Western Reserve Land Conservancy
OUR LAND. OUR LEGACY.
www.wrlandconservancy.org

Spring 2011

Landline

A Western Reserve Land Conservancy newsletter celebrating land conservation in Cuyahoga, Summit and Stark counties

Wildflowers: harbingers of spring



Chris Szell
Associate Director of Regional Conservation

Spring is around the corner! To be exact, the Spring or Vernal Equinox will occur on March 20.

After what has seemed to be a very long winter, I always look forward as the days start to slowly grow longer. The equinox marks the day where the sun shines directly on the equator and the length of day and night are nearly equal in all parts of the world. Following March 20, daylight continues to grow and night time becomes compressed.

The equinox is a reminder that all things are cyclical,

See SZELL page 2

Greenway links Chagrin Falls parks



The project provides the public with scenic views of the Chagrin River from Cleveland and Main streets and complements redevelopment plans for a closed paper mill.

Western Reserve Land Conservancy worked with the Village of Chagrin Falls and a local business group, Spillway LLC, to preserve 83 acres on an approximately two-mile stretch of the Chagrin River, a State Scenic River.

This project provides a linkage between two village-owned properties — Riverside Park and Whitesburg Park — and complements plans to redevelop the former Chase Bag/Ivex Paper Mill.

The greenway provides habitat for two rare dragonflies, and numerous native wildlife species.

It also preserves mature forests, high quality wetlands and steep slope habitat.

The greenway is owned by the village and is permanently preserved through a passive park conservation easement held by the Land Conservancy.

The village is planning a trail system that will link these two parks and connect downtown Chagrin Falls to the redeveloped Chase/Ivex site.

This project was made possible through a grant from the Clean Ohio Conservation Fund.

CONSERVATION CALENDAR

- **March 19, 3-6 p.m.:** Triple Tap, the Land Conservancy's annual celebration of spring, at Patterson Fruit Farm, 8765 Mulberry Road, Chester Township. Bring a potluck dish.
- **April 17, 1:30 p.m.:** Bratenahl Plant and Bird Walk. Meet at Corning and Lakeshore Boulevard. Bring good hiking shoes.
- **April 30, 9 a.m.-noon:** Adam's Run/Haley's Run greenway cleanup in Akron. For more information, call Peg Bobel at (330) 864-6033 or Andrea Irland at (330) 657-2378.
- **May 21:** Conservation Rocks at the Beachland Ballroom and Tavern in Cleveland.

For more details, go to:
www.wrlandconservancy.org

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Metroparks chief on region: He's a fan



SPOTLIGHT
Brian Zimmerman

Brian Zimmerman, who is marking his first anniversary as executive director of Cleveland Metroparks, said collaboration can be a powerful tool for those who preserve land.

"I think when you get like-minded conservation agencies together, the sky is the limit," said Zimmerman, the former Milwaukee County Parks and Recreation and Culture Department operations chief who in 2010 replaced retiring Metroparks director Vern Hartenburg.

Zimmerman, who grew up on a farm near Madison, Wisc., said he sees the potential for increased partnering between the Metroparks and the Land

See FAN page 2

Cochran receives conservation honor



Rich Cochran, who started as the lone employee of what is now Western Reserve Land Conservancy and now heads an organization that has preserved nearly 23,000 acres in northern Ohio, has been named the recipient of the 2010 Conservation Award by The Cleveland Museum of Natural History. Cochran, the president and CEO of the Land Conservancy since 1996, was honored during an awards ceremony. He was presented with the award on behalf of the Museum's Board of Trustees.

Good news: Tax incentives renewed



The Land Conservancy is applauding the renewal of a federal tax incentive for private landowners – especially working family farmers – who protect their land with a voluntary conservation easement.

The Land Conservancy endorsed the move by Congress to renew the incentive, which had expired at the end of 2009. The tax incentive has helped the Land Conservancy work with willing landowners in our community to preserve about 23,000 acres of productive agricultural lands and natural areas.

Conservation-minded landowners now have until December 31, 2011 to take advantage of a significant tax deduction for donating a voluntary conservation agreement to permanently protect important natural or historic resources on their land. When landowners donate a conservation easement, they maintain ownership and management of their land and can sell or pass the land on to their heirs, while foregoing future development rights. For more information, call (440) 729-9621 or send e-mail to info@wrlandconservancy.org.

Szell

From page 1

and that our landscapes if properly protected and stewarded will be renewed, coming alive after a winter's slumber. That renewal is expressed all around us and some of the earliest harbingers of spring for me have always been the blooming of the redbud tree – a woodland edge tree with bright pink to purplish pea-shaped flowers that flower before its leaves appear – coupled with the showy white flowers of the dogwood tree.

However, as I await these blooming trees, I also begin the search for the more secretive



A spring favorite, bloodroot

blooming wildflowers of our region. These are your woodland wildflowers that poke their heads through the fallen leaves of last fall before the trees above them begin to leaf out. There are too many to list, but some of my favorites are bloodroot, trillium, anemone, toothwort, yellow trout lily, dutchman's breeches and dwarf crested iris. Paths that you have walked possibly hundreds of times suddenly look very different.

These wildflowers tell a story of a healthy forest. Woodlands that are not overbrowsed by deer or impacted by invasive plant species will display a rich diversity of spring wildflowers.

Check out your local park district, native plant society and the Cleveland Museum of Natural History for spring wildflower walks, which are likely to begin as early as April.

Fan

From page 1

Conservancy, which together have preserved about 44,000 acres in northern Ohio. He pointed to the possible restoration of a cold-water stream in the Chagrin River Valley as one such opportunity.

It did not take long for Zimmerman to warm up to the region.

"I've got to say Cleveland is nothing but a fantastic city. The people are proud of the region and very positive about its future," said Zimmerman, who lives in Strongsville with wife Jill and son Carter, 8. The family is involved in youth wrestling, flag football and Cub Scouts.

Zimmerman said his rural upbringing helped nurture a love of the outdoors and land conservation. Now, as head of one of the best urban park systems in the nation, he is leading the development of "Cleveland Metroparks 2020: The Emerald Necklace Centennial Plan," a strategic initiative for the Metroparks, which will celebrate its 100th birthday in 2017.

The strategic vision portion of the plan is scheduled to be completed by the end of this year. It has involved public meetings, interviews, surveys and focus groups. Ultimately, the park system hopes to come up with recommendations that also align with its purpose.

"We look to stay true to our mission: conservation, education and recreation," Zimmerman said.

The park system consists of more than 21,000 acres in 16 reservations. The Metroparks tax district includes all of Cuyahoga County and Hinckley Township in Medina County; the park district also owns land in Lake, Lorain and Summit counties.

Kids in the Snow

January 23, 2011

The Rookery, Munson Township



The Land Conservancy's Scott Hill discusses the basics of identifying animal tracks.





Clockwise, from above, a lesson prompts a question from one child; sure signs of beaver activity; the fireplace became a popular spot as the day wore on; and trekking across the footbridge.





Have you remembered the Land Conservancy in your will?

White Oak LEGACY SOCIETY

Find out how you can make a lasting commitment to future generations by including Western Reserve Land Conservancy in your estate planning. For information on our White Oak Legacy Society, call (440) 729-9621, e-mail rkoonce@wrlandconservancy.org or visit www.wrlandconservancy.org.

NEWS FROM THE LAND CONSERVANCY

'Conservation Rocks' is May 21



Mark your calendars for May 21, when the Land Conservancy will stage its second "Conservation Rocks" concert at Cleveland's Beachland Ballroom and Tavern. This year's event will feature musicians who also work in the field of conservation in northern Ohio, including our own Pete McDonald (pictured).

Visit www.wrlandconservancy.org for more information.

Two join Land Conservancy





Koonce **Gay**

Director of Development Robert Koonce and Manager, Corporate and Foundation Relations Erin Gay are the newest members of the Land Conservancy team. Robert, a Cleveland native, and Erin, who is from Houston, both worked for University Hospitals Health System before joining the staff.

In addition to a wealth of fundraising experience, Robert brings a love of the outdoors and a sense of humor. He and his family live in Cleveland Heights.

Erin, who lives in Shaker Heights, was a senior communications specialist at UH before joining us. Her work here will combine her passions for writing and the environment.

Moreland Hills mulling HQ plan



The Land Conservancy is seeking permission from the Village of Moreland Hills to put an addition on a Chagrin River Road home and move its headquarters there. The property is adjacent to the village's Forest Ridge Preserve and across the street from the Cleveland Metroparks Polo Fields. We will keep you posted as the project progresses.

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To receive event notices or Landline online, e-mail us at gpausch@wrlandconservancy.org.

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Our mission, our vision

Western Reserve Land Conservancy seeks to preserve the scenic beauty, rural character and natural resources of northern Ohio. We want to help create a network of interconnected natural areas, working land and green space throughout the region. We envision northern Ohio as a stunningly beautiful and healthy place to live, work and play.