



Winter2015

THE FROGHORN

~ SILVER LAKE NATURE CENTER ~

Friends of
Silver Lake
Nature Center
Mission Statement

The Silver Lake Nature Center inspires connections with nature for people of all ages, interests, and abilities through education, recreation, preservation, research, and advocacy.

Visit us on the Web!
www.silverlakenaturecenter.org

Like us on facebook!
Follow us on Twitter!

Silver Lake Nature Center is turning 50!

This June 2016, the Nature Center will celebrate 50 years. It has been a full half century of environmental education for all ages. We know that some of our members have been here from the beginning and some are relatively new. How long have you been associated with the Center? Do you have some special memories or photos you would like to share? We'd love to hear from you. *Pictured below is our Visitors' Building, "Then and Now."*



To kick off the celebration, Clarence King will present a historical natural perspective of the Nature Center at our 10th Annual Winter Solstice Celebration on December 19th: *Wildlife of Silver Lake, Then and Now*. The evening will also include a concert by Gloria Galante & the WCU Harp Ensemble, a candlelit walk on the trails, and a campfire. Join us and begin celebrating this milestone. *Admission: \$10/person for Friends of Silver Lake Members; \$15/person for Non-members.*

Winter
Solstice



December 19
7-8:30 pm

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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 Environmental Educator

 Peg Mongillo.....Bookkeeper

Afterschool Nature Camp

6 through 12 year olds
3:30 until 5:30 pm at the Center
10 Thursdays, January 14 through March 17

Pre-registration is required. Contact Jenn at 215.785.1177 or email jlbilger@buckscounty.org

\$70 members/\$90 non-members

Drop off and pick up is at the Center's auditorium and/or our outdoor Kids Play Area picnic pavilion. There will be a *rolling drop off* time starting at 3:30pm but final drop off will be no later than 4:00pm. *Pickup* is at 5:30pm.

Each session we will be exploring the nature preserve, learning about the habitats and creatures, playing games, learning survival skills, journaling, and having fun, all while making new friends and memories. We will be offering a healthy snack option each session.

Please send your child with a refillable water bottle, snack, and clothes that you don't mind getting wet and/or dirty and plenty of layers to help them adjust to the range of weather and temperatures since we will be outside a good portion of every session.



2016 Silver Lake Calendars

These beautiful, popular calendars are selling quickly, so please be sure to purchase yours soon!

Enjoy stunning pictures of Silver Lake Nature Center & Park through all seasons! These Calendars make lovely gifts and keepsakes for any occasion.

Photography and design are by Resident Historian & Photographer, Clarence King. Calendars cost \$15 each. All proceeds benefit the Friends of Silver Lake Nature Center.

Supplies are very limited, so please call 215-785-1177 or email palym@buckscounty.org soon to purchase!




Silver Lake Nature Center
1306 Bath Road
Bristol, Pa 19007
215 785-1177
 Fax: 215 785-3228
www.silverlakenaturecenter.org
 Open: Tuesday - Saturday, 10 am - 5 pm
 Every Other 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.

Mercer's Musings

Saying "Good-bye" is never easy...

by Robert Mercer

This is really bizarre—sitting down to write my last musing. As you may know, I will be retiring after 40 plus years at the Silver Lake Nature Center. I will miss it! But, it is time. The organization is in very good hands with a strong, competent staff and a strong, skilled, concerned, and dedicated Board. I realize that this should be a time to reflect on all that has transpired, but how does one squeeze forty years into a couple paragraphs?

If I had to pick the best part about working at the Silver Lake Nature Center, I would say the people. Now the old man of the profession, when I started, I was a true neophyte—raw, inexperienced, and enthused. Starting the first day, each person who came in, from the kids who visited (some of whom are still around), to the volunteers and the community leaders, helped me to learn and grow into the position. I am tempted to name people, but I know that I will forget someone very important and dear to me in the list that would extend to the end of the page and beyond, so I won't. Instead, I will use positions and those people can figure out who they are.

I have been blessed with a wonderful, dedicated staff. Each has his or her own approach, but each contributed to the growth of the Center through new programs, new ideas, fundraising, friend building, and hard work. Most found the Center a comfortable and enjoyable place to work (most of the time). Through staff efforts, we built buildings, trails, programs, friends, security, and a solid business that served and engaged the community. I feel comfortable leaving the organization in the staff's hands.

The volunteers brought so many skills to the Center. I considered many of them good friends and mentors. I can rattle off a long list of life experiences and lessons learned from the many volunteers who worked on the grounds, the buildings, in the store, and on committees. Each of those lessons became part of my toolbox of skills. Often I have

channeled the memory of a volunteer or staff person as I approached a new or challenging task.

Among those volunteers has been a constant parade of skilled, concerned and talented board members. These people work behind the scene helping to set the direction and tone for the Center. They work on committees, advocate for the Center, make tough decisions, and bring in support from contacts and resources I could never approach. They held my feet to the fire when the organization needed strong direction and unpopular action, and they let me go when my crazy visions would go in new directions.

Early in my career, I dealt directly with the children and teachers visiting the Center. Oh how I enjoyed the light in a child's face when they learned something or the reward of a teacher coming back year after year because his or her children needed the lessons taught in the program. Amazingly, on a rare occasion one of those children will stop by, often with either their children or grandchildren, and reminisce about their experience. As my role changed to more management, I hired people to do the fun stuff, but took great pride in watching the hordes of kids enjoy programs.

I could not give up my role of working with adults—leading trips and doing programs. The fun of finding something new, to going somewhere different, and the many hours of great company with people who pushed me to improve my knowledge and skill levels, can never be replaced. The same could be said about the people in the community who invited me to be engaged in programs and committees.

Undoubtedly, more than anything I will miss the people the most! If you saw yourself in any of the above, I most likely was thinking about one of our experiences, so to you I say, thank you! It has been great!

Join us!

Memberships

Individual \$25
Household \$35

'Household' includes all at same address.

Check here for \$10 Senior discount

Special Memberships

(provide funds for additional programs)

Grey Fox \$ 50 - \$99
Red Fox \$ 100 - \$249
Willow Oak \$ 250 - \$499
Pin Oak \$ 500 - \$999
Legacy Investor \$ 1000



Silver Lake Nature Center

Please Print

Name:

First _____

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house number/street name _____

Apt. _____

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State _____

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Application for Membership

Gift

New

Renewal

All contributions and dues are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law - IRS code section 501 (c)(3).
Checks should be made payable to: FOSL (Friends of Silver Lake)

1306 Bath Road, Bristol, PA 19007

phone: 215 785-1177

fax: 215 785-3228

website: www.silverlakenaturecenter.org

"A copy of the official registration and financial information may be obtained from the PA Department of State by calling toll-free within PA, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement."

The Environment

Keeping an Eye on Our Local Waterways

Three years ago, the Nature Center was granted funding from DEP through the Coastal Resources Management Program to begin a volunteer water monitoring program. It was the beginning of something meaningful and marvelous.

With the help of trained and dedicated volunteers, we monitor the streams that drain into the Delaware River – the source of our drinking water. We've made many discoveries, good and not so good, about our Silver Lake watershed. One of the first discoveries was that the waters aren't as bad as we expected. Our local waters support a vast diversity of wildlife – flora and fauna. Recent surveys bear this out.

Other research led to discoveries of a different nature. Broken water mains, sewage and oil leaks, fish kills and impacts from construction. None of these incidents were in-

tentional and most had gone undetected because no one was watching. Now we watch, and because of this, problems get noticed and action can be taken.

In all of these cases, government agencies responded once they were notified. It is heartening to know that the Department of Environmental Protection, our local Health Department, PA Fish and Boat Commission and other organizations are there when we need them. But they can't be everywhere and that's where our water monitors come in. They are out there once a month – every month – taking samples, testing, and noting changes. They've done a remarkably good job.

We are now expanding the program within the Coastal Plain. If you have a few hours a month and would like to join us, you can be part of the expansion of a program that keeps an eye out for this very precious resource – WATER.



The Earthship Education Center Opens

Silver Lake Nature Center has launched a new era of education! The first public building of its kind has opened its doors to provide learning experiences for a variety of environmental issues with a focus on sustainability, conservation, and regeneration in a changing world.



Groups of students of all ages, scouts, and teachers have already begun to visit. Come see what all the excitement is about.

Please call the Nature Center to register your group's visit. The general public is welcome to tour on occasional Saturdays from 10:00 am – 2:00 pm. Call for dates.

Barn Swallow Highlights



The Barn Swallow has something for everyone. The shop is stocked with jewelry, toys, postcards, books, apparel and other items to enhance and stimulate your awareness of nature.

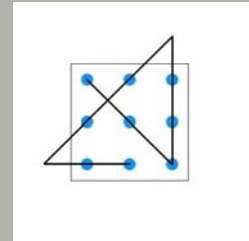
For Readers: There are books about what's involved in designing and building an Earthship, books to help beginning birders learn how to distinguish each friendly flyer from one another, and reference books for experienced birders to expand their knowledge.

For Children: There is jewelry in the form of bracelets, rings, earrings, and precious rock necklaces. The science kits are for those who like to ask "how" and "why". They get to excavate, chip away at, explore, connect and build things at home while learning that there is more to nature than birds and bees.

For Everyone: Show your support for the Silver Lake by purchasing a tee shirt, tote bag, cap, mug, or water bottle with the Center's logo on it. There are one of a kind postcards, stationary sets, and scented pencils to keep in touch with friends and family.

For Educators: There are activity books that promote earth friendly games, lessons, and projects for children of all ages and abilities.

January 29th is National Puzzle Day



The Barn Swallow has an assortment of wooden 3-D animal puzzles and brainteaser scramble square puzzles in stock for those wintry days when you are stuck inside with nothing to do. Puzzles are great for people of all ages and even more fun when you do them with others. Puzzles engage both sides of the brain, enhance the development of small motor skills, and increase concentration, all while having fun. Puzzling as a family is a great way to unplug from electrical devices, enjoy some conversation and bonding time with some favorite snacks.



Bonnie O'Boyle
Store Manager



Business Partners

Diamond Partner \$5000+

The Dow Chemical Company
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 PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR)



Platinum Partner \$3000+

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Bristol Gardens Apartments	
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Please support our Business Partners whenever you can!



Giving Tree

We hope you'll stop by our "Giving Tree" in the Visitors' Building this Holiday Season. Hanging from the limbs are our Wish List Ornaments.

You may take an ornament off the tree as a pledge to donate that item.

Here are some items on our Wish List:

- Marshmallows
- Volunteer Work Day Lunch Sponsor
- Gift Cards to Craft or Grocery Stores to help support the Center's program activities.

Please visit our website at www.silverlakenaturecenter.org for more information.

New Members

- | | |
|------------------|------------------------|
| Nicole Brice | Nicole Mayer |
| Lucy Butterworth | Albina Tnaimou |
| Claudette Reilly | Carl & Barbara Vandine |
| Paula Dinunzio | Sandi Vincenti |
| Marilyn Fox | Arden Williams |
| Maureen Groetsch | Gail Bracegirdle |
| Jaela Johnson | Will Lewis |
| Nick Kanieff | |

Volunteers



Calling all volunteers!

Volunteer Work Days from 9 am to 2 pm

Saturday, January 2
Saturday, February 6
Saturday, March 5

Volunteer Recognition & Annual Meeting

Saturday, March 19th, 10am-12pm
(RSVP by March 12th)

Join us for this special event as we recognize the hard working efforts of an ever-growing family of volunteers, without whom we could never do the extraordinary things we do!
Contact Jenn Bilger at 215.785.1177

Greeters

We are in need of volunteers to work in our gift shop greeting visitors, answering phones, and running the cash register.
Open shift: Saturdays from 1 to 5 pm. Sunday's from 12 to 5 pm.

Animal Sponsors Needed

We are in need of Animal Sponsors who are willing to defray the costs of their food, filters, tank maintenance, habitat improvement, and regular veterinary check-ups.

Naturalist Aides

We are looking to train individuals to teach our environmental education programs. The training is free and the experience lasts a lifetime.

Trail Maintenance Crew

We are looking for a small group of volunteers willing to regularly maintain certain parts of the preserve.

For more information, contact Jenn Bilger at 215-785-1177.

For the Kids

Calling All Scouts!!

We offer all kinds of Girl and Boy Scout programs, including Flag Retirement Ceremonies, Badges, Journeys, Service/Volunteer Projects, and more!

Scouts can also enjoy night-time programs, such as Night Hikes and Sleepovers! Both programs include an indoor presentation focusing on nocturnal life, a walk on the trails (without flashlights), a campfire, a marshmallow roast, storytelling, and a sing-a-long.

We will also work with you to suit the needs of your group with such options as fire building, fire safety, skits, and awards.

For more information on these and all of our Scout program offerings, please visit our website at www.silverlakenaturecenter.org or contact PattiAnn at the Center at palynn@buckscounty.org.

Preschool

We offer a variety of Preschool programs. Some of the topics include: *Hibernation Happens, Ponds & Puddles, Frog Friends, Bugs & Beasties, Five Senses, Winter Wonders, and Spring Discovery.*

These programs, designed to educate children and increase their awareness about our natural world, can be conducted at our location or at local 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 from puppet friends what animals do during winter.

For more information on our Early Childhood Education programs and/or to schedule a program, please visit our website at www.silverlakenaturecenter.org and/or contact PattiAnn at palynn@buckscounty.org or 267-880-5022.

Kids & Nature Event

Tuesday, December 29th & Wednesday, December 30th 9am to 4pm

Due to popular demand, our extended Kids & Nature Days are returning! Spend some of your winter break with us! Six to ten-year olds are invited to join us as we explore the trails, play games, make a craft, and visit with our animals! Activities will be held both outdoors and indoors, so please dress for the weather. Light snacks will be provided, but please be sure to bring a lunch.

Sign up for one or both days! **Fee per day per child:** \$35 member; \$40 non-member. For more information and/or to register, please call 215-785-1177, visit our website at www.silverlakenaturecenter.org, or email palynn@buckscounty.org. Registration and payment are due by December 22nd.

Volunteer Accomplishments:

Our wonderful volunteers have helped in too many ways to count. We had a hardworking crew here for our Waterway Cleanup. They were able to remove several tons of litter from our local waterways. A huge “thanks” to our sponsor, DOW, who partnered with International Coastal Cleanup and Keep PA Beautiful to make this day a success. As does the Watershed Monitoring group who continues to chemically test the Mill Creek-Otter Creek watershed for pollutants.

Our Flea Market - Craft Fair was a big success thanks to the help of all of our volunteers leading the way to make it a great event. Without all of you wonderful volunteers, we couldn't host such great events. Our display staff continues to represent us at offsite events, expanding our support and reach. Our animal care volunteers are able to take great care of our turtles, snakes, and pond tank. Greeters are one of the reasons why everyone gets a friendly welcome to our Center, and they do a wonderful job. The volunteers who help us maintain our trails and keep track of maintenance issues include Sue Grayeski, Bob Pearson, Marty Shively, and Janice Rhodes.

Our volunteer mailers have done a great job getting our mailings out in a timely fashion. The mailings are led by retired SLNC Administrative Assistant, Carolyn Hankerson. Her expertise is put to use as she coordinates the tasks for the other volunteers.

Volunteer mailers include:

Mary Lou Boyer, Joan Foley, Jean Winerip, Diana Bullard, Mary Ida Reitz, Marie Wojcik, Elaine Gramlich, John McGrath, Regula Sheehan, Jeanne Stemmer, Margaret McGinnis, & Charlotte Doan.

Girl Scout Project Update:

Hannah Leszcynski completed her Silver Award by adding new features to our Kids Play Area including a birds' nest, reading nook, and nature library box. Monica Weikel & Alyssa Takach completed their Silver Awards by refurbishing our Kids Crawl Trail & adding animal footprints on the Kids Play Area bridge. Finally, Shannon Brown completed her Silver Award by creating a Kids Play Area mural on our garage wall. Looking toward the future, Clare Weikel will complete her Gold Award by revitalizing our Interpretive Backpack Tours.

Volunteer of the Quarter: Pat Coleman

Pat started volunteering with us at the beginning of 2013. Since then she has put in 200-300 hours a year helping in every way needed. She has contributed to the Center in so many ways. She has completed our master naturalist training, leads educational programs as a naturalist aide, and helps at special events and on the trails. She also works in the office to help with our database management and accounting. Pat gives back to the Master Naturalist Program by teaching classes and leading field trips. She is an active member of our Board and performs the duties of Treasurer. As a Board member she has been vital to moving the organization forward and being a great liaison for staff and board interaction. Pat brings a wonderful knowledge base and experience to our organization and we look forward to seeing how she helps us grow into the future!

“Thank you” is so simple to say, yet it doesn't fully express the gratitude that is felt when we stop to think about your contributions to the Center. For each day that has passed since the last publication of this list, there have been many acts, donations, visits, and meaningful contributions made by strangers, visitors, volunteers and members to the daily functioning of the Center:

John McGrath for sweeping the front walkway, stocking the bird seed, and assisting staff with setting up and breaking down meeting areas; **Colleen Sequeira & Tim Kearney** for Afterschool Nature Camp snacks; **Len Jankowski** for preparing the soup for volunteer work days (Have we told you how tasty it is? Mmm good!); **Maggie Strucker** for a television which makes viewing DVD's and VCR tapes possible; **Nancy Bartle** for turtle food; **Bob Pearson** for stone circle weedwacking and meadow trail & tree maintenance; **Marion Walter** for donating tickets to use for raffles, a poster of Stone Henge to be hung in the Earthship and marshmallows for our campfire programs; **Jeanne Stemmer** for donating plants for the pond tank, breads/desserts for the Volunteer Work Days; **Jackie Conroy** for donating nature books (that can be shared in our book-lending box); **Sue Grayeski** for donating logs and rocks/features for our animal habitats, sweeping the front walk & exhibit area, and keeping the display windows clean; **Eileen Swank** for bringing in her adjustable duster and taking care of the various webs and dust bunnies, and also for leading the campfire portion of our night-time programs; **Sue Kiernan** for assisting with our night-time programs, for helping to keep our exhibit area clean, and for donating craft supplies; **Tony Garwood** for fixing the issues with the Fresh Water tank in the display area and his continued care of the Earthship; **Steve Vitarelli** for stepping up to do what no one else could – installing our rainwater filtration system in the Earthship; **Dave Chalfant** for his talent and expertise in overseeing the Water Monitoring; **Sandi Wah** for editing our publications; **Theresa Vassallo** for donating an Origami Owl gift basket to be raffled at Bob Mercer's Retirement Party. **We thank you all!**

Upcoming Events

Winter Birding

Saturday, January 23: Barnegat Bay, 8 am - 5 pm

Saturday, February 20: New Jersey's North Shore, 8 am - 5 pm

Fee: \$15 member, \$19 non-member

Please register and pay at least ten days prior to the trip date. Call 215-785-1177.



Adult Education Classes & Trips

For adults who wish to further their natural history knowledge in a fun and hands-on learning environment!

- March 26 - Phil Getty: Geology @ 10am-4pm
- April 23 - Kyle Loucks: Herpetology @ 10am-2pm
- April 30 - Pat Coleman: Plants @ 10am-2pm



\$30 members/\$40 non-members
pre-registration required.



Annual Meeting and Volunteer Recognition

Saturday, March 19, 2016 10 am - 12 noon

Join us as we recognize the hard work of our volunteers and thank everyone for sharing their time, talent and friendship this year. We hope to see you all there!

RSVP to Jenn by Friday, March 12th at jlbilger@buckscounty.org



More Bird Seed Sales

Order your sunflower seed, Silver Lake mix, conservation mix, thistle, peanut hearts, sunflower chips and suet by:

January 29th for pick up February 6th
March 25th for pick up April 2nd

Order online, by phone, or in person.
We accept Visa, MasterCard, and Discover.

Hobbies, Clubs and Group Involvement

Symbionts ~ Clubs that meet at the Nature Center:

New members are welcome

West Chester University Harp Ensemble -

Rehearses on third Monday at 6 pm. Come & listen.

For info: Gloria Galante, ggharp@comcast.net.

Focal Planes Foto Club -

Meets on the second and fourth Tuesdays at 7 pm.

Contact Heather: hebaker1@gmail.com.

S. Bucks Garden Club -

Meets on the first Tuesday at 7 pm.

Call Ellen Miller at ellenmiller24@comcast.net for information.

Artists of Bristol -

Meets on the second Wednesday at 7 pm.

Contact: John at 215 595-8295 or e-mail at johnstwyner@verizon.net.

Delaware River Fishermen's Association -

Meets on the last Wednesday of the month at 7 pm. Join us! For information: Scott at 215 989-0153.

Yoga -

Meets every Thursday at 7:30 pm.

This is a class for all ages and abilities.

For information call Deb & Joe at 267 808-1071.

Consider Silver Lake Nature Center for Your Next Birthday Party or Other Special Event!

SLNC offers a variety of options for children (of all ages), as well as grownup birthday parties, bridal/baby showers, anniversaries, other special events, and meetings.

Different types of parties we offer include Day-time Parties, Night Hikes, Campfires, and Kayak trips. We'll work with you to find the right program for your event. Fees vary according to program.

Some of our themes are: Butterflies; Insects; Spiders; Frogs; Rabbits; Squirrels; Worms; Damsels & Dragons; Dinosaurs & Cousins; Tracks & Scat; and more. If there is a nature-related theme that you'd like, but it is not listed, please let us know, and we'll work with you to make that happen, too!!

Contact PattiAnn at 267-880-5022 or palyann@buckscounty.org.





Silver Lake Nature Center
1306 Bath Road
Bristol, PA 19007

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PAID
Levittown, PA 19055
Permit #302

Address service requested.

Mark Your Calendar

It's Maple Syrup Time!

For *one day* in February, we will be demonstrating the old-fashioned process of collecting sap from trees and boiling it down to make maple syrup.

Participants will learn the history, legends, early collection, and modern production of this sweet, nutritious treat.

Come out and join the fun! \$6/person (all ages)

February 20th, 2 - 3:30pm

Call the Nature Center or visit www.silverlakenaturecenter.org to register.



Fine Spirits and Fare on the Delaware

Saturday, April 30, 2016 5 - 7 pm

Join us for an evening of fine wine and food pairings at the beautiful home of Cissi and Louis Quattrocchi, 800 Radcliffe Street in the historic town of Bristol Borough.

Enjoy a wonderful evening on the Delaware!

Tickets: \$55 per person
\$100 per couple

All proceeds benefit the Silver Lake Nature Center.

Coming soon: SLNC's Summer Camp!

(Great holiday gift idea!)

We offer 8 weeks of full and half day camp, Monday thru Friday, beginning June 27th, plus special weeks for preschoolers and teens! Sign the kids up for one week — or all of them!

Call Jenn for details at 215 785-1177.

Please share this newsletter with a friend. Thanks!