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SUMMER 2022

COMMON GROUND

"Protecting our rural character and natural resources through community-based land conservation."



*Small pond located on the Galer property
— see article on front cover*

You can make a difference!

Leave a Legacy, Plan a Gift.

When you include the Conservancy in your estate plans, you help secure the future of our region's natural resources and rural character for future generations. Planning today extends your impact beyond your lifetime.

Get Involved — Volunteer! Tinicum Conservancy would not exist without its volunteers. We need help with mailings, research, event planning, and more! If you prefer the outdoors, we need folks to take part in our River Road cleanups and as volunteer property monitors.

Please contact Tinicum Conservancy at (610) 294-1077 or email MFell@tinicumconservancy.org for questions and more information.

Double Your Impact with an Employer Matching Gift.

Maximize your Conservancy support with an employer matching gift. Many companies make it easy to double or triple the amount you donate! Check with your human resources department.

Conserve Your Property. Preserving your land is a lasting way to contribute to our community.

Please contact our executive director, Jim Engel, at (610) 294-1077 or email jengel@tinicumconservancy.org for questions and a confidential discussion about your options and opportunities.

JOIN TODAY

Your gift can make a positive impact to help protect your community for your family and future generations.

The Tinicum Conservancy is a private non-profit organization that depends on charitable contributions to protect the environment, steward more than 5,000 conserved acres of land, and educate the community about our mission. Your support is essential to realizing our shared purpose.

Every gift makes a difference. Use the envelope inside or visit tinicumconservancy.org to donate today. *Thank you.*



Galer family Thanksgiving 1954

Galer family 2021

Conservancy Receives Donation of Wetlands Property Galer Family Legacy Continues

You could say that the Galer Family likes certain traditions. One of their favorite traditions was visiting the family cabin in Nockamixon Township every Thanksgiving (and many days in between) for more than 30 years. Located on ten acres at the headwaters of Rapp Creek near Lake Warren, the property was a gathering place

for five generations of Galers – brothers and sisters, aunts and uncles, grandparents and grandchildren – where days were spent listening to the radio, exploring the woods, playing cards, fishing, sharing family meals, and playing ice hockey on the small pond. Harold Galer, Jr. purchased the property in the late 40s and soon after built the cabin

with a friend, George Doyle. Another room was added years later, but the cabin always retained its rustic charm. As there was no indoor plumbing, water was hauled from a shallow well, and an outhouse served the cabin and its guests.

Harold Galer III, received the property from his father in the early 2000s and

continued on pg. 3



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The accreditation seal is awarded to land trusts meeting the highest national standards for excellence and conservation permanence.

The Tinicum Conservancy is a 501(c) (3) non-profit organization established in 1992. Donations are tax deductible as allowed by law.

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A letter from our President



This issue of Common Ground reflects on legacies and what motivates people to contribute to their community.

The story of Harold Galer III and his family donating a ten-acre property to the Conservancy would be enough inspirational material to fill an entire issue, but as most of you know, we also had to say farewell to Boyce and Karen Budd, who moved from the community after 30 years of outstanding service.

Boyce and Karen both served as the Conservancy board president for a decade each and served as a trustee for many more years. Their leadership for the Conservancy changed the direction of the organization for the better and led to thousands of acres being conserved in Tinicum, Nockamixon and Bridgeton.

Boyce also served as a Tinicum Township Supervisor and Conservancy office handyman. He was always willing to offer help or tell a good story, and if you were lucky, you got a little of both.

Karen served as volunteer coordinator, eradicator of any invasive plant, easement monitor, educator to whoever would listen, and the best landowner outreach person the Conservancy has ever had.

In between, they traveled the world, raised a family, entertained guests, and engaged in many other interesting pursuits.

But ultimately, it's not just their accomplishments that stand out the most. It's the passion and energy that they brought to their years of dedicated service to the Conservancy.

They have left our community in a much better place. That is their legacy, and we wish them the best of luck in this new chapter of their lives.

—Neal Feigles



*Thank you
Karen & Boyce!*



Norm MacArthur and Karen Budd share a funny moment



Attendees enjoyed a wonderful buffet



Boyce Budd discusses conservation with Jay and Debra Goldstein



Galer family legacy (cont. from pg. 1)

continued to enjoy the property until his death in 2020. His daughter, Kate Galer, said “My father and our family loved this property and kept returning to it year after year.”

Recently, the Galer family, ten members in all, decided to honor their late father’s legacy by donating the entire property to the Tinicum Conservancy. This is the first property that the Conservancy has received as a donation.

In late July, a conservation easement was created for the property as part of a cooperative arrangement with the Heritage Conservancy, a neighboring organization that has successfully partnered with Tinicum Conservancy in the past. The Heritage Conservancy will hold the

easement until the property can be sold. This avoids the perception of a conflict of interest if Tinicum Conservancy were to develop the conservation easement while holding the enforcement responsibility at the same time. The proceeds from the sale will be designated towards the long-term conservation goals of the Conservancy. “We are humbled and very grateful to the Galer Family and the late Mr. Galer for being such good stewards of the property over the many decades, and thankful for their interest in continuing that legacy through this generous donation,” said Neal Feigles, Conservancy President. In a story of serendipity, Mr. Galer became a first-time member of the Tinicum Conservancy in October 2019, just four



months before his passing. When Executive Director Jim Engel was approached by the family, he assumed that Mr. Galer’s recent membership had inspired their decision to donate his property to the Conservancy. But as it turned out, Kate and her family had no idea their father had recently joined. “We chose to donate the land to the Tinicum Conservancy because it appeared to have the best reputation in our area,” explained Kate. “It shows that we made the right choice. It was special to him and so it was special to us too. He would be so happy to know that we permanently protected the property that brought us all such fond memories.”

Want to establish your own legacy?

Do you believe in the mission of the Tinicum Conservancy? Are you interested in creating a family legacy that protects our most important natural resources – fresh water, healthy forests, abundant wildlife and thriving farms? If so, please consider donating your property to the Conservancy. Even a small

property with no natural resources can be a valuable asset! Every piece of the puzzle, no matter how small, helps us establish new conservation easements and defend our community against on-going threats to conserved properties.. Whether you donate during your lifetime or leave a gift in your will, your donation

can transform our community and leave a legacy that your family will be proud of for generations to come.

For a confidential conversation, please contact Jim Engel at 610-294-1077 or email him at jengel@tinicumconservancy.org

Kelly's CORNER: That's Pretty Invasive!

Ah! The beauty of delicate spring flowers gently, almost shyly, flaunting their new blooms! There are many we recognize and anticipate every spring. In our gardens, maybe crocus, snowdrops and daffodils first, and in the woods, columbine, bluebells, trout lily, wild geranium, and if you're very lucky, maybe a trillium or a lady's slipper orchid. But there are also many plants we see and don't recognize. "Oh, that's a pretty flower. I wonder what that is?" Maybe we ask someone knowledgeable. Maybe we use an app on our phone to look it up (like PlantNet or iNaturalist). Or maybe we just collect a few seeds or dig it up and take it home without actually knowing what it is. After all, if it's growing in the woods, it will be great in the garden, right?

Not necessarily! Some of the prettiest flowers can be our worst invaders.

But what does it actually mean to be "an invader" or an invasive plant? Invasive plants come in all shapes, sizes and forms. They are typically not native to the US, having been brought intentionally or by accident decades or centuries ago from Europe, the Middle East, China or Japan. Many were brought for agricultural uses, for the pet trade or for the ornamental market. But some were stow-aways on clothing, animal fur or in the ballast water of cargo ships. In most cases, those plants did not arrive with their biological enemies in tow – the insect pests, diseases and competitors that would naturally keep them in harmony with their environment. Without their natural checks and balances, these plants easily take control.



Fig buttercup or lesser celandine (*Ficaria verna*, previously *Ranunculus ficaria*): Dark green, shiny, heart-shaped leaves with bright yellow flowers having 8 to 12 petals. Plants are only 8" high but form dense impenetrable mats, usually in wet or floodplain areas, but sometimes in upland forests. Sometimes mistaken for native

This is where the term "invader" can be applied. Among native plants, non-native plants are like bullies running rampant, taking up space and precious resources, crowding out native plants until they *and the wildlife that rely on them* can no longer survive. It doesn't matter how pretty they are (picture Genghis Khan with a cute yellow hat and glossy green sleeves), when these interlopers invade, we lose significant ecological resources for ourselves and our wildlife.

So, who are these pretty invaders? There are many, and some may even be in your own back yard. Getting to know the worst offenders will help prevent unintentional spread. If you discover one or more of these in your own gardens or woods, removing them is highly recommended. If you see them along the roadside, do not take them home!

Here are just a few of the most common we see this time of year.

marsh marigold (*Caltha palustris*), which is a taller, more robust, less mat-forming plant.



Dames rocket (*Hesperis matronalis*): Grows up to 4' tall with white, pink to purple flowers. It mimics native tall phlox. How to tell the difference? The flowers have four petals (as in D-A-M-E), while phlox flowers have 5 petals (like P-H-L-O-X).

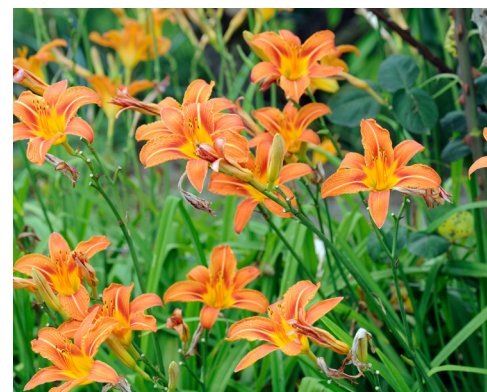


Common periwinkle (*Vinca minor*): Periwinkle is a commonly planted groundcover that escapes cultivation, grows vigorously and forms dense and extensive mats along the forest floor. It has glossy evergreen leaves and blue pinwheel flowers. Its only lookalikes are other invasive periwinkles.

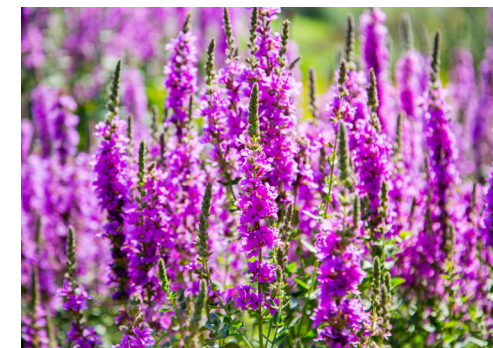
Every gift makes a difference. Use the envelope provided or visit tinicumconservancy.org to donate today. *Thank you.*



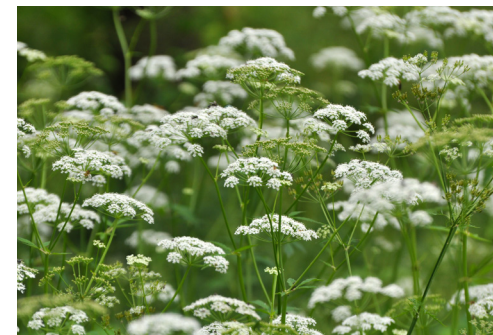
Incised fumewort (*Corydalis incisa*): 3"-24" biennial plant with deeply cut leaves (like its relative, bleeding heart) and purple tubular flowers in clusters. It grows densely in the same areas as fig buttercup. A relative newbie on the recognized invasive species lists, there are few known controls.



Common daylily (*Hemerocallis fulva*): Grows 2-4' tall with showy orange lily flowers, often seen on roadsides. Once established it can be difficult to remove without extensive digging. Lookalike natives include Canada lily (*Lilium canadense*) and Turk's cap lily (*Lilium superbum*). How to tell the difference? The invasive daylily has very long grass-like leaves.



Purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*): grows 4-10' tall with dense spikes of purple flowers, often in wet areas. This plant has overtaken hundreds of acres of NJ wetlands. Lookalike natives include blue vervain (*Verbena hastata*) and blazing star (*Liatris aspera* and *L. spicata*).



Goutweed (*Aegopodium podagraria*): A creeping ground cover that can grow 3' tall with compound, toothed and variegated leaves and white flat-topped clusters of flowers. Like periwinkle, it grows vigorously and forms dense and extensive mats wherever it gets established.

For a more comprehensive look at our pretty invasive plants, check out: Alien Plant Invaders of Natural Areas: <https://www.invasive.org/alien/factmain.htm>



HELP WANTED

Office Assistant Needed

Come help us keep the heart of the Conservancy going strong. A wide variety of opportunities exists for almost anyone here at the Conservancy office. Help with mailings, filing, computer inputting, distributing newsletters and many other important and rewarding projects.

Please contact Tinicum Conservancy Executive Director Jim Engel at (610) 294-9069 or email jengel@tinicumconservancy.org

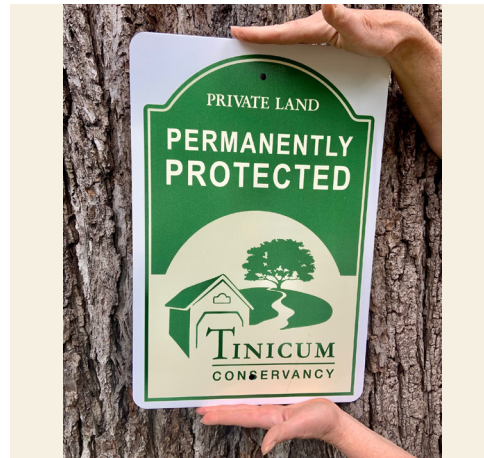


Thank you!

A giant YUMMM & THANK YOU to local businesses **OwowCow** and **Capri Pizza & Restaurant** for generously providing delicious food and scrumptious ice cream for our Volunteer Monitors' Appreciation picnic. Please support the local businesses that support your conservancy!

Field Volunteers Needed

We could not thrive (*or even exist!*) without our dedicated volunteers. If you would like to volunteer outdoors, please sign up for a stewardship project (like stream restoration or invasive plant removal), or train to become a member of our annual property monitoring team.



It was a Dark and Stormy Night...for Amphibian Ambassadors

The excitement was palpable as we clustered together with our umbrellas, flashlights and buckets in the cold, dark, drizzly rain. It was 7:30 p.m. in late February, on the first pre-spring night that promised to be above 40 degrees with rain for at least 4 hours. Our group of 15 was eclectic: A retired couple huddled with a group of 20-somethings, sharing names with a mom and her 12-year-old son, allowed to stay up late on a school night just for this. Why such excitement on an otherwise bleak night?

Because the amphibians were coming!

After a long winter, salamanders, toads and frogs wait for just the right conditions to climb from their earthly burrows, migrate to their ancestral breeding grounds and mate. After laying their eggs in wet, gelatinous masses, they travel back to their burrows to wait until spring. So, what did this annual ritual have to do with us? We were the first volunteer members of the newly formed Tincum Amphibian Ambassadors!

Under the guidance of Pennsylvania reptile and amphibian expert, Kyle Loucks, Tincum Conservancy staff coordinated with Katie Martens and Gabby Gregory (Environmental

Specialists at DCNR's Delaware Canal State Park) to identify where our local (and some rare) salamanders, frogs and toads would be emerging when the weather conditions developed just right. Those locations happened to be along busy back roads, particularly in northern Tincum Township, making these amazing creatures very susceptible to injury and death while making their springtime journey.

When these extremely vulnerable, soft-bodied critters wake up to breed, they



often must migrate long distances to get to their breeding grounds. It must be dark (for safety) and it must be raining (so their permeable skins don't dry out) and it must be above 40 degrees (so they don't freeze). Under the best conditions, it can be difficult for human drivers driving 35 mph to see a tiny hopping or slithering

critter crossing a road. The Amphibian Ambassadors walk the roadways watching for migrating amphibians. We help guide and protect them across the roads, keeping them safe from passing vehicles.

That first night, volunteers saved over 70 amphibians, including spring peepers, wood frogs, grey tree frogs and American toads. The following week, there were far more, including many rare and beautiful marbled salamanders, which I had personally never seen before. I was hooked.



If walking in the dark, cold rain for hours searching for tiny, adorable critters appeals to you too, please consider joining us. The amphibians need all the help they can get. Contact Katie Martens at kmartens@pa.gov for more information.

—Kelly Germann

New Signs for Conservation Easement Landowners

Do you own a conservation easement property with Tincum Conservancy? Get your **FREE** sign!

If you've lived or traveled through Tincum in the past few years, you may have noticed a few Tincum Conservancy signs stating "Private Land Permanently Protected" on several of our most scenic conservation easement properties. Those landowners are proud to tell the world that their beautiful bit of the planet is permanently protected.

The conservancy receives frequent requests for these large signs from other easement landowners. However, due to rising manufacturing costs and lack of materials, we've been unable to attain more of them.

Recently though, the conservancy designed a smaller sign made of sustainable aluminum. These one-sided signs are approximately 12"x18" with pre-drilled holes at the top and bottom for easy attachment to a post, fence or mailbox. We hope every landowner will take advantage of the opportunity to display their pride in protecting a bit of their community and planet.

While supplies last, Tincum Conservancy is offering one free sign* to any conservation easement landowner upon request. Contact Kelly at kgermann@tincumconservancy.org or call us at 610-294-1077 to claim yours. (* Additional signs can be ordered at cost.)

Save the Date!

Come celebrate our 30th anniversary

Saturday, Sept. 24th 3:00pm - 5:00pm

(2:00 optional pre-event walk of the property)

Everyone is invited to help us celebrate our three decades safeguarding the quality of life we all love. Our hosts Jill and Stephen McDonnell invite you to enjoy the beauty of their 80-acre conserved property along with tasty food, refreshing drinks and a chance to spend time with your neighbors. The event starts with a guided walk of the property at 2 pm and the main event from 3 pm to 5:30 pm. Mark your calendar now and watch for your invitation in late August.



Dear River Road Cleanup Volunteers,

Thanks so much to the great group that showed up for Saturday's cleanup. And thanks for your support over the past years. Let's continue that enthusiasm as Trevor and Linda take over this very important project. We picked up 19 full bags of trash, some jewelry, the usual car wheel and parts, and an animal trap. With much gratitude,

—Graham and Beverly