

Individuals, Families Lauded By Conservation District

HEBRON (Lebanon Co.) — The Lebanon County Conservation District recognized four individuals and two families for their outstanding efforts of conservation in Lebanon County at their annual planning meeting and awards banquet held Wednesday at the Hebron Fire Hall, Hebron.

Special guests, volunteers, and award winners were invited to celebrate in the conservation district's 54 years of accomplishments.

During the banquet, special recognition was awarded to a conservation farmer, a conservation volunteer, a conservation educator, conservation steward families from Bethel and Millcreek townships, and a long time conservation district employee.

Jeffrey Werner is recognized for his efforts in soil and water conservation on the 356 acres he farms from his home in Swatara Township. He was awarded The Chesapeake Bay Clean Water Farm Award. Jeff first became cooperater with the Lebanon County Conservation District in 1965 with his father and has continued the family tradition of conservation farming. Jeff maintains a flock of 33,000 turkeys and grows corn, soybeans, and wheat. He reduces soil erosion from this farmland by implementing a conservation district approved soil and water conservation plan involving cover cropping, minimum tillage and no-till farming, contour strip-cropping, and crop rotation. Jeff is also conscientious of reducing nutrient runoff from his fields and voluntarily implements an Act 6 nutrient management plan.

Frederick T. Heilman of Lebanon is the 2003 Lebanon County Conservationist of the Year for at least a quarter century of conservation volunteerism. A native of Lebanon, Heilman has worked behind the scenes to deepen the understanding of the varied natural resources of Lebanon County.

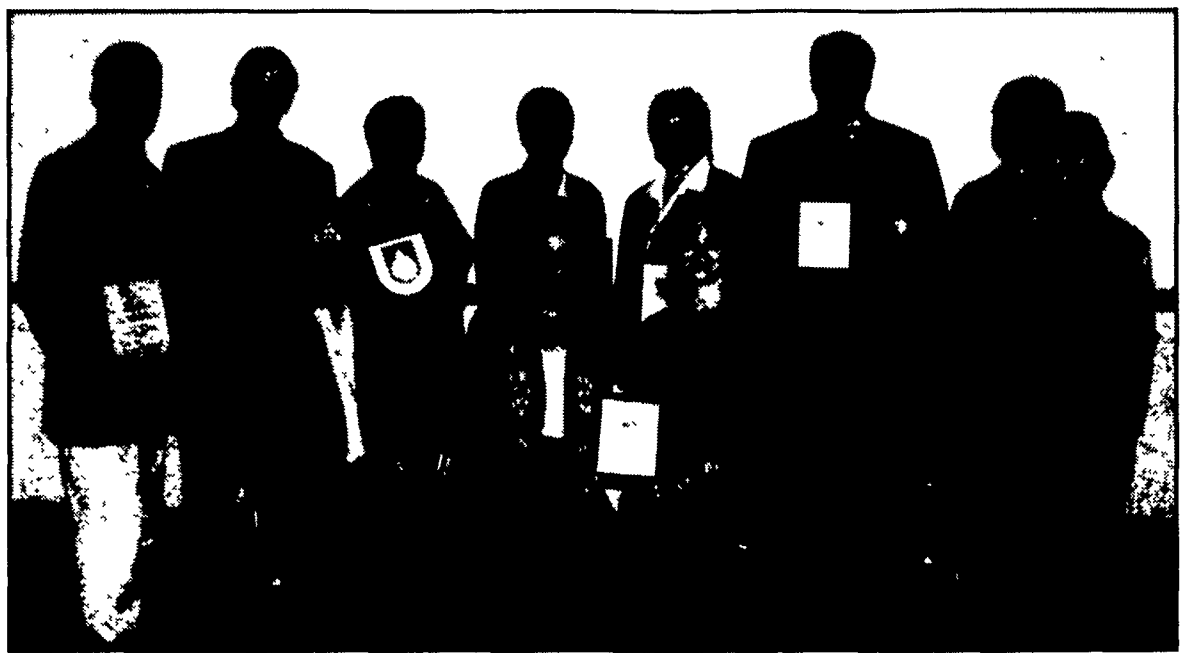
An active member of the Quitapahilla Audubon Society since at least 1982, "Fritz," as he is referenced by friends, has served the organization in almost every capacity, including president, vice president, board of directors, newsletter editor, and program and field trip chairman. More importantly, he has served as a devoted teacher of nature to others while serving in all these capacities. Over the years Heilman has served as a coordinator in Audubon's Christmas Bird Count and spring Birdathon where the most scientifically vital and up-to-date bird population, migration, health and nesting records for Lebanon County are obtained. These programs have reached thousands of Lebanon County school children and adults. Quitapahilla's own scholarship program to send children and adults to ecology camp has been a financial benefactor of Fritz's generosity.

Initiatives at the Stoever's Dam Nature Barn have benefited from his tireless efforts including, event coordination and participation, display development, and educational offerings including astronomy programs to name a few. Additionally, Fritz has served on the steering committee that planned and developed the Memorial Arboretum at Stoever's Dam. Heilman served on the City of Lebanon Shade Tree Commission to help his community promote the importance of a healthy urban forest and has planted his urban property in a manner conducive to environmental stewardship as an example for his neighbors.

Fritz has been instrumental in promoting environmental stewardship at his place of employment, Bayer Corporation. As a member of Bayer's Earth Day Committee he has promoted tree planting through the Lebanon Conservation District's annual sale, helped institute a bluebird trail and provides for its monitoring, and coordinated their Adopt-a-highway program.

Dawn R. Connelly, a fourth grade teacher at Southeast Elementary School in the Lebanon School District was awarded the District's Conservation Educator of the Year award. A resident of Lebanon, Dawn serves as the Elementary Science Coordinator for the school district. Projects often involve the entire student body and parent volunteers. For instance, Campbell's Soups labels have been collected and recycled for over 9 years while the Ronald McDonald House in Hershey has benefited from student recycling of beverage tabs. Come Earth Day, students in grades 1 through 5 are on the school grounds and surrounding neighborhood collecting litter. These initiatives are ongoing with the fourth grade and student council. As a student council advisor Dawn has helped students beautify the school yard. Dawn has helped enact an environmental day each year for the past 5 years for third through fifth graders to encourage environmental awareness. During this day the students do a stream study, a forestry station, a clean-up station and many learning activities. Over 300 students have benefited from this experience.

Connelly has been an active participant with a committee of multiple partners to help develop



Award winners from Lebanon Co. Conservation District Banquet were from left: front — Ed Ludwig, Darlene Ludwig, Tamra Ludwig, Michael Ludwig, Eve Manbeck; rear — Jeffrey Werner, Frederick T. Heilman, Connie Hoffer, Leigh Beamesderfer, Dawn R. Connelly, Andrew Whitehill, Barbara Bauer.

the wetlands at the Lebanon County Career and Technology Center as an outdoor classroom for all of Lebanon County's students. She has incorporated wetlands into her curriculum and takes students on site visits to the wetlands for environmental studies.

Southeast Elementary School as well as the Middle and High Schools participate annually in the Lebanon County Conservation District's three envirothons. Connelly is the coordinator for the entire School District for this event. According to Connelly, "It is very rewarding to see how involved these students and the parents become in the topic each year."

The Manbeck Family, represented by Barbara Bauer, Alletta Schadler, Eve Manbeck and Andrew Whitehill of Fredericksburg have been chosen to receive the Conservation Landowner of the Year award. The Manbecks own and manage 301 acres of forest and farmland in Bethel Township. The property, known at one time as Camp Carson, is approximately 50% farmed while 50% is managed forestland. Since 1977, the Manbecks have taken an active role in managing their land and were recently designated as forest stewards by Bureau of Forestry, Department of Conservation

and Natural Resources (DCNR). The Manbecks began implementing a 10-year forestry stewardship plan 7 years ago that has included cutting firewood, plantings such as red oak and windrow shrubs using tree shelters to increase survival, brush pile building and planting for wildlife, control of invasive species, bird house installation and grape vine control. Gravel has been used to dress roads and a pond spillway has been stabilized. Farmland is managed through a combination of nutrient management, strip farming, diversion and subsurface tile drainage that helps protect soil and water resources from the forces of erosion. Properly managed timber harvesting allows income from the resource while improving habitat to encourage wildlife diversity.

The first an-

nual Lebanon County Business Steward of the Year Award was presented to Arrowhead Springs which is operated by the Ludwig Family of Newmanstown and represented by Michael, Tamara, Edward, and Darlene Ludwig. Arrowhead Springs is part of a family business occupying 430 acres of which 330 acres are woodland with the balance maintained in grass fields, raceways, and ponds. For decades, it has been one of the premier recrea-

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