



November 2022



Happy Thanksgiving

Willistown Township and the Willistown Police Department would like to wish everyone a safe and Happy Thanksgiving. The Township offices will be closed Thursday, 11/24 and Friday, 11/25. There are secure drop boxes located beside the front and rear doors at our

Administration Building at 688 Sugartown Road for residents to drop off any correspondence or sewer payments while we are closed.

Willistown Township Proposed 2023 Budget

The 2023 Budget was presented at the Board of Supervisors meeting on November 14. The budget and budget highlights presentation are both available for review at the Township building and on the Township website: willistown.pa.us/budget.



The Board will consider adoption of the proposed budget at their regular meeting on December 12, 2022, at 7 PM. Join us in person in the boardroom at the rear of the Township building located at 688 Sugartown Road or online via [Zoom](#).



Winter Preparedness

Temperatures are dropping... Is your vehicle's emergency kit packed and ready to go? Preparedness is key during winter emergencies. Make sure your vehicle is stocked with the following to be winter ready:

Flashlight and batteries
Jumper cables
Snow shovel
First aid supplies
Blanket
Sand

Battery-operated radio
Cellphone and charger
Matches and candles
Extra warm clothing, gloves, and a blanket
Ice scraper
Bottled water & non-perishable food

Anything else you may need to accommodate family traveling with you (special

medication, baby supplies, pet food, etc.)

Visit penndot.pa.gov/winter to find more information for the upcoming winter season.

Ronnie Park Neighborhood Stormwater

Residents of the Ronnie Park neighborhood on Jacqueline Drive, Sunset Drive, and Rollingview Drive are invited to a **general information session regarding stormwater issues in the area on Thursday, December, 1 at 7:00 pm** in the Township meeting room located at 688 Sugartown Road or [virtually via Zoom](#) (pre-registration required). The meeting will be recorded and will be made available on our website for those who cannot attend. Township engineers will discuss the field work conducted and plans to address stormwater issues in the neighborhood. For more information visit our [Ronnie Park stormwater page](#).

Willistown Police Department Update: Blue Beards for Charity

It's "beard growing season" for our officers at Willistown Police Department. Blue Beards for Charity was established by police officers in Chester County as a way to give back to the community. Participating officers donate \$100 and are permitted to grow facial hair in the months of October, November and December. We will continue to support several local charities including Unite for Her, The Sambuco Children's Education Fund, A Child's Light and the Chester County Crime Victims Center.



We are hoping to expand our fundraising to the private sector and encourage anyone to donate to this amazing charity. Checks can be made out to "Blue Beards for Charity" and dropped off at the police station located at 688 Sugartown Road. Contact Lt. Heim at 610-251-0222 with any questions.



Oh, The Holidays! Decorate, Taste - Watch Your Waste

By Patti Lynn, Recycling Resources Manager at Chester County Solid Waste Authority

Quick – what time of year generates the most trash for landfills? That's right, it's the holiday season. Online shopping and shipping, wrapping paper, more uneaten food, toys, and electronics being replaced. You get the idea. Household waste increases about 25% this time of year! Can you be more TrashSmart? Try these ideas (or even just one!):

- Downsize – Smaller gathering, less decorations, careful gifting so you create less waste
- Shop (and wrap!) with reusable bags
- Have guests bring reusable containers for leftovers they may take home
- Reduce food waste by using an [online food calculator](#) to estimate how much food is needed to keep guests happy and healthy
- Electronic invitations – Evite®, Greenvelope, Punchbowl®, Zazzle, Inc.
- Gifts for experiences – tickets to an event, museum or zoo membership, cooking class or trip
- Gifts of your time – Babysitting, pet sitting, gardening help, lessons for a new hobby, teach someone a new skill
- Reusable, useful containers such as cookies in a flowerpot, or jewelry in a new pair of gloves

RECYCLING BIN: Non-metallic wrapping paper and greeting cards without batteries

COMPOST: Evergreens, tea bags, coffee grounds, leaves, twigs, fresh cranberries

GARBAGE CAN: Cellophane, tissue paper, musical greeting cards, plastic ware

BATTERIES are special - [Here's what to do with them](#)

So, this year...celebrate how mindful you are with sustainable consumption and disposal practices.

What GOOD behaviors and habits can YOU start on your way to being TrashSmart? And New Year's resolutions are just around the corner...

Willistown Parks & Recreation News

Willistown Township Community Garden

Spring 2023 Openings

Located in [Sugartown Preserve](#), the Willistown Community Garden is a volunteer garden under the oversight of Willistown Parks and Recreation where Willistown and area residents share fellowship over gardening and gather to grow organic fruits, vegetables, and herbs.

The gardeners donate a portion of their harvest to local [Chester County Food Bank](#) food cupboards. Historically, the gardeners have donated over 900 pounds of fresh produce per year for Chester County neighbors in need.

Gardeners commit to the garden through a pledge outlining expectations, requirements, and agreements, and there are volunteer liability waiver(s).

- [Willistown Community Garden Pledge \(PDF\)](#)
- [Adult Volunteer Waiver \(PDF\)](#)
- [Youth Volunteer Waiver \(PDF\)](#)

If you are considering becoming a member, please review the Pledge and Waiver(s) to be sure you are comfortable with the time and diligence needed to participate in the garden. [Contact Mary](#), Director of Parks and Recreation, with any questions after reviewing the materials. If interested, kindly execute this [Willistown Community Garden Interest Form](#). The deadline for membership inquiries is February 14, 2023.



Pictured left to right: Ted Leisenring, CRC President, chats with Bart VanValkenburgh, Willistown Township's Historical Commission Chair and member Terry Kile, as Eloise patiently waits for the hike.

Inaugural Okehocking Sip, Story, and Stroll — Cheers to the First of Many!

Willistown Parks and Recreation and the Chester Ridley Crum Watersheds Association (CRC) led the first Okehocking Sip, Story and Stroll in October. After sipping hot beverages and mingling, Bart VanValkenburgh, Chair of the Willistown Township Historical Commission, entertained the group with thoughtful stories and images about historical transportation and land use in the area. *Thank you, Bart!*

Willistown Parks and Recreation Director, Mary Hundt, then led the stroll highlighting the different landscape features and management practices at Okehocking as well as the combined conservation and cleanup efforts conducted by CRC and Willistown Parks and Recreation over the past almost twenty years!

We saw some spectacular birds including this Broad Winged Hawk overlooking the latest CRC/Willistown Parks collaboration. This fall, approximately one acre of invasive plants was brush hogged from 1,000 feet along the southeast side of Delchester Run, and 100 native trees were installed. The Trees were funded through a grant from the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources to CRC, and CRC and Willistown Parks and Recreation volunteers installed them. *Thank you all for helping to rebuild this important riparian buffer after devastating tree losses to the Emerald Ash Borer!*

Willistown Parks & Rec looks forward to many more partnerships with CRC, the next being another Sip, Story, and Stroll this winter. Stay tuned...

If you'd like to find out more about Chester Ridley Crum Watersheds Association, please [contact Carly](#), their Executive Director. For Willistown Parks and Recreation, [contact Mary](#).



The strollers enjoyed some bird watching as well as being watched by birds including this Broad Winged Hawk and a Great Blue Heron later in the morning.



From Left to Right: Julie Graham (WCT), Drew Gilchrist (PA DCNR), Judy Thomas (Chester County Parks & Preservation), Jeanne Swope (WCT Volunteer), Ted Leisenring (Willistown Township Open Space Review Board), Erik Hetzel (WCT), Michelle Kichline (Chester County Commissioner), Bill Shoemaker (Willistown Township Supervisor), Josh Maxwell (Chester County Commissioner), Kate Etherington (WCT), Bonnie Van Alen (WCT), Mary Hundt (Willistown Township Parks & Recreation), Beth Hucker (WCT Board Chair), Brook Gardner (Willistown Township Open Space Review Board), Molly Perrin (Willistown Township Supervisor).

12 Acres Added to Kirkwood Preserve: Willistown Conservation Trust Hosts Funding Partner Celebration

On Monday, October 24, Willistown Township representatives Bill Shoemaker, Molly Perrin, Ted Leisenring, Mary Hundt, and Brook Gardner attended the Willistown Conservation Trust (WCT) ribbon cutting commemorating the addition of 12 acres to the 83-acre Kirkwood Preserve, owned and maintained by Willistown Conservation Trust. The ceremony honored the funding partners that made the acquisition possible. Grants were provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) through the Keystone Act of 1993, by the Chester County Commissioners through the Chester County Landscapes 21st Century Fund; and by the Willistown Township Supervisors through the Willistown Township Open Space Fund.

Partners attending included Willistown Conservation Trust Executive Director Kate Etherington and Director of Land Protection Erik Hetzel; Chester County Commissioners Michelle Kichline and Josh Maxwell (County Commissioner Marian Moskowitz joined WCT before the ceremony); the PA DCNR Grants Coordinator Drew Gilchrist; Willistown Township's Parks & Recreation Director Mary Hundt, Board of Supervisors Chair Bill Shoemaker, Supervisor Molly Perrin, Open Space Review Board Chair Ted Leisenring and Member Brook Gardner; and Chester County Preservation Programs Coordinator Judy Thomas.

Thanks to Willistown Township funding, WCT is installing a stepping stone creek crossing in Crum Creek connecting the main portion of Kirkwood Preserve to additional Kirkwood lands and this new addition. Due to permitting timelines, WCT expects the crossing installation to begin in early fall of 2023, though walkers and hikers with appropriate footwear may cross the creek at this time. The Township also funded an expansion to the parking lot, both projects increasing and assuring easy public access to the preserve.

The Willistown Township Open Space Fund has been a critical component of the conservation of this now 95-acre preserve, it is protected in perpetuity for natural resource and open space protection as well as passive recreation by a Declaration of Covenants, Conditions, and Restrictions (DOCCR) held by Chester County, Willistown Township, and Natural Lands. The DOCCR is attached to the deed and runs with the land forever.

The protection of this open space is also part of a larger 16-acre conservation project across Grubbs Mill Road that enables the preservation of an historic farmstead dating from the late 18th century with an iconic Chester County bank barn known locally as "The Lama Farm." Portions of the property have been placed under conservation easement and restricted from further development allowing for the preservation of an historically significant landscape that embodies the rural character of the Willistown countryside.



Rake Less: Enjoy Fall More and Live In A Better Environment

*A Message from the PA Department of Environmental Protection
By Deborah Klenotic, Deputy Communications Director*

If your fall to-do list includes raking up all the leaves in your yard and lugging them to the

curb, cross this one off, and replace it with a football game, hike, or other fall activity. Then give yourself a pat on the back. By leaving the leaves, you're improving your part of Pennsylvania's environment. Leave some leaves: Your yard will love you for it. Decomposed leaves are free natural nutrients that will strengthen your soil, grass, and gardens. In fact, "the leaves of one large shade tree can be worth as much as \$50 of plant food and humus," [according to Penn State Extension.](#)

Leaf litter also provides much needed winter habitat and forage sources for birds, insects, amphibians, and other small wildlife that are part of the ecosystem we depend on. Did you know some bees, moths, and butterflies can live under thick leaf cover throughout the winter? Fallen leaves also absorb rain and release moisture back into soil and plants as they decompose. Not only does this improve the health of the vegetation in your yard, but it's a great way to [be stormwater smart](#) and help reduce runoff pollution in Pennsylvania's local streams and rivers.

University of Delaware Professor [Doug Tallamy](#), author of the bestselling *Bringing Nature Home*, has increased awareness across the country of the importance of protecting the natural resources in your own backyard—and ways to do it. Get more good tips from the [National Audubon Society](#), [National Wildlife Federation](#), [Habitat Network](#), and other organizations.

Another great reason to leave some leaves in your yard: It keeps them out of landfills. The [U.S. Environmental Protection Agency calculated](#) that, in 2018, landfills received about 10.5 million tons of yard trimmings, including leaves. This was about 7.2 percent of all municipal solid waste that was landfilled.

Lastly, a more natural yard offers a rustic beauty and wildlife activity to watch and enjoy all winter long.



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