

## Letter from CRC Executive Director Meghan Lockman

Happy New Year everyone, and welcome to 2021, CRC's 50+1 anniversary year! We thought this year called for celebration and more connection, so we are excited to launch our quarterly newsletter this month. We hope this new year brings you peace, health, and joy, and we hope it also brings you outdoors. Even as the snow falls and the days are short (but getting longer), CRC is hard at work preparing ways to help our watersheds. Every quarter we will bring you news of what we've been up to, what we're working on with our volunteers, and other information from around the Chester, Ridley, and Crum watersheds. If you haven't been out to join us lately, we hope you feel comfortable masking up and getting your hands dirty at a planting, hiking with us as we learn about our watersheds, or getting muddy during our spring streams cleanup. We all look forward to the days when events are easier to plan and can include larger groups, but we are putting safety first and still carrying on with planting trees and cleaning streams, learning and having fun along the way. In the meantime, please enjoy this newsletter, and feel free to drop us a line anytime. Thank you for being a part of our watershed community.



## Here Comes Streams Cleanup! MARCH 20, 2021

We are very excited to announce that CRC's Spring Streams Cleanup will take place March 20, 2021. We are so glad to get back to work on this, with some obvious and necessary adjustments for the ongoing Covid crisis. This year's Streams Cleanup will feature smaller groups, social distancing, masks and hand sanitizer, and of course gloves. For more information, check CRC's web site under Streams Cleanup. We hope to see you there!

## New Walks to Anticipate

The Education and Outreach Committee has committed to an enhanced nature walk schedule for 2021. Some upcoming walks will include: a bird or meditation hike, a dog-friendly walk, a Chester hike including a visit to the Caleb Pusey historical house with the Chester Historical Society and hikes the at Longpoint Wildlife Sanctuary, Garrett Williamson, and Newlin Grist Mill.

<i>March</i>	Longpoint Wildlife Sanctuary Hike	focus on trail making
<i>May or June</i>	Garrett Williamson Hike	focus on birds or meditation
<i>August</i>	Newlin Grist Mill family-friendly hike	focus on site archeology
<i>Sept or Oct</i>	Caleb Pusey House walk and visit	focus on history of site
<i>Nov or Dec</i>	Rose Tree Park dog-friendly hike	focus on former hunt club history



## Coming Events:

Feb. 5-6	Invasives removal in Malvern
Feb. 19-20	Invasives removal in Malvern
March 12-13	Tree Planting at Sun Village Park in Chester
March 20	Streams Cleanup!
March 26-27	Tree planting at Caleb Pusey House in Upland
April 16-17	Tree planting in Malvern
April 30-May 1	Tree planting in Thornbury, Chester County

To volunteer for any of the above plantings or invasives removal events, please contact [Lynn@crcwatersheds.org](mailto:Lynn@crcwatersheds.org). To volunteer for the Streams Cleanup, please sign up on crc's website: [crcwatersheds.org](http://crcwatersheds.org).



## Winter is the Time to Target Invasive Plants in the Garden

by David Hilbert, CRC Tree Planting Coordinator

Here in the Mid-Atlantic, our winters are not so harsh that we can't start preparing our land for the spring, and what better way to do so than focus on the removal and suppression of invasive plants that are so problematic the rest of the year? Here are three invasive species in the Delaware Valley, all of which have the potential to spread even into undisturbed woodland, that are best found and eliminated in the winter:

Garlic Mustard is a biennial, meaning it has a two-year life cycle. It establishes itself as a low-growing rosette in the fall of the first year, before flowering with a 3 to 4-foot-tall stem the following spring. Part of what gives garlic mustard a competitive edge over our native plants is its rosette's ability to stay green through the winter and photosynthesize on warmer winter days; this rosette is exactly what you can use to identify the plant. With the removal of each rosette, easily identifiable by the crinkled, kidney-shaped, scalloped leaves, bearing a distinctive, well, mustardy-garlic smell, you can create more room for native spring-blooming wildflowers that are increasingly displaced by this undesired plant.



There are both native and invasive species of *Euonymus* in the Delaware Valley, but unfortunately the invasive species have become more and more prominent, as they are less of a target of deer predation and thus have more of an opportunity to bring their seeds to maturity. In the winter, one of the invasive species, *Euonymus alatus*, or Winged Euonymus (also called Burning Bush), reveals its most obvious characteristic - the corky 'wings' around the stem that occur at either 180 or 90 degrees of one another. Digging up this plant, which usually appears as a 3 to 8-foot-tall shrub in our region, and removing it entirely, is preferred, but if all that can be done is cutting it down to the ground, then we encourage you to do so!

Lastly, many of you might be familiar with Japanese Stiltgrass, an annual grass which carpets shady forest floors throughout our region, reducing these rich soils to an ecologically unproductive monoculture. This time of year, it's seen in the form of 'rolling carpets' or 'blonde waves' of dead grass among the trees, sprawling over dead logs it climbed in an effort to reroot its stems. While Stiltgrass has native look-alikes, none of them share the former's winter appearance. Prevention lies in the fact that this is an annual plant that needs light to germinate; smothering the forest floor where you've seen it occur before with 3 to 5 inches of leaf litter (often available from your local municipality) is a great way to prevent enough light from reaching the soil surface come spring time, while giving an advantage to native wildflowers that usually have no problem pushing through the leaf litter. To keep the leaf litter in place on a slope, you can purchase biodegradable netting and anchors from a range of suppliers, such as Grainger Industrial Supply.





# FALL 2020

## It was a Busy Fall for CRC!

2020 held a busy Fall for CRC. From tree plantings to maintenance work, nature walks to award ceremonies, CRC happily got back to community work after the solitary Covid-influenced spring and summer.

### Back to Work: Tree Plantings and Maintenance

Fall is one of the best seasons for planting trees in our area, and CRC made good use of the weather. The plantings also provided an outdoor, socially-distanced activity that brought in community and corporate partner volunteers.

Our Okehocking planting involved the enhancement of the riparian buffer to Delchester Run, a tributary of Ridley Creek. Given the site's extensive wastewater infrastructure, including a sprayfield and a water filtration pond, a priority was selecting plants, such as Scarlet Oak and Allegheny Serviceberry, that could help filter runoff entering the stream, tolerating both the elevated chlorine levels of the treated wastewater, as well as the steep terrain of the site. The sharp rises in elevation, often approaching 100 feet, offered magnificent views for the volunteers who courageously trekked shovels and mattocks up the slopes.

"This was a perfect day," said volunteer Wendy of West Chester, who also signed up to be a CRC Streams Cleanup site coordinator before that event was cancelled last spring. "I love that the volunteers are all different ages. I made a new friend today who's in 6<sup>th</sup> grade; he learned so much and was telling me all about it. He could be playing video games and he's out planting trees!"

Our planting in Willistown Township off of White Horse Road, in the upper reaches of Crum Creek's watershed, was intended to enhance the freshwater habitat of native trout and bass. These fish are dependent on cool waters shaded by flood-tolerant trees such as River Birch and Sycamore, that simultaneously anchor the streambank and prevent siltation that can affect the species' spawning. Planting occurred along both sides of the stream on a frosty morning after a heavy rainfall, that required our volunteers to bravely ford the cold waters of the rushing creek to reach the isolated opposite bank.

CRC would also like to thank Aqua for providing us with a plethora of gloves!





## A Beautiful Day for a Nature Walk

CRC's Education and Outreach Committee chose a beautiful day for its Fall nature walk at the Okehocking Nature Preserve on October 24. A brisk morning slowly warmed to sunny, clear fall weather. Willistown Township's Parks and Recreation Director, Mary Hundt, gave participants some history of the area (including her work to make the park a reality) and the farmhouse where CRC rents offices, and CRC Tree Planting Coordinator David Hilbert also highlighted CRC's tree plantings throughout Okehocking – from the most recent, at a mere week old, to much more established trees that have grown to shed their cages. He also talked about local invasives and natural elements of the landscape.



## Dining for CRC!

During the month of January, the Bright Spot Café in Newtown Square is hosting a "Dine and Donate" promotion for CRC that will provide us with 10% of dinner proceeds when customers use CRC's special code (DINECRC). This promotion runs for the entire month of January. The restaurant is featuring several nonprofits during the month, so it is very important to include the DINECRC code.



Other similar promotions are in the works with Swarthmore Pizza and Iron Hill Brewery. If you have a favorite restaurant or pizza place that you know hosts events to support local nonprofits, please drop a note to Susan Ethridge, CRC Development & Events Coordinator. [susan@crcwatersheds.org](mailto:susan@crcwatersheds.org).



# Oktoberfeste

## CRC Environmental Awards and Oktoberfeste

CRC presented our Annual Environmental Awards at an Oktoberfeste celebration on October 22 via zoom. The awards celebrate commitment to the environment and our local watersheds. Anne Murphy received the CRC Environmental Leadership Award and Rick Ray received the CRC Volunteer Stewardship Award. "CRC's annual awards celebrate those who love and care for our watersheds," says CRC Board President Ted Leisenring. "Our mission is to protect our local watersheds and we can't do it alone. Thank goodness there are talented individuals like this year's award winners to help."

### Anne Murphy, CRC Environmental Leadership Award

Anne Murphy was CRC's first employee, and served as the organization's Executive Director from 2003 through 2013. Prior to that, she was Development Director at Green Valleys Watersheds Association. During her tenure at CRC, Anne initiated many watershed restoration and educational programs, including the funding and planting of many trees on public lands. She also worked with Delco Manning Trout Unlimited on several post dam removal cleanups and restorations, partnered with municipalities on programs for homeowners and employees, worked with Marple Newtown High School on an annual assessment of Crum Creek and initiated the annual streams cleanups.

Anne has a background in horticulture from Temple Ambler and an MBA, which helped in her work at CRC and subsequent work as a Natural Resources Volunteer at Valley Forge National Historical Park. She has partnered with members from Open Land Conservancy, her Township's Environmental Advisory Council, and Valley Forge Trout Unlimited to design and get approval for an 18-month Stormwater Citizens Advisory Task Force for Tredyffrin Township. In her free time, Anne enjoys hiking the trails at Valley Forge Park and working on her native plant garden.

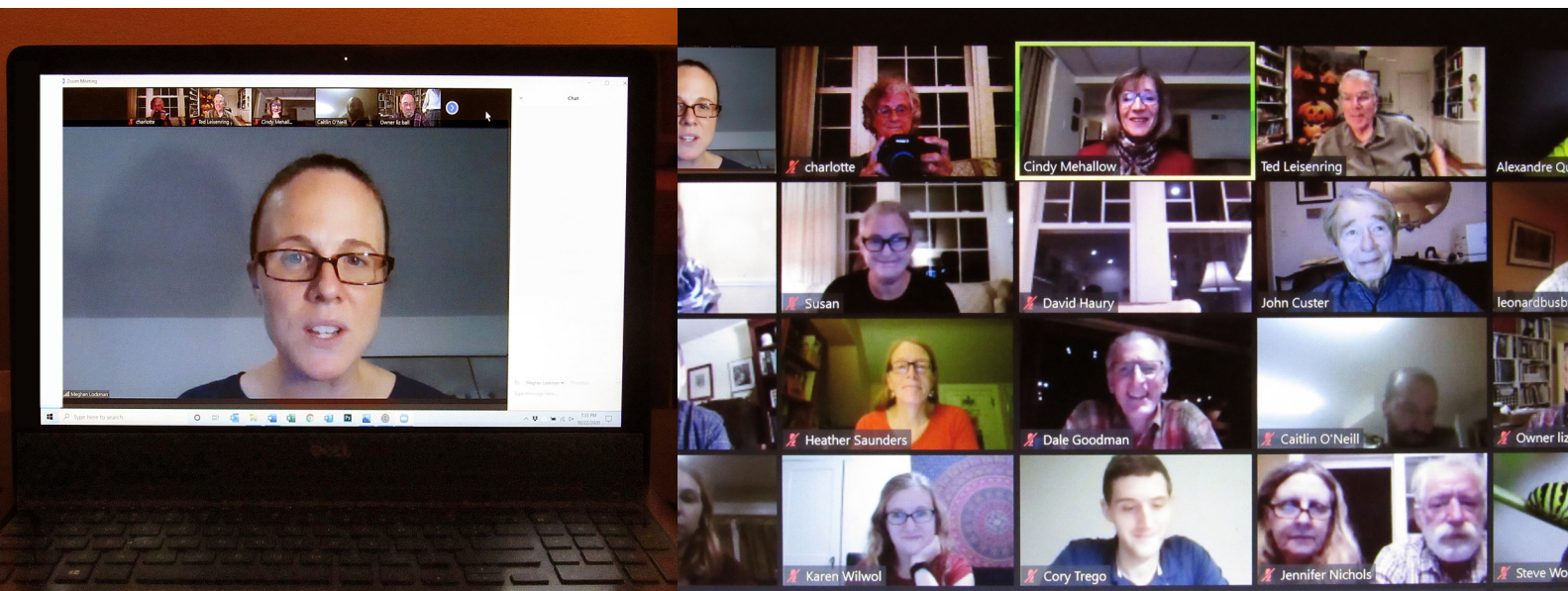


### Rick Ray, Stewardship Award

Rick Ray serves on the CRC Tree Planting Committee and has volunteered at the CRC Streams Cleanup. Last summer, he worked on maintenance of a CRC planting at Rose Tree Park, donating more than 30 hours to lift tree cages, weed and remove vines, enhance garden fencing and update caging. A self-described "Tree Hugger," Rick earned his B.S. in Ornamental Horticulture at North Carolina State University and his M.S. at Virginia Tech. He taught horticulture for seven years at Temple-Ambler and then 20 years at Delaware Valley College in Doylestown, PA. Rick also managed the campus nursery and the campus arboretum at the college. He has been teaching at the Arboretum School of the Barnes Foundation for 25 years. A guest lecturer at several colleges, arboreta, garden clubs and plant societies on tree and shrub selection, culture, and propagation, Rick frequently volunteers as a plant expert at local arboreta plant sales. Rick and his wife, Liz Ball, started the Marple Tree Commission in 2007. After 10 years as Chairman, Rick is now horticulturist, overseeing the planting and maintenance of the 400 trees in Marple Township planted by the commission.

### Oktoberfeste

The Oktoberfeste featured the thematic snacks with a variety of beer and cider tasting. Cindy Mehallow, Vice Chair of the Newtown Township EAC, spoke about earlier CRC plantings in Newtown township. And CRC Tree Planting Coordinator David Hilbert described some of his summer work maintaining CRC planting sites in both Chester and Delaware Counties. Many thanks to 2SP Brewery for delicious donated beer, and to all our generous sponsors.





## CRC's Annual Community Report and Video

For the first time, CRC's recent Annual Community Report is fully "green," a purely on-line publication. Featured on the web site, the report follows a winding creek, with an offshoot representing dashed plans for our formal 50<sup>th</sup> celebration, done in by the Covid virus. (We have decided to celebrate 2021 as our 50<sup>th</sup> plus one and have many fun plans, so stay tuned!) Clicking on any of the photos along the image brings the viewer to more details. As an added feature, we replaced our welcome letters from Meghan Lockman, Executive Director, and Ted Leisenring, President of the Board, with a fun video. We hope you will go to [crcwatersheds.org](http://crcwatersheds.org) and check it out, if you haven't already.



## Do you follow CRC on Social Media?



It goes without saying that social media is an important part of all organizations' communications, and CRC is no exception. Please check out the links to CRC's Facebook page – [facebook.com/CRCWatersheds/](https://facebook.com/CRCWatersheds/) and Instagram account [instagram.com/crcwatersheds/](https://instagram.com/crcwatersheds/) for fun entries with tips for keeping watersheds healthy, upcoming CRC events, and lots of beautiful images that celebrate the Chester, Ridley, Crum Watersheds and our wonderful volunteers! Both accounts are also accessible via the website.



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CHEERS TO 50 YEARS 

## Let Amazon Smile Help Support our Watersheds!

As the plethora of Amazon vans make clear, many people are shopping almost exclusively via Amazon, especially during the Covid crisis. Did you know that a simple sign up will bring a small percentage of each purchase to CRC to support the work we do? Simply sign in to Amazon Smile, choose CRC Watersheds Association as your charity, and shop away. The service does not add to your costs at all, but can make a big difference in our watersheds!