



Western Reserve
Land Conservancy
OUR LAND. OUR LEGACY.

www.wrlandconservancy.org

A Western Reserve Land Conservancy newsletter

LANDLINE

Winter 2015

'Farmland forever'

Family permanently preserves Copley Township farm

The largest remaining farm in Copley Township has been permanently protected.

Lonesome Pine Farm, a 119-acre tract in western Summit County, has been permanently preserved with a conservation easement granted to the Land Conservancy by owners Sally Gamauf and her daughter, Darcy Brandel. The farm, which has been in the family for 92 years, is on Cleveland-Massillon Road, about a half-mile south of Copley Circle.

"Darcy and I wanted to see it remain farmland forever," said Gamauf, a retired University of Akron psychologist and former member of the Land Conservancy's Medina Summit Chapter. "We also wanted

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Sally Gamauf preserved her Summit County farm.

Nearly 3,800 acres preserved in 2014

Western Reserve Land Conservancy permanently protected 42 properties totaling 3,786 acres in northern and eastern Ohio during 2014. It was the fifth-highest acreage total since 1987, the year the first conservation easement was granted to Chagrin River Land Conservancy, one of the groups that merged to form Western Reserve Land Conservancy in 2006.

To date, the Land Conservancy has preserved 558 properties totaling 41,954 acres.

In urban areas, the Land Conservancy's Thriving Communities Institute completed property surveys in East Cleveland, Akron, Oberlin, Sandusky and Cleveland's Buckeye-Mount Pleasant area. In addition, we launched our Reforest Our City program and raised the total amount secured for demolition funding in Ohio to \$232 million. We led the formation of new county land banks, of which there are now 22 in the state.

Urban forester helps tree program take root

The Land Conservancy now has its own urban lumberjack.

Colby Sattler, our new urban forestry and natural resources project manager, is responsible for advancing Reforest Our City, the Land Conservancy's urban reforestation program. Sattler was an urban forester and biologist for Davey Resource Group before joining the Land Conservancy staff in the fall.

Sattler said there is no debating the benefits of trees.

"The science is in – we no longer need to justify why we should do these things, why we should restore our urban tree canopies," he said. "Now is the



Colby Sattler: "It is time to get our hands dirty."

time for action. It is time to get our hands dirty."

Sattler said the Land Conservancy is modeling Reforest Our City after the best elements of nationally successful urban tree initiatives but tailoring it to fit Cleveland. "I think it is a microcosm of what Cleveland is going through, a renaissance," he said. "Reforest Our City will be an enormous benefit

for the city and its residents and an important part of the region's continued transformation."

Sattler, who holds a bachelor's degree in natural resources ecology and conservation biology from the University of Idaho, is an ISA-certified arborist. He has also completed graduate coursework in

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Firelands: 2,300 additional acres of farmland protected

In an occupation normally associated with deep roots, farmer Scott Butts stands out.

"My dad farmed some, but I'm basically a first-generation farmer," Butts said.

The lack of deep agricultural tradition has not stopped Butts from becoming a successful farmer in the Firelands region. Today, Butts and his wife, Kathy, who live in Avon Lake, own a large grain farm operation in Huron County and have protected a total of 742 acres in partnership with the Land Conservancy. The Butts' most recent conservation easement protected another 173 acres.



Kathy and Scott Butts have now protected 742 acres of farmland in partnership with the Land Conservancy.

"We have to protect our productive farmland," Scott Butts said. "And we're not only protecting our farmland, we're helping our farming neighbors."

The Butts family was part of a year-end surge in farmland preservation in the Firelands. At the close of 2014, the Land Conservancy was granted conservation easements permanently protecting nearly 2,300 acres of prime farmland in Huron, Lorain, Sandusky and Seneca counties. The voluntary easements restrict the

ability to develop a particular property, thereby keeping it available for agricultural production.

"We are seeing more and more farmers understand the value of protecting their land," said Andy McDowell, vice president of western field operations for the Land Conservancy. "The significant federal income tax benefits have a major, positive impact on their bottom lines."

The property preserved by Scott and Kathy Butts is in Hartland Township and near two tracts the couple preserved in 2013. Scott Butts said he is pleased the farmland, which consists of active agricultural fields, two small woodlots and a tributary to the Huron River, will remain in production for generations to come.

"I'm happy to know it will continue to be farmed as we have done it," he said.

Other farmland projects completed in the Firelands:

- Robert and Deborah Bumb, fifth- and sixth-generation farmers respectively, preserved 1,450 acres in Huron, Sandusky and Seneca counties. The Bumbs, who have a large grain operation, had previously preserved 750 acres of farmland.
- Fred and Kathy Hacker protected 289 acres in Huron County's Ripley and Fairfield townships with four conservation easements. All of the tracts are in a grain farm operation; one parcel contains two tributaries to the Huron River, while another contains the Southwest Branch of the Vermilion River.
- Rich Smith preserved 332 acres of Huron County land that his family has farmed for three generations. The property produces corn, soybeans and wheat as part of a larger grain farm operation by Smith and his two sons.
- In southern Lorain County, Frances Rollin preserved a 55-acre farm that has been in her family for several generations. The grain farm, located on state Route 58 south of Wellington, also contains more than 3,300 feet of tributaries to the Black River.

Survey says: Our property inventory crews are up to the task

The number of Ohio communities looking for an accurate snapshot of their housing stock is growing. The Land Conservancy has responded with a property survey program to fill that need.

Since launching the program in 2013, the Land Conservancy's Thriving Communities Institute has completed surveys in Lorain, East Cleveland, Cleveland's Buckeye-Mount Pleasant area, Akron, Oberlin and Sandusky. The cities of Cleveland and Dayton are currently considering surveys.

The Land Conservancy's property inventory program employs local workers who use tablet computers to grade the condition of properties on an A-to-F scale and input photos and other data. The information is



Our Akron crew surveyed more than 90,000 parcels.

used to create maps, charts and reports for city leaders and has proven particularly useful to community leaders that are trying to determine the best use of available demolition funds.

"One of our goals is to help city officials identify the number of vacant structures so they can strategically use the limited demolition funding that is now available and give them an idea of how much it would cost to tear down those in the worst condition," said Jim Rokakis, a Land Conservancy vice president and

director of Thriving Communities Institute.

Communities interested in this program can contact Sarah Ryzner at (216) 515-8300 or sryzner@wrlandconservancy.org.

'Farmland forever'

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to preserve the farm in honor of my father and my grandparents."

Gamauf's grandparents purchased the land in 1923 and farmed it their entire lives.

Lonesome Pine has been an organic farm for about 25 years, and its prime agricultural soils produce hay, corn, soybeans and sunflowers. The farm also has two separate woodlots on the southern portion of the property.

With the recent sale and residential development of a farm off state Route 18, Lonesome Pine is now the largest remaining farm in Copley Township. The property is less than two miles from two other Land Conservancy conservation easements totaling 73 acres.

"We are extremely grateful to Sally and Darcy for preserving this beautiful farm, particularly in a community that has seen so much growth and development," said Andy McDowell, vice president of western field operations for the Land Conservancy. Jeff Holland, a Land Conservancy trustee and Medina Summit Chapter member who attended the easement signing, said, "Sally is an old friend of the Land Conservancy. It is exciting to know that she and her family are instrumental in preserving the largest remaining farm in Copley Township."

Sally Gamauf said it was very much a decision she and her daughter made together to permanently preserve the property. She said even though her



Land Conservancy Trustee Jeff Holland was there when Gamauf signed the conservation easement for Lonesome Pine Farm.

daughter is now an English professor at Marygrove College in Detroit, "Darcy is really a farm girl gone to the city. She knows how to work the ground. She knows farming."

Gamauf has three horses "and I really enjoy riding them on the property."

So what is the story behind the name of the farm?

"Well, my father used to sit in his chair and look out over the farm in the evening," Gamauf said. "In one place, there is a single pine in the middle of the field, all by itself. My dad would say, 'That's a lonesome pine.' The name stuck."

"Darcy and I wanted to see it remain farmland forever."

SALLY GAMAUF



Sattler shows volunteers proper tree planting and mulching techniques at a recent event in Cleveland.

Urban forester

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urban sustainability, environmental policy and administration.

He primarily works from the Land Conservancy's Thriving Communities Institute offices in Cleveland.

"Some refer to Colby as an urban lumberjack," said Sarah Ryzner, director of projects for Thriving Communities Institute. "He is a terrific addition to our staff and a real plus for the Reforest Our City program. His background in natural resources is also a great complement to our organization's land-protection mission."

Before joining Davey, Sattler worked as an AmeriCorps VISTA volunteer on the Reimagining Cleveland Program at Cleveland Neighborhood Progress, which involved developing and implementing vacant land reuse and greening strategies. He also has experience as a watershed coordinator and has worked on invasive vegetation control, stream and wetland restoration, native plantings, prairie installation and maintenance, erosion control and site stabilization.

Sattler, who grew up in North Olmsted, lives in Bay Village with his wife Erica and their 11-month-old son Harrison.

He is anxious to get Reforest Our City into high gear. "They say the best time to plant a tree is 20 years ago," Sattler said. "I suppose the best time to start a program like this is 20 years ago. But the next best time is now."

Land Conservancy helps add 30 acres to national park

The Land Conservancy and the National Park Service have effectively filled a “hole” in the footprint of the Cuyahoga Valley National Park by adding 30 acres of new parkland in Boston Township.

The sloping property, located on the south side of Hines Hill Road, just north of the Ohio Turnpike and south of Interstate 271, is surrounded by the national park and includes a portion of Stanford Run, a tributary of the Cuyahoga River. The parcel is heavily forested and includes several ravines and small streams.



The property contains a section of Stanford Run, a tributary to the Cuyahoga River.

The Land Conservancy successfully negotiated a purchase agreement with the owner and identified a funding source that enabled it to acquire the property and turn it over to the NPS, which had expressed an interest in the parcel as far back as 2001. Funding for this project was undertaken in connection with the settlement of an enforcement action, *United States v. City of Akron, et al.*, undertaken

on behalf of U.S. Environmental Protection Agency under the Clean Air Act.

NPS will manage the property as passive parkland.

“The Cuyahoga Valley National Park is a treasure, and we are grateful to be able to help the National Park Service acquire this property,” said Joe Leslie, the Land Conservancy’s director of acquisitions.

“We are grateful for the partnership with Western Reserve Land Conservancy and its commitment over many years to help

acquire this beautiful area along Hines Hill Road for Cuyahoga Valley National Park. Because of its location and habitat values, this was an important acquisition for the park and we are pleased this land is now permanently protected,” said Craig Kenkel, Superintendent of Cuyahoga Valley National Park.

‘The Cuyahoga Valley National Park is a treasure, and we are grateful to be able to help the National Park Service acquire this property.’

JOE LESLIE

More land is added to South Akron Greenway project

The South Akron Greenway project, which includes Haley’s Run, Adam’s Run and a hoped-for future connector to the Little Cuyahoga River, has taken yet another step forward.

The Serves family has donated to the Land Conservancy four vacant residential lots totaling .25 acres in southeast Akron. Three of the lots are adjacent to the completed Haley’s Run Stream Restoration and Trail and one of the lots is adjacent to Land Conservancy-owned property along Adam’s Run.

The existing greenway is located just south of the Goodyear test track.

Sarah Ryzner, director of projects for the Land Conservancy’s Thriving Communities Institute, said the Serves family approached the city of Akron about donating the lots and was referred to the Land Conservancy. The addition of this land is significant as the Land Conservancy worked closely with Lockheed Martin Corp. on the acquisition of parcels for the Haley’s Run Stream Restoration and Trail, which was finished in 2010.

“We excited to be a part of this transaction and to continue to advance the stream restoration and trail connections along Adam’s Run as they become a regional asset for the community,” Ryzner said.

She said the donated lots will be used as a match for a grant to acquire additional property for the greenway project. The ultimate goal,



The donated land has plenty of vegetation.

she said, is to transfer all of the properties to the city of Akron.

In addition to property acquisition, project supporters hold an annual cleanup at the greenway. This year, the cleanup will be from 9 a.m. to noon on Saturday, April 18. A biodiversity event is also being planned this summer to celebrate the fifth anniversary of the completion of the Haley’s Run stream restoration and trail.

Land Conservancy preserves first farm in Wayne County

Lemoine “Lee” Peart said when she and her family began looking to buy a farm in the 1980s, they identified 10 qualities that would constitute the ideal property. Most of the farms fell short in several areas. Then Peart visited a former sheep farm in Wayne County, about two miles south of Burbank.

“This farm hit everything on our list,” she said. “Not only did it have what we were looking for in a farm, it had wonderful natural areas. To this day, people marvel at what a beautiful place it is.”

The family purchased the property in 1989 and founded Canaan Creek Organic Farm, a 98-acre tract that produces organic hay, organic barley seed and organic spelt and has pastures for grass-fed beef cattle. The property, at the corner of Sterling and Parmenter roads, includes an 1890-built farmhouse that sits a quarter-mile from the road as well as three barns, two silos and two grain bins.

Canaan Creek Organic Farm has been permanently protected by a conservation easement donated by Peart to the Land Conservancy. It is the first farm in Wayne County to be preserved by the Land Conservancy; the voluntary, donated conservation easement essentially means the farm will never be developed.

“Lee is to be commended for her



Organic hay, barley seed and spelt are grown on the farm, which is near Burbank.

decision to preserve her amazing property,” said Bill Jordan, the Land Conservancy’s Medina associate field director. “At an important juncture in the easement donation process, Lee broke her collarbone, but her commitment to preserving her farm never wavered.”

Peart, a college biology major and former science teacher in the Brooklyn City School District, has had a lifelong passion for nature. After leaving teaching to raise her family, she returned to work for the Ohio State University’s Agricultural Technical Institute in Wooster and then at the Wayne County Schools Career Center.

Peart said “development pressure” nearby prompted her to consider placing a conservation easement on the property. But she said the decision to permanently preserve the farm was made with full support from her sons, Luke Peart of Quebec and Nathan Wright of Chicago, who will eventually take over the farm.

“I don’t want to see it developed, and my kids don’t want it developed,” she said. “I am honored that this is the first Land Conservancy farm protected in Wayne County. I’m proud to be part of it.”

Glenwillow, Land Conservancy create park along Tinker’s Creek

The Village of Glenwillow and the Land Conservancy partnered to create a new 17.5-acre park and protect a half-mile of Tinker’s Creek, the largest tributary of the Cuyahoga River.

Glenwillow acquired the wooded property, located on the east side of Richmond Road, adjacent to Cleveland Metroparks Bedford Reservation, with a Clean Ohio Conservation Fund grant secured by the Land Conservancy. It is now permanently protected with a conservation easement held by the Land Conservancy. The village will own and maintain the park. It will be used for passive recreation and outdoor education.

Mayor Mark Cegelka said, “This property is a wonderful asset to the village, as it protects land that has a significant scenic, natural, aesthetic and open space value to Glenwillow. Through the partnership



Glenwillow Mayor Mark Cegelka: “This property is a wonderful asset to the village.”

of the Western Reserve Land Conservancy, we were able to make this acquisition with using only grant funds, so no tax dollars were used. This project is just one piece in the overall plan to connect all areas of Glenwillow with multi-purpose trails and greenways, which will make our village a very desirable community to live and work.”

Sarah Ryzner, director of projects for the Land Conservancy’s Thriving Communities Institute, applauded the village for preserving the property and for protecting the Tinker’s Creek corridor. “We thank the Clean Ohio

Green Space Conservation Program for providing the funding to protect a critical piece of property in the Tinker’s Creek Watershed and create the potential for future connections,” Ryzner said.

Ryzner also thanked the Cuyahoga Land Bank for its assistance on the project.

Former golf course is now a Lorain County park

A former golf course is the newest addition to the Lorain County Metro Parks.

The park district partnered with the Land Conservancy to purchase the 97-acre former Royal Oaks Golf Club in the village of Grafton. Funding for the purchase came from the Clean Ohio Conservation Fund, a voter-approved source of revenue for projects preserving natural areas in the state, and the park district.

The property is now part of the Metro Parks' Indian Hollow Reservation and preserves approximately 2,100 linear feet of the East Branch of the Black River as well as wetlands, vernal pools, forest and open meadows.

The project connects two separate parcels of the Indian Hollow Reservation and expands the park's overall size to 726 acres. It also protects the habitat of the Long Beech Fern, a potentially threatened species in Ohio, as well as that of the bobcat, once a state-listed species.

"This project is another great example of what can be accomplished through partnerships. The former Royal Oaks Golf Club has incredible natural assets and is a great addition to the Indian Hollow Reservation," said James Ziemnik, director of Lorain County Metro Parks.

Joe Leslie, director of acquisitions for the Land Conservancy, said the organization was "grateful to be able to assist such an excellent park system in the acquisition of this property, which we view as extremely important to protecting the habitat of a number of species of plants, animals and birds." He said species spotted there include juvenile bald



What used to be a water hazard on a golf course is now a picturesque lake in a park.

eagles, a fledgling great horned owl and native and migratory birds.

Built in 1995, Royal Oaks Golf Club was designed by the father and son team of Max Jalowiec, Sr. and Jr. The 18-hole course, which has been closed for several years, featured eight holes with water hazards in the form of lakes.

This is the Land Conservancy's second project in which a closed golf course has been converted into a park. In 2010, the Land Conservancy completed a transaction in which the former 237-acre Orchard Hills Golf Course in Chester Township became Orchard Hills Park, one of the Geauga Park District's most popular destinations.

The Lorain County Metro Parks system was formed in 1957 and has steadily grown to more than 9,000 acres. Since 1986, the number of programs offered by its naturalist department has grown from 386 to more than 1,600.

Trumbull County grain farm protects more land

W.I. Miller and Sons, a large grain farm located in Trumbull County's Gustavus Township, has permanently preserved another 476 acres of farmland, raising to 3,179 the total acreage protected by the family business.

Alex Czayka, eastern associate field director for the Land Conservancy, said the land-protection efforts by the Miller family will have a lasting, positive impact on the landscape and economy of northern Trumbull County, which depends on agriculture. The soils in this region are both rich in nutrients and well-drained, resulting in highly productive agriculture.

W.I. Miller and Sons grows corn, beans, wheat, barley and other grains on the property. Czayka said protection of the 476 acres ensures



An aerial view of part of the W.I. Miller and Sons farm.

that this land will be preserved for agricultural use in the future, thus supporting the local economy.

"W.I. Miller and Sons have set an amazing precedent for many other landowners in Trumbull County that have followed suit," Czayka said. "This has created one of the largest areas of conserved land protected by the Land Conservancy in our region. Robert, Rusty and Dean Miller have been great advocates of our work."

In Trumbull and Ashtabula counties, the Land Conservancy now holds 67 conservation easements permanently protecting nearly 10,000 acres of farmland. The total includes 42 parcels and 5,996 acres preserved in Trumbull County alone.

Richfield voters approve acquisition of former camp

In the wake of a landmark vote in which Richfield residents approved ballot measures for the acquisition of the 336-acre former Camp Crowell Hilaka, the Land Conservancy is now helping the fledgling Richfield Joint Recreation District explore additional public funding sources and potential uses for the property.

Two levies – one to purchase the former Girl Scout camp, the other to operate it – were approved by voters in the village of Richfield and Richfield Township in the November general election. The Land Conservancy, which had earlier negotiated a purchase and sale agreement for the property with the Girl Scouts of North East Ohio, praised the community for approving the measures.

GSNEO had closed the camp in 2011.

“This is a thoughtful, forward-thinking decision that will benefit all the residents of Richfield for generations to come,” said Joe Leslie, director of acquisitions for the Land Conservancy. “Our goal was to conserve this beautiful property, and the voters of Richfield should be congratulated for making it happen.”

The Land Conservancy spent more than a year searching for an end owner aligned with the organization’s conservation mission; that owner emerged when voters endorsed the acquisition by the RJRD. The Land Conservancy has since taken title to the property and is finalizing a purchase agreement with RJRD.



Kirby's Mill is one of the buildings on the Crowell Hilaka property.

At the same time, the Land Conservancy, which has extensive experience in applying for Clean Ohio grants and other public funding, is helping RJRD explore those options at no cost to the district. Leslie said each grant program has a different set of restrictions based on the purpose of the funding, and it will be up to the RJRD Board of Trustees to determine what portion or portions of the property would be appropriate for grant funding.

The recreation district's website states: “The RJRD Board of Trustees have considered this property and have found the natural resources present at Crowell Hilaka to be a valuable asset that would allow for the development of an urban recreational area for the community of Richfield as well as a tourist draw for visitors near and far.”

The Crowell Hilaka property is located between Broadview and Oviatt roads, north of State Route 303. It has hiking trails, two lakes, opportunities for overnight accommodations, a large capacity dining hall with a commercial grade kitchen, as well as historic homes once owned by the Oviatt and Neal families and inventor James Kirby.

The Crowell Hilaka property was in danger of being developed or timbered before the community stepped to acquire the greenspace. The effort was spearheaded by the Land Conservancy, village and township officials, the Friends of Crowell Hilaka, the Richfield Historical Society and others.

Campaign would make lifeboat station a public park



The park would be the first village-owned coastal property in Marblehead.

The Land Conservancy and the Village of Marblehead have launched a campaign to create a new coastal park that will provide public access for fishing, hiking and bird-watching. The campaign seeks to raise funds to acquire the two-acre Marblehead Lifeboat Station property and make it a public park.

Rich Cochran, president and CEO of the Land Conservancy, said it is “an extraordinary opportunity” to make the site – already platted for a residential subdivision by the current owner – a public asset instead of another private development. More than 80 percent of the Lake Erie shoreline in Ohio is developed or privately owned.

Cochran said even if the Land Conservancy succeeds in securing public grants for the project, there will be a critical need for matching funds. Those wishing to make a tax-deductible donation to Western Reserve Land Conservancy

to fund the project can do so at www.wrlandconservancy.org.

In addition to providing public access to Lake Erie, the new park will complement regional tourism, which is the source of more than 2,800 jobs in Ottawa County. The inlet at the property provides great views of the lake and a rock breakwall at the west end protects this cove. According to the Land Conservancy, if the threat of development is removed, the lake will be protected from the effects of sedimentation, pesticides, nutrients and chemicals that typically result from the conversion of open space.

This project also preserves a bit of history. The property is next to a portion of the historic site of the Marblehead Lifeboat Station, which was established in 1874 as one of the original seven lifeboat stations on the Great Lakes.

Making it easier to support our mission

By *Nancy McCann*

As a reader of Landline, our quarterly newsletter, you are already a supporter of Western Reserve Land Conservancy or one of our valued partners. We are so grateful that you have chosen to invest in our mission. Thank you.



Nancy McCann

We have made changes that will make it even easier to contribute to the Land Conservancy:

- We have streamlined our online donation system and changed our levels of giving, incorporating native trees and wildflowers, with Cherry Tree being the major gift level. With a single click, you can make a contribution and indicate where you would like your donation directed – to the area of greatest need, land conservation, land stewardship or urban initiatives.
- Our corporate engagement program, headed by Jon Logue, provides your company and its employees with volunteering opportunities in the community, especially for the company's "Annual Day of Caring" for their employees. We consider our companies to be our partners.
- We are expanding our volunteer program to include everything from envelope-stuffing to tree-planting. Check out the volunteer link on our website and read the message by volunteer Dee Belew on the back page of this newsletter.
- We are enhancing our planned giving initiative, the White Oak Legacy Society. Members of this special group of Land Conservancy supporters have made a planned gift to our organization or included us in their will or trust. White Oak Legacy Society members are recognized at an annual event held in their honor and in the Land Conservancy's publications. In addition, a local artist designs his or her vision of the "Art of Caring," and at the dinner, this creation is presented to a Legacy Society member who exemplifies the art of caring through their leadership, passion and vision.

I hope you will take a look at our giving opportunities, including those discussed in the stories on pages 8-9, and decide to support our work. If you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at (440) 528-4153 or nmccann@wrlandconservancy.org. Thank you.

Nancy

Nancy

McCann is the Chief Development Officer for the Land Conservancy.

What bequests and estate planning

At Western Reserve Land Conservancy, we are always looking to the future. That's because we must make decisions today about natural areas, farmland and urban neighborhoods that will impact future generations. We are, in effect, making decisions that will improve the lives of our great-great-grandchildren.

Estate planning can be one of the greatest gifts you can give your family. At the same time, you will have peace of mind knowing that by planning ahead you will leave your final expression of what has mattered most to you during your lifetime.

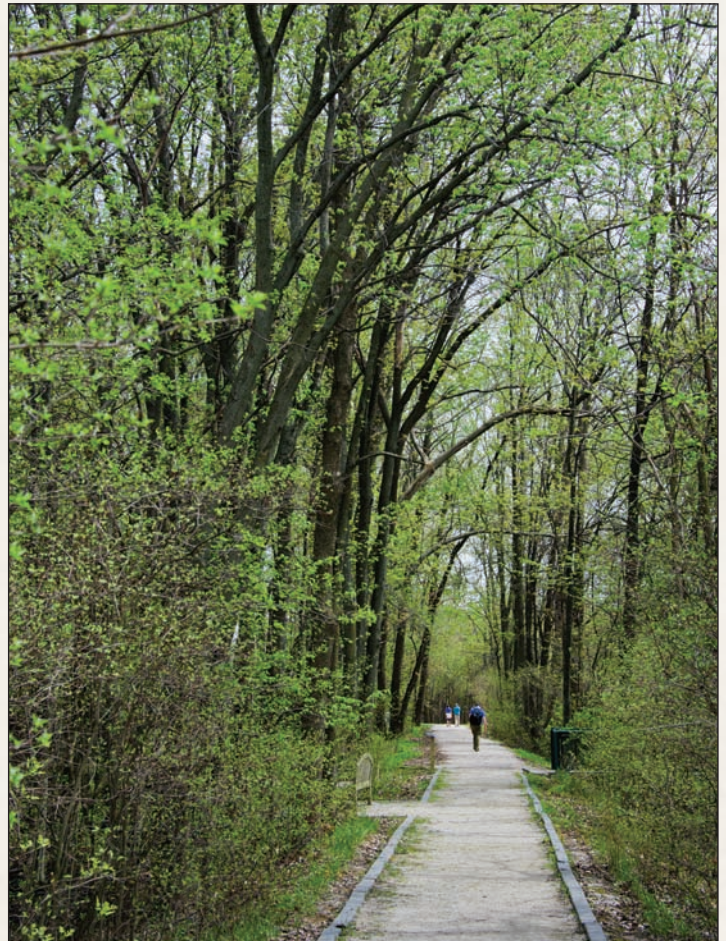
A gift in your will can help you realize your charitable objective

A will is a simple document that directs the distribution of your property after your lifetime. You may wish to make a charitable gift to support Western Reserve Land Conservancy but don't feel that you should part with your assets now. With a bequest, you maintain control of your assets during your lifetime while knowing that your gift will help shape the future of the Land Conservancy.

Giving a percentage of your estate protects your heirs

By designating a percentage of your estate rather than a dollar amount, you guard against inadvertently reducing provisions for other beneficiaries. In the happy event that your estate increases, all beneficiaries share in the profits.

Example: Darlene M. would like to make a bequest of \$100,000 to support Western Reserve Land Conservancy. Her estate is currently worth



mean to you, your family and the Land Conservancy

\$500,000, and she intends that her children divide the remainder equally, so they each would receive \$100,000. She didn't think about a backup plan if her assets were to decrease during her lifetime, in which case each of the children would receive less than the intended \$100,000. However, if she decides to leave them each 20% of her estate, they all would share equally – both in gains and losses.

Designating the purpose of a bequest

Unrestricted: The most useful type of bequest is unrestricted, allowing the funds to be allocated to the area of greatest need at Western Reserve Land Conservancy.

Restricted: You may designate your bequest to support a special program or project that reflects your interest and/or family wishes.

Executor of your estate

If your written will is to be administered in a way that faithfully reflects your inner wishes, you should think carefully about whom to designate as your executor:

- *A spouse, relative or trusted friend or advisor*, whose age and circumstances make it likely that he or she will be available to serve when needed, is likely to be attuned to your wishes and your family's needs.
- *An institution, such as a bank, has the advantages of expertise and neutrality, in case of family disagreements.*

Changing your will

Writing "void" on your will, or making changes directly on your original will, is not a valid way to revise it. You must create a codicil and have it signed by two witnesses. The witnesses cannot benefit from your will and cannot inherit under your will.

Consider these simple options

You may have other assets that you haven't considered as giving options; however, they may be a simple alternative. You can name Western Reserve Land Conservancy as the beneficiary of your life insurance policy or pension plan.

Simply complete and submit a change-of-beneficiary form with your insurance company or retirement plan administrator. The full amount of these assets will pass to Western Reserve Land Conservancy outside of probate, and, therefore, will not be subject to estate or income tax. You can then leave other assets to heirs.

Next steps

Planning your estate is very personal and is different for everyone. If you would like to have a confidential discussion about your estate plan, or if you need draft language for your advisor, please contact Nancy McCann at (440) 528-4153.

We would love to welcome you to the White Oak Legacy Society, a society that is comprised of individuals who know the value of leaving a legacy through their estate plan.

White Oak Legacy Society members are recognized at an annual event held in their honor and in the Land Conservancy's publications. Each year, a local artist designs their vision of the "Art of Caring," which is presented to a Legacy Society member who exemplifies the art of caring through their leadership, passion and vision.



Bill Abell and Lucky walk the Ashtabula County property.

I want to help make the vision a reality

My family has owned a 221-acre farm in Ashtabula County since 1865. This property is my "passion," a source of great enjoyment as I maintain and improve it through the seasons. I share vegetables from my garden in the summer, and firewood from the woods in the winter. Picnics with friends give me the opportunity to share the fun of being in the country.

The ongoing, rapid disappearance of farmland in northeastern Ohio is alarming and discouraging. To protect my property from future division and development, I partnered with the Western Reserve Land Conservancy in the creation and holding of a conservation easement. With our enthusiastically shared goals, forming this alliance was an easy decision for me.

Because the Land Conservancy is at the forefront of farmland preservation, parkland expansion and urban conservation initiatives in our corner of the state, moving aggressively on all fronts, I want to do what I can to support these vital efforts, now and in the future. One way I am accomplishing this is by becoming a White Oak Legacy Society member, leaving a bequest to the Land Conservancy. I can't think of a better way to help make the Land Conservancy's vision a reality!

Bill Abell

EVENTS



Firelands geology hike

The Land Conservancy's Firelands Chapter held a geology hike at Erie MetroParks' Castalia Quarry in Erie County. Hikers found fossils, learned about the area's limestone alvar geology and even saw rare ladies tresses.



YP hike in the park

The Land Conservancy Young Professionals group took a hike in the Cuyahoga Valley National Park to celebrate the Winter Solstice. The hike was at the amazing Ice Box Cave area in Boston Heights. More events are planned for 2015.



Chardon office opening

In December, 55 supporters, including Grand River Chapter members, partners, volunteers and staffers, attended an open house and fundraiser at our new Chardon office. Brett Rodstrom, vice president of eastern field operations for the Land Conservancy, gave the crowd an overview of our recent work and announced receipt of an office-renovation grant from the Cleveland Foundation's Lake-Geauga Fund.



Residents respond to open houses

Following a series of public open houses at the former Crowell Hilaka Girl Scout camp, Richfield voters approved two measures to purchase and maintain the property.



Hoot and Harvest Festival

The Land Conservancy's Medina Summit Chapter held its annual Hoot and Harvest Festival at the Hill 'n Dale Club in Montville Township. It featured food, a campfire and an exhibit of rehabilitated birds from the Medina Raptor Center.



Just for practice

The Land Conservancy allowed the Bloomfield Fire Department to use an old house on the Grand Valley Hunting Ranch property for training. The Land Conservancy-owned property is in Trumbull County.



Rokakis speaks at City Club

Jim Rokakis, director of the Land Conservancy's Thriving Communities Institute, spoke at the City Club of Cleveland. His topic was, "Building a new, better Cleveland in a post-foreclosure world."



CONSERVATION CALENDAR

► 'Making Waves' photo exhibit by Laura Watilo Blake

Through March 31
Western Reserve Land Conservancy
Conservation Center
3850 Chagrin River Road, Moreland Hills
Opening reception with Drink Local. Drink Tap. founder Erin Huber from 5-8 p.m. Feb. 25.

► Learn about farmland preservation

6:30-8 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 11
Sharon Town Hall
1322 Sharon Copley Road, Sharon Center

► Viewfinders Photography Club

1-3 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 21
Western Reserve Land Conservancy
Conservation Center
3850 Chagrin River Road, Moreland Hills
First of new club's monthly meetings. Includes refreshments and a winter hike (with your camera!) through Forest Ridge Preserve.

► Kids in the Snow

9 a.m.-noon, Saturday, March 7
Western Reserve Land Conservancy
Conservation Center
3850 Chagrin River Road, Moreland Hills
Winter activities for the whole family.

► Open house

9 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturday, April 11
Medina Marsh Conservation Center
4266 Fenn Road, Medina Township
Join the Medina Summit Chapter and the Medina County Park District for a gathering at our field office at the Medina Marsh Preserve.

► South Akron Greenway cleanup

9 a.m.-noon, Saturday, April 18
Haley's Run and Adam's Run, Akron

► Grand River cleanup

9 a.m.-2 p.m. Saturday, May 16
Lake County

► SAVE THE DATE!

Saturday, Aug. 29
Our EverGreen EverBlue gala returns!

For more information, contact Emily Bacha at ebacha@wrlandconservancy.org.



Western Reserve Land Conservancy

OUR LAND. OUR LEGACY.

3850 Chagrin River Road
Moreland Hills, Ohio 44022

Non-Profit Org.
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VOLUNTEERING

Helping the Land Conservancy is one small way to give back

My volunteer work with Western Reserve Land Conservancy involves a variety of tasks.

I answer phones, file documents, greet visitors at the Land Conservancy's Moreland Hills headquarters and do other miscellaneous jobs for the staff. Volunteering keeps me involved with what I am passionate about – conservation. I have a deep love for our farm and a strong desire to keep it undeveloped. As a result of working with the Land Conservancy over a period of years, we now have a conservation easement on our property. The conservation easement permanently preserves our land now and in the future.

Our family's work with the Land Conservancy on the conservation easement inspired me to become a volunteer. Volunteering has opened my eyes to the high standards, commitment and work the Land Conservancy does. I feel volunteering is one small way, a day a week, I can give back. There are many volunteer opportunities here. Who knows? I might try a few others.

Dee Belew
Auburn Township



The Belew family has permanently preserved 68 acres in Geauga County. The property includes farmland and natural areas. Interested in volunteering with the Land Conservancy? Contact us at volunteer@wrlandconservancy.org.

Contact Us

Geauga, Lake, Ashtabula, Trumbull, Mahoning, Portage, Columbiana, Jefferson and Carroll counties

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Cuyahoga County and urban work across Ohio

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Field Offices

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(330) 836-2271

Chardon

102 East Park Street, Chardon, Ohio 44024

Medina Marsh Conservation Center

4266 Fenn Road, Medina, Ohio 44256.

Firelands

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140 East Market Street, Suite 150, Orrville, Ohio 44667

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Funding for this edition of Landline was generously provided by the Sandra L. and Dennis B. Haslinger Family Foundation



Printed on recycled paper with vegetable based inks.

