

ENVIRONMENTAL/CONSERVATION COMMITTEE – REPORT NARRATIVE 2024 WOMAN’S CLUB OF LACEY, INC.

The members of the Environmental Department are among the most active members of the Woman’s Club of Lacey. During 2024, many initiatives were taken on, all of which contributed to a cleaner environment. Members also arranged for two guest speakers at general meetings: one from a local garden center and another a local organic farmer.

Achievement Day Entries for the Environment

Member Maria Kowalewski submitted two entries for Achievement Day 2024 using recycled items. The first was a door wreath made entirely of used wine corks, artificial clusters of grapes and ribbons. The second was a wine bottle on which a sparkling snow scene was painted. The bottle had a string of fairy lights powered by a battery in the cork which gave the bottle a lovely glow. Both items received first place and second place certificates.

Animal Shelter Support

The animal lovers of the Woman’s Club of Lacey call themselves the “Doggie Angels.” This group under the leadership of long-time member Lillis Campbell works closely with the Popcorn Park Zoo and Animal Shelter in Lacey Township to provide a variety of items including dog/cat food, bedding, sheets, towels, rugs, newspapers, and toys. This group collects these items throughout the year and makes two deliveries each year. They pass the money jar each month as well collecting \$100 in 2024. They use the donations to purchase food and toys for the shelter. The Woman’s Club received a certificate from the ASPCA this year in recognition of their support.

Beach Cleanup

Members participated in the Ocean Gate Beach Sweep sponsored by NJ Clean Ocean Action in September 2024.

Plastic Recycling

The Woman’s Club of Lacey joined forces with the Methodist church in Lacey Township to support with their effort in collecting household plastic bags for which will be recycled by the Trex Company, Inc. Members collected polyethylene plastic film including: clean and dry produce bags, store bags, ice bags, Ziplock and other reclosable bags, bread bags, newspaper sleeves, dry cleaning bags, bubble wrap and plastic e-commerce bags. This recycled material will help the church receive Trex benches for their garden. This is another example of how this Department supports our community.

Sneaker Recycling

Starting in March 2024 the Environmental Department conducted a shoe drive for Soles4Souls. New and “gently used” shoes and sneakers were collected at several sites in Lacey Township from March through June. Members brought them to the general meetings, dropped them off at the Department Chair’s home, brought them to collection boxes at Retro Fitness in Forked River or at the Lacey Recreation Center. All of the shoes donated went to micro enterprise programs in developing countries around the

world. These programs serve as long-term opportunities to break the cycle of poverty for those in need. Nearly 400 pairs of sneakers or shoes were collected and shipped to Soles4Souls.

Nature Walks

In 2024, members of the Woman's Club of Lacey organized two nature walks. They visited the sunflower farm in Cream Ridge, NJ for a day outing. The rain could not dampen their enthusiasm for cutting sunflowers and enjoying the farm. Members also visited the Grounds for Sculpture in Hamilton, NJ where they enjoyed strolling through the beautiful grounds and eating a delicious luncheon.

Coat Recycling

Members of the Environmental Department teamed up with residents of the Pheasant Run Homeowners Association in Forked River to collect new and gently-used winter coats. Ladies', men's and children's coats were accepted for the One Warm Coat organization. This organization offers a nationwide solution for textile waste with programs that reduce clothing in landfills and maximize the lifespan of outerwear. Coats are distributed to children and adults in need across the country, keeping 1.25 million pounds of textiles kept out of landfills. Members collected the coats at general meetings and at a collection bin placed at the Lacey Recreation Building. A total of 153 coats were collected and shipped to One Warm Coat in time for the start of winter weather.

Animal Toys/Recycling

Members of the environmental department collaborated with the art and culture department collecting gently used Tee shirts to make pet toys for the Popcorn Park Zoo.