

VISTAS

AN ALLEGHENY LAND TRUST PUBLICATION | 2017 Q2



Newsletter Content

MEMBERSHIP INITIATIVE LAUNCHED	2
BUSINESS SPONSORSHIP FURTHERS MISSION	3
NEW LEADERSHIP ON BOARD OF DIRECTORS	4
MEET A STEWARD	5
WHERE & WHAT: OUR MAP & PHOTOS	6-7
EDUCATION TEAM PROGRAMS	8
NOTES FROM THE LAND	9
UPCOMING EVENTS CALENDAR	10-11

Join Us: ALT Launches New Membership Initiative



by **Lindsay Dill | Marketing Communications Director**

Since 1993, ALT has helped local people save local land by protecting more than 2,100 acres of green space in Allegheny and Washington Counties.

There is now an ALT conservation area within 12 miles of all county residents; and last year we added 121 acres to our protected lands, and educated more than 7,000 people on the importance of protecting our natural environment. Yet, there is so much more conservation work to be done.

We have accomplished this vital work over the years with terrific volunteer support and financial contributions from many individuals, but we have never offered a defined membership program; that is, until now.

Your past support is much appreciated, and your future support is crucial to our success.

We ask that you continue to support conservation in our region by taking just a few minutes and signing on as a member of Allegheny Land Trust today. You can do this simply online at alleghenylandtrust.org/become-a-member or by mailing in the attached, self-addressed envelope. Your membership donation--at whichever level is most appropriate for you--will make a difference today and for future generations.

Note: If you are interested in sharing the ALT conservation mission with friends and associates, contact us and we'd be happy to provide you with membership brochures to help you tell our story.

We believe that this new program will play an extremely important role in expanding our conservation and environmental education work in the years to come by:

- *Creating closer ties with our existing supporters*
- *Significantly broadening our reach to new supporters*
- *Raising the overall public awareness of our organization*
- *Helping us to better quantify and communicate the strength of our organization to unlock additional foundation, business, and governmental support*

For more information, e-mail Lindsay at ldill@alleghenylandtrust.org.

Make A Difference: Become an ALT Business Sponsor



by **Tom Dougherty | VP of Development & External Affairs**

As a small, non-profit organization with a big and important mission, ALT must rely upon a mix of funding sources to carry out our work. One of the components of this mix is the local business community.

We are grateful to have partnerships currently in place with 19 businesses who understand the importance of conservation to our region, and recognize the potential benefits of supporting a leading conservation organization like ALT. A list of our current business sponsors can be found at alleghenylandtrust.org/our-sponsors and we ask that you support them in any way possible.

ALT believes that expanding our support among the local business and professional community is a critical component of our ability to achieve our aggressive conservation goals in the coming years, and we have launched a new initiative to more assertively tell our story and solicit sponsorships from the business community.

This new program offers businesses five general sponsorship levels to choose from, as well as opportunities to sponsor specific organizational needs, or to take a highly-visible cornerstone sponsorship position. Each of these

sponsorship levels comes with a commensurate level of visibility, recognition, and the goodwill that comes from supporting a worthwhile cause that contributes to current and future quality of life in Western Pennsylvania.

WE NEED YOUR HELP! Every business is a potential sponsor of ALT. Do you own, work for, or know of a business that might be interested in partnering with ALT to support conservation in our area? If so, please contact Tom Dougherty at 412-741-2750 (x211) with questions or to discuss the possibilities.

This new ALT Business Sponsorship Program is off to a good start with five new business sponsors added since May 1.

These new partners are:

Wall to Wall Design (Gold Level)
Marshall Design (Silver Level)
Knepper Press (Silver Level)
Fort Pitt Capital (Bronze Level)
Design Basics (Bronze Level)

Our sincere thanks to our newest business partners.

For more information, e-mail Tom at tdougherty@alleghenylandtrust.org.

New Board Members Appointed



Brian Jensen, PhD.

by Chris Beichner | President & CEO

At the May 25, 2017 Board of Directors meeting, the board members unanimously added two very experienced, very well-respected leaders to their ranks. Anthony DiTommaso, Esq. and Brian Jensen, PhD will begin their three-year term starting July 1st.

Dr. Brian Jensen is a senior vice president at the Allegheny Conference on Community Development and the Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Economy League of Greater Pittsburgh. Since 1987, Dr. Jensen has been working to improve municipal government throughout southwestern Pennsylvania and across the Commonwealth.

When asked what it means to be appointed to the board, Dr. Jensen replied, "It is important for people to be able to experience natural settings near their homes. Serving on the Allegheny Land Trust board will afford me an opportunity to invest my time, talent and interests in preserving irreplaceable local open spaces that are vital to a healthy environment and vibrant communities."



Anthony DiTommaso, Esq.

Anthony DiTommaso is the vice president and general counsel of the Community College of Allegheny County (CCAC) since 2012. Mr. DiTommaso serves as the chief legal and compliance officer for one of the largest education providers in Pennsylvania, enrolling over 40,000 students annually. Prior to his work at CCAC, Anthony worked for Pine-Richland School District and H.J. Heinz Company.

When asked what it means to him to be appointed as a new ALT board member, Mr. DiTommaso stated, "As a lifelong resident of Western Pennsylvania, I strongly believe in ALT's mission to protect and steward our region's lands and attendant natural resources. The importance of local and regional conservation efforts has, perhaps, never been greater, and I am grateful for and excited by the opportunity to contribute to that effort by serving as a member of ALT's board of directors and by supporting the great work being done by Chris Beichner and the entire ALT team."

For more information, e-mail Chris at cbeichner@alleghenylandtrust.org.



Photos by Lindsay Dill. ALT is proud to have an active, mission-oriented Board, pictured here, working on Barking Slopes. (Left) Board Member Ray Parker. (Right) Board Chair Damon Weiss and President & CEO Chris Beichner.

Meet A Steward:

Ann “Fluff” Berger



Photos courtesy of Ann “Fluff” Berger (LEFT) A butterfly rests on leaves and vegetation. (RIGHT) Ann “Fluff” Berger.

by Caitlin Seiler | Director of Volunteer & Land Resources

Opportunities to connect people to our conservation areas come in a variety of forms. New supporters learn about the work that Allegheny Land Trust is doing in the region through meeting a staff member at an event, stumbling upon a new green space, or catching a story online.

Often when someone learns about the work we do they want to help and they can do so in a variety of ways-- through membership, direct donations or in-kind donations, and through volunteering.

Many of our volunteers and supporters are people who use the lands we protect for passive recreation or for hunting and fishing, like the Allison Park Sportsmen Club that we featured in last quarter's VISTAS. When we encounter a long-time visitor on the land who is interested in volunteering, it's often easy to get them started; most visitors don't even realize they're already doing quite a bit of volunteer work while simply doing what they enjoy. This month's steward is an example of just that!

Ann “Fluff” Berger is Secretary, Board member, and an Identifier for the Western

Pennsylvania Mushroom Club (WPMC), a group that has partnered with ALT to led Mushroom ID Walks on Sycamore Island for several years. An avid outdoor explorer and nature enthusiast she became a Land Steward for Linbrook Woodlands after hearing a presentation at a WPMC meeting.

This year, Ann will be leading Fungus Among Us events at Linbrook Woodlands. “(ALT’s) commitment to preserving and restoring green spaces impressed me. When I saw on their website that ALT wanted to catalogue the different species at Linbrook Woodlands, which is near my home, I was excited to get out there with my camera,” she said.

Fluff volunteers her time helping to inventory species at Linbrook Woodlands, which helps ALT learn more about the conservation area’s health while also helping others learn what they can see while visiting.

She also helps us to monitor the land by reporting on trail conditions and potential hazards like fallen trees; things that are challenging for us to keep up on each conservation area.

“Since I enjoy hiking, taking photos of my

surroundings only adds to the pleasure of being in nature. I’ve been photographing fungi, plants, insects, and snakes—anything that will sit still long enough to get a clear picture, which I then post to ALT’s project on iNaturalist. Knowing the diversity of life indigent to Linbrook Woodlands may help ALT make decisions about how to manage the land to best serve the natural population of its wild creatures.”

Many people use our lands, but not everyone commits to making a difference in helping to conserve and steward local land.

When asked why land conservation is important to her, Fluff says “Land conservation is part of the good stewardship (with which) we’ve been entrusted on this planet. I believe we are made to live in harmony with the natural world, neither abusing it to extinction nor, at the other end of the spectrum, living completely at its mercy. Nature provides us with clean air and water, food, serenity in a shady forest or thrills riding upon Class V rapids, and many other means for our physical and mental health. Taking care of the land and the water is inevitably taking care of ourselves. I hope to do my part.”

For more information, e-mail Caitlin at cseiler@alleghenylandtrust.org.

What's Happening Near You on ALT's Conservation Areas?



Linbrook Woodlands Conservation Area

Photo by Lindsay Dill. One of our most recently-acquired Conservation Areas has a lot of upcoming educational events. Explore these trails with experts!



Wingfield Pines Conservation Area

Photo by Lindsay Dill. Volunteers helped vastly expand the logged species during the spring Bioblitz. Come to the July 8 Bioblitz to learn & help log species.



Pittsburgh



Dead Man's Hollow Conservation Area

Photo by Keri Rouse. Landforce is back! They'll be working on bridge fixes, and building Table Rock Trail. You can help too on the 3rd Tuesday of each month.



Barking Slopes Conservation Area

Photo by Lindsay Dill. ALT Staff, Board, and volunteers took to the trails in May at this gorgeous green space to enact the new trail plan. Join us in November.

For more info on activities at conservation areas near you,
visit alleghenylandtrust.org/find-a-green-space/

Education Programs for All Ages



Photo by Lindsay Dill. Harrison Middle School Students log plant species found at Wingfield Pines in Spring 2016.

"I have no special talent. I am only passionately curious."

- Albert Einstein

"You can never be overdressed or overeducated."

- Oscar Wilde

"One of the secrets to staying young is to always do things you don't know how to do, to keep learning."

-Ruth Reichl

"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."

-Nelson Mandela

by Jessica Kester | VP of Education

In the above opinions and in ours, education is a vital and enriching part of life. At ALT, our environmental education team hopes to enhance each visitor's trip to an ALT conservation area by providing more insight on what's found on the land. Whether you're a student, an educator, or simply a curious explorer, our Environmental Education Team is running programming to illuminate your experience of nature.

Now, ALT's Environmental Education Team is excited to announce that some of our upcoming programs will be run at low or no cost thanks to a variety of funders.

Thanks to an Environmental Education Mini Grant from the PA Department of Environmental Protection we'll be offering three workshops on August 1, 8 and 15 for early childhood educators for free! Watering Your Garden of Knowledge will take place as three workshops each based on activities designed to help educators feel more comfortable utilizing nature and water in the early childhood classroom. Participants will explore books, crafts, experiments, sensory activities and even explore three different ALT conservation areas (one per workshop)! Goodie bags

will be provided for participants who attend all three workshops. PQAS/ Act 48 hours available. For more information on this program contact Julie at jtravaglini@alleghenylandtrust.org.

Thanks to an environmental education grant from Pennsylvania American Water, we'll be offering a stream monitoring training at Dead Man's Hollow near Boston, PA; visit our website for details to come. The stream monitoring training will be accompanied by a volunteer forest clean up in Dead Man's Hollow in partnership with Allegheny Cleanways.

Additionally, we will be offering free early childhood programming to K-2nd grade students in southern Allegheny County, and in southern and eastern Washington and Greene Counties thanks to a generous grant from the EQT Foundation. These early childhood programs bring nature and conservation topics into the classroom through our Science Sprouts program. Utilizing STEM concepts, students explore topics using stories, engineering, problem solving and play! Contact us to bring this program to your school.

**For more information,
e-mail Jessie at jkester@alleghenylandtrust.org.**

notes from the land:

Become A Community Conservationist, Connect Us with Land



Photos by Lindsay Dill. (LEFT) Butterflies enjoying the flora of an ALT conservation area. (RIGHT) A successfully-fundraised project sign on a recent acquisition.

by Roy Kraynyk | VP of Land Protection & Capital Projects

Do you own, or are you aware of a treasured parcel of green space or farm in your community that you'd love to see protected from ever being developed? If so, we can help.

After protecting 4 parcels totaling 121 acres last year, ALT is on the lookout for new properties meeting our GREENPRINT criteria of scenic character, biological quality, and lands that have good water quality or can help to reduce flooding.

Many of ALT's conservation areas were protected as a result of a friend or neighbor introducing us to the land owner. In those cases, the landowner was previously unaware of ALT, and were pleased to learn that they had alternatives to selling their land to a developer. This is community conservation at its finest.

You can be a Community Conservationist

and help to protect land by keeping an eye out for FOR SALE signs, or if you know an owner of a large tract of land and feel comfortable asking, inquire about their thoughts and plans about the future of their land. People love to talk about their land and hear others compliment them on how beautiful it is, and how important it is to the community as green space.

As a landowner, you're doing your community a service when working directly with a nonprofit to support local efforts of land conservation. Additionally, working directly with ALT can save a landowner up to 7% of the real estate transaction fees.

Furthermore, if the land is in the County Clean and Green program, back taxes and penalties are avoided if the land is transferred to a land trust. ALT can also provide options to landowners that are eligible for federal tax deductions. And, we can work with landowners or their financial planner to integrate the disposition of real estate

holdings into an estate plan or will.

You don't need to become an expert in any of these areas. All you need to do is help us make the connection with the land owner before it's too late. We've heard many times from land owners, "I wish I knew about ALT before I sold my land to a developer." According to the Brookings Institute, Southwestern PA is losing 40 acres of land a day to development. Help ALT balance this trend by supporting local land protection.

For more information on conservation options for land owners, or on tips to approaching a land owner, please call me directly at 412-741-2750 x 203.

Who knows, one day while on a hike you may be able to say to your friends and family, "I helped protect this land!" Now that's a great feeling!

For more information, e-mail Roy at rkraynyk@alleghenylandtrust.org.

Upcoming Events

Education Events

Volunteer Events

JULY 3 | 4:30a - 6:30p
Macro Mayhem Monday
@ Wingfield Pines



All Ages | Cost: \$5

Join our trained education team as we wade into the waters that flow through our green spaces in search of the macroinvertebrates that can help determine the health of our waters. We'll be getting wet to varying degrees and closed-toe shoes are required. Run monthly on the first Monday May through October.

JULY 8 | 9a - 5p
Chartiers Creek Bioblitz
@ Wingfield Pines



All Ages | Free to Attend

Join ALT staff and experts to identify varying plant, animal, and fungi species, and use citizen science platforms to record our findings. This is part of a four-part bioblitz series to take place in 2017.

JULY 8 | 9p - 10p
Starlight Stroll
@ Linbrook Woodlands



All Ages | Cost: \$5

Stroll under the light of each month's full moon with trained education staff. Topics vary depending on the evening's expert, and can include nocturnal and crepuscular creatures, astronomy, lore, and more!

JULY 17-19 | 9a - 3p
STEAMed About Water Camp
@ Mingo Creek County Park



Ages 7-11 | Free to Attend

For this summer camp, we've combined outdoor fun with learning about water—a resource so essential, and often taken for granted. Day-campers will explore watershed basics, how human activity on the land affects the quality of rivers and streams, and discover water pollution solutions. We'll hike trails, conducting water experiments, making related crafts and getting our feet wet in the creek for this Pennsylvania American Water camp.

JULY 18, AUG 15, SEPT 19 | 5p - 7p
#TrailTuesdays @ Dead Man's Hollow



All Ages | Free to Attend

Lace up your boots, get outside, and lend a hand in helping improve local land! Join us every third Tuesday (April-September) as we work to improve and expand the Hollow's trail system.

JULY 20, 27; AUG 3, 10, 17
10:30a-11:30a
Science Sprouts Camp Series
@ Linbrook Woodlands



Ages: 3-4 | Cost: \$20-\$95

Explore Linbrook Woodlands with our environmental education team as we immerse young learners in nature while enjoying the colors of summer. Our little sprouting scientists will interact with the natural environment through age appropriate stories, crafts and hikes around the many habitats of Linbrook Woodlands. JUL 20: Bears | JUL 27: Frogs | AUG 3: Deer | AUG 10: Turtles | AUG 17: Birds.

To register and find more information, visit our events calendar at: alleghenylandtrust.org/events/

Upcoming Events

Education Events

Volunteer Events

AUG 1, 8, 15 | 10:30a - 11:30a
Water Your Garden of Knowledge:
Educator Workshops
@ Venango Trails Club House



Adults & Educators | Cost: \$0-5

Join us for an activities-based, interactive workshop designed to help you feel more comfortable utilizing nature and water in your early childhood classroom. We'll explore books, crafts, experiments, sensory activities, and more. In the afternoon, we'll hike Venango Trails to explore the wooded areas and bodies of water. Participants should come dressed for going outside, rain or shine.

AUG 7 | 4:30p - 6:30p
Macro Mayhem Monday
@ Venango Trail



All Ages | Cost: \$5

Join our trained education team as we wade into the waters that flow through our green spaces in search of the macroinvertebrates that can help determine the health of our waters. Great for families and community groups.

AUG 7 | 9p - 10p
Starlight Stroll
@ Linbrook Woodlands



All Ages | Cost: \$5

Ever wonder what our green spaces are like after dark? Join our trained education staff as we stroll under the light of the full moon each month. Topics vary depending on the evening's leader and can include nocturnal and crepuscular creatures, astronomy, lore and much more!



AUG 5 | 10a - 12p
Bountiful Botany
@ Linbrook Woodlands

All Ages | Cost: \$5

Take a walk with one of our trained education staff as we identify a portion of the botanical diversity that can be found growing in our green spaces. We'll focus on the sleeping meadows, forest, and wetlands of Linbrook Woodlands.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

CHAIR

M. Damon Weiss, P.E.

VICE CHAIR

Robin Hummel-Johnson

SECRETARY

Jessica Mooney

TREASURER

Brian O'Brien, CPA

Sue Broughton
 Fred Brown
 Tony DiTommaso, Esq.

Beth Dutton
 Christine Graziano
 David Hunter
 Brian Jensen, Ph.D.

Laurie Johnson
 Ken LaSota, Ph.D.
 Ray Parker, Esq.

STAFF

Chris Beichner
 President & CEO

Lindsay Dill
 Marketing Communications Director

Tom Dougherty
 Vice President of Development &
 External Affairs

Julie Halyama
 Development Associate

Jessica Kester
 Vice President of Education

Roy Kraynyk
 Vice President of Land
 Protection & Capital Projects

Keri Rouse
 Community Coordinator

Emilie Rzotkiewicz
 Vice President of Land
 Resources

Caitlin Seiler
 Director of Volunteer
 & Land Resources

Julie Travaligni
 Education Program Director



Allegheny Land Trust
416 Thorn Street
Sewickley, PA
15143

ABOUT ALLEGHENY LAND TRUST

Allegheny Land Trust (ALT) is an independent, non-profit organization that has been helping local people save local land in the Pittsburgh region for nearly a quarter of a century.

Founded in 1993, ALT has protected more than 2,100 acres of green space preserving our region's unique natural beauty, providing enhanced outdoor recreational opportunities, improving water quality, fostering biodiversity, and enhancing the overall quality of life for our communities. ALT's areas of strategic priority include Land Conservation, Stewardship, Education, and Urban Greening.

ALT's mission has expanded in recent years to include innovative methods of land conservation in support of community needs for urban green space as well the addition of a professional environmental education team teaching children of all ages to understand and appreciate the natural world.

With conservation areas in 27 municipalities, there is now an ALT conservation project within 12 miles of every Allegheny County resident. The benefits of ALT's efforts can be experienced across the region from McKeesport to Franklin Park, Upper St. Clair to Blawnox, Mt. Washington to Plum, and many places in between.

Keep in Touch with ALT



alleghenylandtrust



allegheny-land-trust



@alleghenylandtr



alleghenylandtr



@alleghenylandtr



AlleghenyLandTrust



AlleghenyLandTrust



info@alleghenylandtrust.org



alleghenylandtrust.org



412-741-2750

Please recycle or reuse this newsletter when you're finished -- share it with a friend, use it to shield your face from the sun on your Summer vacation, etc. Email us with your creative reuse of Vistas!

Vistas is underwritten by an anonymous donor. Thank you!

©Allegheny Land Trust 2017.



FFP's Combined
Federal Code
is 62348



Printed on Recycled Material.