



Spring 2013

THE FROGHORN

SILVER LAKE NATURE CENTER

Friends of Silver Lake Nature Center Mission Statement

The Silver Lake Nature Center creates opportunities for the natural habitats of Silver Lake to inspire students of all ages and abilities with the wonder and beauty of this living treasure. Through education, recreation, research and advocacy, we attract new friends to Silver Lake and its watershed, and together preserve this priceless heritage for generations to come.

Visit us on the Web!
silverlakenaturecenter.org

Major progress thanks to wonderful supporters!

Because so many people in our community believe in what we do and show it by supporting us as members, program participants, and donors, the Friends of Silver Lake Nature Center has an excellent reputation with funders. It brings me great delight to announce several new grants since the December newsletter and to update you on our current projects.

New Grants

- The Dow Chemical Company has provided funds to help us complete the Watershed Ed. Building (WEB)—aka Earthship, funding some of the finishing features that will make the building useful as an educational tool. They also provided funding to help us clean up the lake and park during Earth Day Work Day on April 20, 2013, and our Waterway Clean up scheduled for October 5, 2013.



- Foundations Community Partnership supported our request for help to install a handicapped-accessible entrance to the Earthship. This will enable all people to come and visit this unique structure.
- Dominion Energy's Fairless Plant also made a sizable contribution towards creating educational opportunities through the WEB—Earthship.
- The National Environmental Education Foundation is supporting the purchase of a new database to help manage our memberships, volunteers, and program data.

Existing Grants

The Watershed Monitoring Grant provided by NOAA's Coastal Zone Management Program is almost finished. Though the funding is over, we still plan to work hard building our volunteer core, people who regularly measure the water quality in our watershed. **Please help!**

- Also well under way is our programming for teens and pre-teens funded by the Foundations Community Partnership and Enterprise Holdings Foundation.
- We are still spending the funds provided by the West Foundation and the Grundy Foundation to support the construction of the WEB—Earthship.
- Our most ambitious project is to remodel the exhibit area and make the building energy efficient. This grant was presented to the County by the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. Content-Design Collaborative, LLC, is working on the plans for this renovation. By June 2014, we will have a whole new feel to the building and exhibits.



We feel blessed to have the strong support of so many funders and recognize the importance of everyone who supports the Nature Center. Every membership, and even the smallest gift, makes a huge difference, as they tell these funders that the community supports the Friends of Silver Lake Nature Center.

Join us for *Concerts, Frog Slog, Kayaking, Birding, Volunteering, Summer Camp, Birthday Parties, Flea Market, and more...*

The **FROGHORN** is published quarterly for the Silver Lake Nature Center, a facility of the Bucks County Department of Parks & Recreation, by the Friends of Silver Lake Nature Center.

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Open: Tuesday - Saturday, 10 am - 5 pm
 Sunday, 12 pm - 5 pm
 Closed: Monday

The Bucks County Department of Parks and Recreation does not discriminate on the basis of disabilities in its programs, activities and facilities.

So Long!

by Vail Ryan

On March 27, 2012, I started at Silver Lake Nature Center as coordinator of the volunteer watershed monitoring group. It seemed pretty daunting to me to have to get such a program going in just a year. I had never done such a thing, but the opportunity was just too good to resist.

Now, as the end of my term looms on the horizon, I look back with some satisfaction and some regret. I couldn't be happier with the dedicated volunteers and the value of the data they have collected. We have a full year's picture of this little watershed to measure its future health against. Very few watersheds of this size have the information we do!

The future of the program offers the possibility of expanding the monitoring of macroinvertebrates, practicing some remediation: stabilizing stream banks; removing invasives; and planting native plants. I regret that these things will have to happen without me! But, I look forward to the volunteers, with the help of the Silver Lake Nature Center staff, carrying on monitoring, protecting, and improving this watershed.

Always remember that you have a valuable and beautiful piece of Eden here on Silver Lake. Surrounded by development and industry and major highways is a habitat for a myriad of nature's creation. Just the variety and numbers of birds around Silver Lake has been a joy to me.

I thank Bob, Carolyn, Jenn, PattiAnn, and Lorraine—who had faith in my ability—for all their support and encouragement. And I thank the volunteers who continue to go out and monitor even in the cold, rain, and snow. That is dedication!

I am confident the staff and volunteers can keep the program going and growing without me.

Vail Ryan

A Note from the Staff

We found a real gem when we signed Vail Ryan on last spring to establish a water-monitoring program for the Nature Center. Under the guidance of Lorraine Skala and with funds from the Coastal Zone Management grant, Vail located several sites for water-testing, decided on exactly what tests and equipment were needed, and set up a program to keep track of the data as it was received. Vail also recruited and trained volunteers, made water monitoring presentations, and input the data to the database. The work that Vail has done will allow us to continue the project well into the future.

Thank you, Vail, and good luck!

Mercer's Musings

Dark of Night

by Robert Mercer, Director

When we talk about environmental issues, the most challenging concept for most people is how important their contribution is, even though it seems to hardly make any difference. In reality, it is combining the impacts of billions of people that makes the difference. Recently, I saw an image produced by NASA which showed various parts of the earth as seen from space. What made this picture different is that it was a picture of the

Earth at night. NASA called it the Black Marble. This is what our country looks like from space.



There is no single light creating any of those points on the map. Any alien looking down from space would recognize immediately that this crazy pattern of lights has to be emanating from intelligent beings—lots of them. In the Midwest, you can clearly see the highways and the intersections laid out in an almost perfect grid. The New York to Washington, DC, megalopolis glows brightly, and we sit in the dead center!

Every night, your lights added to all of the street lights and lights from buildings and signs create this massive glow. (That is one reason we placed our mural lights so they face down in hopes that they would not add to this glow.) All environmental issues suffer from the same building of impacts from your

practically nothing to something that changes the face of the Earth. Yes, we cannot do much, but we can do our part to keep the planet healthy for future generations.

On the same NASA pages, you can also find images of our area pre-Sandy and on November 1, after Sandy's landfall. [<http://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/IOTD/view.php?id=79589>] Huge patches of New Jersey and Pennsylvania are dark. NASA even speculates that the only light along the Jersey coast may be houses on fire. This series of pictures underscores the strong impacts of nature's feedback loops trying to stabilize the world's temperatures.

Hurricanes are important to climate. They function to bring warm air north to balance out the difference between the tropics and the arctic. In the next musing, we will talk about the newest information on global temperature change and how it means more hurricanes, more floods, and more drought—in other words, more severe weather. The scientific community understands human impacts; now if only the political community would catch up.



Focal Planes Foto Club's 39th Annual Photo Contest



We hope you were able to participate in and otherwise enjoy the 2013 Photo Contest!

This year's Photo Contest featured well over 200 photos submitted by Juniors (up to 15 years old), Amateurs, and Advanced Amateurs, in categories that included Landscape/Seascape, Birds/Animals, Plants, and Bucks County Parks. There was also a Macro/Close-up and an Architecture category.

Local professionals in the field of photography were the judges for this contest. Each judge scored the photos separately. Then the scores were tallied to discover the winners.

Top awards include:

Best In Show - Color – (tie) Joe Connett, Heather Baker

Best In Show - Black & White – Jim Ritter

Silver Lake Nature Center Award – Richard Baker

Focal Planes Foto Club Award - Janice Rhodes

Thank you to everyone who participated, and we hope we'll see you and your photos at next year's contest!





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Our donors and supporters are the best!

Winners of SLNC Membership

December	Maryellen Zitzler
January	Lisa Boyer
February	Pat Stephenson

Congratulations!

Fill out a form in the lobby and drop it in the 'birdhouse.'
 You may win a **Free**, one-year Individual Membership!

One free membership drawn for each month.

Welcome New Members

New Members from November 1, 2012 to January 31, 2013

Pat Coleman, Ciera Cooke,
 Diane Davies, Bob & Connie Drummond,
 Dolores & Anthony Gomez,
 Nancy Gorman, Peter Hobe, Lynn Kalix,
 James Leonard, Pam Morris, Bob Neill,
 Cathy Raupp, Vail Ryan,
 Kingsley Seville, Christine Smith,
 Christine Struble, Theresa Vassallao,
 Carol Ventura

Thanks for joining us. We hope to see you often!

For the Kids

Preschool Update



In 2012, Silver Lake Nature Center did Early Childhood Education programs for about 40 Preschools and Parent/Child

Groups!

These programs, designed to educate children and increase their awareness about our natural world, can be conducted at our location or at the Preschools. One of our popular winter programs is *Hibernation Happens*. During this program, children get to discover what it's like to be in the "Groundhog's Home" and learn what animals do during winter. Our newest program, *Life in a Log*, has been enjoyed by many Preschoolers in the fall and spring! What fun it is to crawl through a giant "log" and learn all about what happens to a tree when it falls to the ground!

Some of our other fun and educational programs include: *Fancy Feet Feats, Frog Friends, Ponds & Puddles, Five Senses, Bugs & Beasties, Winter Wonders, and Discovery.*

Calling All Scouts!!



Did you know that Silver Lake Nature Center offers a variety of Scout programs?

We cover all kinds of Girl Scout & Boy Scout Badge programs, including Brownie Try-its, Merit Badges, and Journeys.

Scouts can also enjoy our nighttime programs, such as Night Hikes and Sleepovers! Both programs include an indoor presentation focusing on nocturnal life, a walk on the trails (sans flashlights), and a campfire with a marshmallow roast and sing-a-long/storytelling!

We will also work with your Scouts to complete Service Projects with our unique Serve & Learn program!



Thank you...

- To those who gave so generously to our Giving Tree: Elijah Jordan Hicks, Laurie & Todd Nixon, Madeline Bobst, David Chalfant, Rebecca Covitch, Glenn Rodkey, Jr., Florence Stepenaskie, Pat & Patty Cutter, John McGrath, Hope & Kevin Sauppe, Lynn Slater, Rae Hemingway, Margaret McGinnis, Mary Ida Reitz, Marty Shively & Janice Rhodes, Jeanne Stemmer, and two "Anonymous" donors.
 - Pat Rossi for creating posters of our events for our bulletin board and the kiosk by the lake.
 - Sandy Wah for proofing our letters, fliers and the newsletter.
 - Clarence King for the photography, design, and preliminary work to produce the 2013 SLNC calendars.
 - JoAnne Kyle for monthly donations to our animals' care.
 - Don West for caring for our trails.
 - Members of Focal Planes Foto Club for the 39th Annual Photo Contest and the Annual Silent Auction.
 - To all the volunteers who helped with our Bird Seed Sales, especially Mary Beth Hartmann, Marie Wojcik, Jeanne Stemmer, and Henry Schaffer. And thanks to everyone who bought bird seed!
 - "Cinders", a.k.a. Elaine Swank, for creating a handmade and personalized SLNC table cover to be used with our traveling display.
 - Marilyn Bauers for donating a collection of bird books for every part of the world.
 - Norm Krier for donating an assortment of instruments and supplies for our various programs.
- Special thanks to the following for helping make our Volunteer Recognition event a success:**
- Christa Bain for creating the Fraktur of our 2012 Century Club volunteers.
 - Senator "Tommy" Tomlinson for the Senator's Proclamation for each Century Club member.
 - Chef Timothy Kearney and family for catering a wonderful brunch.
 - Levittown Floral Boutique, Flowers by Jennie-Lynne, Steins at Sunset Florist, Just Because...Flowers, and Schmid's Flowers for donating carnations and roses for our Century Club members.

Celebrate at Silver Lake!

We offer a variety of parties for children of all ages, as well as grownup birthday parties, bridal showers, baby showers, anniversaries, and other special events. Some of our options include night hikes, campfires, and kayak trips. We'll work with you to find the right program for your event. Fees vary according to program.

Our regular two-hour party includes: one theme-related party craft; indoor activities in case of inclement weather; nature walk; and use of building, auditorium or pavilion, kitchen, restrooms, tables, and chairs.

Fee per child w/one adult: \$9 member
\$12 non-member

Minimum # of participants: 10

For details on Preschool programs, Scout programs, and parties, contact PattiAnn at palynn@co.bucks.pa.us, or call her at 215-785-1177 ext. 12, or visit our website.

Volunteers

VOLUNTEER ACCOMPLISHMENTS!

Our wonderful volunteers have helped in too many ways to count.

Volunteer Recognition and Annual Meeting

In 2012, 1,224 volunteers put in 11,134 hours of volunteer service, worth an estimated \$80,716!

2012 Century Club: Thank you to all 25 of the volunteers who put in over 100 hours of volunteer service last year!

Lauren DeSilva, Anthony Garwood, Lois Glasscock, Rae Hemingway, Clarence King, Chuck Lufkin, John McGrath, Ryan Neuman, Bonnie O'Boyle, Elaine Panuccio, Robert Pearson, Glenn Rodkey, Sr., Darius Rogers, Hope Sauppe, Jim Skala, Jeanne Stemmer, Florence Stepenaskie, Nick Stets, Eileen Swank, Jessica Tokarczyk, Carrie & Larry Walinsky, Donald West, Marie Wojcik, Kelly Young



Volunteers of the Quarter:

Carrie & Larry Walinsky

Carrie and Larry have been volunteering here for two years thus far, and in that time, they have put in over 507 hours! The Walinskys volunteer as our kayak co-guides, helping to pre-trip kayak excursions for safety, as well as helping lead the trips, including very long days of loading and unloading boats, traveling, and kayaking with up to 15 other people! Both Carrie and Larry also help out with our watershed cleanups and volunteer work days, helping to maintain our trails. They have both just completed our PA Master Naturalist training, which inspired them to look for even more ways to broaden and strengthen their volunteerism here at SLNC. They have demonstrated an incredible work ethic and have wonderfully dynamic and enthusiastic personalities. They are an asset to any program here at the Nature Center, and we are incredibly lucky to have them!



Calling all volunteers!

(Please contact Jenn Bilger to pre-register)

Volunteer Work Days from 9 am until 2 pm

Saturdays: April 6th, May 4th, and June 1st

Earth Day Work Day: April 20th from 9 am until 2 pm

Silver Lake Nature Center, in conjunction with The Dow Chemical Company, Keep PA Beautiful, The Heritage Conservancy, and G.O.A.L. invites the community to come out to celebrate the Earth by helping to clean her up!

Flea Market: June 15th from 8 am to 2pm

We will need bakers as well as kitchen and parking lot volunteers for this event.

CIT's (Counselors-In-Training) Needed

We are looking for high school or college students willing to help as volunteer counselors at our summer camp. We will train you.

Summer Camp Sponsorship

We are searching for Summer Camp sponsor(s) to help with the cost of purchasing Silver Lake Nature Center logo tee shirts for our campers to tie dye as a memory and a gift.

Summer Camp Guest Naturalists Wanted

We are looking for people with a special skill, talent, or knowledge who are willing to lead mini-programs for our summer camps.

Contact Jenn Bilger at 215 785-177 ext 14 or jlbilger@co.bucks.pa.us for additional information and to register.

Volunteer of the Year:

Tony Garwood



Tony Garwood has been an active member of the Nature Center and has recently become a member of our Century Club. Tony is our "Mr. Fix It", and we call on him for all kinds of miscellaneous projects. He has fixed up our animal tanks and woodshed; he assembles our bee hives; he sanded and painted our butterfly garden benches; he fixed our bulletin boards; he is creating a natural tree-climbing feature; and he helps out at our monthly volunteer work days and building our Earthship, among the many other things he's done here! We can throw any odd job at Tony and he will figure it out and fix it for us. He is a tremendous asset to the Nature Center, and we thank him for all he is doing to help us out!

Mark Your Calendar

Fine Wine and Fare on the Delaware Saturday, April 6th 5 - 7 pm



Come join us for an evening of fine wine and food pairings in beautiful, historic Bristol, PA, featuring Bucks County wines, local restaurant hors d'oeuvres, live music, and a raffle.

Purchase your tickets in advance:
\$50 per person/\$90 per couple

Call 215 785-1177 for details.

Frog Slog Saturday, April 13th OR Wednesday, April 17th 7 - 8:30 pm



Learn about frogs and their calls, then carpool to the Frog Slog in the Bog.

Bring a flashlight
and come wading with us!

Fun for all ages.

Must register & pay in advance.

Fee: \$7 member

\$10 non-member



Earth Day Concert with Chris Westfall Saturday, April 20th 7:30 - 9:30 pm

Join us under the stars
as we celebrate "Earth Day Every Day"
at our outdoor amphitheater!
(indoors, if inclement weather)

Tickets: \$10 pp (by 5 pm April 19th)
\$15 pp at the door



Spring Birding:

Weekly at the Nature Center
Saturdays 7:30 - 9 am

Come birding with us each Saturday from early March through the end of May. Bring binoculars, if you have them! It's free!

Birding Southern NJ Saturday, April 27th

6:30 am - 5 pm

Carpool from SLNC to several hot spots in search of a wide range of birds. Bring binoculars and a lunch. We usually find 75+ species. Optional: Dinner at a local restaurant. Please register by April 26th.

Birding the Gap Saturday, May 18th

6:30 am - 5 pm

Join us as we explore this rich area that attracts a wide variety of birds. We will meet there EARLY, on Saturday, so call for details.

Fee for each field trip:
\$15 member; \$19 non-member

Must pre-register.

North American Bird Count Saturday, May 11th 5:30 am - 5:30 pm

We will identify and count birds
at Silver Lake Park, Delhaas Woods,
Neshaminy State Park, and along the river.

If you can help with this national census,
call Bob Mercer at
215 785-1177 for details.



19th Annual Delaware River Sojourn June 23 - 29, 2013

The Sojourn is a seven-day guided paddling trip on the wild and scenic Delaware River. It is for novice to experienced paddlers of all ages. Sign up for one day or all seven. For more information call the Nature Center or go to <http://www.delawareriversojourn.org>.



Flea Market and Craft Fair in the Park Saturday, June 15th 8 am - 2 pm

Rain or Shine. No Refunds.

Our Flea Market is set up on the grounds around the building, with spaces in shade and sun. Bring your own table and chairs.

Single space: \$15 member; \$20 non-member

Double: \$20 member; \$25 non-member

Car space: \$30 member; \$35 non-member

Indoor space (six feet, includes table): \$30 member; \$35 non-member



Please stop in to reserve your space. All spaces are assigned: first come, first served. Payment and registration are due in advance.

Refreshments will be sold by the Nature Center.



Silver Lake Nature Center
 1306 Bath Road
 Bristol, PA 19007
 215 785-1177

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Coming Events



WEB Update

The Watershed Education Building—aka Earthship—continues to rise from the recycled materials, donations from local businesses, and hard work of our enthusiastic band of volunteers.

Work has been slow through the winter, but with warming temperatures, we will be able to pour foundations, put up the south wall, create the “Bottle Wall” and do all the finishing work.

Keep your eyes and ears open for word of our Grand Opening Celebration: We hope you will attend this very special event!

Vendors Wanted:

Silver Lake Green Fest
Saturday, October 12, 2013
11 am - 4 pm



Register by
Sept. 17th for
Early Bird Special!

Contact the Nature Center:
215-785-1177

silverlakenaturecenter@co.bucks.pa.us

www.silverlakenaturecenter.org

or stop in!



Please share this newsletter with a friend. Thanks!