

SWPWO



Southwest PA Woodland Owners

Sept 2019

Coming up in September: Wood Lot Tour and Dinner Social

Sept 14, 1 PM-Evening Tour of conservation practices of Brian Adair's woodlot in Conneaut, PA, where he manages his property for a variety of recreational uses with an emphasis on improved hunting. The tour will be followed by a social hour and dinner on the water at Iroquois Boating and Fishing Club just down the road. **RSVP** requested to burnhammaureen@yahoo.com or call 724-233-8781 and for driving directions

The Farm

By Maria Piantanida

In 1960, my parents purchased the first of three wooded properties on the northwestern tip of Washington County. Since the land already supported a mixed-species, hardwood forest, I'm not sure why we began calling it "The Farm," but that's how we've always referred to it. My parents' motivation to buy this land was woven from three strands of desire. First, as owners of a community drugstore, Dad and Mom never felt comfortable leaving the business for a traditional one or two week family vacation. Therefore, they wanted a place close enough to our home to get away for an afternoon and relax. Second, although Mom was born in the US, she returned to Italy as a young child and spoke with great emotion about how scarce and precious firewood was. Third, Mom told a friend that she wanted my sisters and me to be able to hear the crunch of fall leaves under our feet.

From the very beginning, The Farm was a place where everyone was free to relax in whatever way they most enjoyed. While Dad spent Saturday afternoons listening to the opera, Mom would don her combat boots and go out to wage endless war against poison ivy. That we should be forest stewards or be managing the woods never occurred to me. The Farm with its trees, stream, and weeds was just there. Even today, when my more knowledgeable SWPWO friends ask what my stewardship goals are, I'm at a loss for words. I don't want to timber. I don't want to be a tree farmer. I don't want to promote wildlife habitats or watch birds. I just want to go and relax against a backdrop of green and the soothing sound of flowing water.

I no longer remember how I connected with SWPWO, but through my involvement I slowly began to realize that I might owe a duty of care to this family woodland. Taking it for granted and simply leaving it alone might, in the long run, mean it would no longer "just be there" for the next generation to enjoy as I had. I've come to believe that my co-owners and I need a stewardship plan—not to maximize economic benefit from timber, but to sustain the health of the forest. What this plan should contain and how I can manage the work needed to implement it remain unclear. But at least I've progressed from a stage of cluelessness to a stage of exploration and learning. Hopefully, I'll make sufficient progress before I and the forest run out of time.

SWPWO Purpose

Southwestern Pennsylvania Woodland Owners (SWPWO), a not for profit association, is an organization of individuals interested in sound woodland management practices to encourage the diverse use of forests for timber production, wildlife habitat, watershed protection and recreation, and to promote this multiple-use philosophy through education and technical assistance for the benefit of the membership and general public.

SWPWO 2019 Calendar

Sept 28, Sat	2019 PFA Annual Symposium: Wildlife & Woodlands , Toftrees Resort & Conference Ctr, State College (http://paforestry.org/) Join other PA woodland owners for educational sessions that will assist you in managing your woods, water and wildlife.
Oct 6, Sun 1PM	Annual Walk in Penn's Woods- This is a statewide program where walks in the woods are offered all over the state. Visit this site to find a walk for you: https://sites.psu.edu/walkinpennswoods/ or stay local and walk on the Burnham Wood lot where the tour will take you by vernal ponds, a variety of tree plantings of different age classes, and beautiful Fall foliage on and around the country road.
Nov 13, Wed 7 PM	Forest Management Practices Using Drones: This meeting will focus on recent developments in the world of UAS (otherwise known as drones). We have some exciting work going on locally and will present the technology and various applications of the technology to woodland management. This will be a follow-up to our meeting of two years ago. The technology is really flying along (pun intended). So I will stop droning on (pun intended) and hope to see you there. Greene County Airport hanger
Nov 16, Sat 1-4 PM	Demonstration of Forest Management Practices Using Drones- visit a site where drones have been used as part of forestland management practices. Location to be determined.

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Membership Information</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Membership dues will be collected at meetings or can be sent to:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">SWPWO</p> <p style="text-align: center;">261 2nd St, Oakmont 15139</p> <p>If sending in dues, please include name, address, phone number and an e-mail address. Membership to the Southwestern Pennsylvania Woodland Owners Association is \$10 per year for an individual and \$15 per year for a household. Keep your membership up to date to continue to receive the newsletter and yearly calendar.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>SWPWO Officers (year elected)</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">President – Mark Fajerski (2018)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Vice President – John Gregor (2018)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Secretary – Ryan Egidi (2018)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Treasurer – Maria Piantanida (at large position)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Director – Melissa Gregor (2018)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Director – Harold Thistle (2019)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Director – Wayne Kraeer (2018)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Advisor-Bill Wentzel</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Advisor- Arlyn Perkey</p>
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Editors: Gay Thistle and Bobbi Cressey-Ideas for this newsletter are always welcome Please send them to gaythistle@gmail.com