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

Fall 2011

Landline

A Western Reserve Land Conservancy newsletter celebrating land conservation in Mahoning, Portage and Trumbull counties



STAFF SPOTLIGHT

Scott Hill

Scott Hill grew up in Russell Township and spent his childhood working on a nearby farm. After watching that farm become a residential development, Hill became more determined to find a way to help farmers find realistic and advantageous ways to preserve their land.

Today, Hill, the Land Conservancy's eastern field director, leads all aspects of the land protection program in Trumbull, Portage and Mahoning counties, including farmland preservation, the securing of conservation easements and community outreach.

"The Land Conservancy takes pride in having a 'big tent' mentality, and it works," Scott said. "We are working to form partner-

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Land Conservancy preserves first Mahoning Co. parcels

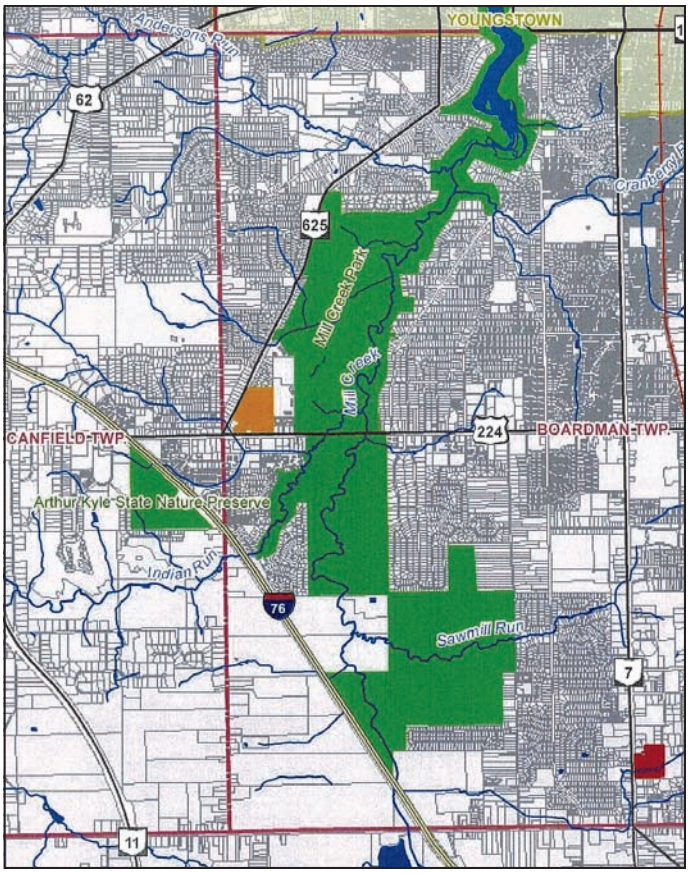
The Land Conservancy has recorded its first two conservation easements in Mahoning County.

Humility of Mary Health Partners, which owns and manages a hospital network in the Mahoning Valley, has donated two easements totaling 22 acres. One of the easements is on a 17.2-acre tract that is one parcel removed from the Mill Creek Golf Course, the Boardman Township property owned by Mill Creek MetroParks.

Humility of Mary's network includes St. Elizabeth Health Center in Youngstown, St. Joseph Health Center in Warren and the new St. Elizabeth Boardman Health Center in Boardman Township.

During the construction of the Boardman Health Center on state Route 7, the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency ruled that HMHP would need to mitigate the loss of wetlands there with conservation easements on both the project site and on newly created, off-site wetlands.

HMHP has done so through two conservation easements. One is on a nearly 5-acre, forested riparian parcel adjacent to the newly constructed health center. The second easement is a 17.2-acre forested tract with wetlands along state routes 224 and 625, in Boardman.



The rust-colored parcel is the 17.2-acre parcel preserved by Humility of Mary Health Partners in Boardman Township, while the area shown in red is the second conservation easement site.

"These are natural areas conservation easements which will help to protect green space in an urbanized community," said Scott Hill, the Land Conservancy's eastern field director. "We have worked with Mill Creek MetroParks on a variety of projects in the past and expect to partner with them even more often in the future."

Mill Creek, the first park district in Ohio, has 4,400 acres of public lands in seven townships and three cities.

LTA president praises Land Conservancy's work

One of the nation's top conservationists described the Land Conservancy as "an extraordinary civic institution" and applauded the preservation work done by the organization in northern Ohio.



Rand Wentworth spoke at EverGreen EverBlue.

Rand Wentworth, president of the Washington, D.C.-based Land Trust Alliance, of which the Land Conservancy is a member, spoke Sept. 9 at EverGreen EverBlue, the Land Conservancy's annual benefit. This year's event, which was held at the recently preserved Stoneybrook Farm in Hunting Valley, drew a crowd of more than 600 people.

LTA is a national organization representing more than 1,700 land trusts.

"(The Land Conservancy) is at the top of the list," Wentworth said.

Wentworth had earlier toured some preserved properties with Rich Cochran, the Land Conservancy's president and CEO. The properties included the Adam's-Haley's runs urban greenway project in Akron, farmland and some of the preserved land in the Chagrin River valley. Wentworth said the formation of the Land Conservancy through the merger of eight local land trusts in 2006 and the addition of Grand River Partners three years later "bore extraordinary fruit."

He added, "It is just amazing to see what you are accomplishing."

Wentworth, who was vice president of the Trust for Public Land before joining LTA in 2002, is a graduate of Yale University and holds an MBA in finance from Cornell University.

Hill

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ships with farmers, naturalists, hunters, fisherman, backpackers and boaters. These groups have not always shared the same views on conservation, land use and the environment, but at the end of the day this is about the land and making certain that the various outdoor experiences that we have all enjoyed are available for our children and grandchildren."

Before joining the Land Conservancy, Scott was self-employed, as owner of both Headwaters Wildlife Management Inc. and Grand River Timberframes. He has also worked as a commercial fisherman in Alaska and as a deputy sheriff for Geauga County. He has been a board member of multiple organizations, including Chagrin River Land Conservancy, National Wild Turkey Federation, Whitetails Unlimited, and Natural Lands Conservancy.

Scott holds a bachelor degree in biology from Cleveland State University and has completed a graduate outdoor education course at Ohio State University's Franz Theodore Stone Laboratory in Put-In-Bay.

Scott, his wife Holly and their daughters Bailey and Brigid live in Orwell. For fun, he spends time outdoors with his family, where they enjoy canoeing, fishing, hunting and hiking.



Thomas



Owen



Davis



Leslie



Boehnlein



Schiffman

Bob Owen promoted

Bob Owen has been named the Land Conservancy's new general counsel, replacing the retiring Ed Meyers. Owen, who lives in Chesterland, has been on the Land Conservancy legal staff since 2006. He is a graduate of Hiram College and Cleveland-Marshall College of Law.

The Land Conservancy also welcomes:

- Die-hard Florida Gators fan and Shaker Heights resident **LeAnn Davis**, our new conservation attorney. The Florida native worked for six years as a real estate attorney at Thompson Hine in Cleveland.
- **Robin Darden Thomas,** land bank program director for Thriving Communities Institute. The Parma resident's career in public service includes stints as interim treasurer and chief deputy treasurer of Cuyahoga County.
- Conservation project manager **Jeffery A. Schiffman**, who has worked in site acquisition in the private and public sectors. Jeffery was raised in Oberlin in Lorain County and now lives in Shaker Heights.
- Medina County native **Paul Boehnlein**, our new GIS and conservation planning specialist. Paul comes from the Muskingum Watershed District, where he was a GIS Technician.
- **Joe Leslie** of Aurora, our new land acquisition specialist. Joe comes to us from Howard Hanna, where he created a successful real estate practice.

A get-together in Warren

August 18, 2011

National Packard Museum









The Land Conservancy's first welcome event in Trumbull County was hosted by Patsy Kouvas (speaking, top), John Pogue (top right) and his wife Marilyn. Guests heard Land Conservancy President and CEO Rich Cochran talk about the organization's work in Trumbull and Mahoning counties as well as about the Thriving Communities Institute. Among those attending the event at the National Packard Museum were, lower left, Dawn Speece and Chuck Joseph, along with, lower right, Patricia Spencer, left, John and Mary Payiavlas.



Friends greet Ed at a surprise retirement party at the home of Trustee Kathy Leavenworth.

One of the good guys takes down his shingle



Ed Meyers

Ed Meyers, who in 2003 left private law practice to head the legal team for what would become the largest land conservancy in Ohio, has retired.

Meyers had been a partner with the law firm of Arter & Hadden for 30 years before joining the staff of the Chagrin River Land Conservancy, one of eight local land trusts that merged in 2006 to form Western Reserve Land Conservancy. As the Land Conservancy's general counsel, he headed the legal team that oversaw the protection of more than 23,000 acres.

"It is impossible to express how grateful we are to Ed," said Rich Cochran, the Land Conservancy's president and CEO. "He has been a stalwart at the Land Conservancy. He and (his wife) Fran are part of our family in a deep and special way."

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

CONSERVATION CALENDAR

- **Oct. 15, 5-8 p.m.:** The Medina Summit Chapter's annual Hoot 'n' Harvest Festival at the Hill 'n' Dale Club, 3605 Poe Road, Montville Township. Bring a potluck dish to share; the Land Conservancy will provide hot dogs and fixings. There will be hayrides, pumpkin-painting and a campfire, as well as an owl walk. RSVP khibhler@wrlandconservancy.org.
- **Oct. 26, 7-9 p.m.:** Rocky River Watershed Council presents information on the current status of land protection in the Rocky River Watershed and future priorities for preservation at the Cleveland Metroparks Rocky River Nature Center, 24000 Valley Parkway, North Olmsted.
- **Nov. 12**: 'Fly the Alley' fly fishing expo at The Lodge at Geneva-on-the-Lake, 4888 North Broadway (state Route 534), Geneva-on-the-Lake. Day passes are $15; weekend packages are available through the lodge. Visit www.flythealley.com.

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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.