

Wissahickon Nature Club

Tonight's Speakers are Monica Miller and Don Weiss



Monica Miller and Don Weiss will present Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Park, the Crown Jewels of the National Park System. The wildlife, scenery, and thermal features are like no other place in North America, or the world. They saw weather from the 20's and snow, to the mid 70's and cloudless sunshine. They saw wildlife from ground squirrels to a grizzly with cubs. Flowers were everywhere and the snow-capped mountains inspired and impressed. Join Monica and Don for a trip through the Serengeti of North America, the worlds first national park, and the most beautiful scenery this country has to offer.

Treasurer's Report

According to Dianne Machesney,
Treasurer 412.366.7869

Beginning balance: \$1017.01

No activity

Current Balance: \$1017.01

Worth Repeating

Winter came down to our home one night; Quietly pirouetting in on silvery-toedslippers of snow, And we, we were children once again. Bill Morgan Jr.

Thank you Judy Stark for our Party Favors.

Happy Holidays to everybody!

Tonight will be our traditional annual Holiday, Christmas Cookie party. Bring cookies. Eat cookies. Take home cookies. Bring a friend. What a wonderful way to introduce your friends and families to our Club.

Thursday, March 8, 7:30 pm. **Brian M. Wargo** will present **Hawkwatching, an Ocean in the Sky**. **Dr. Brian M. Wargo** will showcase the esoteric and often unknown activity of Hawkwatching using pictures and stories, which he has documented in his book, **Bird: An Exploration of Hawkwatching**.



Congratulations to **Kate St. John**, the recipient of the coveted **W. E. Clyde Todd Award**. Kate is widely known for her blog, "Outside My Window" which just celebrated its 10th anniversary. Kate believes that an indoor view of nature is not enough—so in addition to watching birds from her window, she takes every available opportunity to get outside to monitor the Peregrine Falcons at the University of Pittsburgh and hike. She's also a "Bird Files" contributor for The Allegheny Front.



New Year's Wish

Chuck Tague

I'd like to wish all of you a peaceful and productive New Year.

I'd also like to remind you that in the coming years our future demands that we all must make well informed, conscientious decisions in all aspects of our lives and society -- decisions that take into account their long term effect on the environment. These decisions can only be made by people who are not only committed to environmental responsibility, but have an understanding of the interdependence of all living things, the need for the diversity of all forms and all phases of life and the potential problems of unrestrained human population growth. These decisions must be made by people who believe we have a moral responsibility to future generations to protect and restore the earth, its life, its communities and its processes. These goals and commitments must be shared, not only by all segments of our society, but by every other nation on Earth.

However, the environmental legacy of the twentieth century is threatened with this reality: unless we avoid some deadly pitfalls the environmental triumphs we've achieved and the challenges we must continue to address will soon be cast aside. Remember personal survival always takes precedence. Environmental responsibility and understanding require spiritual, moral and intellectual growth; something that cannot occur in people that live in a world of poverty, injustice, desperation and despair.

I spent Christmas Eve, 1967, at a Marine Base in Da Nang, Viet Nam. It was uncharacteristically somber for a Marine Base, probably because of the holiday. Most of us tried to sleep. The marines in the base were mostly young recruits, new to the country, waiting for assignment. There were also some older marines returning to their outfits.

I was no longer one of them. I was waiting for a flight to Okinawa, then a discharge and home. I was much older, a hardened veteran, someone who'd seen the war and returned to tell about it. But I wasn't talking much. I was 22.

I remember that night vividly. I couldn't sleep. I just lay in my cot and listened to the new marines whimper as they thought about their limited future, the inevitability and the proximity of their violent ends. Occasionally, one of the returning marines would wake up and scream in terror.

I felt fear that night more deeply than I ever had before. Unlike my companions, I was not afraid of a paralyzing, disfiguring injury or a violent, bloody death. I had resigned myself to that months before. I feared that with only a week or so left, that I successfully avoided the inevitable. I would not die.

Instead I would return home and face a future that I could not imagine, no matter how hard I tried. I would return to a family and friends I no longer knew. I would be forced to deal with a hostile society and my own bitterness. I would be expected to have emotions; to make responsible decisions; to find solutions other than attack or retreat.

When I returned home, I was not a responsible, contributing citizen. My adjustment was long and painful.

We cannot expect people who live in fear; who live under the threat of violence, either sanctioned by governments, or from individuals or groups, to make decisions that consider the future and the common good. Violence, fear, intolerance, hatred, poverty and despair are all barriers to a sound environmental future.

I'd like to wish you peace in the new year, but instead I implore you to aggressively pursue it.