



P.O. Box 206
Erwinna, PA 18920

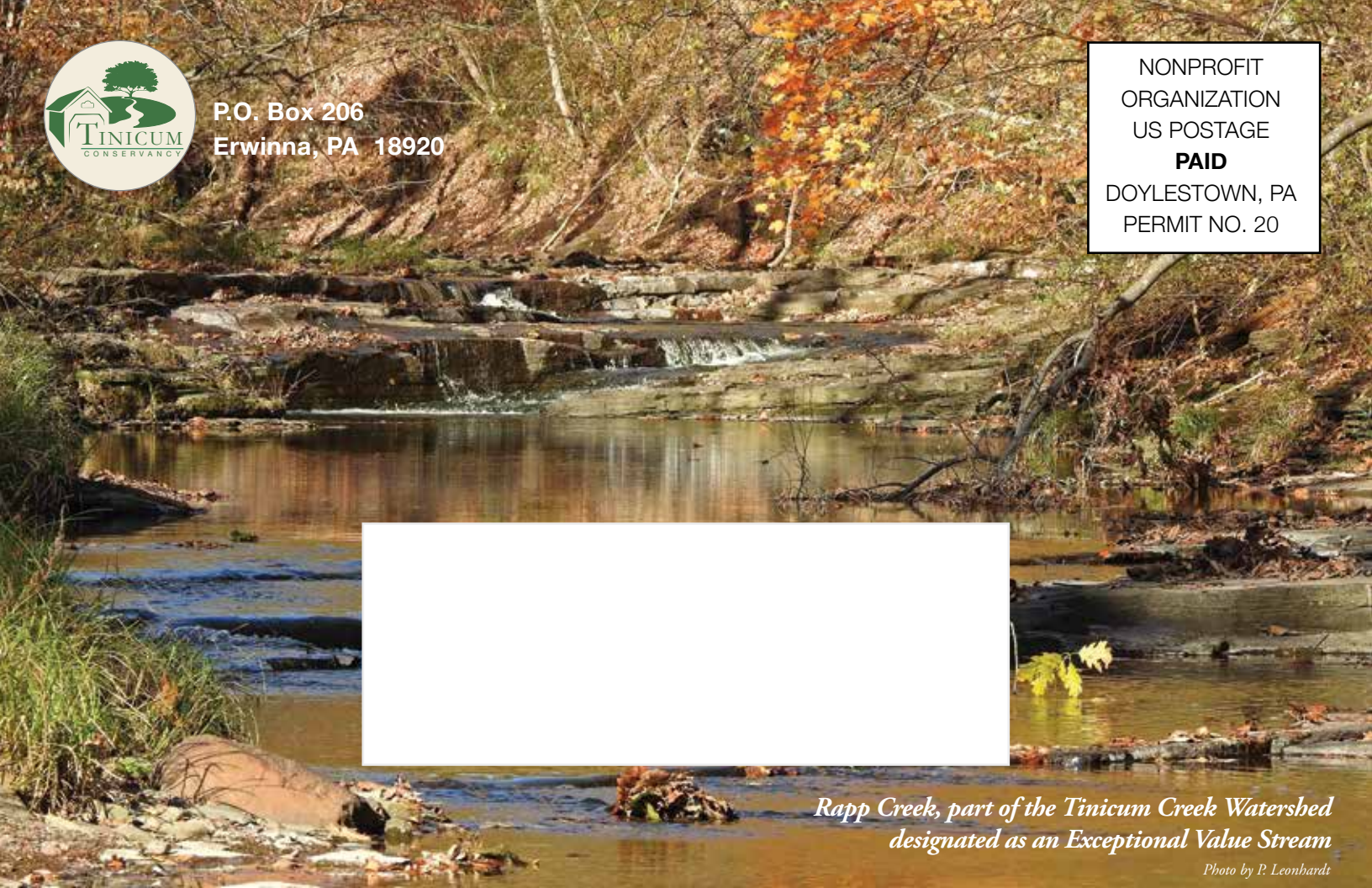
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FALL/WINTER 2019

COMMON GROUND

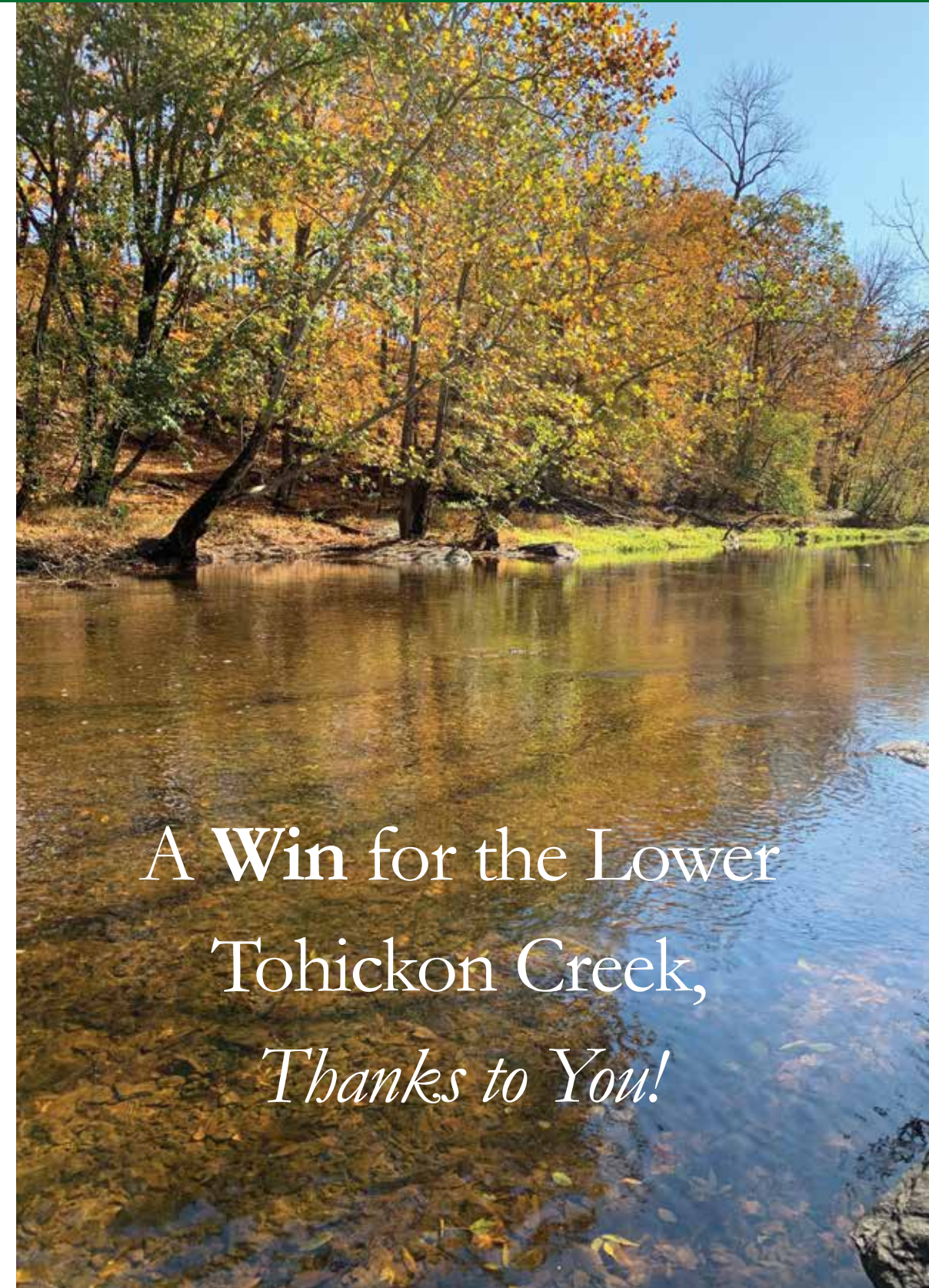
"Protecting our rural character and natural resources through community-based land conservation."



*Rapp Creek, part of the Tinicum Creek Watershed
designated as an Exceptional Value Stream*

Photo by P. Leonhardt

Thank you. You made a real difference. Over the summer months, more than 900 community members, legislators, non-profit groups and partners rallied to urge the PADEP not to downgrade the legal protection status of the Lower Tohickon Creek. Your many voices and countless personal stories of engagement with this beautiful creek grabbed the DEP's attention. We requested that DEP and the National Park Service conduct a study of the measured cold water releases occurring from the bottom of Nockamixon Dam, where the Lower Tohickon Creek begins. This study should determine if the creek is receiving an appropriate volume of cold water to sustain the chemistry and biology befitting the Exceptional Value protection status we believe the Tohickon deserves. The recommendation for the Tohickon's downgrade has been suspended while DEP coordinates with us and other agencies to frame this study. Stay tuned as we navigate this new path to gaining Exceptional Value status for the Tohickon Creek.



*A Win for the Lower
Tohickon Creek,
Thanks to You!*

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.

Please contact Tinicum Conservancy trustee Karen Budd at (610) 294-9069 or email kbudd3030@gmail.com 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 steward over 4,900 acres conserved through our efforts, to protect the environment, and to 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.*



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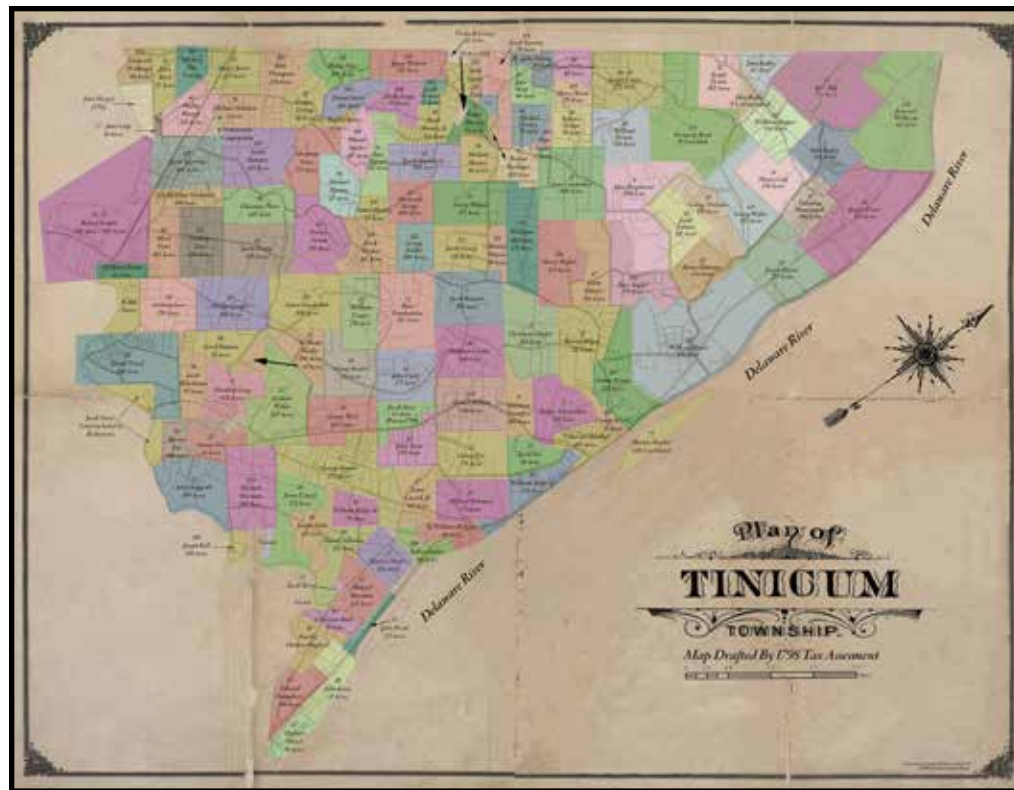
The accreditation seal is awarded to land trusts meeting the highest national standards for excellence and conservation permanence.

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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HISTORIC MAP GIVES US A GLIMPSE OF TINICUM IN THE LATE 1700s



Local resident and Tinicum Conservancy member Richard Zaveta had an idea he just couldn't get out of his head. A client had asked him for a historic map of Tinicum, but no matter how hard he searched he couldn't come up with anything satisfactory.

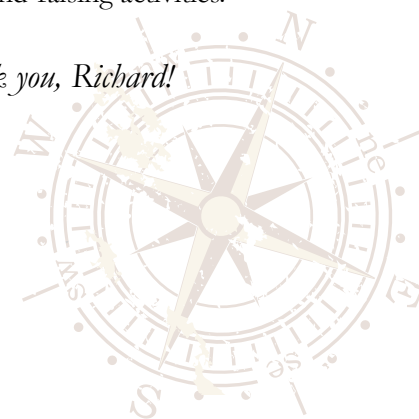
So he decided to do something about it.

Zaveta solicited the help of Jeff Marshall, local historian and President of the Heritage Conservancy, who drew on his skills as a researcher to delve into Tinicum's history. Using data culled from a nationwide tax assessment performed in 1798, Marshall spent a year putting together a comprehensive map that shows the ownership and acreage of every property in the township, along with a separate list of structures and improvements. The map

overlays current tax parcels to make it easy for anyone to find out who owned their property at the time and compare their current property lines with those at the turn of the century.

The result of Marshall's tireless work and Zaveta's financial support is a remarkable glimpse into Tinicum's past, one that will surely be valued by Tinicum residents for generations to come. Zaveta donated a framed copy of the map to the Tinicum Conservancy, along with the right to reprint the map for future publications and fund-raising activities.

Thank you, Richard!



CONSERVANCY SEEKS LAND TRUST ALLIANCE REACCREDITATION



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

The national Land Trust Alliance has established standards and practices for land trusts to build strong, lasting conservation programs and uphold the public trust. In 2009, the Land Trust Accreditation Commission accredited Tinicum Conservancy and was approved again in 2014 for reaccreditation. Accreditation was earned through a rigorous process of evaluation, demonstrating that the Conservancy's organization, management practices and controls conformed to established national standards of excellence.

As noted by the Commission, "accreditation provides public recognition of land trusts that are engaged in the long-term protection of the land in the public interest. It increases public awareness of, and confidence in, land trusts and land conservation." The Board of Trustees of Tinicum Conservancy supports adoption of the LTA's "Land Trust Standards and Practices," and will seek reaccreditation when our current accreditation expires in 2020. To prepare, the Board of Trustees is reviewing our current standards and

practices, to make certain they conform to current Land Trust Standards and Practices. Although we earned accreditation in 2014, our policies and procedures and the Land Trust Alliance standards have evolved and improved. (LTA's renewal is on a five-year cycle regardless of changes.)

The LTA Commission points out that land trusts use the process "as a way to fine-tune their policies and streamline their operations." The Commission conducts an extensive review of the application and grants accreditation (and the right to use the accreditation seal) to land trusts that meet the practices.

For Tinicum Conservancy members and the community at large, reaccreditation provides continuing assurance that the Conservancy's mission "to protect our rural character and natural resources through community-based land conservation" is being conducted according to the highest standards. We will keep you informed of our progress in future issues and on our website.

The Commission invites public input and accepts signed comments relating to how the Tinicum Conservancy complies with national standards. Comments are due by Feb. 22nd, 2020 and may be sent to the LTA, Attn: Public Comments via email info@landtrustaccreditation.org, fax 518-587-3183, or mail to 36 Phila Street, Suite 2, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866. For more information on the accreditation process visit landtrustaccreditation.org.

The Land Trust Alliance will review all aspects of our organization and practices. For a detailed list of all Land Trust Standards and Practices, visit landtrustaccreditation.org. The full list of current standards is:

- 1. Ethics, Mission and Community Engagement**
Land trusts maintain high ethical standards and have a mission committed to conservation, community service and public benefit.
- 2. Compliance with Laws**
Land trusts fulfill their legal requirements as nonprofit tax-exempt organizations and comply with all laws.
- 3. Board Accountability**
Land trust boards act ethically in conducting the affairs of the organization and carry out their legal and financial responsibilities as required by law.
- 4. Conflicts of Interest**
Land trusts have policies and procedures to avoid or manage real or perceived conflicts of interest.
- 5. Fundraising**
Land trusts conduct fundraising activities in a lawful, ethical and responsible manner.
- 6. Financial Oversight**
Land trusts are responsible and accountable for how they manage their finances and assets.
- 7. Human Resources**
Land trusts have sufficient skilled personnel to carry out their programs, whether volunteers, staff and/or consultants/contractors.
- 8. Evaluating and Selecting Conservation Projects**
Land trusts carefully evaluate and select their conservation projects.
- 9. Ensuring Sound Transactions**
Land trusts work diligently to see that every land and conservation easement transaction is legally, ethically and technically sound.
- 10. Tax Benefits and Appraisals**
Land trusts work diligently to see that every charitable gift of land or conservation easement meets federal and state tax law requirements, to avoid fraudulent or abusive transactions and to uphold public confidence in land conservation.
- 11. Conservation Easement Stewardship**
Land trusts have a program of responsible stewardship for their conservation easements.
- 12. Fee Land Stewardship**
Land trusts have a program of responsible stewardship for the land held in fee for conservation purposes.

Join Today

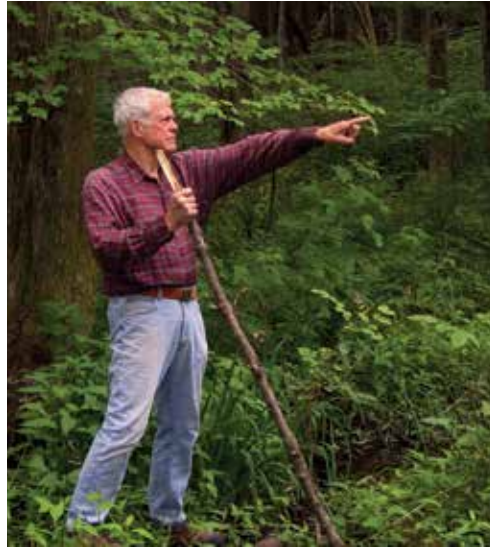


We've come a long way thanks to people like you who care about the land on which you live, but we must remain vigilant. The current threats to our natural world are real, and it's up to all of us to help keep our forests healthy, our land fertile and our waters clean.

If you haven't donated before, or if your membership has lapsed, please consider what new milestones we can reach with your support. Annual memberships of \$50, \$250, or the \$1000 Friends of Conservation are critical to protecting the land we love. Every gift makes a difference. Use the envelope provided or visit TinicumConservancy.org to donate today.

Thank you for your support!

BUDD'S SUCCESSFUL TERM AS CONSERVANCY PRESIDENT COMES TO AN END



When asked about the beginning of his term, Boyce Budd, who has served as Tinicum Conservancy's President since 2012, answers with a smile: "It doesn't seem that long ago."

His time as President may have gone by in a flash, but the progress made under his leadership will last for generations: twenty land preservation projects spanning five townships and protecting more than 940 acres. During his seven-year term, Budd also guided the Conservancy through the

renewal of its professional accreditation and directed a fund-raising campaign that exceeded its \$250,000 goal. His work helped raise core funding by 20%, which has allowed the Conservancy to maintain its professional standards while raising the bar on two of its more crucial responsibilities: protecting the legal status of its 115 conservation easements, and helping landowners with the ongoing stewardship of their properties.

But most of all, Budd's unbridled enthusiasm and tireless commitment has been an invaluable resource for the Conservancy's many supporters, volunteers, and local officials. Asked what he plans to do with all his newfound free time, Budd says he'll always be on hand to talk about why a conservation easement or a donation to the Conservancy can make all the difference in the world to our community. But, he admits, he now has a new, equally rewarding priority: "Spending more time with my grandchildren!"

TWO LEGACY GIFTS WILL HELP PROTECT OUR FUTURE

The Conservancy recently received notification that they will be receiving gifts from the estate of two long time members. The donations will be used for the acquisition of new conservation lands, the protection of existing conservation easements and the long-term sustainability of the organization. "We are so grateful for their generosity and forethought. The difference they have made is beyond measure" explains Conservancy President Boyce Budd.

Both individuals were loyal members of the Conservancy for more than 25 years. But that's where the similarities stop. One of the members, John Seng, attended every membership celebration and event

that he was invited to, while the other individual preferred to remain a quiet, but strong supporter of our mission.

Like many people, Mr. Seng was conservative in his giving during his lifetime because of the high cost of living and uncertainty around health care. The bequest made a more generous gift possible.

"The Conservancy has received pledges from twelve individuals who have told us that we are included in their will or estate plan," states Jim Engel, Conservancy Executive Director. "Beside loving our mission, these individuals made commitments because they know their gift will be used for the long-term benefit

of the community rather than a short-term fix. It's an easy way to create a lasting legacy for the place you love."

Considering including the Conservancy in your will or estate plan or you've already done so?

Please let us know so that we can answer any questions you may have and so that we can thank you.

Have a confidential conversation with Jim Engel at 610-294-1077 or jengel@tinicumconservancy.org

A Special Thank You!

Jim Fillman for returning as a volunteer to help here in the office.

Michael Kauffman for his donation of a new laptop computer and printer for the office.

Captain Dee Keller for providing an educational tour on his boat and **Lower Delaware Wild & Scenic** for funding.

The **Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources** for a guided trip on the Delaware Canal.

Paul Wieand and June Rothkopf for hosting our 2019 Community Celebration at their beautiful property, Tinicum Creek Farm

Jeff Keller for hosting and leading an educational walk at his property.

Richard Zaveta for 1) historic research on the property owners and their structures in Tinicum at the time of the 1798 census; 2) design and layout of the map; 3) a 28"x 36" framed print of the map for use at Conservancy events and at the office; and 4) all rights to the Tinicum Conservancy for the reprint of the map for educational purposes.

President Boyce Budd, Secretary Peggy Enoch, and Treasurer Dot Parker from their two terms of service as trustees for the Conservancy. During their terms, the organization continued to get better because of their talents, enthusiasm, and commitment to our mission.



RESIDENTS TAKE ACTION OVER THREAT TO WATERSHED

In March, residents along Rapp Creek near the border of Tinicum and Nockamixon Townships became alarmed when they saw large amounts of mud coming down the normally clear flowing stream. Even the recent torrential rains couldn't explain the amount of mud flowing through the creek channel.

Michael Moss, a conservation easement owner and long-time resident along Rapp Creek, soon found the source of the mud flows: a new housing development along Route 611 in Nockamixon Township.

It turned out that grading for the project had begun before proper stormwater management structures were put in place, and regulations requiring a 150-foot buffer along sensitive, riparian streams had been ignored. The grading, combined with a series of big storms, led to an unprecedented amount of mud clogging the stream channel. The resulting reduction in water quality threatened fish, amphibians, aquatic insects and other wildlife that depend on the creek for their survival.

Residents along the creek sprang into action and contacted the Conservancy, local officials, and agency staff to make sure the project was stopped before more damage could occur. The installation of erosion control structures, which took several weeks to complete, reduced the amount of soil eroding into the creek, but Moss and his neighbors continue to be concerned about the creek's future and are monitoring subsequent developments.

The Conservancy's Executive Director, Jim Engel, visited the site and continues to maintain close contact with residents along the creek. Rapp Creek is part of the



Tinicum Creek Watershed and is certified as an 'EV' or Exceptional Value Stream (the highest designation in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and one of only two streams awarded this distinction in all of Bucks County).

The Tinicum Conservancy holds conservation easements encompassing more than 350 acres along the impacted section of Rapp Creek as well as more than 1,000 acres in the watershed as a whole. Conservancy President Boyce Budd is grateful that further damage to the creek was avoided. "We sometimes take our supply of fresh water for granted," Budd said. "Thankfully our community and conservation easement landowners did not make that mistake."

A look at the Community Membership party and other great events

On Saturday, September 14th over 120 community members gathered for the annual celebration of donors, volunteers and others who support our mission. The weather held out for us and a fun time was had by all.



Photos by J. Clement and J. Engel

Guided property walk with ecologist and easement landowner Jeff Keller

On Saturday, October 5th we got the chance to walk this newly conserved 27-acre property with stunning views! Jeff was a wonderful walk leader, educating us about meadow management, forest management, trees, wildflowers, and associated wildlife.



The Delaware River Experience

July 25th was one of those perfect summer evenings with temperatures in the 70's and low humidity. Twenty-five local residents took part in the Delaware River Experience conducted by Captain Dee Keller aboard his 52' tri-pontoon, the "River Otter". As Captain Dee said, "It's not the same thing just driving on River Road and looking at the River. If you can get people out on the water, then you can get people behind the River"—a natural treasure that needs all of us behind it to ensure it remains unspoiled for generations to come.



Kelly's CORNER: RESOURCE PROTECTION IS GROWING INTO 2020

Annual Monitoring Program changes

We now hold 115 conservation easements and work with over 175 households and individual landowners. We hope to keep increasing these numbers, but we're nearly bursting with the amount of work it takes to administer our annual monitoring program. To ensure the legacy of land protection and keep up with professional standards and the requirements of our Accreditation status, conservation easement landowners will now see teams of two conservancy representatives for each annual property visit. We will also be testing out new software and hardware technologies to streamline our work and decrease the amount of paper we consume.

- **Why teams?** Property visits completed in teams will increase the safety of our 30+ volunteer monitors (especially in remote areas), increase the accuracy of the visit documentation, and decrease the workload for each volunteer. Land trusts across the nation use this model and have provided great ideas and support as we move away from time and paper-intense methods into a new technological world.
- **How will we accomplish all this?** We really are growing! We are excited



Volunteer monitors Sue Ann Rainey along with her team member and husband Al Gillen, document a property corner set at the edge of a creek.

to be hiring and welcoming a new part-time resource protection staff to our humble office. This staff person will be primarily responsible for managing the monitoring program, co-monitoring with our volunteers, and integrating new technologies into both field and office work.

- **How will easement landowners be affected?** Landowners will still see the same volunteers they've come to know and also have the opportunity to welcome our new staff person. Otherwise, this enhancement should be fairly seamless!

NEW "Baseline Updates" program

A "baseline report" describing the current uses and protected resources is completed for every property when it is first placed under conservation easement. Over time, land uses and resources may change, making that original baseline outdated. For example: cow pastures become native bird-nesting meadows, landowners build new or remove old structures, floods and hurricanes change forest dynamics, and farmers adapt crop fields to new production methods. Another professional accreditation standard we will be addressing in 2020 is to update each easement property file to make sure the current condition of every easement property is thoroughly documented. To keep our property files current, we will be visiting properties to document the changes that may have occurred in the decades since they were first preserved by performing baseline update reports. We certainly cannot update all 115 easements at once, so this will take time. Easement landowners will receive further information coming in the mail from us starting in 2020.

BNT Groundwater Management Committee Seminar

The BNTGMC is an advisory committee for Bridgeton, Nockamixon and Tinicum townships located in upper Bucks County. Their mission is to support the townships in a continued effort to provide a reliable, safe and adequate water supply to its residents. On Oct. 21st they presented Part One of their seminar: **Community Water Monitoring Network: Partners and Applications**, held at Palisades High

School. Water supply in our Townships is drawn from home wells and disposed via septic tanks. The seminar discussed local volunteer and government efforts that manage our water resources to avoid overuse, mitigate drought effects, avoid well contamination, and promote citizen stewardship. The BNTGMC presented hydrology basics and their data collection programs. The course is free

to the public. Part Two will be held on **Nov. 25th from 7:30 – 9:00 PM** at the same location. For more information visit **BNTgroundwater.org**. The only way to know if your water is safe to drink is to get it tested by a certified water testing laboratory, and repeat these tests every few years. Visit **www.extension.psu.edu/testing-your-drinking-water** to find out where and how to test your water. 7