

River Talk

Newsletter of the Carantouan Greenway



Fall 2019

Tackling Climate Change

Wildlife ecologist Steve Beissinger from the University of California recently told the Sierra Club magazine that, *“The debate about whether human-driven climate change is happening is over. You can ask the plants and animals. They stopped debating and started reproducing earlier, flowering earlier, and returning earlier as the climate has changed. It’s now a question about how we will respond, and will the response be fast enough.”*

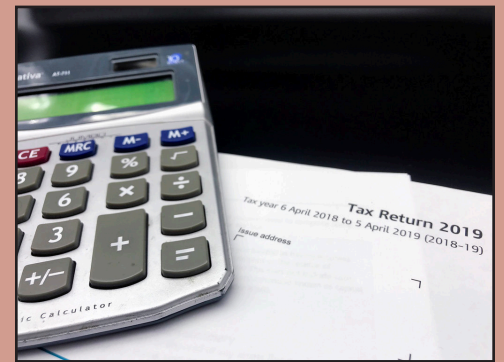
There have been a few grand proposals, like plant a trillion trees or the Green New Deal, but they are either complicated, expensive, and/or long-term potential solutions. What we need is the collective effort of all of us to focus on making daily choices within our means to rein in greenhouse gas emissions. Start by voting for representatives at all levels of government who are committed to tackling climate change. You can find plenty of ideas by searching the web; some of those preferred are: replace fossil fuels with wind or solar; increase energy efficiency throughout your home; shop electric/gas generation choices for eco-alternatives; drive less and/or buy more efficient vehicles; plant trees; support local farms; switch to a more plant-based diet; buy less stuff; buy energy-efficient products; and recycle.

Make some changes now - your children and grand-children will thank you!

You Can Still Gain Tax Benefits for Charitable Contributions

In the past, when you’ve made charitable donations, you were able to provide support to a worthy organization and you received some valuable tax benefits. But with the passage of the new tax laws, things may have changed considerably for many people. According to Phil Sunderlund of Edward Jones’ Williamsport office, in certain instances it is still possible. If you own an IRA and you’re 70-1/2 or

Continued on page 3...Taxes.



In this issue

- Earth Day Run
- Guided Nature Walks
- Horse Nettle
- A Pine Falls
- Tackling Climate Change
- Tax Benefits for Charitable Contributions
- Tree Identification for Diahoga Trail



Earth Day Run Brings Out Variety of Runners

Young and old, two-legged and four-legged runners turned out for the annual trail run. Despite moving the 4K from March to April for the first time, runners still ran headlong into some intermittent snow showers. Vegetable soup warmed the chilly souls afterwards. With a plethora of prizes donated by local business and individuals, all participants went home with a prize. A special thanks to the volunteers that helped keep the runners pointed in the right direction.

Guided Nature Walks

If you are reading this newsletter chances are that you are already a big lover of nature and the outdoors. But if you really want to heighten your experience you really owe yourself the gift of joining Marty on one of his guided tours. How often have you walked past a wildflower and wondered what it was. Perhaps you walked right past a gall without ever noticing it, unaware of the fantastic little creature that created it. On these walks Marty surprises and delights participants dispensing facts from his encyclopedic knowledge of nature. The next time the Greenway offers a guided tour treat yourself to a fascinating hour of the facts and science that make up this wonderful thing we call nature.



Emma views aquatic specimens at Carantouan Greenway's vernal pool field trip.

Vernal pools are one of nature's adaptations for organisms to avoid the heavy fish predation that threaten reproduction for many animals. Vernal pools are temporary bodies of water, isolated from running water, that provide a short period of time for organisms to use its resources and get out. It does not mean that its breeding vertebrates such as peepers, green frogs, wood frogs, tree frogs and salamanders are free from predation as herons and mink will visit the pools looking for dinner. The greatest threat however is a dry short season where the tadpoles and larvae do not have time to develop far enough along to crawl or hop out. This year's continuous rain has made our vernal pools a success. Visitors took advantage of the Greenway's vernal pool exploration to witness several pools' productivity.

Identifying Wildflowers



Marty instructs participants how to identify wildflowers using the Newcomb's Wildflower Guide. In this case it was determined to be a jewel weed.

Identifying Trees



Looking up at a hackberry on the Diahoga Trail, Marty describes how the leaves and bark help identify the tree.



Don't forget to look down, too. By spotting clues on the ground such as the winged seeds of a box elder on the ground, we can predict there is a tree nearby.



Horse Nettle

A thing of beauty, *Solanum carolinense*, with its five white petals which are fused at their bases. There are five erect banana-like stamens that surround the single green stigma of the pistil. The stamens produce the pollen, which has to reach the stigma of the pistil. The cross pollination is usually due to bees. Horse nettle is a member of the nightshade family and its inedible fruit contains solanum, an alkaloid that is toxic to us. The flower is photographed juxtaposed on the umbelliferous flowering wild carrot, otherwise known as Queen Anne's Lace. Both will flower through much of the summer.

Tree Identification for New Diahoga Trail

Recently the Greenway received a grant from the Bradford County United Way to provide tree identification signs for the newly opened Diahoga Trail that runs from the Athens Municipal lot to Riverfront Park. Walkers will be able to use the Greenway's established tree identification app to identify trees on Diahoga Trail this spring.

A Pine Falls

The Wildwood Reserve lost a pine this winter. A large evergreen with clusters of 5 needles in a group toppled to the ground exposing several large rectangular cavities. These cavities were due to the search, exposure and feeding activity of our largest black, white and red woodpecker – the size of a crow. This woodpecker works up and down the major tree trunk and listens to the sound of large black ants known as carpenter ants. They can hear the insects working inside and make the openings to feed on them as they run up and down in their galleries.



The bark of this tree is full of cracks and crevices that serve as hidden sites for insects, spiders and insect eggs. When this pine was alive one could observe tuxedo-dressed black and white straight-billed nuthatches working down the tree searching to find their next meal. On the other hand one may less commonly observe a drab brown-streaked tiny bird with a whitish belly and a decurved bill spiraling up from the bottom of the pine towards the top searching for its next meal as well.

In the winter of 2015 the top of one of the pines served as a nesting site for our largest owl which raised two fledgling great-horns. Along the Susquehanna this pine species, which rises above all our other trees, often serves as a nesting tree for our Bald Eagle. Can you identify the pine, the woodpecker or the little brown bird with the decurved bill?

Taxes, continued from page 1

older, you generally must start taking withdrawals from your traditional IRA. If instead of withdrawing the money, the IRA owner decides to transfer the funds directly to a qualified charity, the distributed amount can be excluded from the IRA owner's income. So, in effect, you can get a sizable tax benefit from your generosity. In fact, you may be able to move up to \$100,000 from your IRA per year to an eligible charity and have it count as your required minimum withdrawal, even if the amount donated is more than the required minimum withdrawal. Additionally, you could name a qualified charity as a beneficiary of your IRA or 401(k). This can allow the assets to pass free of income tax to the charitable group, contribution is not deductible, but you can still avoid the capital gains taxes you'd have to pay if you sold the securities, rather than donating them.

Friends of the Carantouan Greenway

Yes! Count me in! I believe in protecting farm and forestland, wildlife habitat and watersheds in the Penn-York Valley. I want to become a member of Carantouan Greenway!

- Mighty Oak \$500/year
- Golden Eagle..... \$75/year
- Stargazer \$50/year
- Trailblazer \$25/year
- Other \$ _____
- Renewing member** **New member**

- I would like to receive the newsletter via email. Email address _____
- I prefer to receive the newsletter in the mail.
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Gifts to Carantouan Greenway are fully tax deductible! (Tax ID Number 23-2750872)

Please send all contributions to Carantouan Greenway, P.O. Box 441, Sayre, PA 18840-0441 or P.O. Box 827, Waverly, NY 14892-0827 or on-line at carantouangreenway.org/joinonline



Carantouan Greenway

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