

Conococheague Pioneer Times

The Newsletter of the Conococheague Institute for the Study of Cultural Heritage

4th Quarter 2022



Volume 28 Issue 4

Good Day to you...From the Executive Director

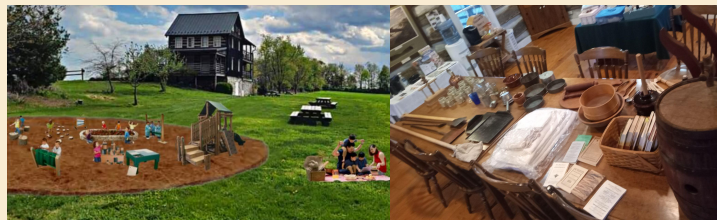
Wassail to you, be in good health!

We hope this holiday season finds everyone enjoying time with friends and family and in good spirits. No matter how you celebrate, we extend our greetings to you.



The Conococheague Institute has a lot to celebrate and we want to share that with you, who has made it possible.

We'll be able to share more in the coming months, but CI has been named a recipient of the **Franklin County IMPACT! Grant program**, and we are set to receive **\$70,000** to improve outdoor spaces for 2023. This is incredible news and gives us optimism that we'll start the year with a bang. New growth is only possible thanks to new initiatives and support like this.



Linda Zeigler also enabled new growth by donating a HUGE cache of interpretive tools from her hearth cooking workshop days. Butter Churns, Baking Tools, Barrels, and Bowls! We've already made several cakes with the new additions.



The new panels to be installed onsite this winter were too large to shrink here, but they combine period imagery and primary documents from the region to tell their story.

We are able to offer **FREE PROGRAMMING** every **Saturday** from **10am to 5pm** year round thanks to your support, and this community resource has proven very popular. Whether visiting tourists or returning locals we see visitors every week interested in learning more about our history and region. For 2023 we are going to keep offering the free 18th Century Living History in the cabin and gardens, but with a new twist. **Monthly Themed Programs!**



We noticed that visitors were less interested in a schedule of programs, and more focused on what tasks we were currently doing: Cooking, Gardening, Carpentry etc. So in November we tried some themed monthly programs based around Native American Heritage month. We had a weekend of 'Arrowheads and Archery' where we examined the lithics in our collection and then offered free archery tutorials and over 60 people attended! We also did a day on Indigenous uses of plants of medicines, and a sewing workshop to great success.



By offering a **different experience each month** visitors will keep coming back for more, so stay tuned for up to date announcements. And don't worry: The fires in the cabin will keep stoked, we'll still be gardening and keeping history alive as well.

Eager to turn the page? Read on for recap of our Donations, Fall Bookings, Camp-o-ree, Tree plantings, Bonfire Night, Colonial Christmas, New Board Members and much more.

Fall Donations

We'd like to thank the following people for their recent (September 22nd to December 19th) donations and memberships. Philanthropy from our community is the reason we are able to keep on in our mission to preserve the past and educate the next generation of historians and naturalists. No matter the amount we are grateful for your contribution. Thank you!

Kermit Hicks, Bill Gour, Andy Abel, Gary Stallings, John Fulk, Erica Peck, Gina Vitale, Phillip Schaff, Robert Kurtz Jr, Alexander Hamilton Memorial Free Library, Oliver Goetz, Alva Lynch, Anne Russell, Michele Seburn, Susan Swope and Shirley Tannenbaum, Larry and Joanne Klase, Barbara Danowski, Fast Ink Screen Printing, John David Bennett, Ken Shannon, Paula Dawson, Richard Culbertson, Franklin Klink, Carol Parsons, Rebecca Gettel, Karri Benedict, Stephen Brooks, Dave Armstrong, Joan McKean, Sue Graff, Joyce Horst, Mary Sanders, Richard E Anderson, Claudia Mooij, Lisa Coombs, Brent Smith, Liberty Auto and Tire, Thomas Durkin, Frank Walizer, Sally Haver, Bruce Winter, George White, John Dickson, James and Rebecca Rogers, Brenda Shaffer, Tonya Longacre, Denise Ordway, Carol Mellott, Kelly Dowling, Harry Nazarro, Paul and Phyllis Mummert, Tomi Kotowich, the Mercersburg Inn, Peter and Meredith Coors, Ann Allen, Mary Ruth Reis, Ben Haldeman, Lisa Coombs, Christine Long, Steven Hatleberg, Benamine Barnhart, Roy Nesbitt, Kate Johnson, Katie Trenary, Melanie Desmond, Lois Steichen, George White, Scott Longstreth, Trump and Darlene Vanderau, Tracy Holliday, Brian Winslow, Ed Leisinger, Robert and Dorothy Harbrige, Jean Guritz, Joanne Thomas, The Conococheague Audubon Society, McCleary Family Trust Foundation, Donald and Debra Kaminski, Ron Jones, Barry and Charlotte Elliott, Christopher Husson, Aaron Moats, Susan Etter, Betsey Lillard, Tom Finucane, Carol Zehosky, Larry Williams, Stephanie Wise, Joanne Thomas, Pat Pece, Linda Cummings, James Swartz, Sam Cathey and Mary Poscover.

Every contribution is important and we're so grateful for your generosity!



Conococheague Audubon Society



Kermit Hicks presenting his contribution

Your Gift Makes a Difference!

Our annual budget ensures we continue in our mission, but there are different ways to give. Funded projects, Memorial Funds or Endowments each have different benefits.

The Kermit and Clarisse Hicks Foundation just FULLY FUNDED our interpretive panel project. We've been updating our panels in small increments but with this gift we can do rest (11) in one go! So look forward in the new year when you visit the site to new interpretive waysides on Religion of the Frontier, Rock Hill Farm families, the lost history of Enslaved People, Susquehannocks, Conflict on the Conococheague and more.

Want to support a Funded Project? Get in contact with us and make a difference!

End of Year Giving 2022

It has been an incredible year of growth: Award Winning Programs, Fun Community Events, New Exhibits and much more. As we entered the final stages of 2022 we launched our End of Year Giving Campaign.

So far you've responded in record giving amounts too with **\$59,940.36** in Donations and **\$6,151.21** in Membership in the last three months.

If you haven't renewed your membership yet or made a tax deductible donation for 2022, please consider making a donation today. All donations received (or mailed) by December 31st 2022 will be acknowledged for the 2022 fiscal year. Corporate Members of the community have offered their support. **Mercersburg Inn, Liberty Auto and Tire, and Fast Ink Screen Printing and Embroidery** have all renewed their memberships. Local business support is especially appreciated.

Ed Leisinger donated so we'd continue our field trips. **Michele Seburn** contributed to our Intern fund, the **Conococheague Audubon Society** gave in thanks for our preservation of our birding habitats and **Bob Kurtz** supported us to ensure that the next generation of citizens receive an understanding of American History and empathy.

Why do you support the Conococheague Institute? Let us know with your next donation.

Fall Activities: A Snapshot

October Field Trips: 1000 students at the Conococheague Institute

2022 has certainly been a year of education for CI. We didn't think anything would top the Spring Booking season, but October alone was even busier. Over 1000 students from homeschool units, churches, private groups, scout troops and public schools (Greencastle Antrim Middle, Lincolnshire Elementary, James Buchanan Middle, Jonathan Hager Elementary) were in paid programs this month. Why are so many booking programs with us? Because children do care about history! When it is taught in a fun and engaging way there is no greater subject, and we are proud to see this trend continue.

And we love getting thank you cards from kids!



CBF Tree Plantings: 5 Millions Trees Planted in PA

Continuing in a Spring/Fall pattern planting pattern in conjunction with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation's K10 Million Tree Project, CI's environmental volunteers, and students from the Mercersburg Academy Community Engagement Team planted 65 largestock trees in the last few months. Coralberry, Pin Oak, Black Gum, Elderberry and American Hazelnut all were added, and the students did a wonderful job learning about conservation and working as a team.

We asked the students to plant trees in memory or honor of anything these chose, and our favorite was Jay Colon of Puerto Rico and Sihyeon Bae of South Korea who planted there tree in honor of Amor, Love, 사랑 ... Love in Spanish, English and Korean to reflect the origins of the team present!



November 5th: Bonfire Night

Strong winds almost prevented this annual event from occurring! A 20 ft flame with 20 mile an hour winds would result in a bigger bonfire then even we would dream of. Throughout the day visitors enjoyed crafts, cooking and games while we watched the weathervanes anticipating an evening cancellation.

Fortunately, at the final moment, the winds dropped, the humidity rose and our forestry experts proclaimed it safe to burn! Bonfire Night has gone through many evolutions in its long history. Founded as a day of Thanksgiving (for God delivering Britain from a devastating catastrophe), it became a pinpoint of anti Catholicism, a reason to riot, before becoming again a day of thanksgiving for communities to come together and celebrate everything that makes us united. It's on our calendar for next year, so make a note to 'Remember, Remember the FOURTH of November.'



CI in the News and Community

Connecting with our community is the best way to grow as an organization. Despite our small staff we try to take every opportunity to do outreach, support other sites, events and collaborate with community partners.

As always pick up a complimentary copy of At Home Places when you visit CI (or at any local tourism area where they are stocked). The Winter edition featured an essay from us about Wassail, and the January edition has a feature from us that looks forward to the events and programs 2023 will bring.

While our programs keep us busy on the site we are available for outreach on request. This Fall we presented our 18th Century Medical program for the local chapter of the P.E.O Sisterhood at their meeting place. It was a wonderful evening, though learning that the P.E.O Sisterhood works to support women's education through scholarships perhaps our 'Women's Roles in Early America' program would have been more fitting! A good contact though for many of our young students at CI. Learn more about them at www.peointernational.org and consider supporting this worthy cause.



On December 15th CI's Amelia Craven and Matthew Wedd were the guest presenters in the Ontario County Historical Society Speaker Series on 'Cloth and Costume in the 18th Century'. Over 40 people attended the live video, and Amelia did a phenomenal job in leading the subject.

In the last newsletter we gave notice of the upcoming release of Early American Life Magazine which features an 8 page article on CI's programs. It is on the shelves now in all major stores so pick one up before they are gone.



Local History Speech at the Mercersburg Academy Irvine Chapel

Most of our outreach programs are a form of our regular programs. Colonial Life, 18th Century Medicine, Women's Roles, and as such can be done with ease.

So when the Reverend Whitmore asked us to speak to the entire student body and faculty of the Mercersburg Academy in their chapel on the subject of **Indigenous Peoples Day and Local History** we were a little nervous at first.



However understanding that local history should be available to everyone despite your origins (something our British Executive Director can relate too) made the perfect theme for the speech, that included a land acknowledgement to Indigenous people, looking at both sides of the story of history, and untold perspectives.



What really made the speech stand out to all though was when on the cue of "how do we keep local history alive today?" several of our students from our Spring Intensive appeared in the wings and gave out shortbread, sage bundles and 18th century scripts to the other students. This gave everyone a tangible link to history... plus a speech with snacks!

Mason Dixon Council BSA Camp-o-Ree: Apprenticeships in Colonial America

Initially slated for May but rescheduled due to rain, the 2022 Camp-o-Ree program that CI designed finally happened on October 15th, with great success.

200 Scouts camped at CI for the weekend in their troops, and we pulled out all the stops to offer an immersive, custom, all day program. With over 12 presenters portraying craftsmen and trades from the 18th century, the Scouts were given the first person role of being an apprentice with the chance to try the various trades, and deciding at the end what trade they wanted.



For each activity they participated in they earned coin and experience that they noted in their marbled journals. Different roles had different rewards and it was up to the Scouts to find the job that suited them best. The program was also designed to teach about teamwork, morality and consequences. If they signed up for a life enlistment bounty with the military sergeant, then they would receive extra money...but they couldn't pick any other trade as their end goal. Playing games and gambling seemed fun, but could also lose them their hard earned coin and end up in debtors prison!



Thanks to everyone who supported the program. Our volunteers had our homestead thriving with activity with Bakers, Laundresses, Milliners, Apothecaries, Gardeners Spinners, Brewers, Hunters, Notaries, Soldiers, Gamblers and Dyers.



Funding for the 2022 Camp-o-Ree was supported by the Americana Corner Grant Program. Subscribe to their blogs to learn more at <https://www.americanacorner.com/>

Americana Corner



GRANT PROGRAM

Event Spotlight: Colonial Christmas at the Conococheague

Our Annual 'Colonial Christmas at the Conococheague' is repeatedly showing itself to be one of our best events of the year!

On December 17th the homestead was heaving with joy and life as volunteers and visitors came to celebrate early American Christmas traditions.

We started the day with a Wassailing program, explaining the origins of the term as an 8th Century greeting 'Waes Hael' (Be Well), its rural traditions as a manner of blessing trees in winter for a good harvest next year, to the Wassail drink and finally the precursor to our Christmas Carols.

Other program highlights included wreath making, gingerbread for the bake oven, a full Christmas feast prepared, games and finally an evening Wassail tavern program by the Taber's of Oakgrove Farm.

Our volunteers had every part of our site full of cheer. Leigh Ann of Stone House History made pomanders with visitors while her husband Jay carved decorations to give out. Denise Ordway had a great make your own potpourri bag activity, Sandra Bloom played games and made more paper decorations, and our Sam and Mary kept the Negley cabin full of warmth.

We also had lots of family volunteers with the Fikar's and Gettel's both bringing a loving atmosphere to the site with their kids as passionate about the history as the adults!



Want to be part of this? Join us for the 2023 Colonial Christmas on December 16th. Wassail!

Our Interns: Visitor Experience Team

Members at CI

The last few months have flown by for our team, with school bookings, exhibit development and events. Kasmira Zechman of Shippensburg University literally hit the ground running as we were entering the final phase of a new exhibit opening and our busiest booking month of the year.

She proved a quick study though, and was soon leading programs for our students and making great input on our interpretive panel projects.

After working with us for 6 months Amelia Craven is becoming a leading face of our programs, and developed a sewing workshop that proved very popular. We'll be looking at dates for January and February for some future iterations!

There always seems to be laughter and good energy with our team and volunteers, and it's a pleasure to see everyone working so well together in harmony.



2023 Internships

Know someone who might be interested in a position at CI? Erin Emerick has taken a position starting January 17th and we are always open for new applicants. Contact us to learn more.

Donate to the Lucas Lapole Memorial Fund to Support Interns

We are pleased to announce that all our current interns are PAID interns. It is proving a museum fact, that unpaid internships limit the opportunities a student can pursue, and severely disenfranchises minority and underrepresented students. As such CI hopes to provide a constant place where students can thrive in their educational career. We maintain a fund created in memory of former CI Intern Lucas Lapole, to which all donations made **are tax deductible and ONLY benefit the students. Donate today by including the note "Intern" on any donation to CI. With more support from you we aim to expand this program in 2023.**

And we are also proud to look back and see where our student interns are progressing in their careers. **Deanna Grove** just graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in History Summa Cum Laude. Congrats Deanna!

Sarah Hoffeditz (who undertook two internships with us in 2021) has continued to thrive like we knew she would. Sarah graduated from Shippensburg University with her masters and is now working as an **Architectural Historian** for ASC Group, Inc. in Harrisburg, PA.



*Announcing
Graduation*
CLASS OF 2022
Deanna Hope Grove
Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania
Bachelor of Arts in History
Summa Cum Laude

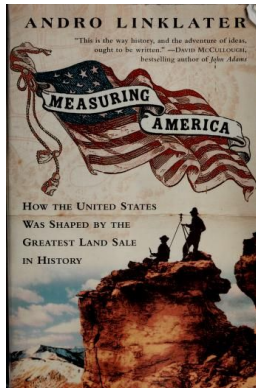


The Conococheague Book Club

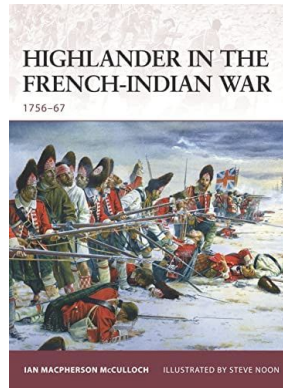
3rd Thursday of every Month at 1pm at the Welsh Barrens Visitor Center

The Fall Book Club meetings in the comfort of the Welsh Barrens Visitor Center had some interesting titles and special guest moderators Betty Jane Lee and Joan McCulloh!

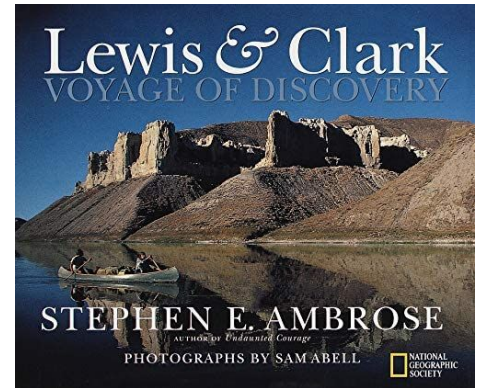
Below are the books for the next 3 months. Come join us, it is free and open to all.



Thursday, January 19th at 1 PM
Measuring America: How the Greatest Land Sale in History Shaped the US
By Andro Linklater
Moderator: Lois Steichen



Thursday, February 16th at 1 PM
Highlander in the French-Indian War 1756-67
By Ian Macpherson McCulloch
Moderator: Ken Shannon



Thursday, March 16th at 1 PM
Lewis & Clark: Voyage of Discovery
By Stephen E. Ambrose
Moderator: Lois Steichen

Archives and Artifacts: Looking back at our Collection

While CI continues to grow in new ways, and expand its potential we can always look back to our members for their generosity and donations over the years that allowed us to reach this point.

This month we'll be focusing on a more esoteric item in our archives: the **1877-79 Minutes of the Welsh Run Brass Band.**

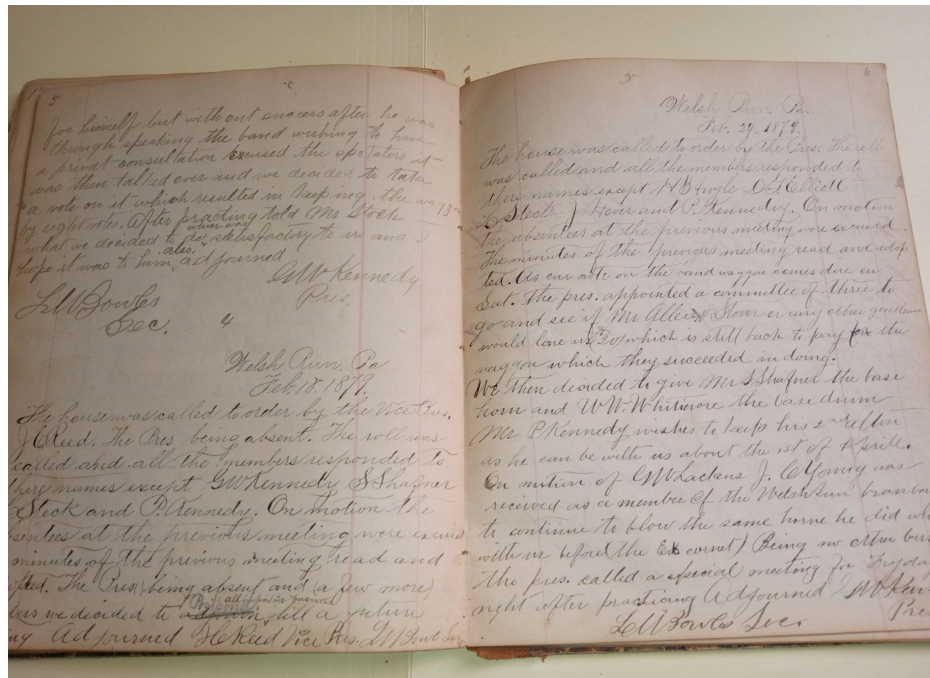
This was a gift of the family of **Howard Lawrence Steck** (1892-1964) and **Henrietta (Elliott) Steck** (1894-1976).

It likely came into their possession through Howard's father, **Luther Phillip Roman Steck**, an active member of the band.

The links to the past are all throughout the document with **Kennedy, Angle, Shaffer, Brewer, Bowles, Reeds, Whitmores and Pikes** all being mentioned.

Howards great grandfather **George Steck** was reported to be a blacksmith in the Welsh Run area in 1810 and Henrietta's great-great grandfather **Benjamin Elliott** came to the area before 1776.

Thanks to G.Edward Whetstone, the grandson of Howard & Henrietta for bringing this item to our attention and his support of CI.



Welcome New Board Members

Following a unanimous vote at our annual membership meeting we would like to welcome and introduce our newest Board of Directors.

Matt Baer, founder and owner of **First Due Lawncare and Landscapes, LLC** has helped out several times this year with donated services, and his management skills, fire services and planning ability all will be invaluable as a Board Member. However, as this year's **CVBA Entrepreneur of the Year** and a CVBA Ambassador, his charisma and Franklin County network will truly help CI grow with local businesses.

John David (JD) Bennett serves as an English Teacher, Dean of Curricular Innovation, & Springboard Director at the **Mercersburg Academy**, and we'd love to see his forward thinking educational concepts implemented into CI's future. Of course our programs with Mercersburg Academy hardly need an introduction! As well as bringing MA faculty to CI for training, making introductions to department heads and supporting our student volunteers, JD facilitated the creation of the school's first intensive term, which in term allowed our 'Full on Frontier: Can You Live 18th Century' program to blossom, which has been an undeniable success!

He's also a passionate outdoorsman and loves to spend time with his family hiking, sporting, and dancing!

Bailey Roberts Long was the Children's Specialist at AHMFL and a student at Penn West Clarion University, and her early childhood experience perfectly syncs with CI's focus on families. She also just started a new role as a mother in November, so we appreciate her devotion in joining the Board at such a busy time! In her own words, she is motivated by "helping others put aside their differences and coming together for mutual understanding."

Gina Vitale is the Teen Services Librarian and Collection Development Librarian at AHMFL and has a rich educational background. Studying Art and Education, at the University of Mary Washington in Fredericksburg, VA, Gina also earned an MLIS (Master of Library and Information Science) at the University of Pittsburgh. She's passionate about all literature, gardening, history and the outdoors, and has already expressed interest in joining our Nature Committee to improve our environmental resources! Educators and Entrepreneurs, Librarians and Linguists, all our new Board Members are incredible additions to CI's existing Board of Directors, and we look forward to working with them over the next few years to further enhance and grow CI for YOU, our community and members.

Welcome New Board Members Matt Baer and John David Bennett



Welcome New Board Members Bailey Roberts Long and Gina Vitale



Supporting the Conococheague Institute

We are always looking for new volunteers and committee members to enrich our site with new energy, ideas and connections.

If you would like to volunteer contact us through email, letter or phone and we'll be glad to welcome you.

Despite such incredible growth in the last 2 years, we now **need to look forward to the next 5 years**. How can CI continue to maintain this growth? **New staffing is key to this, as well as long term financial stability, and strategic plans.**

Should we relocate another log structure to increase our resources? Build a Grist Mill or Blacksmith Shop? Raise livestock so we can represent a working farm? Start a Capital Campaign for a new Visitor Center? Do more Lectures? Give us your input, join our committees, and support CI with a generous endowment and by including us in your Estate Plans.

By doing so you ensure the Future of the Frontier for generations to come.

Board of Directors

Elizabeth Lillard (*President*), Ellen Kinzer (*Vice-President*), Bob Schwartz (*Secretary*), Sam Cathey (*Treasurer*), Will Sheppard, Leighton Wolffe, Kitty Clark, Melanie Desmond, JD Bennett, Matt Baer, Bailey Roberts Long, Gina Vitale

Advisory Board

Dr. John C. Stauffer (*Founder and President Emeritus*), Avery Cook, Tom Finucane, Dr. Doris Armstrong-Goldman, Gay Buchanan, Martha E. Stauffer, MD, Roger Swartz, David Stauffer, Chuck Holland, Carol Zehosky

Staff

Matthew Wedd, *Executive Director*, mwedd@cimlg.org

Amelia Craven and Kasmira Zechman, *Visitor Experience Team Members*

Contact us

The Conococheague Institute, 12995 Bain Road, Mercersburg, PA, 17236

Phone: 717 328 2800 **Email:** info@cimlg.org **Website:** www.cimlg.org

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/conococheagueinstitute/>

Youtube: [@coloniallivingattheconococheagueinstitute](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCqJ8K8K8K8K8K8K8K8K8K8K)



Become part of our Family: Your Membership support allows us to continue in our mission!
CI Membership runs on a 'Valid through 12 month cycle', so whenever you renew you will receive a full year of benefits, and please make a donation for 2022 before December 31st!

Annual Membership/Donation Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone No: _____ **Email:** _____

Newsletter Format Preference, Email or Printed: _____

Student: \$10

Individual: \$25

Family: \$35

Patron: \$125

Corporate: \$200

Sustaining: \$300

Life: \$1000

Membership Level: _____

Additional Donation: _____

**Make Checks Payable to The Conococheague Institute, 12995 Bain Road,
Mercersburg, PA, 17236**

Thank you!

I support the Conococheague Institute because: _____

I have included CI in my Estate Plans ☐

I would like more information about Funded Projects ☐