In 2013 Jennifer McCandless’s decision to conserve more than 60 acres in Nockamixon was never in doubt. She was given the property by the previous owners, Dean and Louise Pine, who had talked about preserving the land but had never acted on it. McCandless provided homecare for Dean Pine, and when Dean passed away, Jennifer and Louise remained close friends. “I would go to her house to have tea,” Jennifer said. She went with Louise to run errands and took her shopping. Louise felt that Jennifer was like a daughter, and when she suddenly fell ill, she told Jennifer she was leaving the house and property to her. Primarily forested, the land lies between Coffman Hill and Cooks Creek Conservation Landscapes and includes a half mile of Gallows Run Creek, which flows directly into the Delaware River. It is contiguous with 183 acres of permanently protected farm land. Grant funds were used to pay McCandless to restrict development. The property is adjacent to Camp Nockamixon and is so picturesque that Jennifer frequently finds amateur photographers on her driveway trying to capture the beauty of the 18th century stone farmhouse, pond and rolling hills. “It looks like a Hallmark card,” she said. The McCandless easement helps fulfill the Tinicum Conservancy’s mandate to protect watershed land and the ever-growing web of healthy habitats that in turn will help protect and improve the Delaware River water quality. Jennifer said what she likes best about her property is the tranquility. “Sitting on the front porch I can get lost in the sound of the water. It’s good for your soul.”

A BRIDGETON PROPERTY’S RICH ECOLOGY

Paul and Margaret Pfisterer’s property on the northern edge of Tinicum township is special because it straddles Tinicum and Bridgeton and marks the first time the Conservancy has protected a Bridgeton landscape. Their 27 acres are also a wonderland of wildlife, from freshwater mussels and leopard frogs to beavers and the odd black bear that rambles through. The stream that cuts across their land is a tributary of Roaring Rocks Creek. The Pfisterers have never regretted moving from a 4,000-square-foot suburban lot on Long Island to the thickly forested plot. “We have always loved being in the woods,” explained Margaret about their decision to put their land under a fully donated conservation easement in 2009. This issue’s conservation work is solely made possible by people like you who contribute through donations of time, talent and dollars. Thank you for making these and many other stories possible.

Our name may be Tinicum Conservancy, but our conservation achievements extend well beyond Tinicum into Bridgeton and Nockamixon. The Tinicum Conservancy was formed in 1992 by a group of residents who were concerned that larger, regional land trusts were not paying enough attention to land protection in our area. Today, over two and a half decades later, we rank near the top of Pennsylvania’s land trusts in number of easements, and in the amount of protected land—nearly 4,700 acres. The conservation work featured in this issue is solely made possible by people like you who contribute through donations of time, talent and dollars. Thank you for making these and many other stories possible.

Volunteers Needed

We need help with mailings, newsletters, event planning, and more! Call 610-294-1077 or visit tinicumconservancy.org to learn how you can help.

Join Today

Every gift makes a difference. Use the envelope inside or visit tinicumconservancy.org to donate today. Thank you.

A Few Things You Should Know About Tinicum Conservancy

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Visit tinicumconservancy.org today.
JIM DIAMOND - ENVIRONMENTAL CRUSADER

Jim Diamond has a long history of community and environmental activism in Nockamixon. In the 1960s it was Jim, then Professor of Agriculture at Delaware Valley College, who sparred the investigation into chemical dumping along Rapp Creek by Echo Chemical Company (later known as Revere Chemical). He and his wife were initially shunned by neighbors who feared jobs might be lost, but when Revere Chemical caused 42 neighboring wells to run dry the whole community got on board. In 1969 Revere Chemical was shut down by the State of Pennsylvania.

“the legacy that a landowner leaves to future generations”

Largely because of Jim’s efforts, the Creek has now evolved from its once toxic conditions to its current Exceptional Value designation, the highest quality ranking and protection the state can give to a waterway! Jim's 38-acre property is aptly named “Clearwater Dell.” It parallels about 1,600 feet along Rapp Creek and was formerly leased for “fracking,” but the lease was extinguished after Arbor Resources abandoned gas development in this area. Early in 2017 and more than a decade in the making, the easement was partially donated by Mr. Diamond. Jim was paid for the remaining development rights. It permanently prevents any surface drilling and limits activities that could damage riparian and aquatic habitats or cause pollution to enter the creek. “It is the legacy that a landowner leaves to future generations,” Jim declared.

93 ACRES IN 2005 — A FIRST IN NOCKAMIXON

In 2005, Ellen Chapman and Michael Moss donated a conservation easement on their 93-acre property on Tabor Road to the Tinicum Conservancy. The Moss/Chapman land in Nockamixon Township is located along the northwestern border of Tinicum Township and in the Rapp Creek watershed. Karen Budd, Conservancy president at the time, called the land “a very critical property on Rapp Creek,” designated as an “Exceptional Value stream” by the State. Rapp Creek joins with Tinicum Creek, which also has the Exceptional Value designation. Other conservation values as described by Budd are “a very diverse topography, steep cliffs going down to the stream, open meadows and very nice areas of deciduous forest.”

“We chose the Tinicum Conservancy to hold the easement on our property,” said Moss, “because the Conservancy is a strong organization that will protect the conservation values of our property into the future.”

FRIENDS WHO CAME TOGETHER TO PROTECT

This is a story about inspiration, commitment and cooperation. It is about the love of the land, its treasures and the memories it holds. In December of 2013, Sally Mirick, Martin and Sugie Weiss, and Don and Mary Woodruff donated conservation easements of nearly 100 acres. The lives of these landowners have long been intertwined. Sugie Weiss and Mary Woodruff are first cousins and close friends. Sugie and Sally have been friends since childhood; their fathers studied medicine together at John Hopkins and later at the Rockefeller Institute along with Mary’s father. In 1945, Mary’s family, the McCloeds, bought a 48-acre farm on Rapp Creek in Nockamixon. In 1968, Sally’s parents bought a farm in Tinicum. In 1960, Sally and Mary bought an adjoining property along Beaver Creek with a portion in Nockamixon. It was Sally who provided the motivation to permanently protect these properties. She gives credit to Marty Weiss for orchestrating the whole effort and attending to the details.

With their extensive wetlands, forested streambanks and mammoth rock formations, these properties were not highly vulnerable to development. Rather the threat was disturbance of valuable natural resources. The Conservancy was also instrumental in helping to remove gas leases on all three properties. The real inspiration here is that these landowners donated conservation easements on their properties and received no payments in return, other than reimbursements of out-of-pocket expenses. This was a case of friends and neighbors working together.

Most importantly, these friends knew they protected their unspoiled ecological treasures for future generations.

A HISTORIC FARM CONSERVED IN BRIDGETON

Hurricane Sandy had just devastated the region. Power was still out for millions. Trees were down everywhere, blocking major roads. But that didn't stop Arlene Hoff from realizing her dream.

As a member of the Schaible Family, Mrs. Hoff grew up on the 75-acre scenic farm along the lower end of Bridgeton Hill Road. She had many fond memories and wanted the farm to stay the way she remembered it as a child. Along with her husband, Herbert, they coordinated with the Tinicum Conservancy and Bridgeton Township to craft a conservation easement that conserved the deeply held values that the Hollfs believed in, allowing for the property’s agricultural heritage to continue.

Beyond the cornfields on the lower portion of the property, the conservation easement also ensured that the scenic view of the rugged Palisades and the upland woods and streams were also protected. The Hollfs received funding from the Bucks County Municipal Open Space program and received an income tax deduction on the remaining development rights.

“The property is a remarkable reminder of the region’s agricultural history and hard work of families that toiled on the land to provide fresh food to their community and beyond,” remarked Jim Engel, Tinicum Conservancy’s executive director.

Back in 2012, a mighty storm couldn’t stop Arlene’s vision. The Tinicum Conservancy is committed to upholding those values into the future.