



VOLUME 28, ISSUE 2 APRIL 2019

ACCREDITATION RENEWAL

Land: The one thing that unites us as a nation. Americans have always strongly supported saving the special open spaces they love. Since 1991 Westmoreland Conservancy has been doing just that for the people of Murrysville and surrounding communities.

We are happy to announce that Westmoreland Conservancy has successfully renewed our accredited status, proving once again that it is committed to upholding standards and best practices to maintain public trust in our conservation work. There are now more than 400 accredited land trusts across the country creating a network of strong, ethical organizations upholding professional excellence.

“Renewing our accreditation illustrates Westmoreland Conservancy’s ongoing commitment to permanent land conservation,” said Shelly Tichy, president. “We are a stronger organization for adopting such rigorous standards and practices as required by the accreditation process, and the renewal process reconfirms that commitment. We will protect these special places by creating a strong, healthy community in which to live and thrive, so that they may be enjoyed by everyone. Since our initial accreditation in 2013 we have DOUBLED the acreage under our protection, and are anticipating great projects in the near future protecting streams and landscapes in surrounding communities. A healthy, vibrant community depends on a healthy, vibrant environment.”

Tammara Van Ryn, executive director of the Land Trust Accreditation Commission said, “It is exciting to recognize Westmoreland Conservancy’s continued commitment to national standards by renewing this national mark of distinction. Donors and partners can trust that 400 plus accredited land trusts across the country are united behind strong standards and have demonstrated sound finances, ethical conduct, responsible governance, and lasting stewardship.”

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Westmoreland Conservancy is one of 1363 land trusts across the United States according to the Land Trust Alliance's most recent National Land Trust Census. A complete list of accredited land trusts and more information about the process and benefits can be found at www.landtrustaccreditation.org.

WINTER WALK @ TOMER

Sunday, February 10th turned out to be a lovely afternoon for a walk in the woods of the Tomer Reserve. Even in February there are plants and fungi to be observed. Giraffe Spots are a crust fungus that we saw along the white trail, as was the amber jelly fungus. Onion grass can be identified at this time, and so can saxifrage. Did you know that?



MOROSINI UPT

The Morosini Universal Pedestrian Trail construction which has been delayed by the persistent rains of 2018, is scheduled for completion by early May. We are planning an official ribbon-cutting ceremony to celebrate this exciting project, so please watch our Facebook page as well as the Penn-Franklin News and Murrysville Star for the exact date.

APPLE TREE PRUNING @ MOROSINI

Revitalizing old apple trees results in more food for wildlife (and visitors!), and usually restores old heritage varieties of apples for everyone's enjoyment. So spending a day out in the cold (before the tree awakens from dormancy) promises great things!

The trees pruned at the 2018 workday blossomed profusely last Spring and produced better than they had in recent years. We're hoping for the same results this year. A bonus to this season's project is the beautiful definition of the parking lot trailhead as a result of the work!



FLINN EARTH DAY WORK DAY

April 22nd marks the 49th celebration of Earth Day. This year it falls on Easter Monday, so Westmoreland Conservancy has scheduled our Earth Day celebration as a Work Day starting 9am on Saturday, April 27th at the Flinn Reserve on Boxcartown Road. We're hoping that our parking lot might be installed by then, but if not, we'll have alternative parking options in place.

We'll have multiple projects going on at various areas of the reserve: trail marking & bushwhacking; boundary marking (& bushwhacking); stream assessment; encroachment clean-up. Protective clothing, gloves, and sturdy footwear are strongly recommended. Loppers and clippers welcome! Join us as we begin developing this interesting reserve! Please let us know that you'll be coming so that we can provide enough hotdogs. RSVP to contact@westmorelandconservancy.org.

THIRD THURSDAY HIKES

If you haven't yet attended one of our hikes with Lindsey Praksti, here's a whole season for you to join in on the fun! Join her and graze your way across the various reserves at 5PM on the Third Thursday of each month. Be prepared to remember that "sour clover" tastes like childhood summers, and that Nature's bounty is just that!

4/18: King Reserve, Crowfoot Road, 5PM

5/16: Morosini Reserve, Morosini Farm Road parking lot, 5PM

6/20: McGinnis Reserve, Hunter Drive, 5PM

7/18: Tomer Reserve, Twin Oaks N, 5PM.



GEOCACHING, CITO & CAMPOUT AT MOROSINI

Spend Saturday June 22nd geocaching around the Morosini Reserve. Bring your tent, enjoy a campfire and spend the night surrounded by Nature. Let us know that you're staying by emailing us at contact@westmorelandconservancy.org OR on our Facebook event page.

On Sunday June 23rd after breakfast, it's CITO time! Some trail maintenance and the opportunity to set a brand new cache!

STAR PARTIES

The Morosini Reserve boasts a huge sky, and at night that means LOTS of stars, planets, meteors, and satellites to observe!

We had our first Star Party in 2018, watching meteor showers around a campfire. Members of the USS Venture-NCC 1655 astronomy club brought their telescopes to show us the planets (Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter & Saturn). They also showed us the space station as it crossed the sky!

The opportunity for stargazing presents itself nightly, but we'll have a few special nights on our calendar this year. Saturday, July 27th we'll watch the Delta Aquariids meteor shower; and Saturday, August 10th we'll watch the Perseids (pre-peak, pre-full moon). Clear skies are an important factor, so cloudy, rainy conditions would obscure the view and cancel the events. But, if the skies are clear, meet at the Morosini parking area at 8PM and bring your marshmallows and roasting sticks!

DHCT TRAIL MAINTENANCE

The Don Harrison Community Trail has been receiving some great buzz lately! Well deserved, because it's a beautiful hike. It's a terrific example of what can happen when entities come together to create something special for a community.

With winter weather and strong winds, it's time for maintenance, and we've scheduled monthly Saturday workdays at 10AM to keep the trail in good condition. While the focus areas will depend on most recent storm or wind damage, the following is a tentative location schedule.

4/20: King/Potter parking lot on Crowfoot Road

5/11: Caywood Reserve lot on Hills Church Rd.

6/8: Murrysville Community Park Field 6 lot

7/13: Townsend Park Ballfield lot

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SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

****Watch our Facebook page or sign up for email reminders for Morosini work days!****

PLEASE WEAR STURDY SHOES, LEG PROTECTION AND WEATHER-APPROPRIATE ATTIRE
SCHEDULED EVENTS MAY BE CANCELLED IN CASE OF EXTREME WEATHER.

- Apr 18: 5pm. *Third Thursday Hike w/Lindsey Praksti.*** King Reserve.
Apr 20: 10am. *DHCT Maintenance.* King/Potter Reserves. Crowfoot Road Parking Lot.
Apr 24: 7pm. *Monthly Meeting/Elections.* Murrysville Senior Center, 3091 Carson Avenue, Murrysville.
Apr 27: 9am. *Earth Day Work Day.* Flinn Reserve. Boxcartown Road, Murrysville.
May 11: 10am. *Trail maintenance @ DHCT.* Caywood Reserve, Hills Church Rd. lot
May 16: 5pm. *Third Thursday Hike w/Lindsey Praksti.* Morosini Reserve.
May 16-18: *PALTA in the Poconos.*
May 22: 7pm. *Monthly Meeting/Elections.* Murrysville Senior Center, 3091 Carson Avenue, Murrysville.
Jun 8: 10am. *Trail maintenance @ DHCT.* MCP Field #6 parking area.
Jun 20: 5pm. *Third Thursday Hike w/Lindsey Praksti.* McGinnis Reserve.
Jun 22-23: *Sat-Geocaching & Overnight Camping. Sun-CITO.* Morosini.
June 27: 7pm. *Monthly Meeting/Elections.* Murrysville Senior Center, 3091 Carson Avenue, Murrysville.

2018-19 Officers

Shelly Tichy - President
James Zimmerman - Vice President
Alan Halperin - Secretary
Rob Malley - Treasurer
Nicole Smith - Recording Treasurer

2018-19 Board of Governors

Eloise Milligan - Board
Rich Berardinelli - Board
Lindsay Praksti - Board
Howard Weigold - Board
Kevin Reisch - Student Board

WESTMORELAND CONSERVANCY ONLINE

Webstore: <http://www.westmorelandconservancy.org/Membership.htm>

Website: <http://www.westmorelandconservancy.org>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/WestmorelandConservancy>

Flickr: <http://www.flickr.com/groups/westmorelandconservancy/>

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OUR VISION

To preserve natural, rural, and historic landscapes for Nature's benefit and the enrichment of future generations.

OUR MISSION

Westmoreland Conservancy will act to preserve, enhance, and connect land, habitat, and green space through acquisition, stewardship, and cooperation with local communities and other organizations.