



Penn Valley Civic Association

Building Community Since 1930

Newsletter

Fall 2019

PENN VALLEY MURAL PROJECT A HUGE SUCCESS!



October will mark the 1-year anniversary of the [inspiring community paint day](#) that helped to make the new mural at 919 Montgomery Avenue a success. Commissioned by the Penn Valley Civic Association (PVCA) and masterfully created by local artist, Eurhi Jones, the beautiful natural scene titled *Hometown Ecology* educates about native plants, reflects on the character of the Mill Creek Valley, and beautifies Penn Valley's business district along Montgomery Avenue—all ongoing priorities for PVCA.

Follow the mural pathway from sunny open habitat near the Penn Valley sign past Mill Creek and historic Country Bridge No. 5 to our charming woodlands and their associated flora and fauna. "We hope that the mural will spark a sense of place and connection for residents," said Michelle Detwiler, president of PVCA. "It's meant to inspire curiosity about the relationships between plants, insects and birds in our area and their conservation. We hope residents will consider planting native trees and other plants to improve stewardship on private landscapes—a key component of healthy local ecosystems, including habitat, stormwater management, and stream health."

PVCA is grateful to the **many** like-minded residents and local business owners who helped sponsor this project, including the LM Township Facade Improvement Program and building owner Dan Goldberg.



Standing in front of the mural from left to right are PVCA VP Steve Filippone, Friends of the Cynwyd Trail President Kitty Rapalyea, PVCA Treasurer Jen Kelly, mural artist Eurhi Jones, mural assistant Maria Wodraska, PVCA president Michelle Detwiler, and Mainline Cycles building owner Dan Goldberg. Photo by Joan Trachtenberg



FALL SOCIAL & HIKE - Sunday, October 20. Meet at 2pm, hike at 3pm.

Get some fresh air, and join us for a casual gathering with neighbors at **Flat Rock Park**. Meet at the parking lot with the boat launch on River Road. Social hour at 2pm in this beautiful park on the river. Those who are up for a challenging hike can then join us at 3pm as we explore the trails of Penn Valley's West Mill Creek Valley Park. Everyone is welcome!

LANDSCAPE STEWARDSHIP TIP: STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

Do you live near a stream? Did you know that streams require a minimum 100 foot buffer of trees and shrubs on each side to prevent erosion, slow runoff of silt, and filter pollution from road salt and lawn chemicals? LM Township is executing a plan to restore certain stream banks on public land, but we can make a greater impact by planting on private property to reduce and slow the amount of water that makes it to our streams in the first place.

WAYS YOU CAN HELP:

- ★ **Protect existing native trees** and convert lawn areas to native tree, shrub and perennial plantings. Deep roots will absorb significantly more water than non-native lawn grasses.
- ★ Create no-mow zones around streams.
- ★ Avoid lawn chemicals.
- ★ Leave dead wood standing, especially in natural areas of your landscape. Roots hold soil in place, and tree snags provide necessary habitat for owls, woodpeckers and songbirds.
- ★ For more information, visit delawareriverkeeper.org



Penn Valley traffic islands stewarded by PVCA host ecologically beneficial native plantings like these coneflowers, asters and bluestar amsonia seen in our largest island at Bryn Mawr Avenue and Old Gulph.

SPOTTED LANTERNFLY



The spotted lanternfly is an invasive planthopper that has reached our area. It damages grapes, apples, hops, walnuts and dozens of native hardwood trees. Look for egg masses in winter, and scrape them from trees and other hard surfaces like outdoor chairs. Also, remove its preferred host tree, the invasive

Tree-of-Heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*) from your property. For more detailed information including how to identify different stages of the insect, google Penn State Extension, Spotted Lanternfly Management for Homeowners.

PVCA TREE PLANTING AT PVE



High winds couldn't stop this hardy group of Penn Valley residents from honoring Arbor Day with a special planting of three native trees on the campus of Penn Valley Elementary School. PVCA donated two gray birches (*Betula populifolia*) and one black gum (*Nyssa sylvatica*) along with deer-protective cages and a lot of elbow grease. Special thanks to Ward 3 and Penn Valley commissioner, **Mike McKeon and his wife Jen and daughter Ava** (pictured above), as well as PVE teacher **Joe Mudd, Jen Kelly, Lars Pace, Julian and Gisella Pace**, and **Michelle Detwiler** for their invaluable help and enthusiasm.

REQUESTING A STREET TREE

Lower Merion Township residents may request a street tree planting by contacting Lower Merion Township Arborist, Joe Marco at 610-726-7141 or jmarco@lowermerion.org. Trees are planted in the fall. Common offerings of native trees include sycamore, linden, cherry, hornbeam, American elm, black gum, oak, serviceberry, Eastern redbud, and dogwood.

Did you know?

A mature red maple can intercept over 1,000 gallons of rainwater per year and can sequester 1 ton of carbon dioxide by the time it reaches 40 years old.



This newsletter is brought to you in part by PVCA president Michelle Detwiler as volunteer service in the PA Master Naturalist program.



THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS MURAL PROJECT SPONSORS!

Oak \$500

Salon Tenshi
Kaylynn & Victoria Davila
David & Susan Hoog
Henry Levy & Beth Allen
Max & Elyse Berger/
Robert Kagan & Paula Sunshine
Narberth Animal Hospital
Damon Michels Realtor
The Juice Merchant
STAPLES

Birch \$101-499

Drs. Jerry & Sue Aronson
George & Kris Prendergast
Ellen Briggs
MF Cardamone
Juliet & Marc Goodfriend/Moreau
Stefanie Langer
Michelle Detwiler & Lars Pace
Mike & Jen Kelly
Kristina & Daniel Chang
Art Goes to School

Dogwood \$51-100

John Clarke & Miriam Solomon
Redbud Native Plant Nursery
Adam Sherman
David Preefer
William P. Becker
Zachary Johns
Marcia & Ron Rubin
Marie Benz
Neil G. Epstein

Dr. & Mrs. Enrique Hernandez
Susan & Joseph Passante
Nicole Herman
Steve & Anne Filippone
Anne DeLosso
Leigh Ann & Eric Dichter
Lisa Margolis
Kellie Hamrick
Jody Holton
Arnold Rovner

Sassafras \$26-50

Carol Love
Louisa O'Neal
Michael Flanagan & Joyce M. Gray
Sandra Bloch
Naomi & Al Gerstein
Joan Barone
Richard Brown
Jennifer Milani
Buck & Mary Scott
Allen & Kathryn Haas
Betty & Arthur Hausman
June Lauer
Seth & Allison Freed
James & Rebecca Cristol/Kittell
Jenny & Bill Graven/VanDecker
Amy Behrman
Ellen & Gary Wasserson
Patricia Burgess
Virginia Keller
Eileen Malloy
Anahita & Cavas Deboo/Pavri
Qingyi Song

Rebecca Halpern
Dr. Alex Siegel
Beneficial Bank/Carlos Rodriguez AVP

Redbud \$1-25

Kathleen Maxwell
Helen Roberts
Karen R. Cohen
Dr. & Mrs. Bernard Friedberg
Chojnacki Family
Rembrandt Cleaners
Deborah Seitz
Maxine Mollick
Harvey Lerner
Joan & Steve Trachtenberg
Chris Campbell
Ryan Margulis
Barbara & Joseph Berkowitz
Jill Spiegel
Helen and John Roberts
Shari Steinberg
Bonnie Schulman
Janet & Andy Harmelin
Jean Cohen
Thomas & Elizabeth Keech
Mary Lou & Phil Olin
Keith & Elizabeth Barrie

In-kind donations

Main Line Cycles
Wawa Foundation
Fastsigns of Main Line
Acme Markets
The Pub of Penn Valley

BATTLING KNOTWEED AT THE WEST MILL CREEK PARK

For the last four years, fans of [West Mill Creek Park](#) have been waging war on Japanese Knotweed, an invasive plant that loves wet locations. It spreads through hefty rhizomes which wander horizontally deep underground, sending up shoots everywhere—and it crowds out native plants that help pollinators and other wildlife.

“Knotweed is unbelievably persistent,” say **Ellen Reese and Ellen Briggs**, Co-chairs of the Friends of West Mill Creek Park Ecology Committee. “We did a lot of research trying to figure out the best way to handle it. Early on we took herbicides off the table. It’s illegal to use most herbicides in the floodplain where the park is located. But even more importantly, there is increasing evidence that over time herbicide use typically creates more problems than it solves, both for ecological function and human health.” That left “the Ellens” with only one option—to pull it out manually. But there was so much knotweed, and volunteer labor is limited.

Reviewing Penn State research on the life cycle of knotweed provided a strategy. One article cited evidence that, in our area, knotweed draws more heavily on stored energy in its rhizomes to send up its leafy stems from April to June. In early June, net energy transfer from the leaves back to the rhizomes greatly exceeds energy use, so June through frost, the rhizomes are fattening up for their next assault—making June the best month to cut this plant. “We based much of our strategy on that one fact,” the Ellens said.

The Friends of WMC Park holds a series of “Knotweed Days” in early June each year. Volunteers and persons with community service requirements via the court system cut the knotweed at the base and pile it onto tarps. The Township crews then pick it up and dispose of it. “An important part of volunteer training is NOT to try to dig down and remove the roots and rhizomes, and to make sure none of the stems are left on the ground,” the Ellens caution. “This can do more harm than good because even a tiny piece of root or stem can easily regenerate into a new plant.” So far, this novel strategy seems to be working. Although the knotweed will never be totally eradicated by this method, it has been very clear that each year of this program the knotweed stems become smaller and weaker, and a bit less widespread than the year before. As long as it is under control, the new bird and pollinator friendly plantings added by the Friends group have some room to grow and thrive.

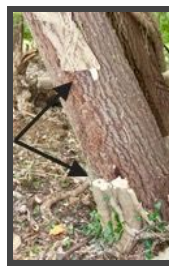
Fondest farewell to long-time Penn Valley residents,
Dr.’s Jerry and Sue Aronson. We will miss you!!!!

NATIVE PLANTS SUPPORT BABY BIRDS

Did you know that caterpillars of butterfly and moth species are indispensable sources of nutrition (protein, fat, and carotenoids) for raising baby birds? Caterpillars rely on native plant species for food because they cannot metabolize the leaves of non-native plants—but non-natives comprise a majority of the plants in traditional landscaping. **Help bring back vibrant living landscapes** by adding high wildlife value trees such as oaks, native cherries, birches and dogwoods and removing invasive species that supplant native counterparts. Common invasives in our area include Norway maple, Amur cork, Bradford pear trees, burning bush, barberry shrubs, English ivy, non-native viburnums, mile-a-minute vine, privet and wineberry. Visit the [Native Plant Finder of the National Wildlife Federation](#) to view a list of high value native trees, shrubs, and perennials based on your zip code.

DRAFT ZONING CODE

Thanks to **PVCA VP Steve Filippone** for providing detailed feedback to the Township concerning the [draft zoning code](#). Steve spent hours analysing the 300-page document which is meant to update the highly outdated code currently in use. The code will specify new standards for residential, commercial, and institutional development. Residents submitted hundreds of comments to TS staff and commissioners. Some concerns remain unresolved and will likely appear before the BOC in a follow-up amendment process. See our website for a more comprehensive update.



Did you know that English ivy can harm trees? Winter is a great time to remove this invasive vine. If you can’t remove the roots, cut out a section of the vine at the base, as shown in this photo. The upper portions will eventually die, giving your tree a chance to thrive.

FALL GARDEN CARE TIP: LEAVE THE LEAVES!

Did you know that many butterflies and other beneficial insects overwinter in leaves? Consider leaving leaves under your trees like a mulch ring or in other parts of your landscape to honor nature’s elegant design, keep your trees healthy, and support the broader ecosystem.

GAS MAIN REPLACEMENTS

Penn Valley is pleased that PECO has contracted for new gas mains in our area. Work is taking longer than anticipated on Righters Mill Road and Mill Creek Road with a projected completion date in December. Work on Old Gulph Road begins in September for 12 weeks. Expect road closure from 9am-3pm, M-F.

MEETING CALENDAR AND IMPORTANT DATES

September 25 PVCA Meeting, 7pm

October 5-6 - TS Cleanup Weekend - 1300 N. Woodbine, Penn Valley

October 20, 2pm Fall social & hike! Meet at Flat Rock Park on River Road.

November 6 PVCA Meeting, 7pm

December 4 PVCA Meeting, 7pm

February 5 PVCA Meeting, 7pm

March - Social at the Penn Valley Pub!
Stay tuned...

April 22 PVCA Meeting, 7pm

Join us in the library of the Penn Valley Elementary School at 7pm for Wednesday meetings of the Penn Valley Civic. Everyone is welcome! 301 Righters Mill Road, Narberth PA 19072

PVCA ADVOCATES FOR LOCAL STREET TREES

PVCA worked with township officials and commissioners this winter to save a few street trees. PECO performed major infrastructure improvements on streets within Penn Valley and beyond. Installations included taller poles, high-powered lines with 5x capacity of previous lines, more segmenting of lines to prevent large scale power outages—and drastic removal of dozens of mature street trees, a move that shocked many residents and changed the character of the viewshed along some roadways. Penn Valley exists in a woodland, and we cherish the street canopy that holds our soil in place, reduces pollution, provides habitat, slows cars and beautifies. If trees are removed on your property, be aware that replanting is necessary to prevent invasive species moving into the newly opened canopy, to prevent erosion, and to restore habitat for birds and other wildlife. Also know that you have the opportunity to negotiate with PECO to save some of your trees before cutting. [Visit our website](#) for a list of appropriately-sized, smaller native tree and shrub species for planting near power lines.

Thanks to Public Works for upcoming edge line striping on Hagys Ford Road near Welsh Valley! PVCA's wish list also includes a crosswalk across Old Gulph Road at Hagys Ford Road, edge line striping or a bike lane on Bryn Mawr Avenue to slow traffic, and pedestrian-friendly traffic signal improvements on Montgomery Avenue in the Penn Valley business district.

✂-----✂

NEW! PAY DUES ONLINE at www.pennvalleycivic.org/join or please cut and return this form with a check for your annual dues and contributions to
PVCA, P.O. Box 753, Penn Valley PA 19072. Thank you for your support!

Penn Valley Civic Association Membership Dues for 2019-2020

Household **\$20** Friend **\$30** Supporter **\$50** Leader **\$100** Visionary **\$200** Other_____

Montgomery Avenue Business Owner **\$35**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Address</u>
<u>Email</u>	

PVCA is in **need of a scribe/recording secretary** to take notes at our meetings. These valuable meeting minutes are posted on our website for the benefit of the community after the fact. If you can help, please email pennvalleycivic@gmail.com or make a note here. Thank you!_____



Penn Valley Civic Association
P.O. Box 753
Penn Valley, PA 19072

Presorted STD
U.S. Postage
PAID
Upper Darby PA
Permit 1339

Please remember to renew your membership. Thank you!

Inside this issue:

- Page 1 **PV Mural Project**
Page 2 **Request a street tree**
Page 4 Invasive plants
Page 5 **Meeting Calendar**



Did you do something to improve the ecology of your landscape in the past year or two? Examples might include planting a rain garden, installing a pollinator garden, planting native trees or shrubs, planting milkweed for monarchs, replacing portions of lawn with native plantings, putting up shelters for birds, creating a wildlife pond or wetland area, removing invasive species, and/or foregoing pesticides and herbicides on your property? If so, **would you like to be recognized on the Penn Valley Civic's, *Heroes of Hometown Ecology* webpage?** Include a short description of your efforts here or send us an email with the details and a photo (optional). We look forward to hearing from you! Thank you!
pennvalleycivic@gmail.com

What local issues interest you? Comments are welcome!

□ Would you like to be entered in a give-away for paying members? Choose a \$40 gift certificate to the Penn Valley Pub or the book, Bringing Nature Home by Doug Tallamy. A drawing will occur at our 2nd meeting on November 6. Hope to see you there!



FALL IS COMING. PLEASE WATCH FOR PEDESTRIANS, AND WEAR REFLECTIVE GEAR ON OUR ROADWAYS. ALSO, CLEAR STORM DRAINS NEAR YOUR HOME TO PREVENT DOWNSTREAM FLOODING.

www.pennvalleycivic.org || [Follow us on FB](#) || pennvalleycivic@gmail.com