



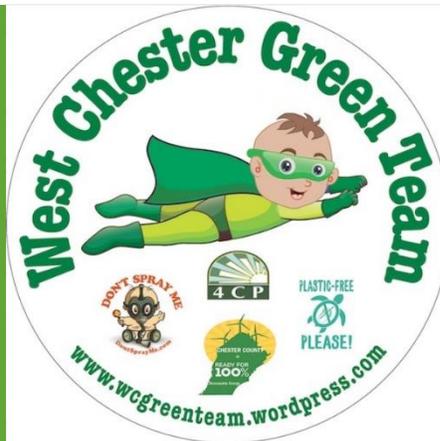
WEST CHESTER GREEN TEAM NEWS

November 2021

Mission: The West Chester Green Team is a civic organization in West Chester, PA, that works to educate the local public and to establish and nourish green initiatives in the community in harmony with nature and each other, promoting the health of all living things and of planet Earth.

Inside:

Auction news, Doug Tallamy, Don't Spray Me, Update on the West Chester University Partnership with the Office of Sustainability and WCGT, our calendar, and more!



Hello Green Team members and all friends of sustainability,

This month marks a change in your newsletter and I hope that over time it will evolve into something bigger and better than ever. I am taking over the newsletter reins from the very capable hands of Nathaniel Smith, who has done the proverbial yeoman's job for some time and is leaving very big shoes for me to fill. I can only hope I am up to the task. I am no stranger to writing, having been a technical writer/business analyst for 30+ years, retiring from Siemens Healthcare USA in 2013. I have also produced newsletters, publicity, and other written materials on a volunteer basis for such not-for-profit entities as the Chester County Sports Hall of Fame, Brandywine Ballet, West Goshen Lions Club, LABMED, and more. But, enough about me. I want to hear from YOU. What would you like to see in this newsletter? What do you think would make it better and more useful to you? Let's hear it!

Dianne Walsh

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Our Green Santa, Jordan Norley, invites you to join us!

ATTENTION!

HOLIDAY AUCTION FUN AHEAD!

Visit our Season's Greenings Auction opening November 24 online and join the fun bidding on vacation homes, services, art, and gift baskets of all sorts. Support the Green Team while doing your holiday shopping. No supply chain problems here—we've got the goods! Auction closes December 4 at 7 PM.

Don't miss it!

Here's the link:

<https://www.myminiauction.com/wcgtauction>



Green Team Mission and Overview

Mission: The West Chester Green Team is a civic organization in West Chester, PA, that works to educate the local public and to establish and nourish green initiatives in the community in harmony with nature and each other, promoting the health of all living things and of planet Earth.

Sometimes, changing people's ways of thinking and acting involves speaking uncomfortable truths to power and demanding more than people think is possible. It's hard work. But the pressures facing our planet and its people are too important for us to spare any effort.

We welcome everyone's help in assuring a sustainable West Chester area and a renewable future. Together we will help residents, governments, non-profits and businesses to make green decisions.

The West Chester Green Team formed in 2019 as an alliance of four local environment-related citizen groups: [Don't Spray Me!](#) (against pesticides and herbicides), [Ready for 100](#) (for 100% renewable energy), and [Plastic-Free Please](#) (to reduce plastic use), and Chester County Citizens for Climate Protection (whose work against human-generated climate change has been folded into WCGT).

In 2021 we added another committee: **West Chester Area Transition**, which is part of a [national](#) and international movement of now 1200+ communities coming together to reimagine and rebuild our world. Transition communities are addressing, from the local level, the big challenges humanity faces today, in our connection with self, others, nature, the economy, work, and weaving new webs of connection and support.

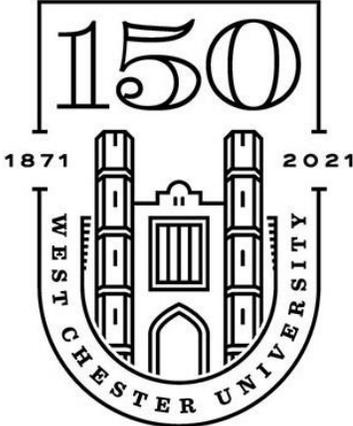
Please learn more on our [website](#) and [Facebook page](#). West Chester Green Team is a member group of the [Chester County Environment Alliance](#). It also works closely with the [Southeastern PA Group of The Sierra Club](#), of which Ready For 100 is a committee.



Update on the West Chester University Partnership with the Office of Sustainability and WCGT

by Megan Schraedley

Six student groups (24 students total) are reaching out to the 17 Sustainable Storefronts organizations to schedule video interviews and invite representative(s) of the organizations to join us for a celebration awards ceremony at the November Film & Forum Series event on Tuesday, November 16th at 7 PM. I will compile the video interviews that they create into one video (if possible) of approximately 15-25 minutes. This video will be presented at the event. We are celebrating these organizations as early adopters of the Borough ban on plastic straws and single-use plastic bags which officially begins in January 2022.



The students are promoting the event heavily with their peers and student organizations/clubs on campus.

Planning to connect this event to the “Invisible Hand” film by discussing local action/policy steps that we can take as community members to prioritize the environment as an important actor in our lives. For example, the Sustainable Storefronts businesses have taken the first step to voluntarily and publicly make the Borough better by limiting how much plastic they use/purchase. Representatives of the organizations are being invited to this event and we will present them with the certificates in person there.

Report: Don't Spray Me! and Progress Against Chemical Threats in our Daily Lives

By Margaret Hudgings



Photo courtesy of Chester County Health Department “West Nile Virus Program” Brochure

The year began cryptically, as usual, with the Chesco Health Department sharing little information about its plans for larviciding or mosquito monitoring. WC Borough Councilman Don Braceland was able to determine that larviciding was being done. We do not know the details.

West Chester Borough Public Works is not complying with a resolution passed by Borough Council in May of 2019 requiring that two staff members be certified pesticide handlers so they can dispense totally non-toxic larvicidal Mosquito Dunks. Whose responsibility is it to implement Council's recommendations? The Borough Manager, it would seem, but Mike Perrone has not done so with regard to mosquito abatement.

Don't Spray Me, con't.

Thanks to Brooks Clark, who submitted two Right to Know requests for the Green Team. The first requested occasions when the PA Department of Environmental Protection has overruled local health departments and sprayed against local wishes. This threat is put forward routinely by local Health Dept officials. As it turns out, it has never happened. So--the bottom line is that if our local County Commissioners decide against spraying--that would be the end of it. And they hire--so could fire--offending officials.

Let's give County administration a B in spraying for this summer. Fortunately, only Phoenixville was sprayed--enough to keep the program alive so they can apply for more funds for next summer. We know our Commissioners do their best to protect people and pollinators from harm. Just one spray is progress compared to previous summers--2018 for example--when the CC Health Department sprayed many times all over the county, including in West Chester Borough. We note that in 2020, when the Health Department did no spraying because of being busy with Covid, there was not appreciable threat of mosquito-borne diseases here.

The second Right to Know request concerned a plan to spray Bifenthrin by the PA Department of Agriculture to kill spotted lantern flies. Through Brooks's Right to Know request and support from our local legislators, we were able to gain access to a list of about a dozen proposed spray sites, which included the entire Borough of Kennett Square and a PECO site in West Goshen. This was very weird. In any case, we fought back with publicity and protest and the plan was shelved. Bifenthrin, by the way, is an EU banned substance manufactured in China. Glad we helped to stop it.

WCGT responded to outreach from a fledgling anti-spraying group in the Charlestown area with a strong networking relationship established. In addition, earlier this year the new Chester County Environmental and Energy Advisory Board forwarded to the Commissioners as series of recommendations basically reflecting the pesticide-wary approach that we have been urging, including public education on minimizing mosquito exposure, monitoring mosquito populations, reducing larvae by larvicide and biological means (such as fish), and, recognizing community concerns about pesticide overuse and the need for better information on avoiding exposure:

- "Use adulticides only as a last resort, meaning when the threshold of mosquitoes has reached epidemic proportions, and when the community is not more adverse to the pesticides than they are the threat of the virus."
- "Notify the public at least 72 hours in advance of application."
- "Provide members of the public with the opportunity to opt-out their residences from spraying. Certain populations are more at risk of pesticide poisoning than the general public."
- "Provide the public with precautionary measures to avoid pesticide exposure." as well as monitoring for adverse health effects and environmental pesticide levels.

Don't Spray Me, con't.

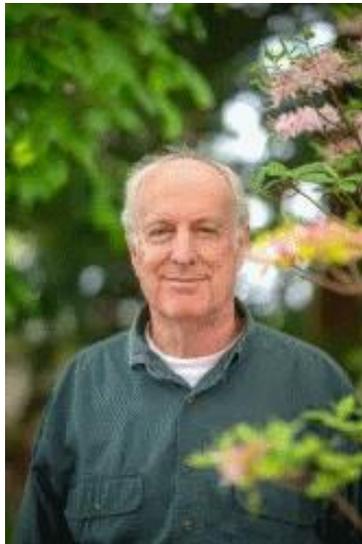
Another spraying issue that has been with us for a number of years concerns the spraying of the railroad tracks that run through the southeastern portion of West Chester Borough south to Glen Mills. Thanks to the efforts of Nathaniel Smith and Don Braceland, with help from Eric Lorgus, we were able to determine that the sprayers are the West Chester Railroad. This group of volunteers decided to spray 12 feet back from the tracks in the densely populated eastern borough, including the areas near public parks and the West Chester Daycare Center. The group's leaders have kindly offered to meet with us, and we are hoping for progress in '22.



Special thanks to our activists--Don Braceland, Nathaniel Smith, Brooks Clark, Amy and George Squire, and Dee Noland--for your work in protecting the local community.

Doug Tallamy, "Nature's Best Hope"

By Nathaniel Smith



Doug Tallamy, a widely acclaimed professor in the Dept. of Entomology and Wildlife Ecology at the University of Delaware, gave a talk at West Chester University on Sept. 13, 2021, to an in-person and online audience of over 200. (See the video [here](#), and don't miss our board member Courtney Finneran's preceding 10-minute illustrated introduction to our work; Closed Captioning recommended).

The reception before Dr. Tallamy's talk was attended by Chester County political and business leaders, and the dinner following allowed Green Team and WCU leaders to network about ways to spread Doug's message and work throughout the County.

Nature's best hope, he explained, is at this point... ourselves! We, the human race, have disturbed the symbiotic balance between insects and plants, between those and birds and all other vertebrates. We destroy inter-species interactions at our peril, and if we continue to impoverish the living earth, our own food supply will perish.

Tallamy, con't.

What can we do as individuals? Welcome biodiversity to our own properties, by turning lawns into meadows, choosing native plants, shunning pesticides and herbicides, and nurturing organically rich soils.

The Green Team, through our Living Landscapes project, strongly supports Dr. Tallamy's call for a "Homegrown National Park" in our collective back yards (and, of course, in the properties of businesses, non-profits, schools, and municipalities). We can all be part of restoring nature to the healthy, symbiotic state that evolved into the world around us.

In a promising sign of forward movement, the Environmental Advisory Committees of northern Chester County have been conferring with each other on such initiatives and will be meeting next week at the Welkinweir preserve with Chair of the Chesco Board of Commissioners Marian Moskowitz. The WC Green Team will also be represented there and it is hoped that countywide networking of all Chesco EACs will ensue.

As an organization determined to reassert the essential importance of nature and environment, the WC Green Team will strongly support a countywide initiative to reclaim natural areas, plant native pollinators, and create... a "Homegrown Chester County Park"!



WCGT Calendar of Upcoming Events

When – What – Where

November 8--7 pm: Transition meeting--Front Porch Concert Planning--at Milestones Events, 600 E Market St. Parking adjacent. All welcome. Contact Margaret at mhudgings@gmail.com.

November 16--6:30 pm: in the lobby and 7 pm event--or in advance online to view the film *Invisible Hand*. "Sustainable Forum" organized by Prof Megan Schraedley--WCU students interview business owners who are cutting back on plastics. Business and Management Public Building, Room 101.

November 23--7 pm: WCGT monthly board meeting. Virtual. Contact Nathaniel Smith for joining. nathanielbsmith@earthlink.net

November 24: Season's Greenings Auction opens online at <https://www.myminiauction.com/wcqtauction>. Vacations in Marbella, Spain and Sofia, Bulgaria. Butterfly gardening plants and coffee machines. And from the famous--a gardening consult by Doug Tallamy and art by Philip Jamison. The auction closes on Dec. 4 at 7 pm. Free delivery of all won items within Chester County.

December 3 from 4-5:30 pm: Photos with the Green Santa at the Chester County History Center, 225 N High St., West Chester, outside on the front porch. Masked if you prefer. Mayor Norley is playing the part. Come to visit Santa, take a photo of him with your kids and get a red, white and green candy cane.

Calendar, con't.

December 4 at 7pm: Season's Greenings Auction closes and winners are notified.

December 7 at 7 pm: Film and Forum Series in Business and Management Public Building, Room 101 at West Chester University. Film: *Thirsty for Justice*. Forum: State Senator Carolyn Comitta, State Rep Dianne Herrin, Chester County Commissioner Josh Maxwell and Maya van Rossum, the Delaware Riverkeeper are interviewed by Dr.

John Jackson and Prof. Nathaniel Smith on helping to actualize our environmental agenda. Also attending will be Mayor Jordan Norley presenting awards in environmental leadership to Nathaniel Smith and Margaret Hudgings, and to Linda Glaum and Woody Lathbury for their work on WC Borough parks.

Register at : https://wcupa.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_8p4IKWoUAV3jhXg Find out about all the panels at: <https://www.wcupa.edu/sustainability/>

**Be sure to visit our Web site at <https://wcgreenteam.com/>
and our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/WCGTeam/> (all are welcome to post
environment- and sustainability-related items there)**

