



## 70th Wedding Anniversary

Rex and Dot (McCobin) Kocher, of Bangor, PA and Bradenton, FL celebrated their 70th Wedding Anniversary on Wednesday, December 6, 2017. The Kocher's were married in the village of Central, PA in 1947 by the Rev. Nelson Thomas.

They celebrated with their children and grandchildren at the Stroudsmoor Country Inn in Stroudsburg, PA.

Rex is a graduate of Benton High School and Dot is a graduate of Lopez and Cherry Township High School. Rex is a World War II veteran, having served in the US Navy on the destroyer USS Wedderburn.

They are the proud parents of 3 children, 4 grandchildren and 1 great-grandson. Another grandson passed away in 2009.

## Veterans Organizations Now Exempt from Realty Transfer Tax

By Christine Zubeck

**HARRISBURG** – Nationally recognized veterans organizations are now exempt from the Realty Transfer Tax, under a provision sponsored by Sen. John Rafferty (R-44) and Sen. Mario Scavello (R-40).

Prior to the change, veterans organizations wishing to transfer property from the local home association to the post were not excluded from the 2 percent realty transfer tax despite their tax-exempt status. The Realty Transfer Tax exemption was introduced by Senator Rafferty and Senator Scavello as Senate Bill 430, which was amended into Act 43 of 2017, the Tax Code bill.

The change was made necessary as the result of a 1998 state Supreme Court ruling that prompted American Legion home associations which did not have a liquor license but wished to obtain one to apply as an incorporated unit of a national veterans organization. The associations were advised to transfer all other realty and assets to the post to insulate the post and its assets from liability while still affording them the opportunity to have social or associate members who can contribute to the post's financial success.

The new law exempts veterans organizations from the Realty Transfer Tax during such necessary transactions.

"For organizations serving Pennsylvania's veterans, covering costs is a constant challenge. The last thing government should be doing is imposing burdens that divert funds away from services for veterans," Scavello said. "Other tax-exempt entities are excluded from the Realty Transfer Tax, and now organizations that serve veterans will receive the same treatment."

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## The River Unites Us: Stories about the Scenic Wild Delaware River by those who know it best



**Sharon Davis**  
Delaware River  
Program Manager  
NPCA

**This week's column features Michele Long, Administrative Manager, Pike County (PA) Conservation District and a member of the Scenic Wild Delaware River Stewardship Council**

**The River Unites Us:** How did you become involved with the Scenic Wild Delaware River (SWDR) geotourism program?

**Michele Long:** I was approached by the National Parks Conservation Association, a non-profit organization that works to safeguard our national parks, about joining the SWDR program to help promote the outstanding resources here in the Delaware River region. The region is home to several national park sites including Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area and the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River, an array of wildlife and trails. I have lived here all my life and know the region well. For the last 14 years I have worked for the Pike County Conservation District and coordinated the Pike/Wayne Conservation Partnership. Being involved in the SWDR geotourism program was a natural fit.



**Michele Long**

**TRUU:** Geotourism encourages travelers to experience the region's authentic natural, historical and recreational assets. How does this fit in with your conservation work?

**ML:** The Pike County Conservation programs and services revolve around preserving our natural resources. Part of my work includes promoting the area's unique character and

helping people understand our link with nature. We strive to educate individuals on how their actions impact the resources. When travelers experience first-hand the beauty of our region's rivers, streams and miles of trails, that link between humans and nature is more easily understood.

**TRRU:** How does conservation and resource preservation benefit the local economy?

**ML:** Conserving this land protects the forested areas which in turn helps to protect water quality. Open spaces that contain forested tracts and wetlands act as sponges allowing rainwater to percolate into the ground, recharging aquifers with clean water. Our water resources are invaluable, and drive our region's tourism-based economy, including river outfitters, wildlife tour operators, and eco-based agri-businesses such as wineries and organic farms.

**TRUU:** Tell us some of the "Must See" places that you recommend for travelers that can be found at [www.scenicwild-delawareriver.com](http://www.scenicwild-delawareriver.com)

**ML:** Bushkill Falls is known the "Niagara of Pennsylvania", and experiencing the eight falls is both breathtaking and rewarding. The trails are coded for all levels of hiking ability too. Plan on a whole day to enjoy the recreational activities including gem mining, paddle boats, fishing and the Native American exhibit to learn about the region's early history. Additionally, Childs Park, a hemlock forest within Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, has a family-friendly trail, three cascading falls and interesting artifacts from our industrial past, including a 19th century woolen mill.

This column is syndicated by the **Blue Valley Times**



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

**About The Scenic Wild Delaware River Geotourism Project:**

Scenic Wild Delaware River Geotourism is one of only 23 geotourism programs created by National Geographic worldwide. Working collaboratively in the 3 states along the middle & upper Delaware River region, the Program promotes and sustains the region's resources for long-term economic and environmental vitality. NPCA helps staff this program. Visit the interactive travel website showcasing local experiences at

[www.ScenicWildDelawareRiver.com](http://www.ScenicWildDelawareRiver.com)



For more information contact Sharon Davis, [sdavis@npca.org](mailto:sdavis@npca.org) or tel: 570.460.4468



**Ken  
Field**

*Owner of Slate  
Belt Energy  
Services*

*Exclusively in the Blue Valley Times*

### Proactive or Reactive

Everything is complicated today and the one complication you can usually avoid is the inconvenience of an unexpected breakdown. That's not to say that your life will be smooth sailing if you are proactive about preventive maintenance but I'm sure it will be less complicated in the long run. Whether it is your car or your home, you have to make a decision whether you will just wait for problems to arise and then fix them or if you will set a schedule and try to prevent them. We do hundreds of preventive maintenance checkups on heating systems every year and we find weak components in them all the time.

Because we know where to look and how to check for things that are likely to fail, we can catch them before they break down on Murphy's schedule. The vast majority of the customers who have annual maintenance visits never see us again in between. There are always a few breakdowns but the ratio is very small. Then we have the customers who only call when something is broken, and if 1 thing is broken and two more are hanging by a thread, they only have us fix the one and let the rest for some other night or weekend. I'm not blind to the fact that money is a factor and I never say pay me now or pay me later but that's what ends up happening. During the cold snap we had some calls that boggled my mind. Some people actually figured they could get through the winter without their central system working but when it got near zero they realized it wasn't going to end well if they did that. That's also not the time to solve some of the problems that were found. But we noted them and suggested that when things warm up a bit they have us back to make the other repairs and get the system to be reliable.

My hunch is that most of those customers will never make the repairs and we will be back again when something else falls apart. It's hard to be compassionate on a breakdown call when someone says "as long as it holds water I'm not going to replace it" or "the noise doesn't bother me as long as it's making heat". I make suggestions about major and minor upgrades that will make things work better but I am not a high pressure sales person and never will be. Being proactive will lead to a better life in the long term and it probably ends up costing less too.

**Ken Field is the owner of Slate Belt Energy. As a certified energy rater and contractor, he is qualified to assess every aspect of energy usage and prescribe solutions to save energy. He can be reached at 610-599-8832 or at [www.SlateBeltEnergy.com](http://www.SlateBeltEnergy.com)**

## Tony's **HANDY MAN** SERVICE

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Call Me Today!**

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Painting Inside/Outside,  
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Hardwood & Vinyl Flooring,  
Gutters Cleaned, Snow Removal,  
Garage Cleanout

*References available from residential  
to commercial sources.*

**570-517-6596**

## J & S Thrift Store

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They presented a certificate to the new owners from the house of representatives thanking them and wishing them good luck.

Chamber members attending were Joanne Ginder, Laura McClain, Deb-

bie Pettinari, Rosemary Albert and Michael Ortoski.

Stop in to say hello and browse their store, you're bound to find something unique that you like. Their Store Hours are: Monday-Thursday, 9 am-5 pm; Friday & Saturday 9 am-7 pm; Sunday 9 am-5 pm. Phone: 610-881-4217



**FREE  
CLASSES**

**GED**

**BEGINS**

January  
February  
March

**BANGOR  
Mon. & Wed.  
Begins Jan. 8th**

**6:00-8:30 P.M.**

**DeFranco Elem.  
School Library  
Rt. 512 & 5 pts.  
Richmond Rd.**

**PEN ARGYL  
Mon. & Thur.  
Begins Jan. 8th**

**6:00-8:30 P.M.**

**Pen Argyl Sr.  
High School Library  
501 W. Laurel Ave.**

**NAZARETH  
Tue. & Thur.  
Begins Jan. 30th**

**6:00-8:30 P.M.**

**Nazareth Sr. High  
School Library  
501 E. Center Street**

**THE FIRST WEEK OF CLASS IS ORIENTATION  
STUDENTS MUST ATTEND BOTH DAYS.**

If a student cannot attend both days in January, they must wait until February or March to begin.

Computer Training is included in all classes.

Adults who attend class, complete requirements and pass the GED will be eligible for an equivalency High School Diploma. Please contact [www.GED.com](http://www.GED.com) for info about test.

**Northampton  
Community College**

Free classes provided by the NCC Center for College & Career Readiness and Bangor, Pen Argyl, Nazareth School Districts. Call 610-861-5427 for more information

## EPA: Protect National Parks- Don't Repeal the Clean Power Plan!

*By NCPA*

**WASHINGTON DC.** - The Trump administration is proposing to repeal the Clean Power Plan, which aims to combat climate change by lowering harmful carbon dioxide emissions from coal-burning power plants. This is bad news for our national parks.

Many parks are facing enormous challenges because of climate change, including hotter temperatures, extreme weather and loss of park wildlife habitat. National parks like Glacier, Joshua Tree and Saguaro risk losing their namesake features!

Speak up for our national parks: Tell the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) that you support the Clean Power Plan and don't want it repealed.

Please remember to personalize your message to the EPA as much as possible; a personalized message from you will go further in protecting our national parks.

Go to [npca.org/site/Advocacy](http://npca.org/site/Advocacy) and sign up!