

November 2022 - January 2023

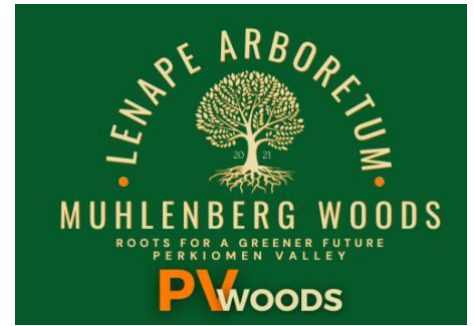
# News from PV Woods

The newsletter of Lenape Arboretum & Muhlenberg Woods

We have continued to be very busy through the Winter! It is hard to believe it has been just over a year and a half since the district designated PV property for conservation and environmental education and to name the properties Lenape Arboretum and Muhlenberg Woods. Read below for an overview of upcoming events!

## Martin Luther King Day Project!

Many thanks to Ursinus College and PVHS students for helping to clean up Lenape Arboretum, complete some landscaping, and prepare a new garden for the ‘Trooper Branden Sisca’ tree on MLK Day. Special shout out to Ms. Courtney Rhone who supervised. Our Green Team students are planning to create a Fire Dept. and State Police themed garden in the Spring. Watch us grow!



## Contact Info

Please email to share your ideas and suggestions.

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<https://www.facebook.com/PerkValleyWoods>



## Two Owls and a Vine Released!

Through the Artist in Residence program, PVSD is hosting composer and performer Jill Haley (<https://jillhaley.com/>), who has written a number of works inspired by our National Parks. Our 7th Grade students recently heard a piece that she has written for our 7th/8th grade band to perform this spring! The assembly included a chamber arrangement (oboe, piano and guitar) of the new piece written for PVSD which was inspired by the historic Lenape visit during the Lenape Arboretum Dedication last spring. They gathered under a 327 year old Swamp White Oak Tree along the Perkiomen Trail. The original piece is based upon the Lenape/Delaware Legend titled "Two Owls and the Vine".

You can listen to this original composition here:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZPEZhC\\_ZFDE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZPEZhC_ZFDE)

The Origin of the Bittersweet Vine told by Nora Thompson Dean

Once a man went hunting in a big forest. He hunted all day, and when he got tired that evening he went to sleep under a big tree. Not long after, an owl alighted in the tree and soon another owl came there. He heard the two of them talking and he finally knew that they were quarrelling. That must have been the husband of the owl. He told her, "Why did you come here? You must like this man!" The husband-owl accused his wife of being in that tree because she liked the man who was sleeping under it. Finally he hit her with his wing and something fell to the ground. When it got daylight the man went to look at what he had heard fall, and he saw a red earring that fell last night. The hunter left it on the ground. In the Fall he returned to the forest, and where the earring had fallen something long was growing. It was covered with red berries that looked like the earring. That must have been the seed from which the Bittersweet Vine grew, and that is the reason we Lenape call it Kukhusëwim - the "Owl Berry".

The version in Lenape can be found here:

<https://www.talk-lenape.org/stories?id=96#2386>



## The Untold Story of the Two Quilts!

In November, Dr. Seamus Clune, had an opportunity to share about PV Woods with the Community Club of Collegeville. During his presentation he shared about the untold story of the two quilts. This generated so much interest and questions by the audience that the story is shared here for posterity.

Soon after Lenape Arboretum and Muhlenberg Woods were established on June 5, 2021, School Board Member, Mrs. Judy Lofton offered to take a gift on behalf of PVSD to the Delaware Tribe of Indians and the Delaware Nation in Oklahoma. She was traveling there on a family vacation in early July. A custom quilted wall hanging in the “Perkiomen” design was selected as an appropriate gift. Master Fiber Artist and Quilter, Mrs. Jane Nase, took on the project with only a few weeks to complete two custom quilted wall hangings. The artist titled the quilts; “Perkiomen-Lenape Friendship Trail”. The colors chosen to depict the Perkiomen Valley School District and Delaware Tribe of Indians or the Delaware Nation along with the color green to represent the living earth that we all share. The background color of white signifies peace and harmony. The sharp contrast of dark and light tones signifies the high hills and broad valleys of the Perkiomen Creek Valley. The embroidered message on the back of the quilt reads as follows:

*Perkiomen Valley School District extends warm greetings of friendship to the Lenape people. ---July 2021*

*“No Kingdom on Earth can surpass the great outdoors.” --- Tamanend*

It should be noted that Mrs. Judy Lofton travelled hundreds of miles out of her way on two different days to personally deliver these quilts to the chiefs of both tribes. Serendipitously, the Delaware Tribe of Indians contacted PVSD in June and requested assistance with locating housing for Tribal Elder, John Thomas, who was finalizing plans with Pennsbury Manor to rebury Lenape ancestral remains. Ursinus College graciously offered to host John Thomas and his wife Faye. So in July, 2021, following a PVSD School Board Member visit with the chiefs of the Delaware Tribe of Indians and Delaware Nation in Oklahoma; PVSD and Ursinus College Administration had a meeting with a Delaware Tribe of Indians delegation. The rest is history!







Dr. Seamus Clune, Dr. Barbara Russell, Tribal Elder John Thomas, Dr. Heather Lobban-Viravong, and Mrs. Faye Thomas at Ursinus College in July, 2021



Tribal Elder John Thomas visiting the meadow at Muhlenberg Woods for the first time in July 2021. He spread some tobacco leaves and prayed a blessing over the site.



## Duck Nesting Tubes

Mr. Mark Marino, owner of the 'Duck Inn' has constructed Duck Nesting Tubes and Nest Boxes on his property as well as on PV Woods property that is adjacent to the Duck Inn. Providing safe artificial nesting structures for mallards has been proved to increase their breeding success. Mallards nests are often destroyed before eggs had a chance to hatch, through predation, trampling from livestock or disturbance from dog walkers. The success from ground nests can be as low as 15 percent. Nest tubes offer security and protection, these tubes can boost fledgling success to over 90 percent. Come check out this unique area of PV Woods. There are several excellent specimens of trees as well as a beautiful view of the Perkiomen. There are usually plenty of ducks nearby too!