

Lucketts News & Notes

A publication of the Lucketts Ruritan Club ♡ Spring 2020

Prosperwell Farm continues to Prosper Well

By Mary Gustafson

Farmer John Whitmore, his ancestors, and his descendants, have always been farmers, deeply rooted in the land. Hailing from the 'white moors' of England, the Whitmore family settled on land near Shepherdstown, WV circa 1776. Around the mid-1800s, Whitmore's great-grandfather was drawn to the good earth of the Potomac River valley and purchased the 700 acres we know today, with its associated roadside vegetable farm, and gave it the name Prosperwell Farm.

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A good farmer knows that, although you grow what is needed, and sell at the best price, you do not put all your eggs in one basket. Eventually, when a working gristmill on Limestone Run in Lost Corner became available, John's great-grandfather purchased the property and expanded his agricultural endeavors. This expansion enabled him to process his own wheat and corn into flour and meal and to contract with other farmers from neighboring Waterford and Taylorstown to also process their grains. Because Limestone Run is a navigable waterway that empties into the Potomac River, products could be shipped all the way from Lost Corner to the top of the Great Falls near Washington, DC.

Whitmore also expanded his domain with the purchase of properties in Lucketts on the west side of Route 15 along Stumptown Road. These smaller properties were not prime agricultural lands, but they did serve as an investment for the family's future needs.

Over time, as the waters in Limestone Run dwindled and the condition of the mill began to deteriorate, the milling business became unprofitable and was eventually abandoned. However, farming was still king in Loudoun County. Whitmore replaced dirt farming at Prosperwell with livestock production. The Whitmores raised Charolais cattle for a time, but then switched to the more popular Hereford and Angus breeds. In addition to raising beef, the family produced 1200 hogs a year, which they sold to Armour and Gwaltney, but because of extreme competition and new safety regulations, they abandoned the pork production when this enterprise was no longer profitable.

From livestock production, the shift to vegetable farming began around mid-century. John shares recollections of loading up a flatbed wagon full of summer garden produce. He would pull the loaded wagon alongside Route 15 in front of his home and sell everything on the wagon. He asserts that, today, the gardens that can be seen from the road are "showy," and the more highly productive fields are located at the back of the farm.



At right A flatbed wagon was loaded with the produce of the day and sold to travelers at roadside. Note the proximity of the wagon to Route 15.



The Whitmore family has stewarded the land of Prosperwell Farm since the early 1800s. From the Revolutionary War and the Civil War to the challenges of present day transportation, Prosperwell straddles Route 15 that runs through the Congressionally-mandated Journey Through Hallowed Ground (JTHG). The JTHG follows Route 15 from Thomas Jefferson's Monticello to Gettysburg, PA. More events of conflict for American independence happened along this narrow 170-mile stretch of roadway than anywhere else in the U.S. The brick and stone home that sheltered many generations of Whitmores stands witness to the conflicts of past and present. In 1861, someone from the farm stated, on record, that they "sold 40 bushels of turnips to the Confederate Army and corn for horses, and delivered a load of produce to Gettysburg." In addition, the home witnessed the transfer of troops and commerce from north to south and back again.

The Prosperwell Farm of today provides direct to market, high-quality, locally-grown fruits and vegetables. And not to put all his eggs in one basket, for the past 20 years, John has sold squash, cucumbers, tomatoes, and eggplants commercially to grocers, including Wegmans in Leesburg. Nothing goes to waste, because John donates anything not sold to area food banks. His workforce has become part of his family. Workers have lived on the farm raising their families and working the land, in some cases for almost 20 years. John is proud that, never at any time in the history of Prosperwell were enslaved people used on the farm.

Throughout Lucketts, residents have grown to appreciate the history and wide open spaces and to depend on the farm stands and services provided by hardworking people like the Whitmores and their workforce. We are fortunate to have the opportunity to enjoy fresh fruits and vegetables from Farmer John's and the many other farm stands along our main street.

The next chapter for Prosperwell Farm...

The farm has been in the Whitmore family for four generations. It has been a long run for the family, as farming is a tough life that relentlessly keeps owners staked to its operations. John and his wife, Teresa, looked forward to retirement, which would require a decision to cut the ties and sell the farm. Mr. Chuck Kuhn, founder and CEO of JK Moving, purchased Prosperwell in late 2019. The Whitmores have agreed to continue to live on the farm, work the land, and operate the beloved farm stand through the 2020 season. Mr. Kuhn will then place the farm into conservation easement to protect it in perpetuity. In this way, Prosperwell Farm will continue to "Prosper Well."





Ruritans in the Lucketts community

Calendar

Spring-Summer 2020

Regular Meetings are cancelled until further notice.

Trash & Recycling at Lucketts Elementary. Every Saturday 8am-noon. Until further notice, all handling of trash is self service. Social distancing required. \$6 suggested donation for average household. Recycling is co-mingled. Please flatten boxes. Do not use plastic bags for recycling.

The Lucketts Ruritan Club, a nonprofit 501(c)(3) community service organization, gathers for monthly dinner meetings at the Lucketts Community Center on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. Members volunteer their time in support of area schools, scouting, shelters, churches, emergency response, food relief, youth activities, adult day care, college scholarships, citizenship awards, and grant program.

www.luckettsruritan.org

Join our Lucketts Ruritan Club and experience the fellowship and goodwill that comes from meeting the needs of your community. Men and women, young, old, and in-between, contact Pat Logue, Membership Chairman, about how to join, call (973) 214-9345.

Ruritan Club Sets \$20K Fundraising Goal

to Assist the Community with Covid-19 Recovery Efforts

The Lucketts Ruritan Club has been supporting the community north of Leesburg – “from the split to the bridge and the river to the ridge” for 41 years! As part of our charter, we raise funds through community service activities to provide assistance where needed within Lucketts. The year 2020 is shaping up to be challenging with new or increased “gaps” emerging as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Our community partners often come to us for funds to help local families in need. In the coming months, we know that more and more families will need their help. Through Give/Choose, we are asking the community to help us raise \$20,000 to close these gaps as they emerge.

Food and Critical Supplies

Our Club was instrumental in helping to start the monthly Lucketts Food Pantry, operated jointly by Loudoun Hunger Relief and Faith Chapel. Should they become short on funds and donations later this year, we want to be there to close the gap by supplementing with our funds. There are new “must haves” for every family in our community as we adjust to the Covid-19 environment. For example, disinfectant wipes, facial masks, and cleaning supplies will be necessities. As our community works together to make sure everyone has what they need, your donation will directly help our club fill this gap.

Emergency Assistance

We receive calls from our local churches, our community center, our parent liaison network, and our social service organizations to help them provide emergency assistance (for overdue rent, utilities, and other critical expenses) to families that meet their standards for receiving support. Due to Covid-19, more families will qualify for this type of assistance. We anticipate our partners will be turning to us more often for our financial support. With your help, we will be able to respond when called on by these local partners.

Critical Needs of Children and Those Who Teach Them

All of our children have had their intellectual, social, and emotional development interrupted as they have stayed home with us. Our families and teachers will face new challenges when school resumes in the future. Our school staff and PTA organizations are quick to meet these challenges, but the funds to implement solutions are often lacking. We want to be ready to close the intellectual, social, and emotional gaps Covid-19 has created for our youth.

Give Choose

On May 5th, please choose to help your community.
Any amount is welcome, give what you can.
This is what your donations can make possible.

Food and Critical Supplies

\$20

helps feed a family for another day.

\$100

feeds the family for another week.

\$500

helps a family get the food and critical cleaning supplies they need for a month.

Emergency Assistance

\$50

pays a water bill.

\$500

pays the overdue utility bill and keeps the heat on in a home.

\$1000

helps pay the rent for one month for a family out of work.

Critical Needs of Children

\$50

pays for school supplies for a child whose parents are facing financial hardship.

\$100

can provide two hours of teacher-led after school remedial education for up to 40 students.

\$500

can cover activity fees for students whose parents can no longer afford them.

By charter, our organization must give back to our local community. As a 501c(3), your donation to us through Give/Choose is fully tax deductible. As a volunteer organization with no paid staff or building to operate, your donation goes straight back to support our community. We are accountable to you, our donor, for the stewardship we demonstrate with your contribution. In addition to receiving your tax-deductible receipt from the Community Foundation, the Lucketts Ruritan Club will provide all donors with a special report at year-end showing how we distributed your GiveChoose contributions. **Thanks for your support!**

It's easy to make a donation.

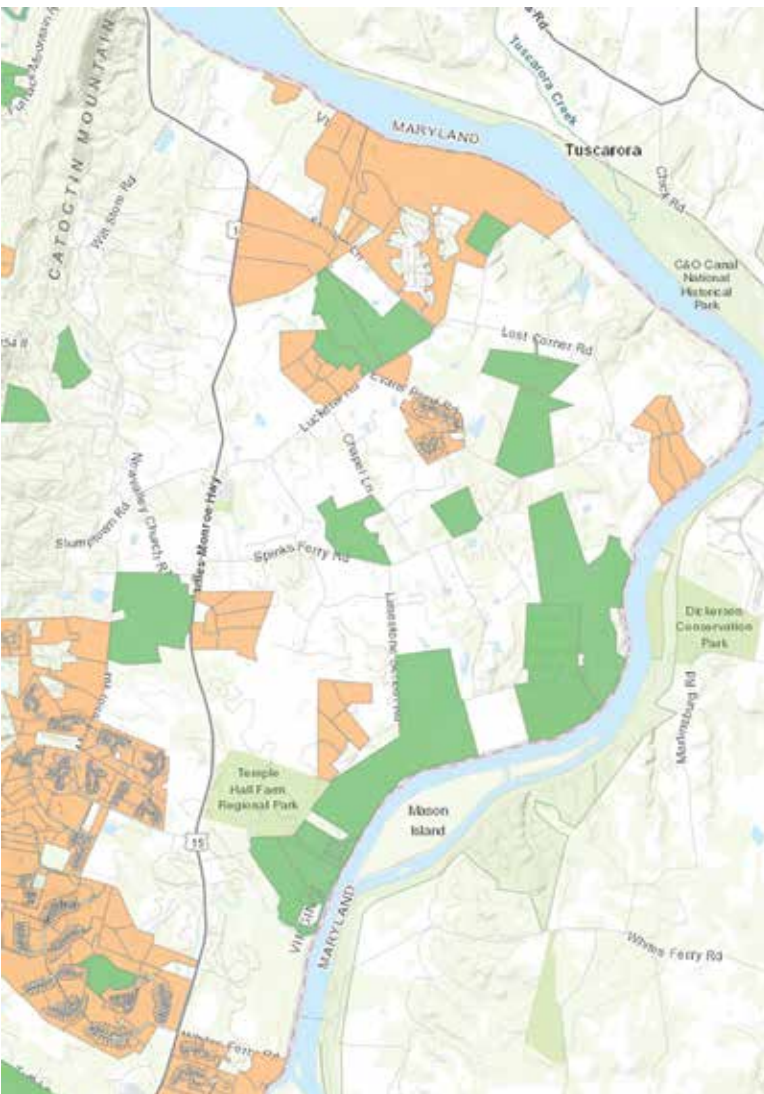
1. For early donating, go to www.GiveChoose.org on or after April 21. Or on May 5 for Give/Choose day.
2. Select Lucketts Ruritan Club.
3. Declare donation amount.
4. The Community Foundation will send you a tax-deductible receipt.
5. The Community Foundation distributes donations to the Lucketts Ruritan Club after event.

Big benefits to land owners and the Lucketts community

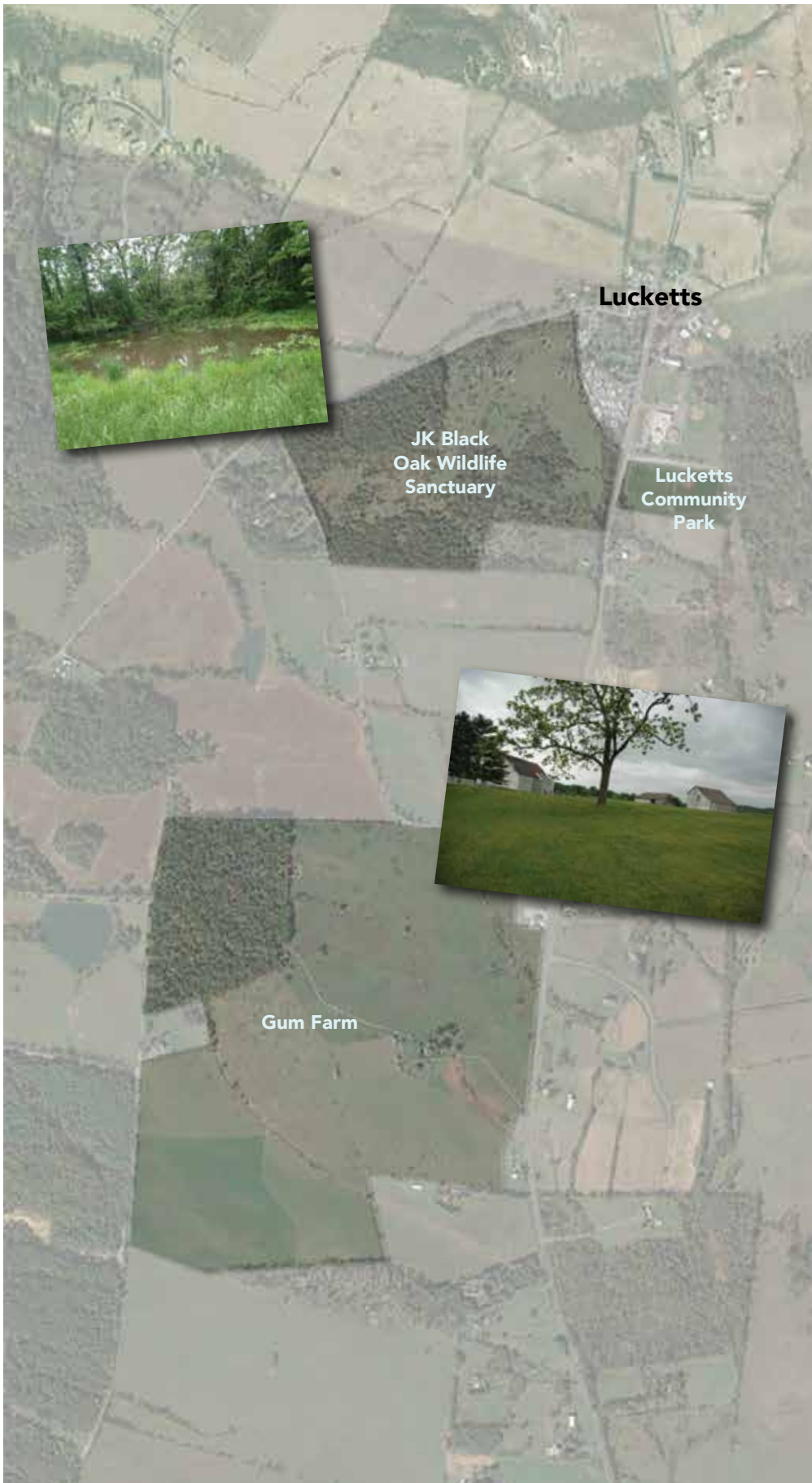
If you are interested in preserving your land for future generations, a conservation easement is a helpful and valuable tool. An easement limits the development potential of your land and can allow you to extract some of the land's cash value now and benefit from federal and state tax credits, while still retaining the right to own and later sell the property. Financial assistance is available to place your property into conservation easement. Here in Lucketts, landowners have placed nearly 3,000 acres of land into conservation easement. These properties include working farms, forests, archaeological sites, parks, and most recently, a nature preserve. The development community has placed another 3,000 acres into

easement, primarily by clustering houses close to each other and preserving larger farmland parcels. As we go to press, another 1,500 acres of farmland is being placed into conservation easement. But at least 4,200 acres of farmland is still not preserved from future development. This land includes over 700 acres of farms involved in agritourism, which contribute to our rural economy.

If you are considering a conservation easement, but are still undecided, you may want to join an Agricultural and Forestal District (AFD). AFDs can play a crucial role in the conservation of farms and enable a pause on development by allowing the landowner to commit to preserve their property for a limited number of years. Most AFDs are for a term of four years. During this time, the landowner commits to maintaining the property in its current use. Benefits include guaranteed land use taxation, right to farm protection, and some eminent domain protections. Landowners who already have their properties in conservation easement, may want to add an additional layer of farmland protection by joining an AFD. Conservation easements protect farmland and forests, support healthy waterways, and link wildlife habitats, thereby benefitting the entire community.



Left Loudoun County map shows properties held in conservation easement in the Lucketts area (in green). Orange areas are developments. Property not shown is the 87-acre preserve. **Right** Two properties in Lucketts which are in easement. The Gum Farm can be seen on the west side of Route 15. The 87-acre JK Black Oak Wildlife Sanctuary owned by the Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy can also be seen on the left side of Route 15 as one approaches Lucketts from the south.



To learn more, the Lucketts Ruritan Environment Committee is sponsoring a Conservation Easement Workshop, to be held at the Lucketts Community Center. **Originally scheduled for April 21, the event has been postponed until the fall of 2020.**

Registration will be available closer to the rescheduled time.

Participating organizations include:

- Piedmont Environmental Council (PEC)
- Northern Virginia Conservation Trust
- Land Trust of Virginia
- VA Dept of Environmental Quality (DEQ)
- VA Dept of Forestry
- Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)
- NOVA Parks
- Loudoun County
- Loudoun Soil and Water Conservation District
- Resource Environmental Solutions
- Atoka Conservation Exchange
- ACRE Investment Management

Youth

set the stage
in **Lucketts**



Rudy Youth Club

with Karyn Price

The Junior Ruritans (the Lucketts ES Rudy Youth Club and the Smart's Mill Rudy Youth Club) have been busy serving the community this year! In **October**, we started the year by discussing community service and planning our projects for the year. In **November**, the Lucketts RYC talked about gratitude and thankfulness and made cards for the staff members at the school. The SM RYC discussed bullying and unkind speech and made positive posters to hang up in the school. In **December**, both clubs volunteered at the Food Pantry. We love being able to see the local benefit to our community service. It is really impactful for the kids. In **January**, both clubs worked on making toys for the animals at the Loudoun County Animal Shelter. In **February**, the Lucketts RYC made hearts with positive messages on them and hung them up in the halls of the elementary school. They also showed the teachers how much they love them by helping them in the classrooms. They sharpened pencils, sorted books, wiped desks down and more. The SM RYC made Valentines for the seniors at Heritage Hall in town. Also in February, both clubs organized a book drive at their schools for Leap of Kindness Day - an extra day of giving on Leap Day. We collected over 160 books for babies to be given to new mothers. In **March**, the Lucketts RYC planned for an upcoming Buddy Day where we will invite some of the younger students at the school to stay after school and do a special project for the teachers. We are hoping that we will be able to do this when school resumes. The SM RYC started planning a longterm project of painting positive messages in the bathrooms at the middle school. We are hoping to be able to complete this project this summer. The Rudies were really excited about this school improvement project. Later in March, we are hoping to provide a meal for Loudoun Transitional Housing, and in **May** we will be marking storm drains in Selma Estates. We are so proud of the Rudy Youth Club students, their hard work, and their dedication to making our community a better place.

Lucketts Elementary School PTA

with Holly McTiernan

Governor Ralph Northam's announcement that all Virginia schools will close through the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year included all upcoming PTA events. PTA members continue to work behind the scenes to support our community. As soon as Lucketts Elementary school closed, we began to put resources online to assist those looking for activities to do with their families. We also reached out to community and business partners to ask how we could assist them during this tumultuous time. We continue to post to social media about things we can do as a community to support and help small businesses.

The PTA sees our community's "Lion Pride" motto on a regular basis! From spirit days to our annual Fall Festival, Family Reading Night, Bingo Night, the 5th Grade Musical and more, PTA members in the Lucketts Community work tirelessly to provide Lucketts families and students with opportunities to connect. We continue to do this online as we navigate the abrupt end of the school year and learn to communicate and connect online. In a short number of weeks, the Lucketts community has come together time and time again to support not only Lucketts but others in need; Lucketts will come out of this stronger than ever!

Thank you to all the first responders and medical personnel who are putting their lives in danger to help others. Thank you to our Lucketts principal, teachers, staff, and custodians who are working as fast as they can to make the best out of an unprecedented situation and to keep a sense of normalcy in our students' lives. Thank you to everyone who is following the guidance of social distancing for the good of our kids, our families, and our community. Nobody can do everything, but everyone can do something.

Girl Scouts

with Cortney Heykoop

The Girl Scouts have had an active Fall and Winter. The girls enjoyed a hiking/canoeing weekend while camping in the George Washington National Forest and also a Christmas time visit to the White House. The highlight of our fall was a Trip to New York City! While in NYC, the girls saw the Broadway musical Wicked and attended a Broadway Master Class in stage makeup. The scouts also continued to tour National Parks by visiting Ellis Island and the Statue of Liberty.

The Girl Scouts continue their service project at Lucketts Elementary School. Here, they support the Positive Behavior in Schools Initiative by converting Lucketts "Loot" into real dollars which is used to buy items for the Lucketts Food Pantry. The Junior Scouts in Troop 751 are completing this project for their Bronze Award! They fund this project by selling cookies. Matching donations from area businesses are always welcome. Please email the troop leader, Cortney Heykoop, at

Cortney.heykoop@gmail.com if you are interested in donating. Finally, our Cadets are finishing their Silver Award Project Plan as we speak. Stay tuned!



Boy Scouts

with Kay Quitter

In this unprecedented time in our world, BSA Troop 1910 of Lucketts wants to convey our concern and caring for the community that has supported us for the last 22 years.

The Annual Yard Sale, originally scheduled for April 25th, has been cancelled. The health and safety of our community is very important to us and it is everyone's job to do all that they can. Our hope is that everyone stays well and safe. Watch this space for a possible reschedule date later on.

At right are helpful suggestions using the **Scout Law** as a guide.

Remember, be calm and carry on.

Trustworthy	Follow the recommendations of the CDC and our local authorities to try to prevent the transmission and spreading of COVID-19.
Loyal	Be loyal to your families and yourself in these difficult times.
Helpful	A little goes a long way and is always appreciated.
Friendly	A phone call, a text message, a letter, a wave. It's tough on everyone.
Courteous	Open a door with a "wipe", wipe down a door handle, sneeze or cough into your elbow.
Kind	Always, always, always be kind. Doesn't cost anything.
Obedient	Follow the guidance and rules to try to help. Everyone doing their part, makes for a big impact.
Cheerful	Smile! It reduces wrinkles.
Thrifty	Buy what you need and leave some for the other guy.
Brave	In the face of hard times, being brave with truth combats fear.
Clean	Please, please, please. Very important now.
Reverent	A small prayer, wish, hope voiced in the quiet personal times to whatever higher power you believe – is never a wrong thing.

JK Black Oak Wildlife Sanctuary Forest Restoration

By Mary Gustafson and Barbara Scott

In November of 2019, Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy, in partnership with the Lucketts Ruritans, Loudoun Soil and Water Conservation District, Virginia Department of Forestry, and Loudoun County, planted three acres of trees on the JK Black Oak Wildlife Sanctuary off Stumptown Road in Lucketts. Older Lucketts residents may remember this parcel as Willard's Woods, owned by Dr. Willard. Over 100 volunteers planted a mix of understory and overstory tree species that included Red Maple, Yellow Poplar, White Oak, Northern Red Oak, Willow Oak, Persimmon, Spice bush, Buttonbush, and Elderberry. In total, the group planted approximately 260 trees. This ongoing project incorporates three major goals:

Shade vernal pools. This land is located within a limestone area with karst topography and includes many natural vernal pools. A vernal pool is an isolated freshwater wetland, not connected to a stream. These pools dry up in the summer and do not contain fish. The tree planting will provide shade to one of the vernal pools that is not currently forested.

Protect fairy shrimp. Fairy shrimp have been documented in the vernal pools at the Lucketts site. Species that lack defenses against fish predation are able to survive in vernal pools. Other species that use vernal pools are wood frogs and salamanders.

Create a contiguous forest. A less fragmented forest provides more corridors to support wildlife activity and movement.

On Sunday March 1, 2020, a group of about 15 volunteers that included Lucketts Ruritans repaired storm damage at the JK Black Oak Wildlife Sanctuary. The damage was the result of the high winds from the tornado that swept through the area in February and from deer. The group met from 10:00 am to noon and replaced stakes and meshing that protects the newly planted trees from deer browse. The deer protection around each tree is necessary to help meet the goal of 75% survival after one year, as required by the cost share contract with Loudoun Soil and Water Conservation District. Additionally, some trees were dislodged and required replanting. The volunteers inspected each tree for damage and provided a layer of natural mulch from the surrounding grass/leaf litter.

The JK Black Oak Wildlife Sanctuary was fully purchased by the Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy on March 13, 2020. This unique property in Lucketts is now in permanent conservation easement, held by the Land Trust of Virginia. This designation means that the property can never be developed and that the rare wetlands are preserved in perpetuity. Michael Myers, Director of Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy, has stated that eventually, this property could be used as an outdoor classroom for students and adults to conduct various science projects such as the study of the unique amphibians, birds, butterflies, and other species native to the property. **For more information about this property and other activities sponsored by the Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy in Lucketts and Loudoun county, visit www.loudounwildlife.org.**



1.



Wood Frog

2.



3.



Spotted Salamander



3.



4.

In November 2019 – 1.

The area was prepared a week in advance by drilling 260 holes with a tractor-powered auger. The holes were flagged and marked with the general species to be planted there.

2. Joe Coleman of Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy demonstrates how to prepare the protective netting for the young trees. **3.** Volunteers remove each tree from their three-gallon pot and place it in the prepared holes, refill the hole then tamp soil around the roots. Another team would then “water the tree in” to encourage root growth. **4.** Once the trees were in the ground, the next team of volunteers would install the protective netting.

In March 2020 – 5. Fifteen volunteers returned to the site to repair protective netting and to make sure all trees were still seated in their holes.



4.



5.



Lucketts Ruritan Club Makes First Youth Development Grant Awards



Karen Feldman, Nikki Daruwala, Al Menendez, Kim Baney, and Carolyn Clement –Photo by Hollie McTiernan



Al Menendez, Lauren O'Laughlin, and Carolyn Clement –Photo by Hollie McTiernan



Al Menendez and Phillip Thresher –Photo by Craig Bond

The Lucketts Ruritan Club has awarded three Youth Development Grants for the first cycle of the Club's 2020 awards. The awards totaled \$3620 for projects and programs that benefit Lucketts youth. First award grant recipients are:

- Lucketts Elementary School Parent Liaison Office—a grant of \$1,620 to fund evening childcare services for parents attending the school's Beginning English as a Second Language (ESL) program. The Loudoun Literacy Council will provide an ESL instructor and class materials.
- Lucketts Elementary PTA—a grant of \$1500 for installation of a Sensory Pathway at the school. The Sensory Pathway helps students improve their sequencing and focusing skills.
- Phillip Thresher, of Lucketts Boy Scout Troop 1910—\$500 for the purchase of plants and materials to construct a flowerbed at the Lucketts Community Center entrance as an Eagle Scout project. Phillip designed the flowerbed, researched, and selected suitable plants, and prepared an installation plan. He will mentor and instruct ten younger Troop members on the installation of the final project.

For complete information, eligibility guidelines, and application form, go to www.luckettsruritan.org/scholarship.

For more information, contact Tom Small at luckettsruritanclub@gmail.com.

"... Where needs exceed our Club's ability to fully fund a qualified request, we are working to find partners, like the Loudoun Literacy Council, to assist our applicants."

— Adolfo Menendez, President of the Lucketts Ruritan Club

Lucketts News & Notes

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Correspondence luckettsnews@mindspring.com

Designer & Coordinator Mary Gustafson
luckettsnews@mindspring.com
(703) 728-0738

Editor Elizabeth Penaranda

Photographers Cortney Heykoop, Karyn Price, Mary Gustafson, Hollie McTiernan, Mouncey Ferguson, Craig Bond

Contributors Pat Logue, Barbara Scott, Jay Frankenfield, Karyn Price, Cortney Heykoop, Kay Quitter, Holly McTiernan, Mary Gustafson

Lucketts Ruritan Club
luckettsruritan@gmail.com
www.luckettsruritan.org

President Al Menendez

Vice President Patricia Logue

Secretary Elizabeth Penaranda

Treasurer Don Stanley



Spring at the Lucketts Community Center



Until further notice, the Lucketts Community Center will remain closed. Please stay home and stay well.