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Our Vision

The Penns Valley Conservation Association seeks to foster an engaged community that preserves our rural way of life while protecting our natural environment. PVCA's Mission is to serve as a steward for the natural and cultural communities in the Upper Penns Creek watershed, seeking to preserve and honor the agricultural roots of Penns Valley by protecting and conserving its waters, farmlands, forests and rural heritage. We envision a community, where growth is balanced with support for healthy natural systems that foster the local economy. PVCA sees our valley assets as dark night skies, clear streams, healthy forests, prosperous farms, and local jobs.

Fall & Winter Newsletter 2021



You're Invited to: PVCA's 18th Annual COMMUNITY CELEBRATION CRICKFEST 2021

**Sunday September 19th
at Coburn Park**

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS:

10 am Tunnel Trot 5 K

11 am - 4pm Crickfest Celebration 2021: Open Mike, Silent Auction, Native Plant Sale, Festival Food with: Brazilian Munchies, Nittany Catering, Ethiopian, Tap Root Kitchen, Inglebean Coffeehouse, Sweet Creek Bakery. Family Fun: Duck Races, Pony Rides, Bottle Rockets, Petting Zoo. Pedals and Pints Bike Ride.

12:15 -Opening Band: Sarsaparilla Main Act: Pure Cane Sugar

2:30-Silent Auction Closes

3:00 -Open mike

4:00-Festival Closes





Volunteer Opportunities

Join an engaged community of your friends and neighbors who share your love of the beauty of the Penns Valley region. Help us protect and preserve this special place, while getting outside and having fun!

Volunteer for Crickfest

Spend part of the day helping with set up or tear down, selling native plants, signing in 5K runners or a number of other essential tasks that make this event the success it is!

Volunteer Contact: *Kat Alden*
aldenkat@gmail.com

Set Up/Tear Down: Jill Buchanan
Sweet Creek Bakery: Abby Gaffron
Native Plant Sale: Sara Depasquale
Silent Auction: Lisa Beherec
5K Race: Lindsay Rupert & Torri Withrow

Join a Committee

Help make sure PVCA remains a strong and vibrant organization as you help shape the future of our events, activities, and plans.

Contact:
Mike.shepski@pennsvalley.net

Kick off this year's Crickfest Celebration with our:

Tunnel Trot 5K

Join us for our Inaugural 5K Tunnel Trot at Crickfest 2021 at the Coburn Park! Runners, walkers, trotters, wanderers, and moseyers alike will navigate the 3.1 mile course alongside the gorgeous Penns Creek. The scenery abounds as Bald Eagles hunt for trout, migrating songbirds harmonize in morning chorus, and if you're really lucky, perhaps even a salamander or wood turtle may cross your path. Beginning at the Coburn Park, the course follows Penns Creek downstream along a relatively flat dirt, gravel, and partially paved road to the historic Coburn Tunnel and back.

Register for the 5K on Eventbrite or Pennsvalley.net

Your 5K registration fee will help support Environmental Education in the Penns Valley Area School District. Local field trips, hands-on experiences, and school gardens all have been provided for the local public school for 20 years without any cost to taxpayers thanks to our fundraising events and sponsorships.

All participants registered before September 10th will receive a commemorative 2021 Tunnel Trot t-shirt.

Event check-in begins at 9:00 AM

Tunnel Trot starts at 10:00 AM





**Fall
Membership
Meeting
October 17th
3-5 pm
Aaronsburg
Civic Center**

Join members and supporters as we hold our annual

meeting of the Board of Directors and Membership at Large. Look for more information about our board candidates and our presentation topic via social media, emails, on the website and at Crickfest. *Stay Tuned!*

**Volunteer Spotlight: Operations Director-Board Member-
Bookkeeper - Volunteer - Becky Bragg**

PVCA was fortunate to have recruited Becky as a volunteer to run the profitable silent auction- a showcase of our talented and generous community featured annually at the Crickfest Community Celebration. Fairly new to the area, Becky saw this as a great way to get to know the community of care that has been bringing conservation efforts to fruition in the Penns Creek Watershed. Her volunteer efforts brought our Environmental Education Committee much needed revenue, and she found a niche of like-minded people who were accomplishing the goals she shared. Becky ran and was elected to the Board of Directors in 2016 there she became familiar with every aspect of our organization. When in 2018 our Executive Director left to pursue further studies, she submitted her application to replace her. Hired as the Organizational Director, Becky ran PVCA for several years with efficiency and enthusiasm. She produced a brilliant Organizational Report showcasing PVCA's accomplishments and goals and encouraged volunteer engagement with her sincere support of conservation and educational efforts. When her family demands increased, Becky continued financial tracking, creating the position of bookkeeper. Becky kept fiscally responsible records of our many grants and donations that kept PVCA operating. It is with our wishes for a new adventure and application of her many talents that PVCA has bid Becky farewell as an active member of our team. Becky left PVCA enriched by her efforts. Our gratitude goes with her!



Praising Native Plants

Come Out to Support Our First Native Plant Sale at Crickfest September 19th We are seeking plant donations: Contact Sara DePasqualli meadowsweetmidwife@gmail.com for more information. Plants can be dropped off Saturday/Sunday at Coburn Park.

Fall is a perfect time to plant and divide native plants! PVCA has planted over 200,000 native plants, shrubs and trees alongside our streams for riparian and multi-functional buffers. Why native plants? They are essential for stream health, butterflies and bees. *"All plants are not created equal, particularly in their ability to support wildlife. Most of our native plant-eaters are not able to eat alien plants, and we are replacing native plants with alien species at an alarming rate, especially in the suburban gardens on which our wildlife increasingly depends. My central message is that unless we restore native plants to our suburban ecosystems, the future of biodiversity in the United States is dim."* Doug Tallamy, [Bringing](#)

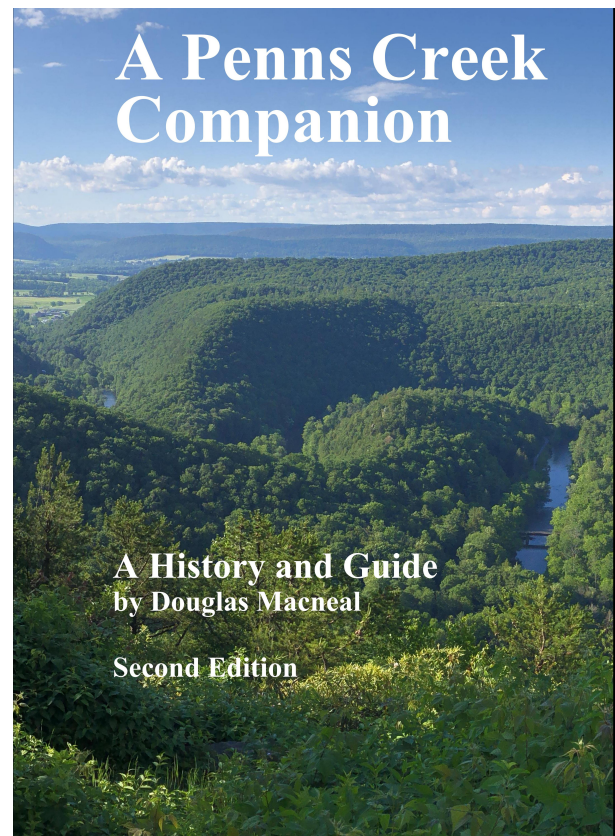
Penns Creek Companion 2nd Edition

PVCA is publishing the second edition of a book about the natural environment and history of the upper Penns Creek watershed. The first edition, also published by PVCA, came out in 2005 and sold out long ago. The decision to reissue a book many years after its initial publication—and the considerable effort required to do so—must be based on solid reasons. Either the subject remains timely and of interest to a new generation of readers, or the knowledge gained from it can claim timeless validity. Both are true of *A Penns Creek Companion: A History and Guide*, written and illustrated by my father, the late Centre County author [Douglas Macneal](#).

Feeling at home in the world is a fundamental human desire—we thirst for a meaningful sense of place and community to help us understand who we are, what we come from. The long valleys and forested headwaters of Penns Creek form a beautiful landscape that captivates visitors and nourishes those who live here. But a true sense of connectedness to this place lies below its surface appearance. Our appreciation is deepened and enriched by local knowledge—familiarity with nature’s processes, recognition of cultural patterns, understanding its history and lore. This type of knowledge can take a lifetime to acquire. As an outsider to rural Pennsylvania who grew up in Baltimore, Doug strove throughout his life to become rooted here and understand this place.

Doug was a lifelong writer. During his work at Penn State, the Pa. Mirror newspaper, Centre County Historical Society, Senior Environmental Corps, Elder Hostel classes, UCC church committees, lay chaplaincy at state parks, school boards and choral societies; he practiced writing as a craft. Much of his writing centers on Brush Valley and the surrounding communities of central Pennsylvania, “reaching back to one’s home by as many avenues as there are memories.” Toward the end of his life when Parkinsons made concentrated thought elusive and exhausting, Doug still wrestled with ideas and words, adding an epilogue to update his 2005 ‘history and guide’ book. This second edition of *A Penns Creek Companion* is a lively and intimate reading of the landscape of central PA, the result of Doug Macneal’s passionate effort to define the essence of a locality and community that he loved.

by Christopher Macneal



Order Books at pennsvalley.net, local bookstores,
PVCA Events & The Green Drake Gallery

Thank You Crickfest Sponsors 2021:

Penns Creek Level:

Brush Mountain Lodge

Envinity

Sierra Club Moshannon Group

Penns Vally Veterinary Clinic

Pine Creek Level:

Black Walnut Bodyworks

Friends of PVCA

Nature's Pantry

Rapid Transit Sports

Elk Creek Level:

**Be Well Associates* Freeze Thaw Cycles* Millheim
Small Engine**

Tributary Level: **Eric Campbell * Ironwood Forestry *Martins Feed Mill***



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Snyder

**Non-Profit Org
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Welcome Mike Shepski, our new Executive Director!

Mike brings to us nearly two decades' worth of experience in non-profit leadership. He has held a variety of leadership positions in central Pennsylvania and Australia, including six years at the executive level. Strategy formulation, community and market growth, and leadership of staff and volunteers are a few of his core strengths. During his first months working for PVCA, he has been doing what matters—communicating clearly, asking questions, meeting as many PVCA people as he can, all while meeting and overcoming challenges large and small.

Mike is passionate about conservation, the environment, and our quality of life in central Pennsylvania. He grew up along the Susquehanna River outside of Northumberland, spending time in nearby streams and fishing the Susquehanna and Lower Penns Creek. As an Eagle Scout, Mike has enjoyed significant outdoor adventures, such as living in Yellowstone National Park, summiting Middle Teton in Grand Teton National Park, and completing a 50 mile backpacking trip in Canada's Algonquin Provincial Park.

Mike is a 2002 graduate from Penn State's Smeal College of Business and a regular student of healthy organizational culture and best practices. He lives in State College with his wife, daughter, and two sons. You can meet Mike at our upcoming Members' Meeting.



From Our Executive Director, Mike Shepski:

I don't think it's a secret - PVCA has a lot to be proud of! I recently led a PVCA Board strategy meeting and, while listening to a discussion about mapping all the places we have protected or improved over three decades, it was easy to feel overwhelmed by the task of simply creating a list of all the locations.

The good news is, we are looking to add more locations! Over the next twelve months or so, I look forward to linking arms with many of you as we go out and plant young forests, work on riparian buffers, and broaden and intensify our educational efforts together.

PVCA is getting ready to involve more people. We want every child in Penns Valley to learn about sustainability, responsibility, and the importance of our land and water. It's not just about the kids, either. Soon we will have experts on local site field days, giving adult landowners the opportunity to learn how they themselves can best steward the land they already own.

These ideas are some of the major themes in our overall strategy for the 2021-22 year. I'm looking forward to meeting many of you at our Fall Members Meeting the weekend of October 16-17, and sharing with you where PVCA is headed over the next year. With that said, I'd love to meet you sooner and hear your own ideas and thoughts about PVCA. If you have questions for me or would like to catch up, please send me an email at mike.shepski@pennsvalley.net. I'd enjoy hearing from you!

