

Prestigious Award Goes To Westfall Resident

By T.A. Crerand

WESTFALL — Adrienne Lombaerde was one of two recipients of the revered John F. Laudadio, Sr. Conservation Leadership Award presented annually by the Pennsylvania Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs (PFSC) in recognition and appreciation of continued commitment to preservation and conservation of natural resources in Pennsylvania.

Adrienne, daughter of Chuck and Helen Lombaerde of Westfall, told the Pike County Dispatch, "It is a great honor for me to be recognized by the PFSC for my passion and efforts for conservation."

Chuck, first vice president of the PFSC, and 10-year member and former secretary of the Pike County Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs (PCFSC), explained that as a tribute to Laudadio PFSC issues the award annually to a young adult who demonstrates a commitment to conservation efforts in the Commonwealth. He added that for the first time ever, two awards were presented this year.

Laudadio (1916-1977), who had been a lifetime member of the PFSC, was a resident of Jeanette (east of Pittsburgh) in Westmoreland County and represented the 56th legislative district (D). He spent most of his lifetime working to protect our natural resources.

The stunning hand-painted and framed award was presented to Adrienne on March 20 at the PFSC Spring Convention in Harrisburg.

She said, "To receive the Laudadio Award has been a highlight of my year and a great honor. It only encourages me to continue to stay involved in the outdoors."

This ambitious young lady attends Midwestern State University in Wichita Falls, Texas majoring in political science.

Chuck explained Adrienne had first received an award locally through the PCFSC, then at the Northeast Division level, and then submitted her resume to the Awards Committee at the state level. The couple is visibly very proud of Adrienne and her commitment to the environment.

Adrienne was selected for her dedication and achievements in conservation activities and projects in Pike County, educational background and awards, leadership activities while a student in the Delaware Valley School District, as well as her successful hunting and trapping skills that in turn manage wildlife.

She said of the award, "It has been an amazing experience to be awarded for something I love and care about so much: conservation."

Chuck said the second recipient was Samantha Pedder of Westmoreland County, a former member of the Altoona Agriculture Club. Both



The Pennsylvania Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs (PFSC) awarded two John F. Laudadio, Sr. Conservation Leadership Awards this year to two deserving recipients. Pictured from left are PA Game Commission Executive Director Carl Roe; Attorney General and candidate for PA governor (R) Tom Corbett; award recipients Samantha Pedder and Adrienne Lombaerde, each holding their beautiful hand-painted awards; PA Fish & Boat Commission Executive Director John Arway; and Senator Richard Alloway II, (R) also Chairman of the Senate Game & Fisheries Committee.

girls served on the Governor's Youth Council for Hunting, Fishing & Conservation. Chuck recalled Samantha served one year on the Council and Adrienne from 2005 to 2008.

Laudadio's Background And Achievements

The state's website gives some background and history about Laudadio, which reveals the significance of this highly respected award.

Laudadio's lifelong passion to protect clean streams and other valuable natural resources developed when he discovered serious pollution of streams and devastation of land resources during his youth while hunting, fishing and trapping.

Back in 1936 when he was 20, he joined the Penn Rod and Gun Club, Inc. in Penn, an affiliate of the Westmoreland County Sportsmen's Clubs, Inc. Two years later, he became an officer and continued to serve until his death. Under his guidance and help, the Club became one of the most outstanding conservation clubs in the county, state and nation that included development of farm and camp facilities in Fulton County consisting of 350 prime acres for members to hunt and fish.

Laudadio was elected to the House of Representatives in 1962 and re-elected every succeeding term. He was serving as Chairman of the House Conservation Committee, and Chairman of the Joint Legislative Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee at the time he died.

In 1965, he sponsored substantial amendments to The Clean Streams Law, and in 1970 fought for and had passed strengthened amendments for tough stream pollution laws in Pennsylvania, likely the toughest in the nation. In 1966, he was the chief sponsor of The Bituminous Mine Subsidence and Land Conservation Act of 1966 that protected people from mine cave-ins.

During the 1969-70 General

Assembly Session, Laudadio sponsored and had passed in the House the All Surface Mining bill and the Watershed Management Act but both failed to pass in the Senate. However, during that same time, he became the chief sponsor and moving force on House Bill 2213 that had 92 sponsors and brought into being the Department of Environmental Resources. He was a cosponsor of the bill amending the Bill of Rights of the Pennsylvania Constitution (Article I, Section 27) that guarantees people the right to clean air, pure water, and the preservation of our natural, scenic, historic and esthetic values of the environment. The day before he died, Laudadio introduced a package of bills to further promote and preserve historic and scenic areas from development, degradation or destruction.

As a member of the PFSC, Laudadio served as president from 1964 to 1966, secretary from 1966 to 1967, and was president of its southwest division from 1957 to 1959. He was president of the Westmoreland County Sportsmen's League from 1950 to 1952. He served as a member and Chairman of the Westmoreland County Recreation and Park Commission from 1960 to 1969.

The National Wildlife Federation and Sears-Roebuck Conservation Foundation recognized him in 1965 as the Pennsylvania Conservation Legislator of the Year. In 1966, former President Lyndon B. Johnson's wife honored Laudadio in Washington, D.C. as the National Conservation Legislator of the Year. In 1971, the Pennsylvania Fraternal Order of Eagles presented him with the Humanitarian of the Year Award. In 1974, then Gov. Milton J. Shapp awarded him Mr. Conservation of Pennsylvania. In 1976, the Westmoreland County Recreation and Park Commission presented him with the President's Award for his conservation achievements.