



MOVING FORWARD IN EXCITING TIMES: *We are Officially Accredited*

The Land Trust Alliance has approved OLC's application for accreditation, the culmination of a years-long process. The Alliance is the national organization that establishes standards and practices for non-profit land trusts like OLC, all working to protect open space and preserve natural habitats. Quoting from the Trust's Accreditation Commission:

"Land trust accreditation is a mark of distinction, showing that a land trust meets high standards for land conservation. It sends a message to landowners and supporters: 'Invest in us. We are a strong, effective organization you can trust to conserve your land forever.'"

Accreditation demonstrates that a land trust has successfully implemented Land Trust Standards and Practices. Accredited land trusts range from all-volunteer organizations to national groups and protect more than 79% of all land and easements held by land trusts in America.

Accreditation is a catalyst for improvement which offers the assurance that a land trust can keep the promise of perpetuity and that it is worthy of the public trust. So, accreditation strengthens both individual land trusts and America's land conservation movement."

In addition to strengthening our internal management processes, including financial oversight, our accredited status should make it easier to obtain grant funding. Adhering to national best practices also reduces our risk and lowers our insurance premiums, so there are immediate tangible benefits. Our accreditation term runs for five years and will then need to be renewed, so this is not a one-time initiative. It is an ongoing commitment to serving our community in the best way possible. - *Tim Lander*



Addition of New Land Donation Completed



Spotted Wintergreen peeking through the leaf litter in the new property

We are delighted to report that the land donation we previewed in the last edition of Landmarks, the Kendig property, has now been completed! However, the hard work of bringing the property into OLC's portfolio continues. It will be some months before we are able to have an official ribbon-cutting and open the Preserve for public access. Here are some of the things we are working on:

- An application to the Chester County Preservation Partnership program for a grant to help out with the survey, title and stewardship costs associated with the donation. We are grateful to the County for this program, and also to our friends at Saul Ewing for their pro-bono legal expertise throughout the process.
- Collaboration with the Charlestown and East Whiteland Townships to integrate with their open space preservation plans. In particular, Charlestown's ownership of adjacent parcels will allow a broader visitor experience and may facilitate access.
- A management plan. We are giving careful thought to the steps needed to protect and sustain the quality woodland, while allowing public enjoyment. In particular, trails will need to be carefully designed and constructed to allow safe passage on steep slopes.

OLC is very excited about this expansion of its reach back to the Valley Creek headwaters in municipalities beyond Tredyffrin. Please follow the website and Landmarks for updates. - *Ray Clarke*

New Branding

As you have noticed, Landmarks has a new look!

The Conservancy is marking its 80 years and its recent accreditation milestones with an initiative to better connect with its current constituents, increase awareness, engagement, and broaden its appeal, through refreshed branding and expanded communications efforts across the community.

Here's our story: the logo redesign process took 3 months to finalize, with a focus group of volunteers, and was guided by a paid consultant. We started with revising the logo's icon, the graphic symbol in our logo. We explored numerous ideas and finally settled on a tree form in an open landscape. The updated logo symbolizes the open space that OLC sustains, with the tree form based on an actual White Oak planted in Lorimer Preserve in memory of Mitsie Toland, the former President who was so influential in growing the Conservancy's preserved land for over 50 years.

The group selected a more modern, updated typography to support the new graphic icon. Added to the logo is the Conservancy's establishment date of 1939 making us one of the oldest, if not THE oldest land trust in Pennsylvania - an achievement we are proud to share with our community. It took the group a considerable amount of time to select the new logo's color scheme. Well into the process it was realized that the primary use of the logo would be for Preserve roadside signage, which needs to be easily read by motorists driving by Preserve locations. Colors were chosen that would contrast well with green vegetation and winter brown/gray landscape tones. Inspiration was found in a painting shared by a focus group volunteer and a blue and gold color scheme was selected.



**Explore.
Connect.
Give Back.**

Enjoy the Preserve.
To donate, volunteer, or
to learn more please visit
openlandconservancy.org
or use the QR code.



In the coming months, we will be updating the look of our information and navigation signs in the Preserves. We will also develop cost estimates and search outside funding sources needed to complete these projects. Changes to other media including stationery, business cards and the various social media platforms will roll out over coming weeks. The new branding initiative will present clear messaging to help the community identify with OLC, enjoy the Preserves and, as the new sign to the left states:

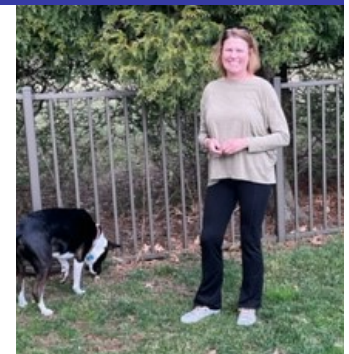
Explore, Connect and Give Back!

- Margot Taylor

OLC Welcomes A New Treasurer: Cathy Misialek

Cathy joined the Board of the OLC as Treasurer in September 2021. Born and raised in Philadelphia, Cathy spent her early professional career in public accounting and then transitioned into the non-profit sector in financial roles. She has spent the last several years as a volunteer for local organizations.

She and her husband Kurt recently moved to Phoenixville after living in Berwyn for 25 years where they raised their four children. They enjoy their time at the shore, hiking with their dog and traveling, especially visiting their children.



Strange But True . . .

Since last year's historic floods, Cedar Hollow Preserve Manager Tim Magee has been monitoring the accumulation of trash on southern bank of Valley Creek with extra vigilance. Thanks to an offer of help from the Devon 50 scout troop, he has now been able to do something about it.

Fortunately the low rainfall since those storms has lowered the stream flows and Tim was able to place a temporary crossing for the scouts to access the trash, both in the creek and on its banks.



The trash haul included not only the typical debris and litter that we would find (sadly) in a stream, but also several truck tires weighing over 200 pounds! This was a true community effort:

- The effort was lead by Ethan Huang, who has already achieved his Eagle Scout rank, but is still active in Devon 50 organizing community improvement projects, and has volunteered at the Conservancy Vine Days. Shane Simpson, Kyle Thomas and mothers Tracy Simpson and Liping Wang also were part of the team that worked for 20 hours, gathering a total of 10 tires, 12 bags of trash, and much miscellaneous junk.
- A Tredyffrin Township Public Works crew made a vital contribution the very next day when they stopped by the Preserve parking lot and made the huge pile of debris disappear.

Valley Creek is designated "Exceptional Value" by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection. OLC is indebted to the Scouts, the Township and other volunteers for helping maintain that quality designation and improve the visitor experience, not only in Cedar Hollow Preserve but also in OLC's other Preserves which border the creek.

Cedar Hollow Preserve - being the most western OLC preserve - is first to receive trash washed down Valley Creek from the old trash dumps just west of Route 29. Hopefully, going forward we will be able to work with the landowners and authorities such as the DEP and East Whiteland Township. - *Tim Magee*

The Board Bids Farewell to A Conservancy Stalwart

Sharon Danbach will be leaving the Conservancy after 16 years of service. As Executive Secretary, she provided clerical support to the Board, bookkeeping assistance to the Treasurer and also maintained the membership database.

Sharon retired at the end of 2016 after 25 years as the Office Manager for Arthur Cox Wilson & Associates. While working for Mac Wilson, (OLC's President), she became interested in the work of the Conservancy and its mission to preserve open space and protect our natural resources.

Sharon has lived in the Malvern/Great Valley area her entire life and has seen firsthand the transformation of this once rural community. Through her work with OLC, she has helped make more people in the Great Valley area aware of the wonderful local resource that is our preserved properties. The Board will miss her and her consistent energetic contributions to our efforts.





**OPEN LAND
CONSERVANCY**
OF CHESTER COUNTY | est. 1939

P.O. Box 1031, Paoli, PA 19301

LANDMARKS



Conservation
Excellence

ANNUAL MEETING VIA ZOOM!

Wednesday April 20, 7:00pm

LOOK FOR THE LINK IN AN UPCOMING EMAIL

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WHAT CAN YOU DO ONLINE?

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- Make a Donation
- Become a Volunteer
- Obtain Information on OLC Preserves Including Preserve Trail Maps
- Find Out About Upcoming Events
- Report a Safety or Maintenance Issue
- View the Landmarks Newsletter