



PIONEER WOMAN!

Soon after my husband and I left small-town life for a more remote address in the woods, my father-in-law came to visit. Unimpressed by the half-mile long dirt driveway and the clear lack of amenities and visible neighbors, he predicted we'd have our isolated homestead up for sale within a year. I protested, telling him pioneer women not only survived but thrived under far worse conditions. Surely I could make do without cable TV or a nearby grocery store.

He looked me square in the eye and said, "You're no pioneer woman."

Now, I don't know about you, but I get a certain satisfaction out of proving people wrong. I once moved an entire room full of furniture in one trip using nothing more than an Oldsmobile Cutlass Supreme, just because my college roommate said it couldn't be done.

So in the eight years since my father-in-law's admonition, I've noted all sorts of little accomplishments that have put me in touch with my inner pioneer.

I've learned how to swing a pick-axe, how to chop and stack firewood, and how to grow at least some of my food with my own two hands. I've hauled water from a nearby stream when the well pump went out, and I once survived the bluff charge of an angry black bear without wetting my pants. I thought for sure that last one would erase any doubt, at least in my own mind, about my determination and self reliance. But then came this past winter. You know, the one that brought the phrase "Polar Vortex" into common parlance. In the middle of all that bitter cold, my husband – poor thing – was called away to Florida on business, and I was left to fend for myself.

Sounds like a job for pioneer woman! I stockpiled some essentials and became obsessed with keeping that long dirt driveway free of snow. I was convinced any accumulation would sever my lifeline to the civilized world and leave me marooned until spring. Donner: party of one.

So I got to know our old plow truck, a diesel pick-up with a family of mice living in the glove compartment. That F-150 and I made a good team – for a while, anyway. Two hours into the second storm, the truck was buried to the axles, and somehow wedged between a snow pile on one side, and a tree trunk on the other; no forward motion, no reverse, no way to open either door. Stuck but good.

I cursed, I cried, I think I even laughed like a crazy person for a while. I saw a mouse peeking out at me from under the dash and I knew what he was thinking.

You're no pioneer woman.

Suddenly, I no longer *wanted* to be a pioneer woman. It occurred to me just then that pioneer women died. They *DIED*. And it wasn't always from lousy care during child-

birth or a lack of antibiotics. These women suffered animal attacks, temperature extremes, starvation, dehydration – things that can still kill us today, and all of them courtesy of our great Mother Earth.

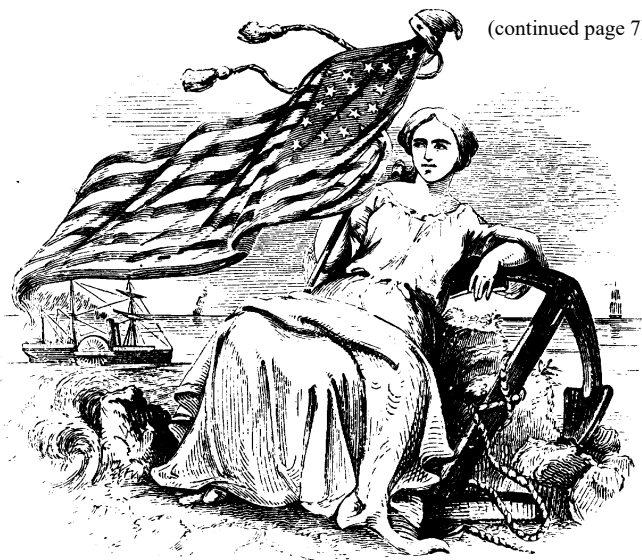
It came as quite a shock that I could die of exposure out there in the driveway. Not because the situation was especially serious; I could have climbed out one of the truck's windows easily enough and made my way home. But as someone who cares deeply for the planet, I guess I sort of figured that it *owed* me something.

Wasn't it me who noticed how pretty and sparkly all the snow was, just before I got stuck in it? Me who spent the last 25 years in environmental education, preaching natural resource conservation? Me, Audubon Society member who mourns dead trees and picks recyclables out of public trash cans - this is how it could end for me? *Really?*

In the months since that storm, since finally rocking the old F-150 out of the snow, I've come to believe that this idea of our planet as a nurturer and caregiver is romanticized, misleading, and genuinely dangerous.

Think about how tenuous our existence really is. Carl Sagan once said that if earth were shrunk down to the size of a basketball, the biosphere – that enveloping layer in which all life is found – would be as thin as a sheet of Saran Wrap. But take that a step further, and consider the layer in which we humans can survive – it is far thinner yet.

Without benefit of technology, we can manage in only a narrow range of temperatures. According to NASA, anything outside 40-95 degrees Fahrenheit is deadly in the long term.



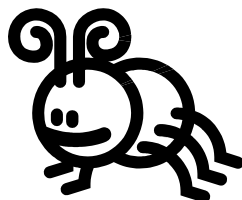
(continued page 7)

Summer Schedule

Uke Around the Clock Benefit Concert

Saturday, June 7, 7:00 pm

In this concert, students and friends of Jim Thorpe's Ukulele Institute will perform a diverse selection of tunes featuring ukulele, guitar, and a few surprises. Admission is \$5 per person, or free for children under 12. Come enjoy the music and help support CCEEC! NOTE: The event takes place at the Summit Hill Heritage Center, on Hazard Street in Summit Hill.



Birding: Beginner Level and Up

Saturday, June 14, 8:00 am

CCEEC volunteer and birder extraordinaire Rob Bergstresser leads this easy walk for all ages and interest levels. Rob begins with a short introduction on how to properly use binoculars and field guides, then heads out onto the trails to look and listen for birdlife. Dress for the weather (and some mud). Participants are asked to bring their binoculars and field guides, though a few of each will be available to borrow. The program is free, but registration is required.

Raptors of Pennsylvania

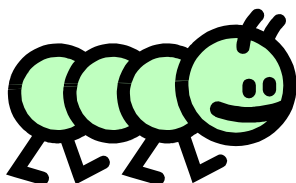
Saturday, June 14, 7:00 pm—At Mauch Chunk Lake Park

Some of CCEEC's resident raptors visit with MCLP campers. Come get a close-up look at their remarkable adaptations, and learn more about raptor i.d. All ages and members of the general public are welcome. The program is free of charge.

Creepy Crawlers—"Water, Water Everywhere!"

Monday, June 16, 10—11:30 am

The "Crawler" program is open to all 2, 3 & 4 year olds. Each month's topic focuses on some aspect of nature, and includes age-appropriate activities. The program is free for CCEEC members. A \$3 donation per child is requested of non-members.



Kids' Week!

Monday through Friday, June 23 – 27

10:00 am to Noon

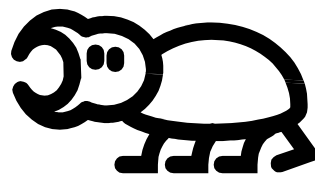
This year's mini day-camp is divided into two sessions for younger and older children. Kids will make new friends, explore a variety of topics, and get outside! The June session is open to students entering grades K to 3. A \$35 fee is requested for each child.

Topics to be Announced

Mammals of Pennsylvania

Saturday, July 12, 7:00 pm - At Mauch Chunk Lake Park

By examining skins, skulls, and other mammal "parts", we'll learn more about the mammals that call Pennsylvania home. The program is free of charge, and all ages are welcome.



Kids' Week!

Monday through Friday, July 14 - 18

10:00 am to Noon

This year's mini day-camp is divided into two sessions for younger and older children. Kids will make new friends, explore a variety of topics, and get outside! The July session is open to students entering grades 4 – 6. A \$35 fee is requested for each child.

Topics to be Announced

Well Water Basics for the Homeowner

Wednesday, July 16, 6:00 pm

Environmental Consultant and hydrogeologist Brian Oram presents this free program for homeowners with private well and/or septic systems. Brian explains smart well maintenance, and takes the mystery out of your water test results.

The program is free of charge. However, a low-cost well water testing program will be outlined for those interested. A booklet on groundwater and water testing will also be available for a \$5 donation.

Registration is required as space is limited. Call CCEEC to sign up.

Creepy Crawlers—"DIRT"

Summer Schedule

Monday, July 22, 10 –11:30 am

The “Crawler” program is open to all 2, 3 and 4 year olds.

Each month’s topic focuses on some aspect of nature, and includes age-appropriate activities.

The program is free for CCEEC members. A \$3 donation per child is requested of non-members.

HUNTER EDUCATION CLASS

**Independent Study Session
and Test**

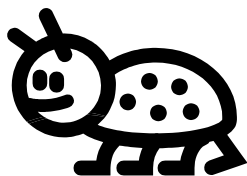
**Thursday, August 7,
6:30 – 9:00 pm**

CCEEC hosts this free course for those looking to purchase a hunting or trapping license in Pennsylvania for the first time.

The program is administered by the Pennsylvania Game Commission.

The independent study program requires participants to complete the majority of work at home before attending the 2 ½ hour session.

For details, [and to register](#), please visit the Game Commission’s website at www.pgc.state.pa.us.

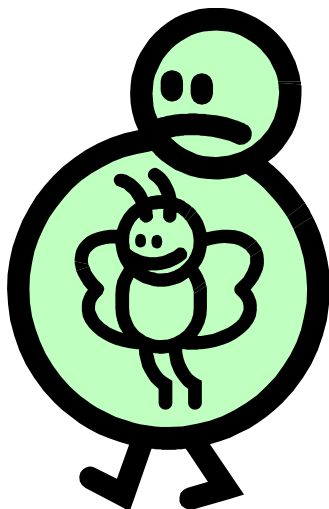


Bugs & Bodies

Wednesday, August 20, 6:00 pm

NOT for the squeamish, this program examines the role insects play in the decomposition process. Summit Hill resident and entomology enthusiast Zachary Venable begins this special program with a lecture explaining insect life cycles. Participants then head outdoors to examine small animal carcasses in various stages of decomposition. Flies, maggots, and beetles, oh my!

The program is free of charge, and recommended for ages 12 and up. Registration is required.



*Please register
for all
programs
in advance
by calling
(570) 645-8597.*



*Unless noted, all ages are
welcome at each program.*

*Most are free for EEC members.
There is a \$5 fee per person for
non-members, unless otherwise
indicated.*

Snakes: Friend or Foe

Saturday, August 30, 7:00 pm

At Mauch Chunk Lake Park

Naturalist Jeannie Carl takes her snake show on the road, so campers and visitors alike can learn more about these remarkable reptiles.

All ages are welcome. The program is free of charge.

*Coming this fall...
Plant Swap,
Mushroom Sundays,
and more special
events.*

*Stay tuned to our
email updates, face-
book page, or your
local newspaper for
details.*

Creature Corner



CCEEC has admitted several species of loons and grebes, but the guy above was a first for us! The red-necked grebe was released on the Lehigh, after becoming stranded in a nearby parking lot. Loons and grebes are not designed to take off from land, and can become grounded when they mistake paved areas for bodies of water from above. CCEEC fed and hydrated the bird before release.



Things are a little more quiet around here since our male educational fruit bats were neutered. Most of the squabbling and squawking coming from the bat enclosure has ceased. Above, one of the little guys wakes from anesthesia. Our thanks to Dr. Dawn Mriss of Lehighton Animal Hospital for taking on the task.

A scurry of flying squirrels overwintered for a short time at CCEEC. Trapped and removed from a building where they had been causing some damage, they were humanely relocated to more remote, though suitable habitat.

This was, however, not before giving birth in captivity! Four babies, mom, and eight other adults were all successfully relocated.





Above, meet our new “weekend gal”, Jackie Maritch, as she prepares to release a red-tailed hawk back to the wild.

Jackie will be tending creatures and welcoming visitors this summer, opening our main building from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm on Saturdays, and 9:00 am to 1:00 pm on Sundays, from now through Labor Day weekend.

Remember, our trails, grounds and outside raptor enclosures are open year round during daylight hours, so stop in anytime to visit.

It was a tough winter—for all of us! This gray squirrel seemed a bit chilly as he snuck sunflower seeds from CCEEC’s bird feeding station. Naturalist Jeannie Carl captured the image out her office window.

All pictures on these pages are Jeannie’s, excepting that of the swan below, provided by volunteer Joanne Scott.



Above, we examine a mute swan found with its head stuck in a fence. Poor guy! The bird recovered quickly and was released.



At right, an immature bald eagle is cared for while recovering from a broken wing. We’re unsure if the bird will fly again. Our thanks to the Pennsylvania Game Commission for arranging her capture and safe transport to CCEEC from the shores of the Susquehanna in Sunbury, PA.



Special Events

Rattlesnake Run

Saturday, June 28, 8:00 am

This is the third year for CCEEC's exciting 5K run and one mile fun walk, held at Lehigh Gorge State Park. There are free T-shirts and organic baked goods for participants, and runners have the chance to win some unique awards.

The event is open to all ages and levels of ability, with new runners especially welcome.

Call for more details, or email Susan Gallagher at



Whitewater Rafting

Sunday, July 13, 10am—3pm

This fundraiser is made possible through the generosity of Whitewater Rafting Adventures of Nesquehoning, and is open to ages 5 and up. For the super-low cost of \$20 for CCEEC members, and \$25 for non-members, you can enjoy the "summer float" section of the Lehigh with us.

CONSERVATION CAMP

Monday through Friday, August 11 to 15

This weeklong event takes place at Hickory Run State Park, and allows children ages 8 through 12 the opportunity to connect with nature through hands-on activities.

Campers enjoy hikes, crafts, games, rafting, campfires, and plenty of healthy, outdoor play. By the end of the week, all are tired and dirty—but full of new experiences to remember. For more information, or to begin the process of registration, call CCEEC.

*Thank-you, supporters of our 2014 Raffle Fundraiser.
You made the event a success!*

Marzen Feed & Hardware, Lehighton
Wild Birds Unlimited, Dallas
Carbon Conservation District / Renai Foster
Joe Matukonis / Joanne Scott / Dave Carl
Ceil Enama / Renee Butts
Jim Thorpe Shops:
Everything Nice / Dee-Zines Floral
Treasure Shop / Vision Herbs & Gifts
Bear Mountain Butterflies

*And thanks to the following for their generous support of our
wildlife rehabilitation and education programs:*

Mr. Donald Reinhard
Sydney Klemow Foundation
Air Products & Chemicals, Inc., Hometown
Lions Clubs Int'l Region II Dist. 14-U
Charles & Carol Getz / Nancy & Ian Beers
PPL Services Corporation

*Congratulations to the winners of
CCEEC's annual photography contest!*

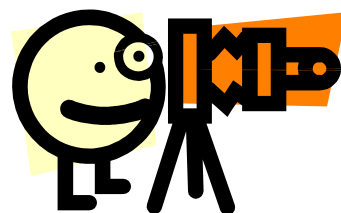
**1st Place, Wildlife—Ed Mulligan,
"Frog on a Lily Pad"**

**1st Place, Macro—Shawn Dreher,
"Bee Visit"**

**1st Place, Landscape—Jack Mroz,
"Winter's Approach at Mauch
Chunk"**

**People's Choice—Deb Beerman,
"Deer in Yard"**

*Thanks also to our judges, Joe Matu-
konis and
Phil Campbell.*



The scope of suitable body temperatures is slimmer still, leaving us unable to cope for long while only a few degrees off from the standard 98.6.

As mountain climbers and scuba divers well know, our relative humidity, oxygen concentration and air pressure requirements are equally limiting. Even chronic lack of sleep, according to one British study, may be fatal. Oddly, the very resources on which we depend will easily kill us under the right circumstance; just a few inches of soil or water over our heads is all it takes.

If humans were offered for sale in some kind of futuristic, inter-galactic pet store, our cage displays would surely be labeled “high maintenance” or “difficult to care for in captivity”.

So why would many of us—and here’s where the idea of earth as “Mother” is a bit dangerous—take a changing climate so lightly? Why would we even stop to consider the false dichotomy of “environment vs. economy”, as if our future survival weren’t questionable enough already?

Have you heard about a recent report by the US Global Change Research Center? It says bad things are happening right here, right now. Increasingly harsh weather patterns are in our immediate future: floods, tornados, snowstorms – each taken up a notch, impacting our daily lives *and* our health. According to NOAA, heat waves are already the leading cause of US weather-related deaths. Climate change means they’re likely to get longer and even more severe.

Heat is tough on our hearts, kidneys and lungs, and can upset the subtle chemical balance of the fluids inside our bodies. In 2003, over 50,000 people in Europe died as record heat and drought swept the continent.

Our survival as individuals, or as a species, is no guarantee in a world where extreme weather patterns become the norm. Other species may fare better, just as they have throughout

our planet’s history of mass extinctions. More adaptable animals and plants, those with less stringent requirements, or those set to benefit from current climate change, could well inherit the earth.

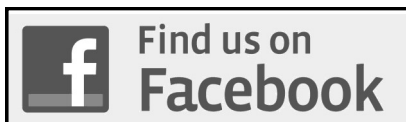
As for me, I’ve stricken the term “Mother Nature” from my vocabulary. This earth is no kind of mother at all. It’s an indifferent ball of rock and iron and ice that—with us or without us— goes on spinning just the same.

Even for those among us who appreciate all the beauty nature has to offer, there are no special dispensations. We may boast a profound love for the planet, but that doesn’t mean it loves us back.

Pioneer women probably understood that quite well. They realized that the earth is a tough place to make a living. It promises nothing, owes us nothing by virtue of our humanity.

Given the disruption climate change is already doing to our current, comfortable existence, this is a lesson we’re forgetting at our own peril.

- Susan Gallagher



CCEEC MEMBERSHIP

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

E-MAIL: _____

Membership category, please check.

_____ STUDENT..... \$10

_____ ORGANIZATION.... \$50

_____ SENIOR CITIZEN..... \$10

_____ SPONSOR..... \$100

_____ INDIVIDUAL..... \$15

_____ PATRON..... \$500

_____ FAMILY..... \$25

MAIL TO: CCEEC, 151 E. WHITE BEAR DR., SUMMIT HILL, PA 18250

CCEEC DOES NOT SHARE YOUR PERSONAL MEMBER INFORMATION WITH ANY OTHER ORGANIZATION.

“Reflections from the Lake” is published three times annually by the Carbon County Environmental Education Center. It is mailed free to all members of CCEEC and Mauch Chunk Lake Park.

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CENTER
151 E. WHITE BEAR DR.
SUMMIT HILL, PA 18250
PHONE: (570) 645-8597
FAX: (570) 645-8499
CCEEC@PTD.NET
SUSAN GALLAGHER, CHIEF NATURALIST
JEANNIE CARL, NATURALIST
FRANKLIN KLOCK, PROGRAM ASSISTANT

MAUCH CHUNK LAKE PARK OFFICE
625 LENTZ TRAIL
JIM THORPE, PA 18229
OFFICE: (570) 325-3669
BEACH: (570) 325-2956
DAVID HORVATH, DIRECTOR, PARKS & RECREATION

Mauch Chunk Lake is administered by the Carbon County Parks and Recreation Commission. CCEEC is administered by the Carbon Conservation District. Funding is provided in part by the Carbon County Commissioners.

CARBON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

WAYNE NOTHSTEIN, CHAIRMAN
THOMAS GERHARD
WILLIAM O'GUREK

CARBON COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

THOMAS J. WILDONER, CHAIRMAN
TERRY WARNAGIRIS, VICE CHAIRWOMAN
KEVIN ZURAWA, SECRETARY
DARRYL J. BREWSTER EARL HENNINGER

CARBON CONSERVATION DISTRICT DIRECTORS

JOSIAH W.H. BEHRENS III, CHAIRMAN
ROBERT MILLER, VICE CHAIRMAN GERALD DOTTER
CLARK SHOENBERGER, SECRETARY WAYNE NOTHSTEIN
ROBIN CRESSLEY MERLE HUNSICKER

CCEEC ADVISORY BOARD

BARB FOGAL DR. RENNIE SHOOP
DR. CARL FRANKEL DAVID HAWK
CAROL GETZ RICK GRANT
MARIGRACE HEYER

Address Service Requested

CONSERVATION THROUGH EDUCATION

Carbon County
Environmental Education Center
151 E. White Bear Dr.
Summit Hill, PA 18250

Presorted Standard

