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

Summer 2011

Landline

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

Love of nature comes naturally



Eddie Dengg
Vice President

The thrilling sound of barred owls filled the air.

Naturalists say it sounds like "who cooks, who cooks, who cooks for you all…" To me it just sounds like morning. As I continued my stroll in the meadow, soon I met a mother doe and her fawn, still spotted. They looked cautiously at me, gave a few tentative flicks of their white tails, then just nonchalantly resumed their breakfasts as if nothing were out of place.

Of course, nothing was out of place. I belonged there at that moment, and so did

See NATURE page 2

Land bank interests Stark and Summit

Stark and Summit counties are among those now talking with the Land Conservancy's Thriving Communities Institute and its director, Jim Rokakis, about setting up land banks.



The Land Conservancy helped create this urban greenway in Akron.

Rokakis, who, as Cuyahoga County treasurer, was instrumental in establishing that county's land bank, has been meeting with government leaders throughout the region since Thriving Communities was launched earlier this year. He is advocating the creation of county land banks as a way to help transform cities now plagued with vacant and abandoned properties.

The Community Building Partnership of Stark County hired Thriving Communities to host a series of informational meetings on land-banking; the first such session was held in May before a working meeting of the Stark County Board of Commissioners.

According to Rokakis, Summit County is also interested in creating a land bank with the help of Thriving Communities.

Rokakis has held initial discussions about the initiative with Summit County Executive Russ Pry and expects to meet with Akron Mayor Don Plusquellic.

"County governments across northern Ohio now realize that land banks are needed to allow their communities to recover from the foreclosure crisis," Rokakis said.

CONSERVATION CALENDAR

- **Aug. 14, 9 a.m.:** The third annual Yoga on the Preserve, sponsored by Cleveland Yoga and the Land Conservancy. Join us at the Geauga Park District's Orchard Hills Preserve. Free.
- **Sept. 8-10**: Eighth annual Conservation Symposium at The Cleveland Museum of Natural History. Fee is $15 per person with registration before Sept. 2; $25 after Sept. 2. For more information, call (216) 231-1177 or 1-800-317-9155, Ext. 3279.
- **Sept. 9:** EverGreen EverBlue, our annual benefit, in Hunting Valley. For details, visit www.evergreeneverblue.org

For more details, go to:

www.wrlandconservancy.org

Contact Western Reserve Land Conservancy

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He's keeping watch over the Rocky

In order to protect the Rocky River, Jared Bartley must pay close attention to its lifeblood – tiny feeder streams that are often negatively impacted by development.



SPOTLIGHT
Jared Bartley

The health of small waterways such as Baldwin and Abram creeks in southwestern Cuyahoga County and Plum Creek in Medina County is often overlooked when assessing the quality of the Rocky.

"The smaller the creek, the easier it is to ignore," said Bartley, who works for the Cuyahoga Soil and Water Conservation District and serves as the Rocky River Watershed Coordinator.

Bartley, a southwestern Ohio

See ROCKY page 2

Land Conservancy's new home will be in Moreland Hills



The Land Conservancy plans to add a wing to a restored Century Home in Moreland Hills and relocate its headquarters there in 2012. The Village of Moreland Hills has approved a conditional use permit for the project on Chagrin River Road, across from the Cleveland Metroparks Polo Fields. Construction will start later this year.

The go-ahead for project was made possible by the generosity of a Land Conservancy donor who wishes to remain anonymous. Other friends have provided additional support for the project.

Conversion and expansion of the existing historic home — the core of which was built in the 1830s as one of the first one-room schoolhouses in the Connecticut Western Reserve — will take place on one portion of the 22-acre parcel. Another piece will become a village park, while yet another portion will be added to the adjacent Forest Ridge Preserve, which the Land Conservancy helped preserve.

Land Conservancy President and CEO Rich Cochran said the building will use cost-effective green technologies. Renowned architect Tony Paskevich is designing the entire project. The former owners, the Lang family, helped make the project possible.

Nature

From page 1



those deer. Feeling the gaze of a wild animal, then feeling its acceptance is an awesome and humbling experience.

Too often, we forget that what grows in a forest or field is not just tree, flower or bird. These are bricks and mortar in the cathedral of nature. And, like being in a man-made cathedral, simply standing there absorbing the sounds, smells and sights of nature stirs something mysterious in the soul. People and nature are intimately intertwined.

We inherently love nature even when we do not understand why.

Whether you live in a rural area or within one of our northern Ohio cities, you are part of nature, and you can feel its pull on your spirit. Nature and open land are the foundation of our human ecosystem. A community cannot be built on an unhealthy foundation if it is to thrive for the long term.

When you see a community in decay, it is usually because one or more critical ingredients are missing. Sometimes it is because nature is missing.

By creating an interconnected network of open space throughout northern Ohio, the Land Conservancy is helping ensure we all have a bit of nature in our lives.

Like deer and barred owls, people need good habitat: places to live, work, play and recharge. Join us in our mission to ensure that our region thrives.

Rocky

From page 1

native who holds a geology degree from Case Western Reserve University, is responsible for a multitude of conservation initiatives in the Rocky River watershed, a 294 square-mile network of neighborhoods, farms, forests, parks, roads and streams that stretches from Medina to Lake Erie. He works closely with the Rocky River Watershed Council, which is chaired by Dan Miltner, president of the Land Conservancy's Medina Summit Chapter.

> "The smaller the creek, the easier it is to ignore."
>
> **— JARED BARTLEY**

Bartley said the Rocky River's main stem, West Branch and East Branch "are in pretty good condition," particularly in Cleveland's western suburbs, where Cleveland Metroparks property protects about 28 contiguous miles of the stream.

A group that includes Medina, Medina Township, the Land Conservancy and the Cleveland Museum of Natural History is now working on protecting a section of the West Branch in Medina County.

"We work with our partners whenever we can," Bartley said.

Bartley served a two-year agroforestry stint in the Peace Corps in El Salvador and worked on watershed plans in western Maryland and West Virginia before joining CSWCD in 2007.

He and his wife Christy have three sons, Jeffrey, 5, Ryan, 3, and Sam, who is two months old. They live in Cleveland's Slavic Village neighborhood.

Conservation Rocks!

May 21, 2011

Beachland Ballroom, Cleveland



An all-star jam capped off the memorable evening.

More than 260 people turned out for the second Conservation Rocks! concert at the Beachland Ballroom. This year's show featured the music of those who work in the field of conservation: the Land Conservancy's Pete McDonald, who performed with Pete McDonald & the Black Oaks.; The Swamp Rattlers (featuring staffers from Geauga Park District), Fat City (with Harvey Webster of the Cleveland Museum of Natural History) and Drake Hollow featuring Steve Madewell (Lake Metroparks) and Al Bonnis (U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service).



Pete McDonald on stage.



Spring cleaning in Akron

Volunteers picked up everything from old tires to Styrofoam cups at the April 30 cleanup of Adam's Run and Haley's Run in southeast Akron. The Land Conservancy was one of the sponsors.



Bratenahl Plant and Bird Walk

April 17, 2011



Participants gathered for a group photo.

Have you remembered the Land Conservancy in your will?

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.

White Oak LEGACY SOCIETY

Hike leaders sought

The Land Conservancy is looking for people who are willing to serve as volunteer hike leaders. You do not have to be a naturalist to be a hike leader, just a willingness to help organize walks in your region. The Land Conservancy is also considering formation of a hiking club. To volunteer as a hike leader, please e-mail kbihler@wrlandconservancy.org.

SAVE THE DATE!

EverGreen EverBlue

Sept. 9, 2011

Chagrin River Road

Hunting Valley

For more information, call (440) 729-9621

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Land Conservancy

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

Yes, I want to join the Land Conservancy.

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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.