

Conococheague Pioneer Times

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

1st Quarter 2023



Volume 29 Issue 1

Good Day to you...From the Executive Director Happy New Year, Happy Valentines, Dydd Dewi Dewi Hapus, Lá Fhéile Pádraig Sona Duit!

We've celebrated so much this winter from Saints Days, to Black History Month and it's simply flown by.

I hope you are in good health and happiness. Hopefully you've been following in person or online but if this is your first Conococheague Institute update since December then you are in for quite the treat!



While we have had some snow this winter we've also been fortunate to have clear skies which has been great for our winter programming and tours. The sun has come out at the perfect time like when the Falling Springs Quester Chapter toured in March. This was the same group that supported the purchase of the Welsh Dowry chest a decade ago!

The **new 2023 Saturday program themes (10am to 5pm every week)** have proven very successful. 70+ visitors per weekend during a cold February is outstanding for an outdoor museum. Many people have become new members as a result, and the vast majority of new visitors found us online as we are one of the few museums that were open!



As part of Black History Month, we were thrilled to invite the passionate Marvin Greer to present on the experience of enslaved people on the frontier. Of course it shed light on the hardships they faced, but also the resilience and community they forged together. We look forward to hosting him again!

In recent years we have been named **Young Professional of the Year, Non-Profit of the Year, and Educator of the Year**, and we are about to **add another award** to the mix: In April we will accept from **PA Museums** their Special Achievements Award for our "Can You Live 18th Century" program. This program, in partnership with **Mercersburg Academy** and funded by **Robert and Marilyn Kurtz**, has been endowed for several years to come, and for it to receive STATE recognition is an honour. We are humbled to be accepting an award that last year was won by the prestigious **Museum of the American Revolution!** Our annual budgets are a little different (\$150,000 for CI, \$10,000,000 for MOAR) so that we would receive an award for programs on par with them is an amazing achievement. **In our donations page we go into detail about increasing our endowment and so we encourage you to think about making a donation in honour of this, to support our Intern Fund, or make a general contribution.**



It's hard to believe but April 2023 will mark my **Third Anniversary** at the Conococheague Institute, during which time I have only fallen more in love with this site, its mission, and our community. We would love to hear what you think about our progress. **A lot has happened in three years, but what stands out to you as the crowning moment?**

I look forward to the next three years (and our **30th Anniversary in 2024**). In a few weeks we will be joined by another full time staff member who we can't wait to meet!

Finally, if the daffodils at this time of year have you thinking of Welsh Run and our Gaelic heritage, local **Harpist Lauren Swain** is performing a **free concert** in advance of an annual competition in Wales.

Check her out on Friday March 31, at 7pm at the Hancock Assembly of God, (North Pennsylvania Avenue). We may even have Lauren at a future CI event!



Winter Donations

We'd like to thank the following people for their recent (December 20th to March 14th) 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!

Buzz Mooney, Cody Grabhorn, Robert Weir, Gary Stallings, Mary Poscover, James Swartz, Jacqueline Martin, Pam Knepper, Catherine Stickell Trust, Suellen Burkey, Tracy Bartlett, Kitty Clark, Judith Ditto, Oliver Goetz, Bob Faylor, Michael Brand, Mark Devecchis, Richard Johnson, Charles Angle, Susan Schneider, Will Willis, Chris Howlett, Paul Veen, Larry Smith, Heather McIntire, Sue Barthalow, Randy Treichler, Ken Myers, Jill Storer, Barbara Twigg, Douglas Foreback, Barbara Irene Hicks, Robert Stransky, Jeff Semmler, Lind Zeigler, Wendy Mahan, Gregory Adamson, Don and Deb Kaminski, McCleary Oil, Kasmira Zechman, George Franks, Richard and Rebecca Johnson, Jane Hershey, Dennis Kubicki, John C Stauffer, Alva Lynch, John Hull, Betty Jane Lee, Joann Williams, Marilyn Sauer, James Todd, Martha Miraglia, Ruth Hamil, Harriet Hurd-Gilbert, Betty Lee, Thomas Wolf, Ken Milliken, Claude Zimmerman, Ezra Beaton, Carole Sakamota, Janette Haven, Courtney Miles, Keith Taber, Dean and Lynne Wigfield, Susan Benedict, Suzanne Wochos, Treasurer of Franklin County, Tom Hand, Jim Stanton, Michael Reese, Samuel and Kathy Hawbaker, Eric Ardjewski, Mara Lowry, Chuck Holland, Rich Armel, Cheryl Hartman, Kim Spanos-Telsing, Gregory Pierce, Jack and Betty Seburn, JeanMarie Walz, Edgar Mills, The Questers of Falling Springs, Jan and Lee Davis and Eric and Alexandra Barzydlo.

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



**Thank you to our latest 2023 Corporate Members
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Fast Ink Screen Printing & Embroidery Co AND James
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**Corporate Memberships at
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Help us take the next step

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.

We have received very generous grants and funded project donations recently, **but your contributions to our annual fund ensure we can operate the essentials:** staffing, utilities and upkeep are important to allowing our educational programs and preservation to continue. The next step for CI, is securing a solid foundational endowment fund, so we can reach for larger annual grants.

If you can give \$5,000 to \$100,000 towards our endowment please consider giving to the future of the frontier.

All donations are tax deductible.



Winter Activities: A Snapshot

Cold and Hardy Volunteers: No Fair Weather Friends at the Conococheague Institute

We are delighted that so many volunteers continue to support us year round. The winter months have not been lonely or idle at CI with volunteer projects ranging from historic preservation, invasive removal, wattle trellis building, helping out winter birds and, of course, our historic programs. Of special note are the Life Skills students from James Buchanan Middle School who come out every Thursday morning, rain or shine, to help with various activities and learn team building skills. They especially enjoy refilling our peanut butter bird feeders.



Outreach Programs: Homeschool Centers, Senior Homes, and High School Auditoriums

While we've still been seeing visitors every week for our free Saturday programs, we have accepted an increasing number of outreach programs and presentations this winter. We took our Colonial Life program on the road to the Zullinger Community Center for the MDHSA, helped decorate at the FCVB Ben Franklin Birthday party, performed our 18th Century Surgery program for seniors at Mountain View House in McConnellsburg, did the same program for 200 middle school students at Greencastle Antrim in one day, and presented on volunteer opportunities to Greencastle Antrim High School students.



Renovations: Oils, Floors and Preservation

It's not something we'd usually brag about, but next time you visit CI check out the floors. They all got a good coating of Linseed Oil this winter, and are positively shining! This natural treatment brings out the best of the wood and has been used for centuries. Work also continues in Rock Hill Farm to repair the floor from the 1950's bathroom adjustments.



CI Impact Grant: \$70,000 to improve Outdoor Spaces

At the end of last year we announced that we had received a \$70,000 award from the Franklin County IMPACT! Grant program. This is a project-based grant and will be used for the following key outdoor improvements.

- 8 ADA compliant picnic tables
- 2 bike racks
- Early childhood sensory learning area playground
- UTV for grounds maintenance
- Tractor with bucket and plow for site jobs and landscaping

We've already begun the ordering process. The picnic tables and children's learning area will arrive around April/May, which will be perfect for the lovely weather. These amenities makes our 30 acre grounds, gardens and trails so much more accessible to our community members, who we encourage to visit every day from dawn to dusk.

We are very grateful to the County Commissioners who approved the grant request, and the Franklin County staff who lent us support. Funded projects allow growth at CI and we are always looking for new contributors.

Let us know if you would like to fund a specific project, or of course make a donation to support our annual operating costs, without which we could not continue in our mission!



THIS PROJECT SUPPORTED BY



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Religion on the Frontier

18th Century Religion

William Penn founded Pennsylvania as a Holy Experiment where people from every denomination and sect could live without fear of persecution. Religious strife had driven many people away from their homes in Europe. Many other colonies only welcomed specific groups like the Anglicans in Virginia or Congregationalists in Massachusetts. Pennsylvania offered a haven to Baptists, Lutherans, Reformed, Methodists, Quakers, Moravians, Mennonites, Amish, and many others. Among those who settled in the Cumberland Valley were Welsh and Scots-Irish Presbyterians and German and Swiss Dunkards.

Anabaptists (Dunkards)

The Anabaptist people who settled in the Welsh Run area were Schwarzenau Brethren, a denomination first formed in 1708 in Schwartzau (Bad Berleburg) Germany. They were also known as German Baptist Brethren, Dunkers, or Dunkards. Many of the Brethren spread their religion as they established communities in other parts of Pennsylvania. Many, including Eliab Negley and his family, later settled in English speaking towns.

Presbyterians

Presbyterians in colonial Pennsylvania were the driving force of settlement on the frontier. Most came from Wales, including the Davis family. Presbyterian settlers believed the frontier was a wasteland that needed to be tamed into productive towns and farms. Presbyterians also valued universal literacy, with many families reading the Bible at home and engaging in regular family prayer.

Young Explorer Activity: The Bible has been translated into many languages, including Welsh. Many of the settlers from Wales would have brought their Welsh Bibles with them. Below is the first part of the Lord's Prayer in Welsh. Try your best to read it out loud!

Welsh: Ein Tad, yr hwn wyt yn y nefoedd, sancteiddir dy enw.
English: Our Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

A Lost Story: Enslaved on the Frontier

History of Enslaved People in Pennsylvania

Over 2000 people were enslaved in Pennsylvania by 1770, and while many enslaved people lived in highly populated areas like Philadelphia, rural settlements on the frontier also took part in this terrible practice. On these farms, enslaved people worked as farm laborers and domestic servants, or were trained in crafts (such as joinery or blacksmithing). It was a harsh life of labor, highly controlled by enslavers and always under the threat of violence. Yet we know from surviving scraps of evidence that enslaved people also formed loving families, created new cultural practices, and resisted their enslavers.

Several people were enslaved on the farm that stood here in the 18th century, most often recorded only by their names or sometimes just by their price. Local probate inventories from the region show a large percentage of landowners owned at least one enslaved person. If an enslaver could only afford one person, they often purchased a young woman derogatorily referred to as 'wench'. This may be due to women's use as domestic servants or their role in the flax industry, which was strong in the region.

Laws and Punishments

Numerous laws were enacted to control and divide the races in colonial PA, and after 1700 enslaved people were tied to non-jury courts. Some articles passed in 1725 included laws that prevented interracial relationships. The law did not permit a White man and a Black woman to marry, nor a Black man and a White woman. Ministers would be fined £100 for marrying an interracial couple, and if the Black person was free, they would be bound back into slavery.

For being found 10 miles from their enslaver's home, enslaved people would receive 10 lashes, and any citizens found harboring an enslaved person who had escaped would be fined 30 shillings a day.

These laws and many others like it imposed harsher penalties on the Black community, prevented fair treatment, and denied even free people a chance at equality.



"Plantation Dance", South Carolina, ca. 1780-1790. This image highlights the resilience and community that enslaved people showed despite the horrendous conditions forced upon them. Descriptions in ads about freedom seekers provide descriptions of their clothing: generally the same style as the rest of society, but lower quality, secondhand, or of local-made country cloth.

The Gradual Abolition Act of 1780

In 1780 during the American Revolution, Pennsylvania passed an Act that would allow for gradual abolition of slavery, stating:

"That all Persons... who shall be born within this State, from and after the Passing of this Act, shall not be deemed and considered as Servants for Life or Slaves."

This act did not free any of the 6,000 persons who were already enslaved in PA. Also, any children who were born to enslaved mothers after this act was passed had to serve as indentured servants to their mother's enslaver until they were 28 years old.

Due to Pennsylvania's early adoption of emancipation, by the 1820's a thriving community of 400 free Black people lived in nearby Mercersburg, with one large community centered around Fayette Street, and another outside of town at a settlement referred to as Little Africa. Due to its proximity to the Mason-Dixon Line, and slave holding states, Mercersburg became a major stopping point on the Underground Railroad.

Kermit and Clarisse Hicks Foundation Interpretive Project: Ready to Install

At the end of 2022 we received a generous \$2,000 donation from the Kermit and Clarisse Hicks foundation to update all the interpretive panels across our site that were outdated.

With the research required, this turned out to be a longer process than we expected. Thank you to all the staff, volunteers, and professors from Universities who helped to proofread and improve our research.

These 11 panels will explore different areas of our history, using period imagery, our current branding colors, and each panel will have a 'Young Explorer Activity' to engage young minds. The signs are ordered and we look forward to a warm April groundbreaking and a future ribbon cutting ceremony with our donors.

11 New Panels include:

Conflict on the Conococheague, Enslaved on the Frontier, Rock Hill Farm, the Negley House, the Welsh Barrens, Women's Roles, Religion, Pre-Contact Indigenous History, Post-Contact Indigenous History, Lost Flora and Fauna, and Childhood Development.

These help CI tell our story in a way that meets current audiences and our mission. We've even included a land acknowledgement on the beginning of our Indigenous panel that will form part of a new walking trail.

Preserving America Grant

In 2022 we were among the inaugural recipients of the Americana Corner (AC) grant program which greatly helped in expanding our education programs.

The Conococheague Institute is proud to announce that we've been selected again for the 2023 Americana Corner Preserving America Grant Program! The program was established to assist non-profit organizations like us in telling the incredible story of America from its founding era through its first century as a nation.

We received the full \$10,000 grant request so we'll be going even further this year, using it to support our educational programs and offer in-school opportunities. We will also use it to install a brand new exhibit on the history of firearms, and acquire new historic gardening tools that will allow more students hands-on experience in the garden during every program. Which of course, in turn means more tasty crops that we can give back to the community. Truly the gift that keeps on giving.

Our sincerest thanks to Tom Hand of AC for his generosity in supporting so many wonderful organizations that instill a "love of country" – the Amor Patriae – in our communities. Visit americanacorner.com for details.

Much of the exhibit material has been delivered already and we are already in full education booking mode. Now that's progress!



The Conococheague Institute presents
on March 29th to Greencastle Antrim Middle School
'The Men and Women of the Revolution'



History comes into the classroom with this special in school program. Step away from the textbooks, and learn first hand how about the average men and women who lived during the American Revolution. What did their clothes feel like, what did they eat, what were their jobs and skills?
Through understanding the life's of average American citizens, we are better able to understand the big history of this Revolutionary time.
Outreach education program made possible thanks to the Americana Corner 'Preserving America' Grant program.

Americana Corner
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PRESERVING AMERICA
GRANT
2023
Grant Recipient



Coming Soon:
History of
Firearms Exhibit



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Supporting the Conococheague Institute: 30th Anniversary next year!

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 establishing long term financial stability, and strategic plans.**

We have greatly expanded our grant income for project based programs, but many larger grants are still out of reach, as we don't have a large enough endowment to qualify (most larger grants require operating funds in excess of 5 years for stability).

If we could enrich our endowment to \$300,000 for our 30th Anniversary next year that would be a perfect foundation for the long term plan.

Give us your input, join our committees, and support CI with a generous endowment and also by including us in your Estate Plans.
By doing so you ensure the Future of the Frontier for generations to come.

New Saturday Themed Programs and Upcoming Events

This winter we launched our new themed programming to coincide with our 18th century living history programming. These programs change thematically each month making each visit a new experience and have proven a huge success. From January to March we've had Calligraphy, Cloak Making Workshops, Nature Crafts, Spinning Bees, Valentine's Scavenger Hunts, Welsh Cooking, Frontier Hunting and Firelocks, Enslaved on the Frontier, and Library Research. We'll be continuing to offer these FREE programs year round thanks to your support. The programs update quite regularly with our volunteer opportunities, so we can't advertise months in advance. **Stop by any Saturday from 10am to 5pm** to see what's happening, call us, or follow us online for the latest news.



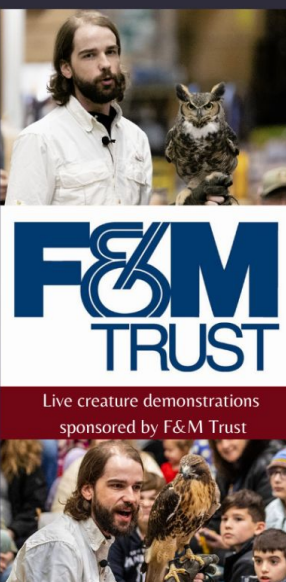
Beyond our Saturday regular programming, you need to **SAVE THE DATE for April 15th** our next big event. This is a new nature themed free event focused on learning about nature and conservation in advance of Earth Day 2023. We are pleased to announce two unique elements: at 11am kids and adults alike will delight in learning about pythons, turtles, and mammals from around the world (and how conservation helps them). At 1pm, there will be a rare flight demonstration of a Red Tailed Hawk across our field, and a chance to get to see a Peregrine Falcon, Harris' Hawk and maybe even a Great Horned Owl up close!



Conococheague Institute

Get to Know Nature: Learning then Conserving

Saturday April 15th 10am to 4pm 2023 at the Conococheague Institute



Prepare for Earth Day 2023 and learn how to 'Invest in our Planet' Event activities include:

- 11am 'Wonderfully Wild' Animal Encounter Program
- 1pm 'Millers Wildlife' Falconry Program with flight demonstration
- Tree Conservation: Learn how to plant trees with us for the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, and take a tree home to plant yourself
- Conococheague Audubon Society, Bird Activities and crafts
- Nature Crafts for Kids and Adults! Make a 'Seed Bomb' or a Simple Bird Feeder
- Medicinal Plant walks

Visit www.cimlg.org to learn more.

Funding for the Wonderfully Wild & Miller's Wildlife part of the event is generously provided by F&M Trust Bank. Thank you!



Event Spotlight: Tuscarora Area Chamber of Commerce Mixer, March 9th 2023

We welcome visitors to CI every week as part of our mission to educate about the cultural heritage of the region, and this month we were honoured to host over 70 business members of the Tuscarora Area Chamber of Commerce for a mixer.

These are great opportunities to spotlight what's happening to potential new sponsors as well as show acknowledgement to our existing supporters.

We chose March 9th as it sat between St David's Day (March 1st) and St Patrick's Day (March 17th) the patron saints of Wales and Ireland respectively.

With this cultural link, we were able to offer a Gaelic theme with meals prepared by our staff.

On the menu was a Cawl Cennin (a vegan leek soup) and Dublin Coddle (bacon, sausages and potato soup) as well as assorted snacks and tasty treats.

We appreciate everyone who attended, and were especially pleased that County Commissioner Dave Keller was present to shake hands with Dr. Lee Davis. The former just approved a \$70,000 Grant for CI, and the latter is a much beloved long time donor, and a legend of colonial medicine interpretation.

The mixer was an unparalleled success. A generous donor contributed \$5,000 to our Intern Fund, M&T Bank said they would like to approve our grant we had written, and Truist and Orrstown are looking to support us. More importantly the Cawl Cennin and Dublin Coddle came out PERFECTLY! Gwych!



Could your business be the next sponsor for CI? Your support would benefit our cultural heritage while aligning yourself with a non-profit that seeks to enrich our community.

Our Interns: Visitor Experience Team Members at CI

Shippensburg University has continued to provide the Conococheague Institute with outstanding student interns.

Joining us from January to May is Erin Emerick. Erin received a BA in History from Lycoming College, and is currently finishing her MA in Applied History from Shippensburg University.

Erin quickly adapted to our mission selling three new memberships on her first weekend to winter visitors, and has not slowed down since. She has impeccable research and writing skills which have proven of great value during our new interpretive panel narratives.

Erin also has a familial connection to 18th century education: Her Aunt and Uncle have performed colonial puppet shows at Williamsburg, and we're currently working on our Frontier Puppet Show for younger audiences.

Amelia Craven has continued to show great development leading an 18th century cloak workshop that was a great success. Many visitors left with their own cloak and our volunteers now have several CI cloaks to choose from. Perfect for this winter chill!

Amelia and Erin have formed a close knit team under Matthew, and are always willing to get stuck into the next major project.

Not every museum role is glamorous curatorial work; but between basement renovations, floor oiling, repainting and gallery installations the team are making improvements for your Conococheague Institute every day.



2023 Summer Internships

Know someone who might be interested in a position at CI? With your generous support we are able to expand our internships to include high school students. Contact us today if you know someone who would like to apply for a summer position to start their work experience in museums.

Donate to the Lucas Lapole Memorial Fund to Support Interns

We are pleased to announce that all our current interns are PAID interns. 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 and to expand it to include High School students too.

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 are expanding this program in 2023.

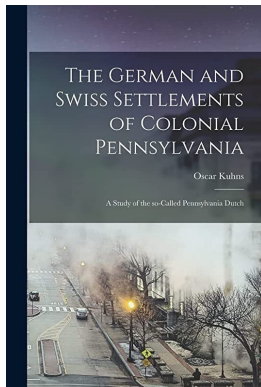


The Conococheague Book Club

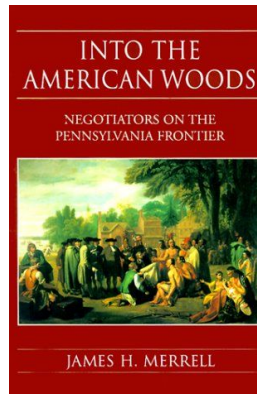
3rd Thursday of every Month at 1pm at the Welsh Barrens Visitor Center

The Winter Book Club meetings in the heat of the Welsh Barrens Visitor Center featured the history of measurement, Highlanders in the French and Indian War, and Lewis and Clark's travels.

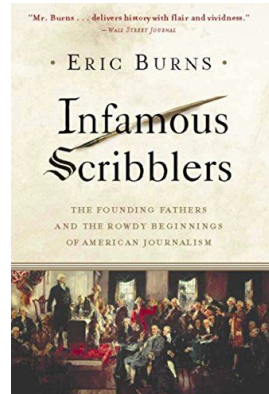
Below are the books for the next 3 months. Come join us, it is free and open to all.



Thursday, April 20th at 1 PM
"The German and Swiss Settlements of Colonial Pennsylvania: A Study of the So-Called Pennsylvania Dutch"
by Oscar Kuhns



Thursday, May 18th at 1 PM
"Into the American Woods: Negotiators on the Pennsylvania Frontier"
by James H. Merrell



Thursday, June 15th at 1 PM
"Infamous Scribblers: The Founding Fathers and the Rowdy Beginnings of American Journalism"
by Eric Burns

Archives and Artifacts: Looking into our Collection

Step aside Winsor and Newton there's a new traveling watercolor set in town, or rather an old watercolor set. This wooden box contains a brightly colored watercolor paint set dating circa 1820s-1830s. The sliding lid has a paper label that advertises these paints as being "free from poison," a mildly alarming statement to come from paint. However, it is more reassuring once you know that up until the late-19th and early-20th centuries, paints were commonly made with toxic materials such as cadmium, lead, and arsenic. The paints themselves have a variety of colors such as blue, green, orange, yellow, brown, black, and white, as well as an eagle stamped onto one side. This set has a matching brush as well as a small dish for water, making it easy to take it out into the world to capture all your eye can see! This artifact was donated to CI in 2013 by Jan and Lee Davis, and now is part of a new exhibit. For more information on watercolor uses visit the Met's Essay on Watercolor Painting in Britain, 1750–1850 at https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/bwtr/hd_bwtr.htm



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Amelia Craven and Erin Emerick, *Visitor Experience Team Members*

Contact us

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Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/conococheagueinstitute/> **Instagram:** [@conococheague_institute](https://www.instagram.com/conococheague_institute)

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Help Craft our Future: 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

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 ☐

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