



From the WillisTowne Crier Newsletter April 2007

OKEHOCKING NATURE CENTER UPDATE

Steering Committee Formation

We are pleased to announce that, to date, Brian Raichich and the Upper Main Line YMCA, Sandy Claus and the Great Valley School District, Dick Menn and the Chester County Master Gardeners, Derek Stedman and Southeast PA Habitat Resource Network, and Jim Rapp and the Malvern Troop 7 Boy Scouts of America (BSA), who will act as a liaison to the Diamond Rock District of Chester County BSA Council, are all serving on the Okehocking Nature Center steering committee with Willistown's Mary McLoughlin guiding the effort. These organizations have declared their commitment as partners in the Okehocking Nature Center.

St. Joseph's University Research

A St. Joseph's University MBA class team of five students chose the Okehocking Nature Center from a number of others as their study project for the spring semester. The team will be studying three nature centers similar in concept to the Okehocking Nature Center. Drawing from that research, the team will make recommendations of best management practices, document lessons learned, and provide their research for reference. We are honored that the ONC project was chosen by the spectacular team of Rebekah, Arriana, Tim, Kristen, and Choinita...and we are looking forward to the final product!

For more information about the Okehocking Nature Center or to give input or get involved, please contact Mary McLoughlin at 610-640-1669.



The Okehocking Nature Center was chosen from many as a St. Joe's MBA program research project. Pictured from left to right are the team members: Rebekah Anderson, Arianna Stefanoni, Tim Unrath, and Kristen McGrath. (Not pictured: Choinita Logan.)

Grant Awarded!

As reported in the November 2006 Towne Crier, the township applied to the State Department of Conservation and Natural Resources' (DCNR) Community Conservation Partnerships Program for funding for a feasibility study and schematic design for the Okehocking Nature Center. The DCNR announced its grant award of \$52,000 to the project, which when added to the township match of \$40,000 cash and \$14,300 of partner in-kind donations will provide the \$106,300 necessary to execute the study and design. Muscoe Martin of M² Architecture in Philadelphia, an architect with extensive



experience designing environmental education and nature centers utilizing green technology and sustainable design, will be facilitating this project for the township.