

# NBLT is testing for accreditation

The North Branch Land Trust was recently selected as one of 23 land conservation organizations from 16 states to participate in a second round of testing of a new national accreditation program. The program will recognize land conservation organizations, also known as land trusts, that meet national quality standards for protecting important natural places and working lands forever. The nation's nearly 1,700 land trusts have protected over 11.9 million acres of land.

The North Branch Land Trust, headquartered in Trucksville, focuses its conservation efforts on the watershed lands that frame the North Branch of the Susquehanna River and on Northeastern Pennsylvania's lands that comprise its agricultural heritage. Since its founding in 1994, North Branch Land Trust has protected more than 7,000 acres with the cooperation of their landowners in seven counties. At the end of 2005, the last year for which data are available, North Branch Land Trust ranked sixth in number of acres protected in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Frank Oliver, executive director, explained "Accreditation is a new credential for land trusts and a new process for everyone involved. We think that objective scrutiny of the land trust community will increase public confidence in the work we do, and if we're successful, we'll be in a position to help and encourage other conservation organizations attain the designation."

The North Branch Land Trust is one of 44 land trusts that are piloting the program, operated by the Land Trust Accreditation

Commission, this year. Land trusts volunteered to be part of the program, and those selected to participate represent a diversity of land trust sizes, geographic locations and types of land protected. They will help the Commission improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the program before it goes nationwide next year.

The Commission, an independent program of the Land Trust Alliance, was created in 2006. "In an era when the public is demanding accountability from government and nonprofit organizations, independent land trust accreditation will help provide the assurance of quality and permanence of land conservation the public is looking for," explained Executive Director of the Commission, Tammara Van Ryn.

The accreditation program will be tested in 2007 and will be available to interested organizations starting in 2008. At that time, land trusts can join the ranks of other nonprofit organizations that gain professional recognition through accreditation, such as museums, zoos, aquariums, colleges and hospitals. Accredited land trusts will be able to display a seal indicating to the public that they meet national standards for excellence, uphold the public trust and ensure that conservation efforts are permanent.

Van Ryn emphasized, "We are extremely grateful to the land trusts that volunteered to be part of the pilot accreditation program. These organizations are willing to demonstrate publicly their commitment to high standards of ethics and operations and serve the land conservation

community and the American public by shaping this new program."

North Branch Land Trust accomplishes its conservation mission primarily by helping landowners place legally binding conservation agreements, called conservation easements, on their land. Typically, these agreements are donated by the landowner, and the federal government encourages such donations through the tax codes. Less frequently, the Land Trust will seek financial resources to purchase the development rights on land. Ownership of the land does not change with a conservation agreement. Landowners maintain ownership and continue to manage their land's resources within the restrictions of the conservation agreement, and they can sell the property or bequeath it to their heirs. A conservation agreement simply limits or prohibits development according to the individual easement's specifications. The nonprofit Land Trust relies almost exclusively on memberships, gifts, and grants for its work.

The Land Trust Accreditation Commission will award the accreditation seal to community institutions that meet national quality standards for protecting important natural places and working lands forever. The Commission, an independent program of the Land Trust Alliance established in 2006, is governed a volunteer board of diverse land conservation and nonprofit management experts from around the country. For more information please visit [www.landtrustaccreditation.org](http://www.landtrustaccreditation.org).

## PUZZLE ANSWERS

Puzzles, Page 2

Go Figure!

6	÷	1	+	9	15
+		+		-	
4	x	8	-	1	31
÷		+		x	
2	x	5	+	3	13
5		14		24	

## King Crossword

Answers

Solution time: 21 mins.

ESP	ROAMS	HIP
LOU	IFNOT	USA
FUNNY	FACE	SLY
EAR	HASHES	
ALBEDO	ALUM	
LEU	HAM	SLOSH
GAGE	DAD	KNEE
ASSAY	YES	ERR
BRAS	PLAYER	
BRUNCH	LAB	
YON	HONEY	COMB
EON	TRITE	FEE
SKY	STEER	FAT

AHEAD	AWARE	BAR	CRIB
LADDER	MARAT	OLE	HANA
FIDDLER	ONTHE	ROOF	EVAN
ARA	CALM	SLEEP	GAINE
MIASMA	QUAY	TILLS	
POMP	PUPPET	ONACHAIN	
ROPES	BRIE	ARON	CRO
ORR	HEROD	POKES	TACIT
WEE	TRAN	BODE	TERESA
STRANGER	SONA	TRAIN	
INSERT	JEEB	FROM	TEC
SOIL	LS	AMEND	BLADE
NAV	EXEC	SWAY	DRAPE
THECAT	INTHE	HAT	ATTN
LHASA	OMAN	BARNEY	
SPOOL	GEISHA	ALAI	
MEATY	ZEE	ICON	EPA
RASH	TURKEY	INTHE	STRAW
ETTE	ALI	LILAC	SORTIE
DOES	RUE	GNASH	MYERS

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**VENUS** • June 20 • Rated R; 95 Minutes

Giving a staggering, fearless, defiantly untamed performance, Peter O'Toole, 74, plays Maurice, a still-employable British actor enthralled with a friend's visiting 19 year-old grandniece, Jessie. Although petulant and crude, Maurice ignores those characteristics and sees Jessie as a reason to live. Jessie soon blossoms under Maurice's attention and they become deep genuine friends in this May-December relationship. With Vanessa Redgrave and the great Leslie Phillips.



**THE LIVES OF OTHERS** • June 27 • Rated R; 137 Minutes

This political thriller and human drama won the 2007 Oscar for Best Foreign Language Film. Set in 1984 East Germany, this heart-jolting film explores oppression and personal liberty under the constant watch of the State Secret Police. With their goal to know everything about the lives of its citizens, the story focuses on the surveillance of a famous playwright, his celebrity actress live-in girlfriend, and the Stasi officer assigned to watch them. The drama unfolds with the officer transforming from a shell of a man leading an empty existence to a human being deeply involved in the couple's lives. In the finale, this turnabout brings surprises and profoundly moving perspectives on lives, actions, and consequences.



**AMAZING GRACE** • July 18 • Rated PG; 111 Minutes

A quintessential historical epic, the film details 18th Century British politician William Wilberforce's life-long mission to end slavery in the British Empire. Although born into a well-to-do merchant family, Wilberforce opts to enter politics and is elected into Parliament at the age of twenty-one. Inspired to serve by humanitarian interests, the young philanthropist soon becomes a leading advocate of social reform. Even though he experiences setbacks, Wilberforce is spurred on in his abolitionist efforts by John Newton (Albert Finney), the remorseful former slave ship captain who wrote the hymn Amazing Grace following a dramatic religious conversion.

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