



# RIVER TALK

Winter 2013

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## Member Information ~ by Marty Borko

Dear supporting members,

As many of you support the activities of the Carantouan Greenway but do not follow Board deliberations, I would like to update you on our present fiscal situation. We are fiscally sound but running on a very small tight budget. Last year 2012 we actually ran in the red. Let me repeat that. We are sound and have money in the bank. However, as President, I like to run in the black on a year to year basis. What has hurt us the most is that our banking investments of about \$20,000 have been earning less than a fraction of 1% in today's markets. Fortunately we have a fund set up with the Community Foundation of the Twin Tiers which contributed \$874 to our annual operating budget. Our biggest expense is insurance budgeted for \$1700 and auditing \$400 for a total of

\$2,100. This is half of our operating budget. My hope is that by 2020 we can build up the CFTT's account so that its annual contribution would cover the insurance and auditing costs and that members contributions can go toward educational activities and trail maintenance. WE appreciate your continued support and ask, if you can, to reach out to others to join us as well. Thanks, your President, Marty Borko

## ALWAYS USE

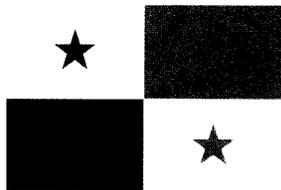
## Trail Maintenance

Many of you are volunteers who come to do stream clean-ups in the Spring or trail maintenance at Wildwood and We thank you for that. This past year Barry Skeist continued to maintain the Forbidden Path at the end of RT. 220. The rest of us worked on maintaining Wildwood trails which had the brush cut back so it does not overhang or narrow the trail's path. The grassed path sections and the grassed dam were mowed with weed-wackers three times during the summer. We try to maintain well-kept paths to encourage utilization. The same September storm that took roof sections off of Stray Havens animal shelter took down many trees on our trails. We had downed red maples, white pine, black cherry, shadbush and black locust. Most of these trees were tied up with grape vines and virginia creeper. Your VP John Palmer took out most of the smaller trees and vines and Barry Skeist, a wizard with a chain saw, came along the next day and cleared all the larger trees. The trails were blocked for less than 3 days. One should also note that Barry wore a safety helmet, steel-toed shoes, leather gloves and kevlar pants. Safety is always a concern.

## E-mail Addresses

**As many of you know. Technology has changed quickly and aside from our Treasurer, Jim Daly, I suspect many of us are tech challenged. In any event please consider this a request for you to e-mail Jim at [JJdaly@gmail.com](mailto:JJdaly@gmail.com) so that we can keep in touch via your address. Thanks !!!**





This October I had the chance to personally evaluate the popular Pipeline Road and Rainforest Discovery Center. Off of the Pipeline Road is a 174 step tower that allows you to overlook the tropical rain forest. From here we had distant views of mealy parrots, blue cotinga, and masked tityra. Not far from the tower is the Discovery Center porch where you can watch hummingbirds feed which included the long-billed hermit, the white-necked jacobin and the white-bellied plumeleteer. The best bird off of the Pipeline was the pheasant cuckoo which as its name suggests is a large bird. We met lots of familiar friends such as yellow and chestnut-sided warblers along with redstarts, Eastern pewees, yellowlegs, great-blue herons, and more Eastern kingbirds than you can imagine. The best day there was our first where we stood at the top of Ancon Hill and overlooked Panama City as kettle after kettle of broad-winged hawks, Mississippi kites and black vultures passed through along with an osprey or two and many turkey vultures. The days count was well over 62 thousand birds, yes 62K plus. Our guide Ariel Aguirre was capable as he led us over the 8 days from the mountains to the Pacific ocean. My recommended residence for the birder would be the Gamboa Rainforest Resort. From your hotel room balcony you can see open meadows, the river, several trees and lots of flower hedges with feeding hummingbirds and blue-grey tanagers.

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### Shop For Electricity and Save ~ by John Palmer

As a result of the deregulation of the electricity industry, all consumers now have the opportunity to shop multiple suppliers to get the best price for generating their electricity. Many suppliers also offer plans which allow consumers to choose part or all of their energy from renewable sources. Last year I found a plan that generated all of my electricity from 100% wind for about the same price as I'd regularly pay for energy generated from fossil fuels. That same plan this year is saving me 6%! I can't think of a better way to support clean renewable energy, kick our fossil fuel habit, and help mitigate climate change. You can also shop for natural gas suppliers and save. The process is easy: in PA go to [www.papowerswitch.com](http://www.papowerswitch.com), in NY go to [www.saveonenergy.com](http://www.saveonenergy.com).



On your monthly electric bill you will find an amount called the "price to compare", or PTC, which is the price to generate your electricity in \$ per kilowatt-hour. The PTC is variable so you need to look at an average over several months, but if another supplier offers a lower PTC, you could save by switching. Suppliers offer many different plans, some with fixed, some with variable rates, so be sure to check the details. Suppliers and plans change frequently, so if you don't find something the first try check again in a couple of months.



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### E-bird

The Carantouan Greenway is re-issuing its educational challenge to 6th grade classes in Tioga and Chemung counties in New York along with Bradford County in Pa. The class is asked to use the changing e-bird data from our web site in any way; be that music, art, science, English, math, civics or an integrated manner. The Greenway is offering achievement recognition awards of \$300, \$150 and \$50 to the classrooms presenting the best utilization of the e-bird data. The submission for recognition should be in the form of a 10-15 minute DVD sent to the Carantouan Greenway. The deadline for submission is April 15, 2014. The data on the web site is submitted to the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology on most days of the week after your president walks the trail identifying all the birds he sees or hears. Cornell immediately relays that info over to our web site making it available to the public. All bird species seen over the last 30 days are readily viewable with the numbers of each species as well. We have submitted a grant application to help fund this effort but will not know until next year.



## Carantouan St. Paddy's Jog

The Board is sponsoring a St. Paddy's Day Wildwood Run on Saturday morning, 10 am, March 15. There are several reasons for this. #1 We are not aware of one in the Valley that would compete with that date. #2 Exercise is important to everyone's health and we would be encouraging joggers to get out as Spring breaks. #3 We believe that this would acquaint more people with the existence of our trails and their availability for walking and appreciating nature. #4 We hope to turn over profits, if any, to build up our Community Foundation of the Twin Tiers account. #5 We plan green random-drawing prizes such as garden tools, carrot cake, organic food vouchers, etc. The run is called the "Carantouan Cloverleaf 4K Trail Run". Sign up on our website!

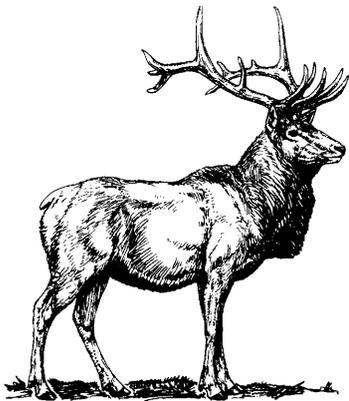
### A Wildwood Walk ~ by Marty Borko

On September 23 two days into the Fall we did our usual 1.3 mile walk surveying the scenery and recording the birds for e-bird. The temperature was 50 degrees, a completely covered dark sky with a slight breeze. There were song sparrows singing in the parking lot and we wandered up onto the Caplan loop. The sound of a jay with its clothes-line call was heard and then the chatter of titmice and a carolina wren as we turned toward the pond. The cattails seemed quiet, only interrupted by the meow of a catbird from the woods. Returning to the downed willow a red-tailed hawk took off and I proceeded down the otter trail. Between the cattail patches I could see more song sparrows and hear the trill of a swamp sparrow along with a kingfisher in the distance. As I crossed over to the alfalfa field I could hear a robin chuck and a cardinal called from the hedgerow. Far back in the cattails I could just make out the chatter of red-winged blackbirds which regularly roost there. As I crossed over the dam and into the pine woods a great-blue heron took off followed by 6 wood ducks and 2 gadwalls. I never expected the gadwalls with their white wing patch. On this day the pine woods provided no activity. Coming across the dam I scanned the tree behind the dam and sitting on the dead branches about 20 feet apart were a great-blue heron and an immature red-shouldered hawk. The red-shouldered hawk is notably smaller than a red tail with a clear breast and belly. As it flew off one could see its narrow banded tail. That sighting made it a great day. As I proceeded across the alfalfa field a small flock of honking Canada geese flew over. A great beginning for an early Fall day.



### ELK COUNTY – A GREAT FALL WEEKEND DESTINATION

~ By Marilyn Palmer



Many people aren't aware that Pennsylvania's Elk County has a herd of 800 magnificent elk and hundreds of acres of beautiful territory in which to enjoy watching them. A great time to go is in late September, during the breeding season when the big bulls are bugling to establish their dominance and maintain guardianship of their harems of females. John and I have gone both during the rut, and later, when the males are back to their solitary wanderings and the females and young adults are more visible. We saw fewer elk during the rut, when the males were closely guarding their harems in open fields off in the distance, but it is well worth the trip to hear them bugle and watch them pace and strut their stuff. In October they are more visible as they browse the shrubs along the highway or partake of the culinary delights to be found in peoples' yards. Either time is great for a fall getaway, as there are many nice places to stay, and several towns in the area with stately historic homes, artisan shops, and galleries. For those who prefer more action, there are many wonderful hiking and biking trails through some of the oldest old-growth forest in the state. The people we met were all very friendly and helpful, and shared suggestions for good places to eat and where they had last seen a nice herd of elk. At Benezette there is a wonderful Visitor Center that offers touch screen displays, a sensory-surround theater, live forest cams, elk viewing blinds, a panoramic mountain overlook, walking paths, picnic areas, and a very nice gift shop. Also in Benezette, there is a nice winery that offers tastings and a gift shop. All along Rte 555 are hiking spots and wildlife viewing areas. At one of the pull-offs we saw migration gatherings of several species of warblers as well as Rufus-sided Towhees and Redstarts, and a pair of Wood Thrushes that allowed us to get a long, close view. Even the drive to and from Elk County is beautiful, especially during peak color. John and I highly recommend it as a fall destination or getaway. If you should choose the Victorian House B&B in Ridgeway, which is filled with lovely antiques and has comfortable rooms, plan to skip the breakfast, which is not served in a timely fashion, consists of store-bought pastries and dry cereal, and will make you miss the morning elk action. Instead, get an early start to enjoy elk viewing and then head to the Benezette Store and Restaurant on Rte 555 for a delicious home-made breakfast with fast service and friendly people.

Good sources for further information are: [www.elkcountyvisitorscenter.com](http://www.elkcountyvisitorscenter.com) and [www.pawilds.com](http://www.pawilds.com).

Friends of the  
**CARANTOUAN GREENWAY**

Yes! Count me in! I believe in protecting farm and forestland, wildlife habitat and watersheds in the Penn-York Valley. I want to become a member of Carantouan Greenway!

- |  |                       |   |                      |
|--|-----------------------|---|----------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Mighty Oak</b>   | <b>\$500 per year</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Trailblazer</b> | <b>\$25 per year</b> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Golden Eagle</b> | <b>\$75 per year</b>  | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Other</b>       | <b>\$_____</b>       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Stargazer</b>    | <b>\$50 per year</b>  |   |                      |

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**Gifts to Carantouan Greenway are fully tax deductible! (Tax Id Number: 23-2750872)**

*Please send all contributions to Carantouan Greenway, PO Box 441, Sayre, PA 18840-0441 or PO Box 827, Waverly, NY 14892-0827 or on-line at [www.carantouangreenway.org/joinonline](http://www.carantouangreenway.org/joinonline).*

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