



Lebanon Valley Conservancy, Inc.

# 2014 Scholarship Awards

## Annual Conservancy Scholarship Awards - Presented May 8, 2014



**Matt Darok**



### First Place Award - Matt Darok

Matt belongs to Boy Scout Troop 456 and with his appreciation of the Quittie Nature Park, used a GPS and mapped all of the trails within the park. He worked with other students to assist with the project and he provided regular reports to the Quittie Park Committee. Matt was careful to ensure accuracy and wanted to present a quality product to sustain the map for the enjoyment of visitors to the area for years to come.

Annville Township Commissioners presented Matt with a special commendation for his work. He indicated that although the map specifically is not conservation oriented, it is his hope the map will assist in the enjoyment of visitors in their exploration of the park will give them greater appreciation for the natural lands and their importance to all of us.

### Second Place Award - Mitchell Aponik

Mitchell submitted his Eagle Scout project for consideration. He renovated the pond area and courtyard at Elco HS. Mrs. Aponik, his Mother, who also is his HS Envirothon advisor and Biology teacher had talked about the poor condition of the courtyard many times which led to Mitchell's decision to use this as a project. Mitchell served as the project leader and coordinated the activities of twelve scouts, nine friends, and fourteen adults over three Saturdays to complete the improvement of the pond and courtyard area. When finished, the area looked restored. Weeds were pulled and the area mulched, and the new shrubs will add color to the courtyard. The new picnic table provides a place for students and staff to sit and enjoy the pond and its surroundings. Concrete areas were power washed. The painted overhang should not rust and it enhances the area's appearance. The improvements to the courtyard and pond area will make it more appealing and useful for years to come.

### Tied for Third Place Award - Jorie Mason

Jorie Mason served as a Student leader for the Lebanon County Envirothon Program. She assisted in conducting a field experience for over 100 elementary school students from various schools within Lebanon Co. who traveled to Pickering Beach in Delaware along the Bay. The students conducted a population study of Horseshoe crabs. Jorie assisted with teaching "The Importance of Wetlands" for the Delaware Aquatic resources Education Ctr. She also assisted with a tour of Bombay Hook National Refuge. The programs were designed to instill awareness and importance of long-term environmental stewardship by our students. Jorie also worked with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, Saw-whet Owl banding.

### Tied for Third Place Award - Luke Gaidos

Luke Gaidos worked with the Briar Lake, 55+ community to improve conditions at their lake. He started by removing invasive plant species and planted trees to soak in and absorb nutrients from lawn fertilizers that would otherwise wash into the lake. The trees planted also work as a deterrent to geese landing in the lake as geese are drawn to open water with surrounding open areas. Luke assisted with building pads for fishing along the lake and planted flora to assist with eliminating pollution of the lake. He enjoyed working with the residents of the Briar Lake Community and feels they will benefit from the work accomplished. Luke appreciated working to improve the natural area around the community lake and in completing work in his area of interest, the environment.

### Fourth Place Award - Andrew Luch

Andrew belongs to the North Lebanon High School Ecology Club. His project surrounded the development of a food plot for deer. He cleared an area, fertilized it and planted food items with the intent that these plants will continue to grow year after year providing a food source for the deer in the area. He has participated in a variety of environmental stewardship activities and is a biology and environmental science student.



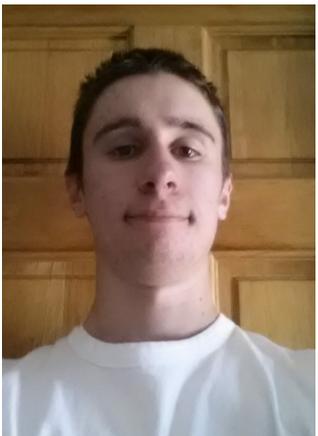
**Mitchell Aponik**



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