birds can't see window reflections. However, moving it just three-feet away is an option too- the bird can't reach top speed at this distance, making the collision less forceful and less fatal.
- Cover your glass with one-way transparent film that permits people inside to see out, while making your window appear opaque on the outside.
- Install external sun shades or awnings on windows, to block the reflection of sunlight.
- Cover the outside of your window with netting or screening, so the reflection is no longer visible, or the bird is held back far enough not to hurt itself.
- Hang string vertically spaced 4 inches apart on the exterior of your window to deter bird strikes.
- Planning for renovations to your home, school or workplace? Contact B&G Glass to see if bird strike reduction glass is an option for you! www.bgglass.com.





Nature Preschool at The Nature Place



Berks Nature is proud to offer the first nature preschool in Berks County. Our Nature Preschool officially opened its doors in January, with a once-a-week Monday Nature Preschool, running now through the end of May. Registration remains open for this weekly introduction- a great way to familiarize your family with what our Nature Preschool or preschool camp can offer your child.

“The kids are having a great time playing and learning in the natural playground of Angelica Park,” Nature Preschool Director Anne Muvdi said. On a recent Monday, she added, students used leaves, sticks, rocks and branches to create a “home” in the mulch outside of The Nature Place.

“They’re testing their limits, learning cooperative play by playing in a free learning environment, and learning to use their imaginations by creating play scenarios,” Muvdi said.

Enrollment is now open for full-time, Monday-Friday Nature Preschool, beginning September 5th!

The first of its kind in the county, a Nature Preschool infuses nature into all aspects of the school’s program, with the instruction emphasizing inquiry-based learning through play and hands-on discovery. Nature-based preschools are rooted in high quality early childhood practices, by implementing developmentally appropriate practices related to the physical environment as well as teacher-child interactions.

The mission of Berks Nature Preschool is to provide a high quality early childhood education that meets the children’s developmental needs, while instilling a lasting appreciation for and meaningful relationship with the natural world. The Berks Nature Preschool will empower children by offering those opportunities to explore, create, imagine, learn, and grow through hands-on nature-based activities and experiences.

Here at Nature Preschool at The Nature Place, children will spend 75% of their school day outside.

Learn more at our Nature Preschool Open House on April 28th, from 10am- noon at The Nature Place.

Or schedule your own tour and meeting with our Nature preschool Director by calling 610-372-4992 x115, or emailing anne.muvdi@berksnature.org.





2017

Financial Report

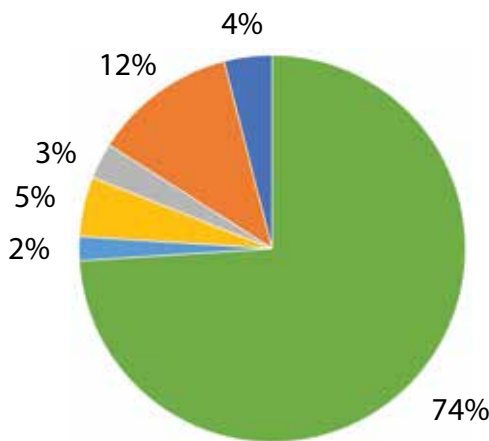
Berks Nature Revenues vs. Expenditures

*Preliminary pre-audited figures taken from Berks Nature
December 31, 2017 financial statements*

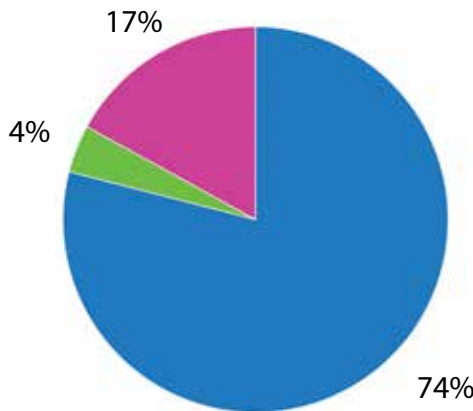
Year Ending December 31, 2017

Total Revenues: \$2,321,896.63

*includes capital campaign contributions



- 74% Restricted Income (Grants/Contributions)
- 4% Conservation Easements
- 5% Investment Income
- 3% Membership
- 12% Unrestricted Contributions/Grants
- 2% Unrealized Gain on Investment



Total Expenditures: \$1,415,869.92

- 79% Program Services
- 17% Management & General
- 4% Fund-raising



Berks Nature List of 2017 Gifts & Grants

Berks Nature thanks you, its generous supporters, for your continued support and commitment. This listing was compiled from those gifts and grants received between January 1, 2017 and December 31, 2017.

Every effort has been made to ensure that this list is complete and accurate.

We apologize for any errors of omissions and would appreciate your comments or corrections at 610-372-4992 ext. 100 or info@berksnature.org.

\$5,000 +

Anonymous
Avenir Matching Grant ♦
Barley Snyder, LLC ♦
Jim & Cindy Boscov ♦
Boscov's Department Store, Inc. ♦
Brentwood Industries, Inc. ♦
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
County of Berks
County of Berks Redevelopment
Authority
East Penn Manufacturing Co., Inc. ♦
Entech Engineering, Inc. ♦
Arthur & Joanne Haberberger ○
Henry Janssen Foundation
Dr. & Mrs. J. Frederick Hiehle ♦
Jerlyn Foundation ○
Eric Jenkins, Julie Klein &
Ethan Jenkins ♦, ○
Kutztown Borough
William L. & Janet N. Luyben ○
Nick & Risa Marmontello ♦, ○
National Audubon Society
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
Natural Lands
The Nature Conservancy
Ray & Carole Neag ♦, ○
Partnership for the Delaware Estuary, Inc.
Pennsylvania Land Trust Association
Penske Truck Leasing ♦
R.M. Palmer Company ♦
Reading Area Water Authority
Jay & Elaine Rosenson Fund of
Berks County Community Foundation
Schuylkill River Greenways

Patrick J. & Margaret M. Shields ♦
Christopher & Michelle Smith
Stroud Water Research Center
UGI Utilities Inc.
The William Penn Foundation
The Wyomissing Foundation, Inc. ♦

\$2,500 +

Bellman Fund for Berks Nature of
Berks County Community Foundation
Berks County Conservation District
Dr. Constance P. Dent ○
Jeffrey & Kristel Euclide ♦, ○
Bonnie L. Finch & Cynthia M. Schultz ○
First Energy Foundation
Fulton Bank – Great Valley Division ♦
Don & Ann Moll
Mr. & Mrs. Kevin K. Murphy ♦, ○
Joni & David Naugle ♦, ○
Pennsylvania DCNR
ProAsys ♦
The Trust for Tomorrow

\$1,000 +

Martha & Marc Aynardi ♦
Bank of America Matching Gifts
David R. Beane, Esq. ♦
The Breidegam Family Foundation
Rick & Dawn Burkey ♦
Martha Costello 2
Cushion Peak Rod & Gun Club
Charles P. Durkin Jr. ○
Michael & Susan Fromm ♦
John & Lisa Gallen ○
Dr. Ann T. Gundry ○

Terry & Ginny Hand ○
Hartman, Valeriano, Magovern
& Lutz, P.C.
Independence Seaport Museum
Robin & Bill Koch Sr., CPA ○
David & Mary Ellen Lord ○
Elizabeth Magovern ♦, ○
James & Shelley Middleton ♦, ○
Marlin & Ginger Miller ○
Dr. & Mrs. Charles R. Minehart ♦
Ilse & Ingrid Morning ○, 5
Pennsylvania American Water
Alan & Laurie Peer ○
Craig & Sue Perrotty ♦
Pine Creek Valley Watershed Assoc. Inc.
Quaker Maid Meats, Inc.
Chiara & Ryan Renninger ○
The Roberts Family Fund for Stream &
Wetland Preservation of Berks County
Community Foundation
Milton Ripple ○
Paul Roedel ♦
James M. Savage ○
The Scotts Miracle-Gro Foundation ♦
SSM Group, Inc.
Tompkins VIST Bank
Laura J. Wozniski ○
Karen Wright ○

\$500 +

Daniel & Stephanie Becker ♦
Bellairs Real Estate
Brecknock Township
David Breitegam
Burkey Construction Co.

Continued on next page

Charles & June Dunn
Edge Insights
Eva Goll ♦
Griffin Holdings Group, LLC
Howard & Vicky Hafetz
Gregory Hartman 4
Herbein & Company, Inc.
Timothy & Elissa Keeler
John & Gretchen Lea
Lorax Foundation Inc.
Maidencreek Township
Maidencreek Township Authority
Mr. & Mrs. Brian McCoy ♦
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Rob & Yvonne Oppenheimer ♦
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Suzanne M. Tucker ♦
Ann & Jim Steffel
West Lawn Quaiting Association

\$250 +

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Dudley & Eileen Musselman
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John & Sara Steber
Topton Borough
Don & Joanne van Roden
William Vitale ♦
Wolf Run Nursery, Inc.
Elizabeth Wolfe

\$100 +

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Aqua-Terra Environmental Ltd.
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Dick & Ginny Close
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Edward J. Kuhn Funeral Home, Inc.

James Elliott
Jean Engle
Bob & Marcia Fehl
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First American Abstract of PA
Flyway Excavating, Inc.
James Frank
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Kennth & Denice Fulmer
Stanley & Grete Furrow
Gage Personnel
Chuck & Ellen Gallagher
The Garden Club of Reading
Karl Gardner
Diane Gaul
Elizabeth Gaul
Valerie Gehr
Gwen Gentile
Jeffrey Gernsheimer
Matthew Goldstan
Karen & David Gorgonzola
Governor Mifflin School District
Barry & Joanna Groebel
Bradley & Barbara Hall
Christopher Hartman
Raymond Heffner
Nancy Hemmerich
Margaret Huff
Irish Creek Excavating, Inc.
J.P. Mascaro & Sons
Elizabeth Kann
Roy & Michele Kegerize
Dottie & Adam Keller
James Killian
Anton & Diana Kleiner
Donald & Phyllis Koch
John & Donna Kramer
James & Carol Kurtz
Kylene Laity
George Legler
Denny & Tina Little
Benjamin Lloyd
Ronald & Karen Long
Nancy Lounsbury
Terry & Sandra Lutz
Gerald & Sydney Malick
Marion Township
Masano Bradley
Charles Matchett, DDS

Haia Mazuz
Ann & John Mazzo
Claude & Annie Mervine
Marilyn Michalski
J. Randall & Jean Miller
Mount Penn Borough
Jennifer Moyer 🐾
Joan Guldin Moyer
Karen Nein
Network For Good
Anne & Frode Nordhoy
Kit Ogilvie & Linda Bell
Lee & Deb Olsen
Patricia Ori
Robert Ottinger
Pagoda Pacers Athletic Club
Pennsylvania Master Naturalist
Pennsylvania Recreation & Park Society
Lia Perella
Earl & Hellen Poole Memorial Fund
of Berks County Community
Foundation
Charles & Susan Randazzo
Grace Reindle
Ronald Rhein
Gary & Karen Rightmire
Robesonia Borough
Les Rohrbach
Tatiana Royer
John & Mary Ruff
Kathleen Rumler
Eric & Jeannie Savage
Michael & Janice Schiffman
Thomas & Elizabeth Schmoyer
Judy & Jim Schwank
Carol Seidel
Gregory & Ronda Lee Seymour 🐾
Larry & Eliza Sheaffer 🐾
Tami & Todd Shimp
Pamela Shupp
Richard & Kathryn Smith
Charles Snyder
John Spang
Barbara Spangenberg
Spencer Stober
Jeff & Debbie Sweinhart
Jackie Trate
Tulpehocken Chapter Trout Unlimited
Kristan Ulrich

Todd Underwood
Eleanor Vanderbeck
Randy & Dawn Weidner
Tom & Donna Weik
Weik Investment Services, Inc.
Ellen Weinreb
Bill & Jody Widing
Windsor Township
Women's Club of St. Lawrence
Wyomissing Area Garden Club
YourCause, LLC
Peter Zacharias
Bob & Leslyn Zajdowicz
Stam & Joyce Zervanos

\$60 +

Christopher Antosy
(Ret.) LTC Richard D. & Carol Barnett
Richard Bausher
Berks County Pomona Grange
Richard & Donna Burkhart
Connie Cammarano
Joel & Shirley Caves
James Cinelli
Caroline Clark 🐾
June Clougher
Jim & Kathy Coker
Charlotte Cooper
Dave & Alice Coult
Jason Coyle
Dreibelbis Farm Historical Society
Jennifer Ebersole
Harry G. & Janice M Eisenbise
Elizabeth H. & David R. Eshelman
Cassandra Evans
Michael Feyers
Linda & Jim Focht
David Fox
Melissa Garay Belinski
Paula & David George
Edwards Business Systems
Paul & Ellen Grebinger
Kathleen Grim
Bradley Hartline
Dave & Nancy Hemberger
George & Cindy Heminiz
John & Winnie Hoskyns-Abraham
Jeffrey & Diana Howard
Amy & Darryl Jenkins

Jeffrey R. & Barbara D. Kahl
Jeffery Keim
Kemp Family
Dave & Cindy Kercher
Natalie Koehler
James Kohler
Dave & Donna Kurczewski
Dan Leininger
Tim & Amy Leon Guerrero
Kurt Lessig
Joan Lloyd
Douglas & Marcia Love
Greg Marshall
Jane Masters Nase
Brian & Sarah McCahon
Meridian Regional Retirees
Holly Metzgar
Bill & Sandie Mills
Cindy Murdough 🐾
Agnes Noll
Patrick O'Donnell
Fred & Jan Opalinski
Ron & Barbara Orth
Douglas Paine
Frank Politzer
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Jim & Barb Priebe
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Mark Rentschler
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Larry & Dona Ritchey
Joseph Schaefer
Benjamin Schiavone
Sandra & Glenn Schweikart
Robert & Merrilee Sheeler
Steve & Heidi Silverman
David & Joan Smith
Lynn & Kathy Thiel
Mary Turner
Lawrence Walsky
Grace Weber
Carl & Kathy Wiest
David & Elaine Wiley
Tricia & Brian Williams
William & Lavery Willits
Douglas Wolfe
Nancy Wolff
Michael York

Continued on next page

\$35 +

Michael & Karen Achenbach 1
Andrea Bensusan
Berks Community Hiking Club
Ruth Blatt
Blue Mountain Eagle Climbing Club
Harvey Bomberger
Harold Burgert
Kevin Burns
Peter Campanella
Michelle Cobb
C. Harold Cohn
David C. Collins
James Devine 🐾
David DeWalt
Pat Diefenderfer
Suzanne Dillman
Sayed Elmarzouky
Greg Epler-Wood
Steve Fabian
Mimi Feeg
Larry Fisher
Kathy Fitzpatrick
Flying Dutchmen Ski Club, Inc.
Adam Galczynski
Cyril Ganter
Nancy Gardner
Donald & Faye Gehris
Elizabeth Glass
Leonard & Barbara Good
Robert Good
Laurie Goodrich
Leonard Graczyk
Jerry Griffith
Clair Gross
Kelly Gutshall
Libby Haas
Lesley Hand
Charles Harting
Rita Hendershott
Barbara Homsher
Barbara Hughes
Roberta & Bob Kelchner
Rudy Keller
Fern Kline
Patricia Koch 3
Ben & Bonita Koller
Don Kreitz
Laureldale Borough
Christian Leinbach

Ken Levan
Susan Levan
Ken Mayer
Michele Means
James Metzler
Daphne & Jake Meyer
David Moodhart
Kathleen Neiman
Aaron Theodore Ormai
Jayne Park-Martinez
Francis Plucinsky
Barry & Marilyn Pounder
Carl Pratt 🐾
Lisa Priebe
Norman Reifsnnyder
Patricia Rettstadt
Jan Roberts
The Rose Corporation 3
Sylvia Ross
Meredith Rotz
Hannah Salvatore
Brett Schultz
Kristina Schultz
Paul Schumann
Suzanne Schweitzer
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- ◆ Capital Campaign
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- 1 In memory of Charles Harper Bestwick
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Berks Nature would like to recognize the following for 2017 donations of professional services:

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(as of 12/31/2017)

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(○) Donors with this symbol are members of our President's Nature Circle. This Nature Circle involves an annual gift commitment of \$1,000 to our organization. Members of the President's Nature Circle enjoy all of the benefits of member-ship, and are invited to an exclusive President's Nature Circle event each year. Most importantly, the support enables us to remain dedicated to protecting open space, clean water, hiking & biking trails, and wildlife habitats, to ensure a balanced quality of life in Berks County.



Berks Nature is grateful for the support of the William Penn Foundation. They have helped to make our conservation projects and partnerships a great success.



Our dedicated 2017 Board and Committee volunteers generously provided time, energy and resources to Berks Nature. Thank you!

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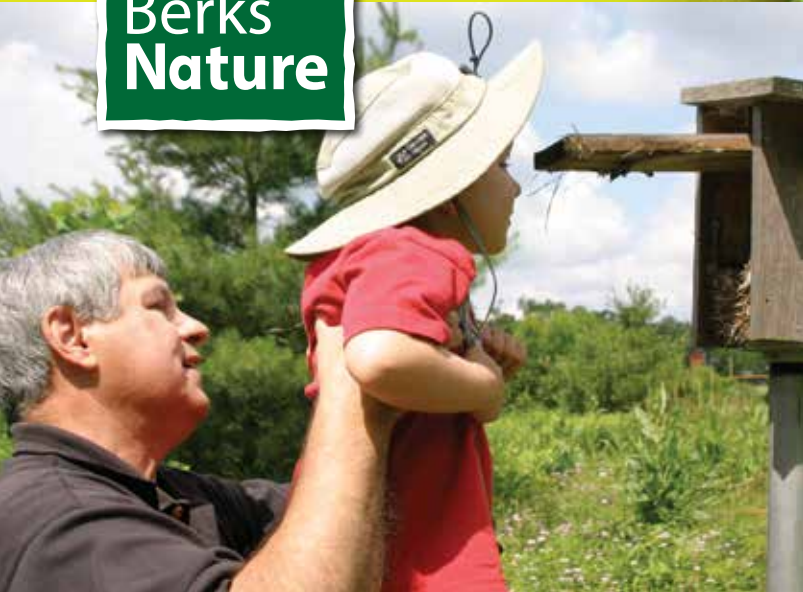
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Ilse Morning 



Berks Nature Volunteer, Charlie Randazzo

Volunteer Spotlight

Charlie Randazzo *Lower Alsace Township*

Background: An educator in the Reading School District for 33-years, Charlie taught elementary school for 11-years, before spending the remainder of his career in middle school science. “I think my interest in nature and the outdoors was innate and cultivated by my parents, the Boy Scouts, and living close to the Mt. Penn Forest, Rose Creek, and Antietam Lake,” he said. “I have fond memories of playing and exploring in the woods, hunting for snakes, turtles, and fishing.” His interest in nature and science would further develop through his high school and college years. Charlie credits many of his teachers with helping to promote his interest in science.

Years Volunteered with Berks Nature: 16. “I have been involved in the Angelica Park project shortly after the breach of the dam at Angelica (after Tropical Storm Allison in 2001),” he said. “I believe it was in 2002 that I was asked to serve as an educational representative for the Reading School District. I am still active today.”

How he’s served: Charlie has worn many different hats as a Berks Nature volunteer and consultant, mainly in education. He’s served on Berks Nature’s Education Committee and contributed to program creation and development, in addition to being a trained specialist in NASA’s GLOBE (Global Learning for the Observation and Benefit of the Environment) program, an Eco-Camp Director, a Berks Nature Ambassador, teacher trainer, member of the Nature Place and Eco-Fun Day committees, and a presenter and promoter for Berks Nature and GLOBE at various events.

What keeps him coming back: “With today’s society having such a ‘disconnect with nature’, I believe that we need to do more to help our society reconnect,” Charlie said. “Every day in nature there is something new, different, or amazing to observe or learn about. Nature is a part of our being – if we fail to realize this we fail to fully understand ourselves. I enjoy sharing nature with others, young or old.

What we’re saying about Charlie: Charlie, Berks Nature President Kim Murphy said, “has been long lasting in his commitment to Angelica Park, the creation of The Nature Place and Berks Nature offering educational programs.”

“Charlie’s knowledge of environmental science and many years of teaching experience has been invaluable in shaping our eco-camp, field trip and family programs,” she added. “It was Charlie who first introduced us to GLOBE, and encouraged us to offer citizen science and professional development training for teachers. We are grateful for his involvement and support.”

Thursday Morning Volunteer Work Days

Do you enjoy working outdoors? Have some extra time on your hands? Berks Nature is looking for you! Join our new Thursday morning work crew! From 10 am until noon each Thursday morning, weather permitting, we’ll roll up our sleeves and get to work on projects outside The Nature Place. No registration required- simply drop in as your schedule allows.

“It’s an opportunity for volunteers who enjoy being outside and doing work outside to be part of The Nature Place and help us with routine outdoor management,” said Tami Shimp, Berks Nature’s Vice President of Development and Community Relations.

Among the work you may tackle: raking, maintaining gardens and trails, litter removal and keeping The Nature Play Zone in good shape.

“We hope this group of volunteers grows into a dedicated part of our team,” Tami said. “We’ll still offer outdoor opportunities on weekends, like tree plantings, but we hope the Thursday morning work days can be an opportunity for retired individuals who have time to give, and others who can build some time in the outdoors into their weekly schedule.”

Those interested in participating in Thursday Morning volunteer work days at The Nature Place are asked to contact Tami, at tami.shimp@berksnature.org, or 610-372-4992 x110.



WE'RE ALL ABUZZ!

On May 19th we will open our honey bee exhibit at The Nature Place!

This includes the debut of our live honey bee observation hive in the lobby. Visitors will be able to safely watch the bees hard at work in their new home at The Nature Place.

Join us anytime between 10 am - 3 pm that day to visit the bees, tour our native pollinator meadow, and enjoy a day focused on the bees. Our friends at Griesemer Beekeeping will be on-site offering honey tasting and honey bee education. We'd like to thank Griesemer Beekeeping for managing our new beehive.

The Store at The Nature Place will also be celebrating the arrival of the honey bees in May! Visit our store to see our new line of products this Spring, including bee-themed related jewelry, local raw honey by **Griesemer Beekeeping**, and fun items for children!



**Here at Berks Nature,
we believe nature is
essential to our quality of life.**

As a 501(c)(3) non-profit conservation organization, Berks Nature has been serving the Berks County community since 1974. Land preservation, water protection, trail management, community gardens, education programs, State of the Environment, Eco-Camp and our valued partnerships are at the center of Berks Nature's work every day. Your membership donation stays in Berks to directly support our work.

Won't you join us? Become a Berks Nature member today!



More information on Membership, including benefits and annual giving levels, can be found at www.berksnature.org, or by calling 610-372-4992.



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**Hop in to Berks Nature
or visit us at BerksNature.org!**



CALENDAR *at a Glance*

Register online for these events and more, at BerksNature.org.events!



Kids Writing Workshop April 21, 9:30- Noon

This morning session for young writers will blend the exploration of nature with the art of writing. Led by Andrea Bensusan, a Berks Nature Ambassador and fellow of the PA Writing and Literature Project, participants will learn the craft of nature writing while exploring examples from other authors and taking a hike around Angelica Park.
\$10/per child. Berks Nature members receive a 30% discount.



Yoga at The Nature Place

Join us for one or both of our 6-week May and September series, taught by two different Berks-based yoga instructors.

5/5- 6/9: A 6-week session with Bonnie Showalter of Yoga Unlimited begins May 5th and runs every Saturday, from 10 am- 11:15 am, through June 9th.
\$84/per person for the 6-week series, or \$18/per class for drop-ins.

9/20-10/18: Lily Oglesby will lead a 6-week fall course, running every Tuesday and Thursday morning, from 12 pm- 1 pm.
\$80/per person for the 6-week series.

First Saturdays at The Nature Place

Saturdays are for learning! Join us every Saturday at The Nature Place, when we'll tackle a different nature-based educational theme every week. The first Saturday of each month, we'll offer a program at 9am and again at 3pm, led by the Berks Nature team.

\$7/per person. Berks Nature members receive a 30% discount.

Upcoming First Saturday themes include:

- May 5: All About Fish!**
- June 2: Nature Scavenger Hunt**
- July 7: Family Nature Games**
- August 4: Creek Critters**
- September 1: Birds of Prey**

Eco-Camp

Camp begins the week of June 11th, with 9-different weeks for your family to choose from this summer. New this year: We'll offer preschool camp each week, in addition to excursions for older campers. View this year's weekly themes, register and meet our camp directors at www.BerksNature.org/Eco-Camp!



Trail Advisory: Met-Ed will be performing work on the power line right-of-way on Neversink Mountain at various times through the remainder of the year, mostly concentrated in the spring and fall. Be advised that this may impact your trail plans.