



# HERITAGE CIRCLE

## Rick and Miriam Williams: *Their Legacies*



As a child, Richard (Rick) Williams enjoyed backpacking trips in Northern Pennsylvania. Years later, he returned to those areas, only to find that they were no longer open for public recreation due to development of one kind or another. Wild areas seemed to be disappearing. He recalls that experience as a valuable lesson on the importance of conserving land.

Rick and his wife Miriam (Mindy) have long appreciated the forested ridges and valleys that are typical of Central Pennsylvania. A Mifflin County-native, Mindy recalls visiting relatives in Juniata County as a child and exploring their surrounding land. Rick grew up farther north in Clinton County.

Their love of nature continued to grow after Rick and Mindy met and started their lives together. Twenty years ago, Rick and Mindy made the decision to move from their small town in Mifflin County to a very rural and expansive wooded property along Jacks Mountain outside of Lewistown. As one of the largest blocks of contiguous forestland in Mifflin County, Jacks Mountain reminds Rick and Mindy of the rural areas where they lived as children.

After many years of living on their property, Rick's earlier realization about disappearing open space prompted him to take steps toward permanently protecting their property to ensure their three children and future generations will be able to enjoy it as they do.

This past August, Rick and Mindy Williams generously donated a conservation easement on 146 acres of their property. The Western Pennsylvania Conservancy was thrilled to receive this donation, as Jacks Mountain contains significant high quality habitat for species such as the timber rattlesnake, a priority species for protection in Pennsylvania, and provides an important corridor for wildlife, including migrating raptors and songbirds. Even more impressive, though, is that this donation builds upon an existing conservation easement of 193 acres that the Williams had donated to WPC in 2009 — bringing the total protected acreage to 339.

"Protecting rapidly developing land in our region is very important to us, not only as concerned citizens, but as a matter of faith and being good stewards of nature," said Richard Williams. "We see the splendor of this beautiful mountain every day. We wanted to do more to help protect it and felt a conservation easement to save more land was the best choice."

Recently retired from a long career in the Mifflin County judicial system, Rick now spends the majority of his time outdoors. He can be found in his garden or delving into the management plans for the property. One of his current projects is creating a golden-winged warbler habitat area by controlling invasive species and selectively cutting 19 acres to promote the young forest habitat that warblers prefer.

Since the Conservancy is responsible for monitoring the easement each year in perpetuity, the Williamses generously named WPC as a beneficiary of a life insurance policy that will offset the costs of these perpetual activities. Their conservation easement and planned gift ensure that their part of Jacks Mountain will remain the wildlife habitat that they love.



Northern woods of Pennsylvania

*If you would like to share your story with WPC, we would love to hear it. Please call us at 412-586-2336 or email [development@paconserve.org](mailto:development@paconserve.org).*

*Is WPC in your will, or would you consider including it? We hope you will let us know by filling out the form on the enclosed envelope and returning it to the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy.*

# With Gratitude for Our Heritage Circle Members

The Western Pennsylvania Conservancy is fortunate to have 137 Heritage Circle members — people who have informed the Conservancy of their intentions to support its mission through their estate plans. Their foresight helps to ensure WPC's ability to protect Western Pennsylvania's best natural features in the future.

If you have included the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy as a beneficiary of your will, trust, life insurance policy or retirement account, please let us know by filling out and returning the enclosed envelope. By allowing us to express our appreciation for your commitment now, you will help us to better plan for the future — and demonstrate how your ultimate gift will be appreciated and stewarded. As a Heritage Circle member, you will receive closer access to our work through special mailings, lectures and outings designed just for our closest supporters like you.

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Engaging young children in caring for nature through a tree planting.

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Audrey R. Clement, Ph.D.  
Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin L. Costello  
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\* We are pleased to welcome three new Heritage Circle members. These members notified us of their plans between March 2015 and September 2015. New members are annotated with an asterisk.

# Dennis Hamm: *His Legacy*

Dennis Hamm has worked in some of our country's most spectacular national parks: Grand Canyon National Park, Rocky Mountain National Park and Olympic National Park, to name a few. Yet, like so many of us who grew up or have spent considerable time in Western Pennsylvania, he deeply values the woods, hills, valleys and streams that grace this beautiful region.

Like many of our members, Dennis's childhood was spent outdoors, particularly at natural areas near his home in McCandless Township. Early on, North Park, located just north of Pittsburgh, provided endless opportunities to explore by bike and foot. Later, in the late 1970s, as a high school and college student, Dennis frequently visited Beechwood Farms in Fox Chapel. In fact, Dennis believes this was his first introduction to the Conservancy, which had recently protected the property thanks to a generous donation.

Dennis's interest in the outdoors continued to grow while studying biology and later geology at Slippery Rock University. Dr. Eugene Wilhelm, his advisor and now fellow WPC member, led birding trips to local natural areas, including to WPC's Wolf Creek Narrows Natural Area in Slippery Rock. After that first introduction, Dennis found himself on the streamside property whenever time allowed, walking on the footpath or going off-trail through the varying terrain. He also became immersed in studying the history of the property, including its biology, hydrology and geology. Since Wolf Creek had been recommended by the Pennsylvania Scenic Rivers Task Force to receive a Wild and Scenic River designation, many scientific studies were available, although for reasons unknown, the waterway never received the designation.

Over his 31-year career with the National Park Service, Dennis has learned a lot about conservation organizations in all parts of the country. Since 1997, Dennis has worked in the



Dennis Hamm enjoying one of his favorite places — Wolf Creek Narrows Natural Area

Cuyahoga Valley National Park, which is located between Cleveland and Akron, Ohio. As a land resources specialist, Dennis works on land acquisition-related projects within the 33,000-acre park and has worked with several land trusts and conservation organizations. With that background, he shares that he can easily spot a good conservation organization. He doesn't hesitate when he says that the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy is one of the best. According to Dennis, "compared to similar organizations, the scope, scale and sophistication of the Conservancy are remarkable."

When asked what keeps him engaged with WPC, Dennis said that he slowly came to the realization that the Conservancy has played a key role in protecting the places that he loves in Western Pennsylvania as well as the places that other people love — notably Wolf Creek Narrows, McConnells Mills and Moraine state parks. In 2014, Dennis decided to include WPC in his estate plans to ensure that the Conservancy will have the funds needed to be as successful as possible in the future. His legacy gift will support stewardship activities at Wolf Creek Narrows as well as our overall conservation goals. The Conservancy is honored to be part of Dennis's legacy.

## Explore Making a Deferred Gift from Home

Would you like to know more about how a charitable gift annuity would work for you? Interested in finding out the true cost of making an outright gift to the Conservancy after factoring in potential tax savings? You can log onto our gift illustrator website at [WaterLandLife.org/339](http://WaterLandLife.org/339) and explore the giving options — outright or deferred — that are right for you.

For more information, please contact us at **412-586-2336**, toll-free at **1-866-564-6972 ext. 2336** or by email at [development@paconserve.org](mailto:development@paconserve.org).

You can also visit [WaterLandLife.org/60](http://WaterLandLife.org/60) or fill out the form on the enclosed envelope and return it to the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy.

A charitable gift annuity is established through a simple contract between WPC and the donor(s). In exchange for an irrevocable gift of \$10,000 or more, the Conservancy agrees to pay the donor and/or his/her spouse a fixed income for life. The donor gets an immediate charitable deduction and enjoys a dependable income for life. Sample rates are below:

### Current Charitable Gift Annuity Rates\*

Age	Rate	Charitable Deduction for a \$10,000 one-life annuity	Annual Payment for a \$10,000 one-life annuity
60	4.4	\$2,749	\$440
65	4.7	\$3,363	\$470
70	5.1	\$4,002	\$510
75	5.8	\$4,502	\$580
80	6.8	\$4,965	\$680
85	7.8	\$5,622	\$780
90+	9.0	\$6,269	\$900

\* As of October 2015. Assumes 2.2% IRS discount rate. For illustrative purposes only.

Western Pennsylvania Conservancy



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## Happy Holidays!

During this season of thanksgiving, we are grateful for you! Thank you for all that you do to help advance the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy's mission.

For monthly e-newsletter updates on how we are putting your support to work, email us at [wpc@paconserve.org](mailto:wpc@paconserve.org).



Photo by: Greg Funka

**Mission Statement:** The Western Pennsylvania Conservancy protects and restores exceptional places to provide our region with clean waters and healthy forests, wildlife and natural areas for the benefit of present and future generations. The Conservancy creates green spaces and gardens, contributing to the vitality of our cities and towns, and preserves Fallingwater, a symbol of people living in harmony with nature.

## The Western Pennsylvania Conservancy's Heritage Circle

You can provide for the future of the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy without sacrificing your current income — and possibly receive favorable tax benefits in the process. Members of the Heritage Circle support WPC in ways such as:

- Adding WPC as a beneficiary of their current will with a simple codicil;
- Making WPC a beneficiary of their IRA or retirement fund;
- Creating a charitable gift annuity through WPC;
- Including WPC as a beneficiary of their charitable remainder or charitable lead trust;
- Naming WPC as owner and beneficiary of an insurance policy.

