Conococheague Pioneer Times

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

Volume 30 Issue 3



3rd Quarter 2024

Good Day to you...From the Executive Director

What a long hot summer. I hope this Fall Newsletter finds you well, and enjoying the cooler evenings. As you read this we've just finished a busy project period, and are about to start the school booking season...the fun never stops at CI!



We've got lots to share with you if you've missed the last few months, and the next 10 pages will give you a glimpse of what we've been able to achieve thanks to the dedication of our community, volunteers, team and students.

While it may not be the most exciting news, CI completed a full independent audit this Summer undertaken by Boyer & Ritter LLC. While it took a lot of time and paperwork, it does mean that CI can now apply for larger endowment grants and contributions from large foundations. As a 501(c)3 nonprofit everything we do is made possible by donations, memberships, grants and business sponsorships.

Planning for CI's continued growth has been a major focus during this celebratory year, and the **strategic plan set last year by our Board of Directors** has been extremely helpful in this. We are on target across the Board, and we have some really good news on the way.

We can't give out full details just yet but it concerns several of our action items and will have ramifications for the next 5 years! Stay tuned for more information at the end of this year.



Program highlights this summer? Guest lecturer Drew Shuptar Rayvis talking about Eastern Woodland life really drew in a crowd, and ever since we've been busy.







We've seen bigger crowds than ever, whether **celebrating** America's Birthday for July 4th, learning about women's health and beauty, medicinal plant walks, flax processing, or hearth cooking. The one thing we've noticed this year is that people are traveling from further afield to CI as a destination. In the last few weeks alone, we've had guests from Zelienople, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, New Cumberland, Frederick, Ashford and many more.

With free programs every Saturday year round, CI has truly become a choice destination for lovers of history and our beautiful natural environment. When did you last visit? Our Saturday program themes are posted in various locations, but if you're curious about what's coming up just reach out to us.

Not everyone attends CI for it's Saturday programs, and our **Rock Hill Farm First Friday Tours** (11am, 1pm and 3pm) and **Little Learners Early Childhood Activity** (2nd and 4th Thursday 10.30am) have continued to bring in new visitors. Add to that, summer camps, genealogy requests, weddings, sponsor visits, and outreach events the summer has literally flown by.

Remember you can enjoy the Conococheague Institute your own way! The Mountain Valley Plein Air Group have used the site twice for free and made the most incredible works of art of our favourite views. Whether painting, picnicking, bird watching or dog walking our grounds are open daily from dawn to dusk.





Summer Donations

We'd like to thank the following people for their recent (June 11th to August 10th) 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!

Mary Beth Pastorius, Sarah Campbell, Joanne Thomas, Richard Bell, Ray Mowery, the Catherine Stickell Trust, Agronomy Inc, Tom Finucane, Pat Novack, the Nitterhouse Foundation, Bryan Taylor, DL Martin, Chuck and Carole Holland, Greg Pierce, Jack Demuth, Lee Davis, Ron Chamberlin, Bob Weir, Barbara and Tony Onorato, Lin St Clair and Nancy Wilson, Cecil Snyder, Scott and Associates, Mark Niemeyer, Gay Buchanan (for Katie, Kiefer, Connor and Cameron), Will Sheppard, abc27, Dick Ebersole, Pat Novack, Meagan McNulty, Terri Scott, Greg Pierce, Liberty Auto and Tire, Joanne Thomas, Patriot Federal Credit Union, Ron Jones, Thomas G. & Nancy H Burkey Fund, the Pomerov Foundation, Franklin County Visitors Bureau, Fast Ink, DL Martin, Carolyn Ketchel, Visit Hagerstown - Washington County CVB, and the Franklin County Community Foundation

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



Dr. Lee Davis donated a Conestoga Wagon tool for our museum exhibit, and abc27 donated a live tv spot to feature our 30th Anniversary on Good Day PA with host Amy Kehm!

If you missed it watch it here:

https://www.abc27.com/good-day-pa/free-satur day-programs-at-the-conococheague-institute/



Reasons to Give: In Memory, In Honor and in Appreciation

With every donation, we ask our members to share why they chose to support the Conococheague Institute and our mission. Mary Beth Pastorius gave, for our genealogy, Gregory Pierce in honor of Book Club, Jack Demuth in memory of his wife Barbara, who recently passed away, Pat Novack gave in memory of her father, Earl E. Jones who lived here at Rock Hill Farm. We've received many more donations in memory of Jim Rogers, with generous contributions from Tom Finucane and Agronomy Inc, and thanks to an anonymous donor, we purchased an Exmark zero turn lawn mower in Jim's memory: Something Jim had recommended to make CI's lawn maintenance more efficient, and it sure has!

When you make a tax-deductible donation you are supporting CI's mission, benefiting the community, and we'd love to hear from you. Drop us a note with your next contribution, or mail in the slip on the last page of the newsletter.



INSTITUTE

Founders Match Campaign! Dr. John C. Stauffer donates \$50k to our endowment and in addition pledges to match all donations up to CONOCOCHEAGUE \$50,000 in celebration of our 30th Anniversary! Make a contribution before December 31st and have it doubled!

Our founder, **Dr. John Stauffer** has created a true legacy at CI, and still enjoys spending the summers here with his son David.

This summer was spent surveying and mulching, making plans for CI's next stage of growth, enjoying the Welshfest, catching up with old friends, attending our programs, and walking the nature trails.

His announcement to match all contributions between now and the end of the year up to \$50,000 means there has never been a better time to donate to CI.

Or make an endowment contribution today, directly by donating stocks & securities directly. Just use this information DTCC Number: 0141 Conococheague Institute Acct#6672-9564

A qualified charitable distribution (OCD) allows individuals who are 70½ years old or older to donate up to \$105,000 total to one or more charities directly. This is a tax-free process! Contact your IRA manager today!

A Community Gathers: August CVBA Mixer at CI

Our CVBA mixer on August 22nd was a huge success, with an incredible turnout from the community. We were thrilled to see Commissioners, Presidents, founders, donors, sponsors, board members, volunteers, students, grantors, friends, and neighbors come out in support. The Conococheague Institute is deeply grateful to everyone who made the event such a welcoming and enjoyable experience.

The generous sponsorships from **DL Martin and Fast Ink of Mercersburg** allowed us to provide an amazing spread of food,
drinks (including our famous Fish House Punch), **live music with Forbes Road Frolic**, and **Miller's Wildlife's** amazing raptors!.
Events like this are a wonderful way for us to thank our supporters,
celebrate our joint achievements, and encourage new businesses to get
involved.

There are many opportunities for businesses to partner with the Conococheague Institute, whether through Corporate Memberships, supporting our internship program, event sponsorships, funded projects, or tax-deductible donations.





Miller's Wildlife featured a Great Horned Owl, sponsored by Fast Ink





Dancing & baking were some of the activities that guests engaged in



The music by Forbes Road Frolic was sponsored by DL Martin

Thank you Liberty Auto and Tire of Mercersburg for renewing your corporate membership, and welcome new members Patriot Federal Credit Union! Corporate memberships start at \$200 per year. Recommend a business to support our mission at CI.





PRESERVING OUR HISTORY, AND SUPPORTING THE NEXT GENERATION OF HISTORIANS AND NATURALISTS







SUPPORTING EDUCATION EXPERIENCES AND HISTORY IN OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY



Summer Activities: A Snapshot

Dyeing for Color: 18th century natural dye programs at CI bring vibrancy to the homestead

Recently we did a program about Natural Dyes and how they were used in the 18th century. For this program we used both Madder and Logwood, which give red and purple dyes respectively. We used these two as they are both examples of adjective dyes, meaning they needed to be used on mordanted fabric. In other words, the fiber that we dyed had to be chemically changed before the dyes would stick to them as a bright color. If you're interested in the process of how one goes from a plain white fiber to a brightly colored ball of yarn, stop by for the **Fall edition of 'Dyeing for Color' on October 12th!**We ended this past program with two skeins of wool dyed red and purple, a bright red silk handkerchief, some orange-toned linen, and a couple of yards of deep purple linen. We were also able to prep some skeins for future dyeing. During the October 12th program (which is the same day as our Annual Members Meeting) we'll be using dyestuff found on site.

Based on what is available, we may show black walnut, goldenrod, dock, acorn, or others. Make plans to join us that day!







Stalwart Volunteers: Historic preservation and environmental conservation in a heatwave

While the summer holidays have students and families vacationing, we still had a healthy stream of volunteers on site to help with all sorts of tasks. The garden is a constant need, and **Mary Poscover**, **Sam Cathey and Karen Sourbier** have kept us growing! New preservationist **Mark Niemeyer** has been working on Rock Hill Farm carpentry fixes. He is now turning his historic hand to make some rustic hay feeders and well cranks. Young **Jacob Shaffer** has been volunteering so much, he's practically staff, and at only 14 his maturity and skillset is incredible. Finally **Middletown Valley Bank** continues to support our community, helping out this summer with linseed oiling the Negley Cabin, invasive removal and tending our vines.











Summer Camps: Student experiences at CI create a passion for the past

Between 6 YMCA camp groups, and our own hosted Conococheague Camp, we've had a lot of engaging experiences for area youth. During the military day of our summer camp it reached 110 degrees, so the wool clothes were an endurance test for our team. Our young soldiers marched from shade to shade! They also had fun with macroinvertebrate stream studies, archery, nature art, scavenger hunts, dancing, bake oven fun and even a celebratory water fight to cool off on the last day.









Animal Husbandry of the Frontier Project

Following our strategic plan to have animals on the homestead in 2025, we've been working with our student interns this summer to create the animal pen and pastures. Along the way, we've been able to develop their construction and project skills, and the result is amazing!

Digging holes in 100 degree weather, innumerable splinters and blisters, and many needed ice pop breaks, but everyone on our team can now say "I helped build that" and envision the future programs that will take place there.

The project is a **safe blend of history and public safety.** The shed was constructed of historic timbers with mortise and tenon joints: But it has hidden construction screws! The fence itself is simple hemlock, but we've used a low-visibility mesh fence to ensure the animals can't escape (and that predators can't get in). This Fall we're making Pasture 2, and though our own animals won't **join the farm until 2025 (with a TBA major program revival)**, in November local family **Phil and Donna Kelly** will be loaning us 6 month old bucklings and a grizzled old Oberhasli so we can test the pastures, and our staff time at managing them. **Do you have sheep, goats, or donkeys** you'd be willing to loan to CI for a few days this Fall? **Or perhaps some animal feed equipment** or expertise?

Reach out to us and we'd be happy for help.





Cl's 'Lawn to Prairie Conversion' project is fully funded thanks to the Thomas G. & Nancy H. Burkey Fund, a charitable fund of the Franklin County Community Foundation, a regional foundation of The Foundation for Enhancing Communities (TFEC).

The project is also supported by the Rotary Club of Hagerstown, Gaye McGovern, Richard Bell and CI members like you. Thank you! \$6,600 devoted to restoring native habitats in the region!







Lawn to Prairie Conversion Project

In the last newsletter we announced this project to convert 3000 square feet of our lawn to native plants to make a prairie habitat. We're pleased to share that **Sue Burkey** recommended to **finish the project funding at the max level** with her parent's (**Thomas and Nancy Burkey**) charitable fund through the **Franklin County Community Foundation.**

Over the summer our interns went hard to work, removing invasive plants in the shade area, and planting in this section. This smaller area was a test, **but it is already filling and blooming nicely with sedges, sunflowers & spiderworts.** This month we cut the sod on the 3000 acres and have placed the order for **2000 plant plugs from the Native Niche.** They are due in at the beginning of October!

Would you like to help with these mass volunteer plantings? Give us a call or email, and we'll arrange to have you on the list.

Wilson College Intern Karlee Lisinski is creating a 'How to Prairie' handout so you can recreate this project at home!

Grants make our work possible

This Summer, as well as the generous Lawn to Prairie grant, we received a \$10,000 from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Covid-19 ARPA PA Arts And Culture Recovery program.

The grant was written to support our professional staff (when we were still interviewing for Kori's position in fact) and it's release now reimburses several months of payroll.

We also just received funding from the William G. Pomeroy Foundation for a road marker detailing early farmsteads in the region, and a TFEC grant towards our Animal Husbandry. More details on these are coming in the December newsletter!

Fall 2024 Funded Projects at the Conococheague Institute

There has never been a better time to give than this Fall. To celebrate our 30th Anniversary, our Founder Dr. John C. Stauffer has announced a \$50,000 matching campaign.

All contributions and sponsorships between now and December 31st 2024 will be doubled in honor of the great strides we've made. Give a donation to our **Annual Operating fund (\$200,000 annually)**, or select one of these exciting funded projects!

Natural Dye Kits \$50 - \$350

Cream of Tartar, Tannic Acid, Weld, Logwood, Madder, Soda Ash, Indigo... It sounds like a potion, but these are just some of the ingredients needed for our natural dye programs!

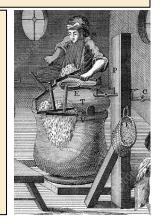
Total Goal: \$350



Wool Processing Tools \$100 -\$1,500

We've been given bags of wool, so it's time to start practicing scouring and carding, so we have wool for our spinning wheels. And next year we'll be sheep shearing our own wool too.

Total Goal: \$1,500



Hearth Cooking Equipment \$15 - \$1,005

Our cabin cooking programs are always popular, and they put extreme wear on our pots, knives and jars. Help our kitchen out with some new reproduction ironware, coppers, blades, and pickling jars.

Total Goal: \$1,005



<u>Tree Identification Plaques</u> \$40 - \$3,000

We have red oaks, maples, sycamores, pines, and even some chestnut hybrids. Aluminium 6" x 4" tree markers would include information about each key species across our 30 acres.

Total Goal: \$3,000 (\$40 each)



Audio Equipment \$1,000

We've been renting audio systems for large events, but as we get busier it's time we purchased a professional PA system of our own. We'll be able to use it for guest lecturers, and for very large tours.

2 Speakers, Mixer & Mic - \$1,000



Paid Lecturers & Presentations \$500 to \$5,000

Outside speakers bring expertise, knowledge and new experiences for our community. Cultural ambassadors, lecturers, musicians, craft experts, historians, live animal displays and more.

\$500 per presenter for 2025 dates



Bows & Arrows \$100 to \$1,500

At the last archery program, we had 52 participants for the first session! More Bows & Arrows will allow us to serve larger groups.

Welsh Longbow - \$250 each Youth Bow - \$260 each Traditional Arrows - \$100



Musical Harp for Playground \$2,250

Add music to our early childhood playground with this musical wishing well. It creates an infinite variety of music box tones.

Project includes a naming plaque for a loved one of your choice. \$2,250



Special Funded Project: Eagle Scout Archery Butts and Portable Safety Range

This funded project was a long shot (haha), but Mikaela on finishing her internship, announced that she'd like to do her Eagle project for CI, and incorporate the archery programs that she had taken such joy in. Our 'butts' are currently just straw bales, and our range is the field (safe distance...but easy to lose arrows). Mikaela proposed that she would lead her troop in constructing 6 quality archery butts and procure a modern safety net, and we gave her our full support. We mentioned it to the public during our CVBA mixer, and we were astounded when **Barb** Onorato of Shady Spring Farm said she'd like to FULLY FUND the project.

The reason? As a young lady she had always been intimidated by sports, except in archery, where she always hit her mark. Barb was inspired to see another young lady taking such an interest in archery, and pledged to fund it 100%. Mikaela has already started work, and hopes to be able to loose her project at our Bonfire Night November 9th! We can't wait!

6 Archery Butts, Materials and Construction, Donor & Eagle Scout Acknowledgment Plaque: \$388.01 Fully Funded!

20ft x 50ft Archery Back net with poles: \$1,011.99

Total Cost: \$1,400



PA Historic Farm for Vacations: Shady Spring Farm near McConnellsburg

The generous sponsors of the Eagle Scout Archery project, Shady Spring Farm, has a deep and interesting history. The farm is part of the original land tract of 280 acres referred to as "Nebuchadnezer's Defeat" that was granted by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to Abednego Stevens on the 7th of January, 1786. Abednego Stevens, Esquire, was a major landholder in the area and had served as a captain in the Revolutionary War.

Today the farm has wonderfully restored buildings that highlight 3 centuries of use. As a rental option, it offers two historic homes: a late 18th century stone farmhouse decorated with period antiques and an 1880's frame farmhouse decorated to the 1930's. There are even 4 modern horse stalls, offering overnight stabling! A useful perk for a Revolutionary War Captain or a family of trekkers looking for a scenic place to stay. To learn more, go to http://www.shadyspringfarm.com/index.html or email them at thetenanthouse@shadyspringfarm.com







Local Celebrity Homes: The Harriet Lane House

To learn more about historic preservation techniques and regional history, our team and interns were invited to the Harriet Lane House in Mercersburg by owner Sahand Miraminy. Built in 1828, this historic structure is a 2 ½ story, five-bay, brick dwelling that was designed in the Federal style. It was the birthplace of Harriet Lane (1830-1903), who served as hostess at the White House for her uncle James Buchanan. Today it serves as a beautifully scenic spot for rentals in Mercersburg. It even has a pool! Learn more at https://www.lanehouseinn.com/







Congratulations to our 2024 Interns!

Karlee Lisinski (Wilson College), Mikaela Mummert (Greencastle Antrim High School), Selena Feng and Rosalyn Remeikas (Mercersburg Academy)

Thanks to the community's generous support, this summer we had the largest pool of paid interns in our history! These talented individuals brought diverse interests and backgrounds to CI, but instantly bonded into a family.

It was Selena Feng's last year with us before heading to Boston College, and she took a leadership role with the other interns: encouraging them to try new things, becoming a cannon commander, and being a friend at all times. Selena has tried so much at CI so much now that if she wasn't heading to college she could run the place!

Karlee Lisinski of Wilson College has been instrumental in showing the rest of the team her environmental knowledge, leading public medicinal plant walks, and has had the native plant projects in hand. She'll be extending her internship until this Fall to see the Lawn to Prairie to completion.

Rosalyn (Roz) Remeikas of Mercersburg Academy, had to take a few weeks of this summer for Naval Officer Boot Camp, but still gave her all in fence building, programs and poison ivy removal! Come visit soon Roz!

Finally, Mikaela Mummert of Greencastle Antrim, did such exemplary service in every aspect of the internship, that we offered her a job! Unfortunately, being a senior in High school, in band on Saturdays, and going for her Eagle Scout rank, she declined, but has promised to apply next year...and volunteer in the interim whenever she can, like at our Bonfire Night!

























Donate to the Lucas Lapole Memorial Fund Support Career Development in Area Students

All donations made are tax-deductible and ONLY benefit the 100% paid student interns. **Donate today by including the** note "Intern" on any donation to CI.

Don't forget all contributions will be matched up to \$50k!

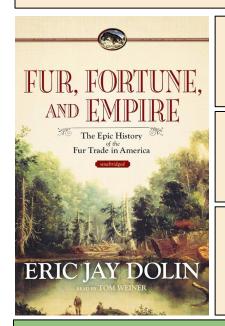


Careers in Historic Museums and **Environmental Conservation: 2024 Paid Internships**

2024 Contributions: \$5,600 2024 Pledged: \$4,000 (PHMC) 2024 Internship Expended: \$11,465.50 Give today to support the amazing work our interns have contributed to CI, and ensure that next year new students get these opportunities.

The Conococheague Book Club

3rd Thursday of every Month at 1pm at the Welsh Barrens Visitor Center Reading a book is a journey that is better for sharing it with others. Book Club is free and open to all.



Thursday, Oct 17th at 1PM

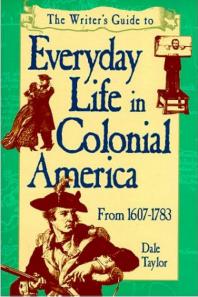
Fur, Fortune and Empire: The Epic History of the Fur Trade in America (2010) by Eric Jay Dolin

Thursday, Nov 21st at 1PM

A Writer's Guide to Everyday Life in Colonial America from 1607 to 1783 (1997) by Dale Taylor

Thursday, Dec 19th at 1PM

"Show and Tell" Group session: bring your favorite non-fiction history book to share with the company



We have great library books to borrow for our members, so check out a winter read of your own. Or check out the great titles for sale in our gift shop.

10% discount on all sales for members.

Archives and Artifacts: Looking into our Collection

We preserve the past inhabitants of Rock Hill Farm in our collection: pictured here is a young **Earl E. Jones** who lived here with his siblings and parents, **Nellie and David Jones** (pictured in the Wagon).

The Jones family leased the farm from **Bess and John Craig (our founder Dr Stauffer's grandparents)** on a share crop basis. The corn, wheat and other crops were split on a 50:50 basis.

For Earl and his family, the farm was a working home, with milk being carried from up on the barn to the Spring House to cool. The spring ran much more freely back then!

The ruins of our Summer Kitchen behind Rock Hill Farm was still a functioning building until 1950 and was used for butchering hogs, and making pudding and apple butter. An entire orchard of Imperial York apples was located in the pasture that is today a cow field near our wetlands area!







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RSVP TODAY!

Let us know if you'll be at the upcoming Annual Members Meeting so we can prepare for your company.

All are welcome!

The Conococheague Institute 2024 Annual Members Meeting Saturday 12th October 2pm to 3pm

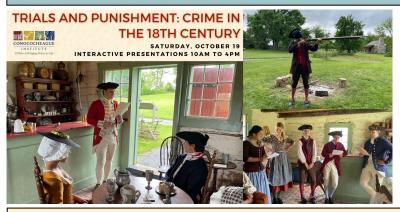
Join our staff, Board of Directors and volunteers in our annual members meeting. A review of the last 12 months will be presented, new Board members voted in, as well as an open forum discussion on the next stage of CI's growth.

For our 30th Anniversary Year we have some big announcements to discuss, and would love for you to be present to share your past with CI, and help plan our future together.

Light tea and snacks will be provided.



SAVE THE DATE! FREE PROGRAMS EVERY SATURDAY





ARCHERY, BIRDS OF PREY, CHILDREN'S ENTERTAINMENT, TAVERN LIFE, CRAFT & FOOD VENDORS, MICHAUX BREWING CO, HISTORIC PERFOMANCES, BONFIRE PARTY AND MORE... MADE POSSIBLE BY OUR GENEROUS SPONSORS







Board of Directors

Elizabeth Lillard (*President*), Ellen Kinzer (*Vice-President*), Bob Schwartz (*Secretary*), Sam Cathey (*Treasurer*), Will Sheppard, Kitty Clark, Melanie Desmond, Bailey Roberts Long, Gina Vitale, Matt South, Sheryl Snider

Advisory Board

Dr. John C. Stauffer (Founder & 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 and Team

Matthew Wedd, Executive Director, mwedd@cimlg.org Kori Taber, Visitor Experience Facilitator, visit@cimlg.org

Amelia Craven Visitor Experience Team Members, team@cimlg.org

Karlee Lisinski (Wilson College), Naturalist Paid Internship team@cimlg.org

Contact us

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Be part of our Journey: 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

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