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## Gordie News, October 2007

West Chester University of Pennsylvania

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# GORDIE NEWS

(October 2007) 1:10

Erika Szonntag, editor

Gordon Natural Area for Environmental Studies

West Chester University of Pennsylvania

(A Certified Wildlife Habitat by the National Wildlife Federation)



## Special Announcements & Dates-

### November 10-workday (10am-12pm)

**Saturday, November 3 – “National Day of Climate Change” Event in West Chester.**

**Help save postage: If you have an E-mail we can add you to the Friends of the Gordon Natural Area mailing list. You will be notified of the latest Gordie News (<http://darwin.wcupa.edu/gordon/>) and other activities**

**Contact Erika Szonntag with feedback or ideas for articles at [es631042@wcupa.edu](mailto:es631042@wcupa.edu)**

## :: What's New? ::

*The following is the abstract to a scientific article published by Dr. Greg Turner, Robin van Meter, and Dr. Gerry Hertel. The article includes data on tree population in the Gordon Natural Area.*

A 2003 survey of canopy trees and woody saplings and seedlings at the Gordon Natural Area in Chester County, Pennsylvania was used for comparison with a survey conducted there in 1970 to determine if changes in forest composition have occurred over this thirty-three year period. Plots were established in 2003 in the Gordon forest in the vicinity of those surveyed in 1970 and all trees (> 12.6 cm DBH), saplings (between 2.5-12.6 cm DBH), and seedlings (<2.5 cm DBH and taller than 30.5 cm) were identified and inventoried using size classes similar to those used in 1970. In 2003 the canopy was dominated by tulip poplar (*Liriodendron tulipifera*) and American beech (*Fagus grandifolia*). The understory was dominated by both beech saplings and seedlings, and by white ash (*Fraxinus americana*) seedlings, all of whose relative densities were similar to those found in 1970. Flowering dogwood (*Cornus florida*) and Mockernut hickory (*Carya tomentosa*) sapling



Tulip poplar  
(*Liriodendron tulipifera*)

density declined from 1970 to 2003 while dogwood, ironwood (*Carpinus caroliniana*), and red oak (*Quercus rubra*) seedlings, all present in 1970, were absent from plots in 2003. Two new exotic species, Tree-of-heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*) and Princess tree (*Paulownia tomentosa*), were found in the understory in 2003, though at low densities. While canopy dominance by tulip poplar and beech did not change from 1970 to 2003, declines in density by most native species, and establishment by new exotic species, into the understory suggest that forest composition is changing to include fewer native and more exotic species.



*Turner, G. D., Robin Van Meter and G. D. Hertel. 2007. Changes in forest understory composition from 1970-2003 at the Gordon Natural Area and urban preserve in Chester County, Pennsylvania. Journal of the Pennsylvania Academy of Science 81: 8-13*

Princess tree (*Paulownia tomentosa*)

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## ***Upcoming Events***

### **Gordon Natural Area Workday – November 10<sup>th</sup> (10am)**

We are expecting to:

1. Remove invasive species in the floodplain
2. Start on Amur honeysuckle removal
3. Complete the garbage pick up in two areas
4. Stream cleaning
5. Trail closure
6. Tree planting

Be sure to stay for lunch at noon at the front gate (our chef for the last two years Margo Bucco will be cooking up some food!). A promotional video by Dan Baab and Steve Savage will be in production, along with a GPS demo by Scott Rawhauser and Nicholas Lucash. The National Wildlife Federation Backyard Habitat Program will be represented.

See you there!

## **“Step It Up” – National Day of Climate Change**

What: National Day of Climate Change or "Step It Up"

When: Saturday, November 3, 2007 from 11am-2pm

Where: W.C. United Methodist Church (across from 7-11 at the corner of High St. and Barnard St.)

Speak out against climate change, get informed, meet local leaders, get green gear, check out Toyota Hybrids, hear live music, and much more. The W.C. Alliance for Global Warming Awareness has been organizing the campaign for the West Chester area for about two months.

Some speakers include Richard Whiteford, Joy Bergey of PennFuture, Dianne Herrin of BLUER, Duncan Allison of the BVA, Sam Cantrell of Maysie's Farm, and others. Visit <http://events.stepitup2007.org> for more information.

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### **Down to Earth Exhibit**

**November 9 – December 8, 2007**

**The Arts Scene**

**530 E. Union Street, West Chester, PA 19380**

*“To celebrate connections between functional art, local food, and community”*

Each week there will be a different event, all involving local cooking, local music, and local art! The opening reception will be catered by Café Menta with a performance by Jazz Harpist Gillian Grassie and a presentation by a local potter and furniture maker.

Other events include “Mugs, Microbrews, Music & Movies” which features sampling of *Victory Brewery's* beers, a musical performance by Hoots and Hellmouth, and a screening by a local filmmaker.

On Saturday, December 8<sup>th</sup>, “Empty Bowls” will take place. Here, ceramic artists donate bowls from which guests choose and donate money for a meal. All proceeds will be donated to the Community Gardens of Chester County, and guests can keep the bowls as a reminder that “there are always empty bowls in the world.”

There will also be chef's tastings, silent auctions, and much more! So check out The Arts Scene in West Chester next month for a great time.

## :: Check Out These Websites ::

### The PB & J Campaign – The “Green” Lunch!

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

*“The next time you pack this all-American sandwich for lunch, you're helping the environment. You don't have to change your whole diet to change the world. Just start with lunch.”* Here's how:

- Your carbon footprint will be reduced by **2.5 lbs. of carbon dioxide emissions** – the amount an average meat-based lunch produces.
- You save **280 gallons of water** by skipping the hamburger.
- Having a pb & j saves anywhere between **12 and 50** square feet of land from “*deforestation, over-grazing, and pesticide and fertilizer pollution.*”



Log on to learn more stunning facts and to be a part of the campaign today – it's an easy, healthy, and darn tasty alternative!

### Geo-4 – Global Environment Outlook

Special U.N. Report

[news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/science/nature/7060072.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/science/nature/7060072.stm)



*“With its Geo-4 report, the United Nations tells us that most aspects of the Earth's natural environment are in decline; and that the decline will affect us, the planet's human inhabitants, in some pretty important ways.”* The article is based on the recently released 572 page document compiled by hundreds of researchers about all of our current environmental issues and the ties between them. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) illustrates exactly what is physically happening to the earth, using James Lovelock's Gaia theory as a frame. Read this fascinating article to get a closer glimpse into what the earth is experiencing and how changes like “sustainable development” could help reverse current trends for future global environment improvement.

## **:: The Arts ::**

*In Hardwood Groves*  
By Robert Frost

The same leaves over and over again!  
They fall from giving shade above  
To make one texture of faded brown  
And fit the earth like a leather glove.

Before the leaves can mount again  
To fill the trees with another shade,  
They must go down past things coming up,  
They must go down into the dark decayed.

They *must* be pierced by flowers and put  
Beneath the feet of dancing flowers.  
However it is in some other world  
I know that this is the way in ours.



### **Homecoming 2007 a Success!**



The Alumni Event on Saturday, September 29<sup>th</sup> was a huge success and helped raise awareness about the Gordon Natural Area. Smokey Bear and Woodsy Owl made guest appearances to help make more Alumni aware of the GNA. The National Wildlife Federation, Backyard Habitat Program had a table and Yellow Springs Native Plant Nursery donated six trees to the GNA and has a program in which one can purchase a tree and donate it to the Gordon. (Matt Bigos [Smokey], Tara Speck, Gordie [in Smokey and Woodsy's hand], Erika Szonntag [Woodsy]). Thanks to the USDA Forest Service, Newtown Square for the loan of the costumes.

**Donate a Tree to the Gordon Natural Area  
Yellow Springs Farm Native Plant Nursery  
610-827-2014**

[www.yellowspringsfarm.com](http://www.yellowspringsfarm.com)

**Tree, tree protector, and mat-\$50**

## Billion Tree Campaign

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has launched a campaign to plant trees all over the world. The Gordon Natural Area has pledged 100 trees thus far. World target-pledged-planted/the Gordon Natural Area

### Target



**1,000,000,000/100**

### Pledged

**1,203,544,832/100**

### Planted

**431,015,853/64**

Visit <http://www.unep.org/billiontreecampaign/>

### GNA Supporters:

*2004:* Presidential Initiative (WCU); Environmental Council (WCU); USDA Forest Service; Henderson High School Environmental Club; Friends of the Gordon Area

*2005:* Wegman's; Yellow Springs Farm Native Plant Nursery; Environmental Council; Henderson High School Environmental Club; Friends of the Gordon Area

*2006:* Yellow Springs Farm Native Plant Nursery; Valero Energy Corporation; National Wildlife Federation; Henderson High School Environmental Club; Friends of the Gordon Area

*2007:* Pennsylvania Department of Natural Resources; WCU Alumni Association; Darlington Biological Society; MENTA Café; Yellow Springs Farm Native Plant Nursery

Contact: [ghertel@wcupa.edu](mailto:ghertel@wcupa.edu); 610-436-2722; 484-883-3371

**NO TRAIL BIKES ARE ALLOWED IN THE GNA** – They have increased the length of trails by 300% and are impacting the biodiversity in the GNA.

**DOGS NEED TO BE LEASHED** – Students doing laboratory assignments have been attacked by unleashed dogs.

**WCU Public Safety:** 610-436-3311

