



# EAST NOTTINGHAM TOWNSHIP NEWSLETTER

## FALL/WINTER 2017-2018

### HAPPY BIRTHDAY EAST NOTTINGHAM.



It is not often we get to be three hundred (yes 300) years old. That is what happened on May 27, 2017. So, just like the way that our real birthdays

should be celebrated (There was no "century zero"), we will recognize our YEAR 300 beginning on May 27 2018. (get it?). We would like to celebrate a bit by devoting our entire Spring 2018 Newsletter to the history of East Nottingham Township. Do you have any stories of notable Nottinghamgers? Any Civil War heroes? Native American information? Anybody know whether the British marched through our fields? How about Native American artifacts or stories? What was doing in the 1800's or 1900's?

We would like to hear anything of a historical nature and we promise we will lovingly edit it for space and will include it into our "Nottingham 300" Newsletter (If we are overstuffed with good stuff, we shall devote more space in subsequent issues)

Please submit your writings (OR PICTURES) to WALT LEIS at [corie@zoominternet.net](mailto:corie@zoominternet.net), or call 610-932-5477. Remember, there are over two thirds of our population that were not even here until the 1980's so there is a lot for all of us to learn about our Township.

### STORMWATER MANAGEMENT EDUCATION

#### Rain Gardens and Small Bioretention



#### *What is it?*

A rain garden or bioretention area is a shallow depression that will hold runoff. It is planted with specially selected native vegetation that will filter and use runoff, as well as increase infiltration.

#### *How does it work?*

Rain gardens reduce the amount of runoff and remove pollutants. As the water pools in the depression, it can infiltrate deeper into the soil, or be used by the vegetation through evapotranspiration. The deep and dense root system of perennial vegetation increased the amount of water that infiltrates as compared to the shallow roots of lawn grasses. Even in a larger event during which

the rain garden may overflow, runoff is still filtered through the vegetation removing pollutants.

#### *How does a homeowner maintain it?*

Twice a year vegetation needs to be checked to make sure that it's healthy. Any bare spots need to be replanted. Check the inflow area to make sure that there isn't any sediment building up. Remove any accumulated sediment. Mulch should be re-spread when erosion is evident and be replenished as needed.

Once a year perennial plants should be cut back if needed by species type and any dead vegetation should be removed at the end of the growing season.

Every three years apply mulch in the spring as needed to cover soil. Mulch should be 1-3 inches deep. Do not use mulch to "fill-in" the depression of the rain garden. That depression area is needed for stormwater management.

#### *Additional Information:*

While vegetation is being established in the first few years, weeding may be required. If any plants die, they need to be replaced. Refer to the Conservation District for what types of plants to use. During periods of draught, bioretention areas may require watering. Rain gardens should be checked after large rain storms to make sure that they are draining within 72 hours. If water remains in the rain garden longer than that you could have mosquito problems, and should contact the Conservation District for guidance on fixing or replacing your rain garden.

### WATER AND ON-LOT SEWAGE DISPOSAL

In future newsletters, we plan to include certain "hints and observations" about the operation and maintenance of your on- lot well and on- site sewage system. These are two very important systems that we who live in the "country" take for granted but rarely think about. Today I'd like to talk about getting our well water tested and why.

- A. **Why test your wells water quality?** –A ground-water supply serving a single household usually yields a sufficient supply to serve our needs. Either the well yields sufficient volume or the driller builds a casing system that can store sufficient water for a household need. (Obviously, if we wish to install a swimming pool or stoke up on high water-use appliances we need to be aware of both.) The USGS has, in the last 20 years, identified several ground- water contaminants of emerging concern. Many of these are specific (bacteria metals and even contaminants like Arsenic) that occur in common minerals like "fool's gold".
- B. **Testing your well water** should be done by a service that is staffed by competent (Chester County actually licenses well drillers and Pennsylvania licenses ground water scientists and engineers). Testing should also be conducted fairly regularly. Some folks say every two years but, in especially heavy rainfall years, every year may actually be better.

- C. **Sampling consists of running your water system** for a time that assures you've emptied your holding tank and the water running in the spigot is from your aquifer (that's what we call the rock body that serves up your water). Once the water is sure to be from the aquifer, we fill a bottle (the size of which is determined by the testing lab's needs. Deliver the sample to the labs for the analyses. A good lab will tell you how your analysis "stacks up" to the EPA, the PA Health Department (as well as Chester County Health Department) water standards.
- D. **What do you do** when you have the data and it's on the higher side? We will include recommendations for this in the following newsletters.

**RURAL LIVING**  
**Our Wildlife, Flora, & Fauna**  
**My Hovercraft is Full of EELS**



If that went over your head, you probably aren't old enough to recall Monty Python's Flying Circus. However, since I have your attention, let's keep talking about eels.

You've probably never seen an eel in a nearby

stream. If you did, you probably thought it was a deep swimming water snake. While snakes have lungs, and are a reptile, and swim on the water's surface, eels have gills and are a true fish. All American eels were born in the Sargasso Sea, which is an area of the Mid-Atlantic Ocean southeast of Bermuda. The Sargasso Sea area is created currents that form the boundary of the Sea. The Sargasso contains an area of about 1.5 Million square miles, (a little smaller than the State of Alaska). Since it's surrounded by four giants, slowly rotating ocean currents (called Gyres) it's a quiet, blue water area. The Sargasso Sea was reportedly named by Portuguese explorers for the Sargasso seaweed which is common to the area. This is the eel cradle.

Eels are a unique fish. They are born at Sea. Then, within the first year after their birth, the young transparent eels (called glass eels) begin a mass migration to areas far inland from the Atlantic Ocean. Some of these glass eels migrate to Europe and Canada. However most of them migrate westward to the many rivers, estuaries, and small streams along the eastern margin of the US.

Within few months of starting their journeys, the "glass eels" become "elvers" as they enlarge to about 3 to 6" in length and take on their adult colors of greens, browns and yellows. The majority live and grow in fresh waters. (The males will mostly remain at the edge of the salt water estuaries while the females will migrate far inland.

That's how the story begins for East Nottingham. The elvers will follow the Chesapeake Bay North into the Susquehanna River System. Once the elvers arrived in the river, they are able to locate streams genetically imprinted on their parents. The elvers will follow the Octorara, the Northeast River and The Elk Creeks into smaller and smaller streams until they arrive (even with a little bit of squirming over the land) into East Nottingham. They take up residence for the next 5 to 20 years in the tiniest of streams and farm

ponds. After they've matured within that time, they will begin their long swim back to the Sargasso Sea to breed, lay eggs and then die. You can often see these returning eels as glints of their white ventral surfaces as they pass along in our streams during the autumn migration before the waters freeze

The dams along the Susquehanna have stopped most of the migration to the Northern Susquehanna River. There they will live for up to 20 years or even more. They live a quiet existence in these 20 or so years. They hide in the banks and deep waters during the day and come out to feed on insects and small fish food at night. They are omnivorous feeders, anything that would gag a maggot is considered fine dining for eels. In that way, they can grow to several feet long in some of the smallest streams.

In colonial times, eels were first considered a food staple, then later, a delicacy, to be savored with flagons' of hard cider. Eel was served in smoked or salted chunks, like "slim Jims". Along with hard cooked eggs and pickled pigs feet they were some of the original "tavern food". Our history is replete with tales of how the early New England settlers were saved from starvation by eating eel.

Native Americans taught the Pilgrims to catch and cook them. Except for sushi restaurants where they serve eel as *unagi* or in some faraway markets along the upper Delaware or in central Maine, or in areas along the Ohio where its "hillbilly fare". Today eel has been mostly ignored as a food.

We're not trying to stoke up any interest in eating eel, No that choice is up to you. We just want you to be aware of the wildlife that lives in the township and often goes unnoticed and ignored.

Eel traps, often seen in museums of our colonial history, looked like long "cones" made of woven oak splints. These traps were placed in streams as a center point of a stone Barrier wall. The eels are shunted into the trap and further led into a trap basket where the fishermen come to see their catch (usually daily) and then the eels were collected in cotton cloth bags, sold unprocessed, or smoked and seasoned and sold to regular customers of taverns and road houses. Since colonial times eels have undergone a rapid decline due to industrialization of its home range and land use practices that had removed their food organisms. Also, dams have interrupted with their migration routes of the colonial times and late 1800's. As it looks, the heavily regulated eel fishery along the big rivers of Pa have slowly seen a recovery of the species so that, since about 2010, the catch limits have been raised more than once.

At least it's some good news about this not so cute critter. Keep your vision acute and develop a "nature's eye". You can see eels in streams like the Elks and they are quite common in East Nottingham.

**Milkweeds and Monarchs**



Our native milkweeds, plants of the ASCLEPIS family, are both annual and perennial plants that host many insects in unique relationships.

Monarch butterflies, for example, are fast disappearing in the northern tiers of North America. Development and changing agricultural practices have decimated this species which lives and breeds in our latitudes and whose descendants migrate to southern Mexico (primarily the state of Michoacán). They return there each winter. Even in Michoacán logging and development has further reduced population sizes of spring time breeding stock that can make the 3500 mile trip north to restore the population, in our area during the summers

The Monarch butterfly is functionally attached to milkweed plants. It is the sole food that is eaten by Monarch larvae. The last few emerging monarch butterflies, around East Nottingham's environment will be ready to head south by early October and we can often see the butterflies flying due south in groups. Sometimes the groups can be just a few butterflies to spread-out clusters of 20 to 30 butterflies. They all look like they are on a mission. They are, in that most of these butterflies will stop breeding until and when they reach their wintering-over grounds and they will cluster by the millions in the evergreen trees atop several specific mountains. However, while they don't breed on their trip south, they do eat and will take nectar from energy providing plants, they still enjoy being among milkweeds. The final emerging butterflies have been decimated in number due to the treating of milkweed plants like real weeds

We can do something about this: we can make sure we don't mow our properties so closely that no milkweeds even exist along margins or near wood edges. It's a relatively simple way to assure that the generation size needed to make the full trek to Michoacán Mexico from East Nottingham Township exists in sufficient numbers. Many other surrounding townships with weed ordinances (milkweeds are still incorrectly viewed as an invasive weed) have changed their mowing policy if landowners mark "conservation plots", which are only mowed beyond mid-October when the last of the Monarch generations have hatched and begun its trip south.

Let's try it. In the last year (2016), I counted over 100 monarchs that made it out of here from my own field margins.

## Volunteering Opportunities in ENT

Inspired by Marc Arot, ENT Resident



Anyone in ENT is interested in volunteering their time and services for worthwhile local organizations, then please allow me to inform you about two organizations that are near and dear to me personally, as I have been a volunteer for both of them for the last two years.

### Oxford SILO:

SILO is an acronym for Serving, Inspiring and Loving Others. Oxford SILO is a welcoming and diverse group of friends that come together to Serve, Inspire and Love Others in our community. Oxford SILO is non-denominational and non-judgmental.

The main thing SILO provides is a once-a-month free meal for anyone who needs a hot meal or needs the

company of good friends and good people around them. These meals are always on the third Saturday of every month. The times and locations of these meals vary from month to month. These monthly meals are where Oxford SILO needs the most volunteer help. But, before you volunteer SILO folks suggest that inquiring simply attend one of the monthly meals and get a feel for it and talk to the volunteers and friends they serve.

SILO also needs volunteers for home visits, work and clean-up projects, driving their friends to doctor visits or other errands and also for occasional random acts of kindness.

For further information about Oxford SILO please contact: Melissa Pacella at 610-932-7500 or E-mail [Melissa@oxfordsilo.com](mailto:Melissa@oxfordsilo.com) or PO Box 22, Oxford, PA 19363.

The Oxford SILO website is [www.oxfordsilo.com](http://www.oxfordsilo.com)

### Lighthouse Youth Center:

Located at 245 Commerce Street in the Borough of Oxford, The Lighthouse Youth Center is a faith based organization that reaches school ages youth from ages 9-18. It strives to have a positive impact in each child's life. They are open on most weekdays after school from 2:30 pm to 6:30 pm where the kids are served a free hot meal by local volunteers.

The youth can participate in sports, board games, ping pong, shuffleboard, arts and crafts and many other fun activities! Tutoring and homework help is also offered.

On March 3, 2015 the Lighthouse opened its doors to its new. The new facility has seen a DOUBLING of the youth in attendance over the last two year but volunteer numbers have lagged behind. They need help from everyday folks just like us to spend time with the kids, or help serve the meals and clean up afterwards. Just an hour a week would help them tremendously! Managing Director, Buzz Tyson once said "You will get more out of volunteering at the Lighthouse than what you put in to it." (Volunteers 18+ please)

For more information please contact:

Amy Perkins at (610) 467-6000 or E-mail [amy@oxfordlighthouse.org](mailto:amy@oxfordlighthouse.org).

The Lighthouse Youth Center website is

[www.oxfordlighthouse.org](http://www.oxfordlighthouse.org)

Like Rural Living, Volunteer Opportunities will be a continuing feature of our Newsletter. Your input is welcome.

## Septic Management Program

So far the septic management program has been working pretty well. The Chester County Health Department has resurrected its program for certified pump and haulers to link up to their website so they can sent the information directly to the CCHD, who then forwards that to the municipalities. They have a list of those pump and haulers who are certified on their website so residents can pick someone they know will send the information to the CCHD.

## A Dog Park Is Coming To Our Area!

The Oxford Area Rec Authority is actively planning the installation of a small and large dog park at the 900 W. Locust Street location. The Board is accepting sponsors and donors. Any thought, questions, donors can contact Michael Watson ([Watson.npd@zoominternet.net](mailto:Watson.npd@zoominternet.net)) or come to a meeting posted on their website.

## DATES TO REMEMBER!

- **Fall Dumpster Days** will be October 13<sup>th</sup> (7am to 6pm) & 14<sup>th</sup> (7am to 3pm) Further details are on ENT's Website.
- **Election Day** is Tuesday, November 7<sup>th</sup>. Voting is a privilege that should not be wasted.

The Haunted Park  
900 W. Locust Street

October 20<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup>

Includes Haunted Hayride

Details on OARA Website ([oxfordrecreation.org](http://oxfordrecreation.org))

- October 21<sup>st</sup> include a Kids Fall Fest (\$5/child). Events begin at noon and go until 4pm. Includes face painting, pumpkin art, fall crafts with decorations to take home, and straw maze.
- Haunted hayride every night! Kids under 5 free. 5 and up \$7/person
- Kids under 5 from 6:30 – 8pm
- Older kids and adults from 8 – 10pm.
- Hot chocolate, glow sticks for the riders under pavilion.
- Food vendors will be there every night.
- Volunteer actors needed on all nights. Please contact Chip Benke ([chipskins@zoominternet.net](mailto:chipskins@zoominternet.net))

East Nottingham Township  
158 Election Road  
Oxford, PA 19363  
Tel: (610)932-9812



Visit Us on the Web  
[www.eastnottingham.org](http://www.eastnottingham.org)

Board of Supervisor meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month.

Planning Commission meetings are held on the fourth Monday of each month.

All meetings are held at 7 p.m. at the Township Building

Prst Std  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Permit No. 8  
Oxford, PA 19363

**EAST NOTTINGHAM TOWNSHIP NEWSLETTER**

**Fall / Winter 2017-2018**