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

Spring 2011

Landline

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

Nature also practices conservation



Scott Hill
Eastern Field Director

This winter has seemed unusually long and harsh.

The snows came early and have stayed virtually all winter. In January, I was sitting in the woods along the Grand River in Trumbull County and I saw something I had never seen before: woodpeckers, cardinals and blue jays were storing grain and seeds like squirrels.

In the winter, I spend time on the weekends feeding wildlife. I maintain several feeders that provide food that birds and wildlife can get to when the rest of the

See HILL page 2

504-acre tract becomes a park

The Land Conservancy played a key role in creating the 504-acre Burton D. and Margaret Clark Morgan Preserve, the newest addition to the Portage Park District.



The Portage Park District has now focused its attention on making the new Burton D. and Margaret Clark Morgan Preserve accessible to the public.

The Shalersville Township preserve, which contains wetlands and forests, was created when The Burton D. Morgan Foundation and The Margaret Clark Morgan Foundation worked with the Land Conservancy to preserve the land for the park district. It is now the district's largest park.

More than 20 years ago, Burton Morgan purchased the property, which is south of the Ohio Turnpike and east of state Route 44, in the hope of building an international jetport there. The plan never materialized, but Morgan, along with Harold Morrison, farmed the land until his death in 2003.

Christine Craycroft, the park district's executive director, said now that the land has been preserved, the focus will shift to finding the funds needed to make the preserve accessible to the public. She said the preserve will be a passive park used for hiking, birding and educa-

See PARK page 2

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 21, 7:30 p.m.:** Mary Garvin, professor in Oberlin College's Department of Biology, speaks on "The Ecology and Natural History of Ohio's Vermilion River Watershed" in the Pritchard Room of the Hiram College Library.
- **April 22-24**: "Who's Your Mama? Earth Day Festival, Kent.
- **May 21:** Conservation Rocks at the Beachland Ballroom and Tavern in Cleveland.

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

Contact Western Reserve Land Conservancy

Eastern Field Office:
Scott Hill, Eastern Field Director
(440) 773-5582 or
shill@wrlandconservancy.org

Painesville Field Office:
Brett Rodstrom, Eastern Field Director (440) 357-4837 or
brodstrom
@wrlandconservancy.org

Native Ohioan now at helm of Mill Creek

In his first three months as the new executive director of Mill Creek MetroParks, Clarke Johnson has been a meeting guest of just about every service club in the Mahoning Valley.

And he has done more listening than talking.



SPOTLIGHT
Clarke Johnson

"I'm trying to get as much input as possible from the community," said Johnson, who was named to the position at the end of 2010 by the park system's Board of Commissioners.

Johnson, who grew up in the Columbus area and did his undergraduate studies at Ohio State University, said he wants to get as much feedback as pos-

See JOHNSON 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.

Hill

From page 1

mast crop is frozen under snow and ice. These birds were carrying sunflowers and corn kernels and hiding these precious nuggets behind the rough bark of shagbark hickory and cherry trees, presumably so this source of energy would be available in the future.

The work we do at the conservancy is very much like the work that the birds were doing so earnestly. We have precious resources around us right now that may not be available to future generations if we don't find a means of valuing and protecting them. These resources can be wetlands and river bottom habitat, or the prime soils found in our thousands of acres of farmland.

It is our job to save some of these precious nuggets for the future.

Thanks to you, we have protected more than 23,000 acres to date. Please keep up the good work!

It is our job to save some of these precious nuggets for the future.

Park

From page 1

tional programs.

The park district recently received a $47,000 grant from the Ohio EPA for stream and wetlands restoration on the property next year. For more information about the Portage Park District, call (330) 297-7728 or visit www.portageparkdistrict.org.

The property is home to several rare and endangered species, including the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Hermit Thrush and Least Flycatcher, to name a few.

Johnson

From page 1

sible before mapping a new direction for the state's first park district, a 4,500-acre jewel based in Youngstown. His most recent positions jobs were as superintendent of Lakeshore State Park in Milwaukee, Wisc. and superintendent of the City of Portage (Ind.) Parks and Recreation Department.

One of Johnson's first duties as executive director will be to start developing a strategic plan for the park system. He said he is now working with Youngstown State University with the goal of doing a major park survey in 2012 and putting a levy on the ballot in 2014.

"Mill Creek has such a rich tradition, and the park is a genuine source of pride for the community," Johnson said. "We're pretty much doing what a metropolitan park system does."

Johnson, who graduated from Upper Arlington High School and received his bachelor's degree in parks and recreation from OSU, said he has received a "fantastic welcome" by the city of Youngstown. His wife, Jeanne, a school principal in Wisconsin, will be moving to Youngstown at the close of the 2010-11 school year, while son Stewart, 23, now lives in Hawaii. Johnson has two brothers who still live in the Columbus area.

An avid sailor, Johnson also enjoys downhill skiing, hiking, fishing, pheasant hunting and bicycling. "I'm a chameleon – my interests change, depending on where I live," he said.

Johnson said he is interested in expanding the collaboration between the park district and the Land Conservancy.

"Anything we can do to partner is at the top of our list," he said.

Morgan Preserve dedication

October 8, 2010

Shalersville Township



Deborah Hoover, left, president of the Burton D. Morgan Foundation, Suzanne Morgan, daughter of Burton and Margaret Clark Morgan, and Rick Kellar, president of the Margaret Clark Morgan Foundation, cut the ribbon.







Clockwise, from left, the Land Conservancy's Scott Hill talks to Trustee Bill Hlavin; Portage Park District's Chris Craycroft is interviewed; Land Conservancy CEO Rich Cochran chats with Deb Hoover, president of the Burton D. Morgan Foundation.

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.

Western Reserve
Land Conservancy

OUR LAND. OUR LEGACY.

Western Reserve Land Conservancy
P.O. Box 314
Novelty, OH 44072

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Cleveland, OH
Permit No. 1

Printed on Recycled Paper

Our members make our land protection efforts possible.

We thank you for supporting our mission.

Become a fan of Western Reserve Land Conservancy group on Facebook!

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

Yes, I want to join the Land Conservancy.

Please check your membership level:

O $15 Student
O $25 Introductory
O $50 Supporting
O $100 Donor
O $250 Contributing
O $500 Sustainer



Member benefits: Car decal, event notices, regional newsletter, satisfaction of supporting our work plus additional benefits for those contributing $50 or more.

Name:_____

Address:_____

City, State, ZIP:_____

E-mail address:_____

Phone:_____

Payment Method: O Check enclosed, payable to
Western Reserve Land Conservancy

O Visa O MC O AmEx O Discover

#_____ Exp:_____

Signature_____

Please return to: Western Reserve Land Conservancy
P.O. Box 314, Novelty, Ohio 44072

The Land Conservancy is a tax-exempt, nonprofit corporation.

Western Reserve
Land Conservancy

OUR LAND. OUR LEGACY.

Eastern Field Office
P.O. Box 114, Orwell, Ohio 44076 (440) 773-5582
shill@wrlandconservancy.org
Painesville Field Office
70 South Park Place, Painesville, Ohio 44077
(440) 357-4837
brodstrom@wrlandconservancy.org

www.wrlandconservancy.org

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.