



Elliott Fackler Dr. David Lasky, LVC Board Member Joshua Pfautz

2013 Scholarship Awards

The Lebanon Valley Conservancy, a 501 (C) 3 non profit organization, awarded cash and certificates on **May 7th** to area students who made a significant contribution to the conservation of natural resources in Lebanon County. The award presentation took place at the Conservancy's Board of Directors meeting **in Willow Suites in downtown Lebanon**. The Lebanon Valley Conservancy Scholarship Awards Program is an annual event and all students participating in projects that involve environmental and conservation efforts within the past year are invited to submit applications for consideration for awards.

This year two students were vying for awards and the voting of the Awards Committee was a tie. As a result both students are receiving First Place award recognition.

First Place recognition with a cash prize of \$300.00 was awarded to **Joshua Pfautz** of Eastern Lebanon High School, who through the summer of 2012 volunteered with The Nature Conservancy. Joshua assisted with various projects through the summer including: Clearing trails of trees and debris resulting from past storm activity in the area; clearing Japanese barberry that was taking over an area; worked on building a boardwalk through a bog in the Poconos which was a joint effort with The Nature Conservancy and AmeriCorps. Part of the boardwalk was designed for handicapped visitors. Joshua also assisted his Nature Conservancy mentor, George C. Gress of Schaefferstown, PA, with tracking bog turtles and banding Saw-Whet Owls at the Middlecreek Wildlife Preserve.

Joshua related that he is very active with participating in a particular school program since he was in middle school, the Elco Envirothon, led by Lynn Aponick. He has participated in stream studies through Lebanon County, recording the viability of our local streams and helps out in the spring when his school district's fifth graders go camping to Camp Swatara. The Envirothon members lead the students in stream study, introducing them to and teaching them about the organisms they find.

With his interests and participation in these local programs, Joshua Pfautz has developed a goal of achieving a college degree in the Wildlife Science field of study and eventually hopes to obtain a career managing and protecting wildlife.

Also receiving a certificate of recognition and **First Place Award** and a cash prize of \$300 is **Elliott Fackler** from **Annville-Cleona High School and Boy Scout Troop 440**.

In June of 2012, Elliott Fackler completed his Eagle Scout project at the Cleona Community Park with the Boy Scouts. Elliott led a group of twenty five volunteers in the construction of a retaining wall to stop erosion along a trail and fixing up a picnic area. The retaining wall was constructed of interlocking wall bricks to stop the embankment from further eroding onto a trail. The wall will enable a walking path which is near the Quittapahilla Creek and remain serviceable and free of eroded soil in the future. This path will also ensure foot traffic will remain on the trail prepared for that purpose. The picnic area that was repaired is located near the Creek and was damaged by the flood in 2011. The scouts moved back railroad ties that surrounded the area but were washed away, re-mulched, and constructed a new picnic table for the area to replace an old one that was badly worn and splintered. The improved picnic grounds will encourage use by visitors in the areas prepared for that purpose. The improvements are more aesthetically pleasing for visitors and discourages random wandering through the natural area.

The scholarships awarded to students for their conservation efforts meets the goal of the Conservancy to improve the quality of life in the Lebanon Valley area. The student projects have certainly made a difference in their community. By recognizing this generation of students, we hope to encourage their lifelong participation in conservation work.