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*Summer 2011 - Volume 2- No. 2 | Preserving our heritage to enrich our future.*

#### In this issue:

- [A Corridor Built on Volunteering](#)
- [Taking Time To Coordinate](#)
- [Nurturing Nature at Lehigh Gap](#)
- [Volunteers on Patrol](#)

## A Corridor Built on Volunteering

What would the Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor be without volunteers? Would the D&L Trail be passable? Would locks along the Lehigh Canal be visible? Would there be an education center at Lehigh Gap, or spur trails in Slatington and outside Hazleton, or a beautiful canal park in Walnutport? The answer to all those questions is a resounding "No!"



Volunteers have long been the lifeblood of many non-profit partners of the D&L and are becoming an increasingly important aspect of the D&L itself. Volunteers clear trails, build picnic tables and benches, protect historic structures from nature's grip, and provide educational programs that introduce the public to the D&L's history, culture and natural resources. Volunteers offer their services with a smile and at no cost to organizations with small budgets. Altruism and dedication to a

#### Online Articles

- [The D&L's Plant Ladies](#)
- [A Life of Dedication to Walnutport](#)
- [Instant Volunteer!](#)
- [Mr. GIS of the D&L](#)
- [Hazleton's Trail Maker](#)
- [Volunteering for Peanut Butter Sandwiches](#)
- [Thank Goodness for Eagle Scouts!](#)
- [Delaware Canal has Friends](#)

#### Volunteers Improve Our Lives



The Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor is home to a spectrum of volunteer-based community organizations. From the top of Luzerne County to the bottom of Bucks, there are hundreds of large and small not-for-profit groups that exist because of unselfish people who band together for a common cause, whether it's running a

cause drive them and a sincere "thank you" is all they need to return another day. As you've probably heard, volunteering does indeed come from the heart.

We hope you enjoy the volunteer stories in this summer's D&L e-letter; we are certainly proud and honored to share them with you.

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## Taking Time To Coordinate

The D&L Trail Tenders have evolved in size and scope of operation over the past five years largely because of the establishment of local Trail Tenders chapters. By breaking the D&L Trail into regional sections, volunteers can work in their own backyard instead of traveling an hour to a cleanup, working for three hours, and then using another hour to drive home. "Chapterization" has enabled the Trail Tenders to recruit local volunteers and initiate more local projects.



Finding the right person to coordinate a Trail Tenders chapter is essential to the chapter's success. A coordinator must be willing to schedule, organize, and supervise cleanups, delegate tasks, recruit members, and do a little cheerleading when necessary to rally the troops. It's one of those important, thankless jobs that make the clock tick. [\(Click here to continue reading.\)](#)

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## Nurturing Nature at Lehigh Gap

Dan Kunkle and the Lehigh Gap Nature Center are synonymous; one can't be mentioned without thinking of the other.

As Executive Director of the LGNC since 2004, Kunkle has led a dynamic charge to turn a former EPA Superfund site into one of the nation's most successful and intriguing environmental



soup kitchen, nature center, library, or a Boy or Girl Scout troop.

Volunteers give their time and skills to help communities sustain a high quality of life. They are there when you need them and all they need in return is the knowledge that they've helped someone. If you're a volunteer, you know what I mean. If you've never volunteered, I encourage you to find a worthwhile program that has little in the way of human and financial resources, and take the plunge. You'll gain a sense of gratification unlike any you've experienced.

The D&L is a good place to begin your volunteer career. We have an active Trail Tenders organization and a new Trail Patrol whose members already have identified and reported many maintenance issues along the D&L Trail. You can get involved by picking up a telephone or sending us an e-mail.

If you're interested in trail maintenance, ask for Dennis Scholl, our Outreach Coordinator (610-923-3548 x225; [dennis@delawareandlehigh.org](mailto:dennis@delawareandlehigh.org)). He'll explain the opportunities we have. Silas Chamberlin, our Corridor Resource Specialist, will answer questions about the Trail Patrol. Contact Silas at 610-923-3548 x222 or [silas@delawareandlehigh.org](mailto:silas@delawareandlehigh.org). We also have needs for people who are interested in outdoor education programs, canal history, and fixing and maintaining trail tools. Tell us your interests and we'll find a worthwhile job for you.

However you choose to volunteer, your involvement will

reclamation stories. Yet to hear Kunkle explain his role in the LGNC's unlikely rise from ashes, he is merely a volunteer playing a very humble part in a much larger play.

"It is a privilege to volunteer for these projects that help enhance the quality of life for the members of our communities," says Kunkle, a Carbon County native whose involvement with the LGNC began in the 1990s when it was called the Wildlife Information Center. [\(Click here to continue story.\)](#)

## Volunteers on Patrol

In little more than three months, the D&L Trail Patrol has emerged as a valuable asset to the health of the D&L Trail and the safety of the people using it. More than 90 people have become volunteer members, with several dozen forming an



enthusiastic core who provide regular reports on trail conditions. They call or use e-mail to send photos and descriptions of a variety of problems along the trail, from fallen trees to canal sinkholes. They also provide trail user counts, wildlife sightings, recommendations, and even healthy criticism.

After the information is received, it's circulated among D&L staff members and forwarded to appropriate municipal officials. A sinkhole on the bank of the Lehigh Canal in Bethlehem was reported by a Trail Patrol member and filled in less than 24 hours, stopping a leak that was slowly draining the canal. A tree that was blown down by a severe summer thunderstorm across Lock 45 in Bethlehem Township was reported and removed the next day by the township's parks department. Scarcely a day goes by without at least one patroller checking in, sometimes to report a problem but often to simply say the trail looks great.

[\(Click here to continue story.\)](#)

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enrich your life and the lives of many others. What could be better?

*Allen Sachse*

*President and Executive Director*

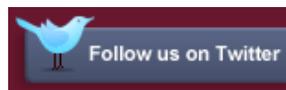


### D&L Links:

- [Lehigh Gap Nature Center](#)
- [Walnutport Canal Association](#)
- [Friends of the Delaware Canal](#)
- [Greater Hazleton Rails to Trails](#)
- [Allentown Hiking Club](#)
- [Penn State Master Gardener Program](#)



**Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor**  
 2750 Hugh Moore Park Road  
 Easton, PA 18042  
 Phone : 610.923.3548





Fax: 610.923.0537



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**Our Mission:** To enrich the communities within the Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor thru actions and partnerships that conserve the resources, tell the stories and enhance the quality of life for residents of the Corridor.