

# River Talk

Newsletter of the Carantouan Greenway



Fall 2017

## President's Message

Fellow Carantouans,

The Carantouan Board continues to meet monthly to serve the public good via environmental education, partnering and outreach. We are presently working with the Tioga County Office of Tourism serving

*“With hurricane damage in Texas, Florida and Puerto Rico and wildfires in California, it becomes more evident than ever for our fellow citizens to become more familiar with their own environmental neighborhoods.”*

as the fiscal vehicle for the envisioned group “Friends of Two Rivers State Park”.

With hurricane damage in Texas, Florida and Puerto Rico and wildfires in California, it becomes more evident than ever for our fellow citizens to become more familiar with their own environmental neighborhoods. We, the Greenway, continue to offer field trips for all; wildlife gardens

for youth and senior citizens; and citizen education about tick-borne Lyme disease and climate change. We are presently awaiting a grant request to extend our partnership to the Tioga County Health Department, Tioga and Waverly School Districts and Binghamton University in an effort to document the extent of the deer tick explosion and its

*Continued on page 2...President's Message*

## 4-Year-Old Todd's Journey with Lyme



It was an early July morning when Elizabeth, a Waverly mother of 8, discovered her 4-year-old son Todd unable to walk. With the original diagnosis of an infected knee, he was sent to an orthopedic surgeon in Syracuse. A last-minute blood test prior to surgery revealed a diagnosis that no one expected. Todd's swollen knee was not infected, it was arthritic from advanced Lyme disease. According to researchers from Harvard Medical School, Lyme arthritis (in the U.S.) is the most common feature of late stage infection with the tick-borne spiro-

*Continued on page 3...Lyme*

### In this issue

- Baneberries
- 4-Year-Old Todd's Journey with Lyme
- Greenway Celebrates Ralph Geiger
- Park Mapping
- President's Message
- Recipe for a Perfect Sunday
- Raising Boys in Lieu of Flowers

## Park Mapping: Coming Soon

The Carantouan Greenway Park Mapping project has made some exciting progress over the last few months. We have had volunteers hit the trails, mapping Wildwood and the Waverly Glen/Two Rivers State Park. Using the ESRI app, we have created easy to follow maps with pictures of points of interests. This app can be used to create storyboards about each of your parks, can give important information and history, and can make it easy to navigate the parks without fear of getting lost. The more we use technology to make the experience in our parks attractive and educational, the more value we will add to our communities. Carantouan collaborators are working behind the scenes to make the maps and technology available to our park visitors, and include program manager Jessica Schillmoeller, ESRI specialist Dave Bubniak and web developer Brad Zehr. Stay tuned for updates to our website, coming soon!

## Greenway Celebrates Ralph Geiger on #GivingTuesday

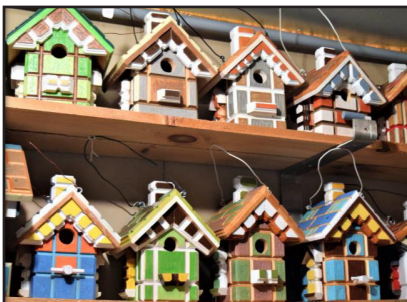
While the average pigeon lives a mere four years, Waverly's resident-pigeon "Buddy" is approaching her 13th birthday. Often found perched on the shoulder of her caretaker Ralph Geiger, the two work closely in their one-of-a-kind woodshop, where Ralph has been building unique birdhouses for close to 20 years, creating nearly 1,700 to date. Showcased regularly at festivals and bazaars, it is Ralph's hope that no bird will ever be without a place to call home. His wife Diane paints them in cheerful palettes.



*Ralph and Buddy at work*

Additionally, Ralph has partnered with the Carantouan Greenway to get birdhouses out to our community, bringing his vision to light. Art projects hosted by local libraries, schools, parks, and Greenway Youth Days have resulted in a multitude of Ralph's birdhouses uniquely painted by local youth, which can be found at Two Rivers State Park, the Riverwalk Area in downtown Owego, Owego-Appalachian School District, Waverly Little League, Muldoon Gardens and residential homes throughout the county.

In honor of #GivingTuesday, the Greenway wishes to thank Ralph Geiger for his selfless spirit and dedication to local wildlife. In the U.S., Giving Tuesday is celebrated on the Tuesday following Thanksgiving. #GivingTuesday is often recognized as a kick off to the charitable season, when many focus on their holiday and end-of-year giving. The Greenway is giving away three of Ralph Geiger's birdhouses



*Assembled and painted*

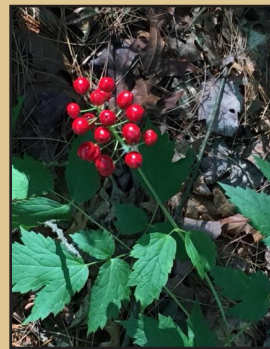
on #GivingTuesday, November 28th. No purchase necessary. To be entered, simply text "Giving Tuesday" to 607-216-8415, by Monday, Nov. 27th. Entries chosen at random by Greenway.

## Baneberries

Last year volunteers removed much of the Japanese honeysuckle that dominated the understory of Wildwood's pine woods. This spring we planted over 100 native dogwoods in the more opened understory. This led to more observations as to what was sitting off our maintained trail. The vision of bright red fruits led to the



discovery of a single red baneberry with thin-pedicelled raceme of brilliant-red fruits. Its foliage is dark consisting of pinnately compound leaves. Several weeks later on the other side of the pine grove there was another baneberry, but this one had a shorter raceme and its thick-pedicelled



white fruits were developing with a single black central spot giving this plant its other name of doll's eyes. Both are native plants of our woodlands. What has selected for the fact that there is but a single plant of each, widely separated but in the same woods I do not know, but therein lies a reason to take a walk in the woods.

### *President's Message*, continued from page 1

relationship to Lyme disease. We partner with the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation and sample macro-invertebrates that serve as water quality indicators in Cayuta Creek.

The Carantouan Greenway is known for its Forbidden Path, an old Indian Trail and spring as well as our 50-acre mainstay, the Wildwood Preserve. Its two-plus miles of trails are regularly maintained by our volunteers and most of our outdoor events are held there including our March fund-raiser 4K jog. The Greenway's biggest expense is its liability insurance and annual reporting to the states of New York and Pennsylvania as well as the federal government. This costs us in the neighborhood of \$2,500 annually. It is for that reason that your total volunteer board deeply appreciates your continued fiscal support to keep us in the black and able to serve the public good. Thank you!

Marty Borko, President

# Recipe for a Perfect Sunday

*Begin with one part big blue sky. Add an equal amount of light breeze. Combine with one knowledgeable guide and a generous amount of eager hikers. Add spicy autumn wood scents and sounds to preference. Simmer for 90 minutes. Serve at outdoor temperature.*

Have you ever noticed that some caterpillars are smooth and some are hairy? What clues does that give us about what emerges from the cocoon? If you think smooth caterpillars are butterflies and hairy ones are moths then you are right. Hikers were also taught how to tell a white oak from a red oak by the shape of their leaves and bark patterns. The guide for the October 15th educational hike, Marty Borko, pointed out that the invasive plant wormwood is often confused with the similar looking ragweed. Additionally, many of the trees and plants we blindly pass by are critical to the survival of keen-eyed birds and animals that rely on them for sustenance over the winter, like sumac and viburnum. In the wetlands he pointed out the differences between rushes, sedges and grasses. Many other facts were shared with the nature lovers. All in all, it was another informative, eye-opening hike that encouraged those who participated how to look at the details and marvel at nature's diversity.



*Marty explains how to differentiate between white and red oak by observing their leaves and bark.*

## Raising Boys in Lieu of Flowers



Years ago, I watched out the window as my husband began rototilling through the middle of the back yard. The exciting prospect of a new flower bed was quickly squelched as he drove directly through my existing perennials. After a few choice words on my part, Jay calmly explained that the trenches were baselines. Before I knew it, my gardens were replaced with 23 full-size Little League signs, an industrial light for night games, and a custom-built batting cage that dwarfed the garage. What was once a landscape worthy of publication in *Better Homes and Gardens*, has become the neighborhood yard for pick-up games, swimming, jailbreak, rope swings, nerf bullets, trampolines, a four-legged digger, and all things destructive to anything with a root. The realization that we will be raising boys in lieu of flowers for years to come, has been an evolving process. What began with stern threats for any child that dare step near my flowers, has progressed to a total surrender on my part. Today, I maintain a perennial bed on the neighbor's land, and embrace the joys of the most kid-friendly and flora-less yard in the entire village.

~Theresa Pipher

## *Lyme*, continued from page 1

chete, *Borrelia burgdorferi*, often beginning months after the initial tick bite. Patients with Lyme arthritis have intermittent or persistent attacks of joint swelling and pain in one or a few large joints, especially the knee, usually over a period of several years, often without prominent systemic manifestations. Todd's battle did not end there. After several days in the hospital, he was sent home on amoxicillin. Shortly thereafter, he was rushed back to Syracuse for a spinal tap that revealed meningitis. While Todd's family may never know for sure if the meningitis was a result of his Lyme, researchers at Columbia University Medical Center have confirmed that when Lyme disease first affects the nervous system, one may see symptoms of meningitis, encephalitis, or cranial neuritis. Todd's Lyme journey is not over and Tioga County is facing a growing public health concern for Lyme disease, which accompanies the growing tick population in our region. With funding from the Community Fund of the Community Foundation for South Central New York, the Carantouan Greenway will work with local Lyme-educational stakeholders to develop and disseminate ticks and Lyme disease information to 1,115 Tioga County youth at four schools, invest in data acquisition from leaders of local Lyme disease stakeholder groups, foster awareness and offer informational resources to parents and children on Lyme disease and ticks.

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!**

- Mighty Oak ..... \$500/year
- Golden Eagle..... \$75/year
- Stargazer ..... \$50/year
- Trailblazer ..... \$25/year
- Other ..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Renewing member**     **New member**

- I would like to receive the newsletter via email. Email address \_\_\_\_\_
- I prefer to receive the newsletter in the mail.
- I prefer not to receive the newsletter.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Town, State, and Zip \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

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

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



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