



# Friends Of Opossum Lake Conservancy

*(Help! This newsletter needs a name – see Page 3 for details!)*

**Summer 2006**

**INAUGURAL EDITION!**

**Volume I, No. 1**

## **Welcome New Members!**

The Friends of Opossum Lake Conservancy or FOLC welcomes its first members since officially organizing in May of 2006. Alphabetically, new members are as follows:

Betty Adler, Dick Adler, Denise Ahern, John Alden, David C. Bachman, John Bolen, Jr., John Bolen, Sr., Craig Boyer, Jim Bradley, Mary Bradley, Bill Brousse, Lisa Brousse, Mary Carl, Robert Carl, Mike Chronister, Viki Chronister, Bruce Clash, Kimberly Clash, Bonnilyn Cobb, William Cobb, Cindy Criswell, Gary Criswell, Lucie deFrance, Sherrill DeMoss, Wayne DeMoss, Richard Dockey, Dee Dombach, Scott Dombach, Culver Dunkleberger, John Durain, Mary Ann Durain, Steve Fahnstock, Steve Fealtman, Morton Fegley, Karen Finkenbinder, Mike Finkenbinder, Ed Franco, Mary Franco, Diane Frey, Joe Frey, Hal Gardner, Brian Gish, Laura Gish, Carol Hair, Robert Hair, Frank R. Hartman, Susan W. Hartman, Edna Hawkins, Joseph Hawkins, Karen Heishman, Mike Hepler, Irene Hewitt, Richard Hewitt, Richard Hewitt, Jr., Audra Hochreiter, Mike Hochreiter, Rich Hoffman, Joseph R. Horn, A. Craig Houston, Isabel Houston, Donald Jones, Kenneth A. Katoski, Penny Kauffman, Raymond Kauffman, Brian Kimball, Gretchen Kimball, Steve Kuhn, Judy Kutz, Ron Kutz, Ruben Lao, Jr., Jerry Loudon, Tim Lush, Carolyn McGarvey, Eric Melder, Sally Melder, Jody Minich, Rick Minich, Christine Moist, Cheryl Pauli, Tom Place, Jan Ruby, Coleen Russell, SDF Consulting Alliance, Inc., Don Seiple, Michelle Swartz, Robert Swartz, Ashley Thumma, Charles

## **FOLC Organizes**

In April of 2006, a group of concerned citizens met and decided they would not accept the bleak future of Opossum Lake painted by the PA Fish & Boat Commission. From that very enthusiastic group, the Friends of Opossum Lake Conservancy (FOLC) was born. A major step was taken towards being an active, recognized nonprofit organization with an inaugural membership and organizational meeting on May 18, 2006.

At this general membership meeting, a Board of Directors was elected, By-Laws were adopted, and several committees were formed.

Members of the Board of Directors of FOLC are:

John Alden	Craig Boyer
Cindy Criswell	Gary Criswell
Wayne DeMoss	Steve Fealtman
Karen Finkenbinder	Ed Franco
Mary Franco	Hal Gardner
A. Craig Houston	Steve Kuhn
Ruben Lao, Jr.	Eric Melder
Jan Ruby	

Following the membership meeting, the Board of Directors elected the Executive Committee:

Ed Franco, President
Steve Fealtman, Vice President
Cindy Criswell, Secretary
Wayne DeMoss, Treasurer

## **Our Mission**

***Friends of Opossum Lake Conservancy is a non-profit organization committed to restoring and preserving the lake through working collaboratively with the Township, the County, the Fish and Boat Commission, The Department of Environmental Protection, and the State Legislature.***

## A Message From The President

Dear Friends and Members of FOLC,

First and foremost, **THANK YOU** to all of you who have joined as members, and to the many who have volunteered their hard work to ensure the restoration of Opossum Lake. If you are not yet a member, please join us by contributing to FOLC. Rest assured that the Board of Directors will be attempting to leverage these funds as “local matching dollars” to obtain County, state, and federal dollars to both enhance the lake and rebuild the spillway and dam.

We have been approved as a Pennsylvania non profit corporation and have applied for federal tax exemption and recognition as a charitable corporation (501[c][3]), which will allow our supporters to deduct their contributions from their federal income taxes each year.

Our 15 committed board members and others have achieved a great deal since the April 13<sup>th</sup> public meeting that led to the formation of FOLC.

- » We have nearly 100 members and we're growing.
- » We've created a web site :  
[www.opossumlakefriends.org](http://www.opossumlakefriends.org)
- » Our speakers bureau has developed a Power-Point presentation to educate the public and gain support.
- » We have an active Projects Committee that has submitted a grant application to improve a 3.59 mile trail around the lake and has also taken responsibility for clean up and maintenance around the lake through the PA Fish & Boat Commission's "Adopt an Access" program.

Our plans for the coming months include continuing to educate the public about the lake and how they can help, beginning a major fundraising campaign, keeping public and political visibility on Opossum Lake (a letter writing campaign to the Governor is planned when the Capitol Budget is passed), and ongoing stewardship of the lake property.

I know we can count on your participation through your membership support and donation of time and energy to help with future activities, both to improve the lake environment and to return the lake to its former beauty. Committees and contact information are listed on page three. Take a minute to look at them – and please join us!

Ed Franco , FOLC President  
([efranco99@comcast.net](mailto:efranco99@comcast.net))  
(717) 243-9863

## What's Happening With the Lake Now?

? **Can I fish at Opossum Lake now?** 

**Yes**, you may fish at Opossum Lake now (provided you have a fishing license!). Keep in mind that daily creel limits have been reinstated by the PA Fish & Boat Commission. However, it will be difficult to get a boat into the lake unless you can carry it down to the water. Lower Frankford Township plans to improve the gravel launch area with stone and grading to make launching a boat a little easier.

? **Will the lake ever be like it was?** 

**The lake will be back some day!** FOLC and our supporters are working very hard towards that goal!

The PA Fish & Boat Commission's estimate for rebuilding the 46-year-old lake is approximately \$3 million, part of an \$83 million statewide backlog of major impoundment upgrades needed on state-owned dams managed by the Commission. The engineering to fix the dam at Opossum Lake is estimated to take two years and construction another two years. However, the Commission will begin the engineering process through what's referred to as “incremental” engineering. Even though the total is not yet in hand, it will be a kind of “jump start” on the whole project.

**Opossum Lake will be back – better than before!**



? **Where's all that money coming from to fix it?**

**Where's** all that money coming from? It's obvious that FOLC can't raise \$3 million through \$10 and \$15 membership dues alone. Lower Frankford Township Supervisors and the Cumberland County Commissioners are exploring the use of Growing Greener funding to begin the engineering and planning phase of the spillway and dam reconstruction.

In addition, the Commissioners have asked the PA Fish & Boat Commission to release funds specifically for Opossum Lake.

And, we are in close contact with Senator Pat Vance and Rep. Will Gabig and have their support in advocating for partial additional funding from Governor Rendell through the state's Capital Budget.

In the meantime, FOLC's Fundraising Committee is planning some exciting fundraising events for this year and next – stay tuned for more news!

The  
"Friends of Opossum Lake  
Conservancy Newsletter"  
is a loooooong name for a  
newsletter!

We're sure you have a better idea  
and  
we want your suggestions!

In fact, we'll reward the person  
who submits the winning name  
with a gift certificate to a local store!

Here's how to enter and a few rules to follow:

Enter the contest by contacting Cindy  
Criswell (newsletter editor):

- Call: 717-486-8904 (leave a message)
- Email: gc\_criswell@peoplepc.com
- Mail to: 471 Pine Grove Road  
Gardners, PA 17324

You must be a member of FOLC or on  
the current mailing list (as of 7/1/06).

Submit your suggestion by 7/15/06.

You may submit more than one entry.

The Board of Directors will select the winning  
entry at their July meeting on 7/20/06  
by "blind" selection.

(The Board will see only the list and  
not the names of the contributors.)

The winner will receive  
the gift certificate  
and special recognition in the next issue  
of the  
"Friends of Opossum Lake  
Conservancy Newsletter."

*Come on, help us out – this newsletter deserves  
its own special name!*

## FOLC Committees

Opportunities for you to help FOLC are numerous.  
Contact any of the committee chairs listed below to  
volunteer on a committee or for more information,  
please refer to our website:

[www.opossumlakefriends.org](http://www.opossumlakefriends.org)

### – Media Relations Committee

This committee is charged with the dissemination of  
news and calendar information about the organiza-  
tion in a timely fashion to area news media including  
radio, television and newspapers. Members include  
Steve Fealtman, Cindy Criswell, Hal Gardner and  
Janet Ruby. Committee Chairman: John Alden  
(email: pa61pilgrim@peoplepc.com).

### – Fund Raising

The Fundraising Committee is currently under  
development. Questions or suggestions? Contact  
Committee Chairman Karen Finkenbinder (email:  
kxf175@psu.edu or phone 717-258-9661).  
Additional members include Eric Melder and Mike  
and Audra Hochreiter.

### – Projects/Trail/Adopt An Access Committee

See the next column for more information about the  
projects planned by this committee and the PA Fish  
& Boat Commission's "Adopt An Access" program.  
Committee Chairman: Ruben Lao (email:  
rubenlaojr@bellsouth.net or phone 717-323-1002).

### – Membership

The Membership Committee is charged with recruit-  
ing new FOLC members, maintaining accurate  
records for existing members, and disseminating  
information through the FOLC newsletter.  
Committee Chair & Newsletter Editor: Cindy  
Criswell (email: gc\_criswell@peoplepc.com or phone  
717-486-8904).

### – Grants/Legislation

Committee Co-Chairs: A. Craig Houston (email:  
houstona@epix.net or phone 717-243-8941) and Hal  
Gardner (email: Hrdgrdnr@aol.com or phone 717-  
258-6932). Contact Hal Gardner for information on  
the availability of FOLC's **Speakers Bureau** to  
present our program to your organization – free of  
charge.

### – Finance

Committee Co-Chairs: Wayne DeMoss (phone: 717-  
241-4086 and Ed Franco (email: efranco99@  
comcast.net or phone 717-243-9863).

## Adopt An Access Program

FOLC is pleased to announce that we have become a sponsoring organization of the PA Fish & Boat Commission's "Adopt an Access" Program. The program is designed to encourage local stewardship of the lake's property, enhance the public use of the property, and reduce the burden of maintenance on the PA Fish & Boat Commission. FOLC has already held one trash pick-up day and will soon be scheduling another work day at the lake.

We have also submitted a Cumberland County Land Partnership Grant to improve and establish an "Anglers Access Trail Around the Lake." The 3.59 mile trail around Opossum Lake is a project that FOLC is keen to start working on. We will work closely with the PA Fish & Boat Commission to establish the Anglers Access Trail and enhance existing trails. The trail currently in existence will be widened and improved to provide better access for fisherman and their families. The current trail is overgrown with poison ivy, brush, and non-native invasive plant species such as multi-flora rose and tree of heaven. FOLC intends to make the trail passable around the entire lake, cutting brush and fallen trees, and building and installing a number of foot bridges over marshy areas and tributary streams. The trail has the potential to be widely used not only by anglers, but also by birders, naturalists, and others who would enjoy hiking on the trail. Dogs are welcome on the trail but must be on a leash. Equestrian and bicycle uses are also permitted.

We also intend to install a number of permanent benches and picnic tables around the 3.59 mile trail to encourage its use and enjoyment at several of the meadows and vistas surrounding the lake. In addition to on-going maintenance of the trail, we plan to create permanent trail markers, some with natural and wildlife information, two information kiosks, and trail maps.

FOLC needs volunteer man-hours to implement the maintenance and repair of the trail and the other planned improvements. Funding from the County grant will support rental of equipment and the purchase of needed materials.

FOLC is a non-profit organization comprised of concerned neighbors and others who want to restore and improve Opossum Lake and its environs. We respect the need for lake access and boating in Pennsylvania and particularly in the immediate Carlisle/Plainfield area. We welcome your support and membership. Without your participation, Opossum Lake may cease to exist!

## Tidbits...

A big **THANK YOU** to Senator Pat Vance and Representative Will Gabig for organizing and sponsoring the public meeting held April 13, 2006 at Whispering Pines. Without that public meeting, FOLC would not exist and Opossum Lake would have no future!



**Members:** your assistance is needed to recruit additional members! Within the past month, FOLC applied for 501[c][3] status. FOLC must show a high number of supportive members to help secure our 501[c][3] status as a Pennsylvania non-profit membership corporation.



### FOLC Wish List

*You say you can't volunteer on a committee or attend a work day? There is a way you can help. Donate an item from our "Wish List!"*

- 39-cent postage stamps
- Plain #10 white envelopes

*Items on the Wish List will change depending on upcoming FOLC programs and projects. Drop off your donation at the Lower Frankford Township Building at 1205 Easy Road, Carlisle, PA 17013.*



Not a member of FOLC yet? It's **easy** to join! Go to our web site ([www.opossumlakefriends.org](http://www.opossumlakefriends.org)) and fill out the membership form on line, print it and mail it to the address shown. Or just call Cindy Criswell at 717-486-8904 to have a form mailed.



**New Members** (continued from Page 1)

Thumma, David Thumma, Joshua Thumma, Kathy Thumma, Senator Pat Vance, Jay Verdu, Sherry Verdu, Charles York, Nancy York, and Terry Zook.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!**

*(If you have paid membership dues and your name is not listed, please contact Cindy Criswell, Membership Committee Chair, at 717-486-8904.)*