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

Summer 2011

Landline

A Western Reserve Land Conservancy newsletter celebrating land conservation in Erie, Huron and Lorain counties

Five thousand acres and counting



Andy McDowell
Western Field Director

The Firelands Field Office recently surpassed 5,000 acres of preserved land is currently working on preserving the most diverse array of farms to date.

The diversity is not limited to what is being farmed, but also in terms of geography; a seven-breed sheep farm in Ashland County, a grain and greenhouse operation in Richland County, a farrow to finish hog and cow/calf farm in Huron County, a Black Angus local beef farm in Lorain County, and a grain farm that grows popcorn in Erie County.

See ACRES page 2

137 acres preserved in Huron County

The conservation easement Brian Smith has placed on a 137-acre farm near Willard in New Haven Township, Huron County, brings the total amount of land he has permanently protected to more than 400 acres.



More than 5,000 acres of farmland have now been preserved in the Firelands region.

The fourth generation farm, which has been in the family for 146 years, is the first in the county to be accepted into the state's Clean Ohio Agricultural Easement Purchase Program, according to Andy McDowell, the Land Conservancy's western field director. The Land Conservancy sponsored Smith's AEPP application.

"Brian has set the pace for farmland preservation in Huron County," McDowell said. "I am also very pleased to see some of the AEPP funds go to preserve farms in strong agricultural counties like Huron that have never been successful in the 10-plus years of the program."

The Smith farm is located within the Huron River watershed and is about a mile from the river's main stem. About 120 of the 137 acres are agricultural fields, and 94 percent of the property contains "prime farmland soils," as designated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The farm is in a rotating row crop operation using agronomic practices dedicated to maximum production.

CONSERVATION CALENDAR

- **July 26, 5:30-8:30 p.m.:** Firelands Chapter potluck dinner at Hostile Valley Campground.
- **Aug. 22-28:** The Land Conservancy will have a booth in the Soil and Water Barn at the Lorain County Fair in Wellington.
- **Sept. 8, 6-8 p.m.:** Presentation by Jim Rokakis of the Land Conservancy's Thriving Communities Institute, in partnership with Firelands Association for Visual Arts in Oberlin.
- **Sept. 9:** EverGreen EverBlue, our annual benefit, in Hunting Valley.

For more details, go to:

www.wrlandconservancy.org

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Ex-intern now a long-distance supporter

Artist and environmentalist Ting Fong Lee's first "jobs" in land conservation in northern Ohio were not glamorous.

In 2001, the then-Oberlin College freshman stuffed envelopes, did computer work and assembled newsletters as an intern in the Firelands Land Conservancy office.



SPOTLIGHT
Ting Fong Lee

But the soft-spoken Lee, who prefers to be called Flora, loved the experience.

"Those were fun times," she said.

Today, Flora, who lives in Hong Kong, is now one of the Land Conservancy's long-distance supporters.

See DISTANCE 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.

Acres

From page 1

These are in addition to grain farms in Huron, Lorain, Erie and Richland counties. In the land trust community it is often said that the number of acres is not the only measuring stick for an organization. Although true, I also believe each and every acre of preserved farmland and natural places will be one of the few measuring sticks future generations will hold us accountable for.

The Firelands Field Office is the base for the Land Conservancy's work in Erie, Lorain, Huron, Ashland, Ottawa and Richland counties.



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Distance

From page 1

Flora, a watercolor artist, recently toured the Moreland Hills property that will become the Land Conservancy's new headquarters in 2012; she did so to get a feel for the headquarters project, for which she is doing a series of conceptual renderings.

Flora, who holds a bachelor's degree in environmental studies from Oberlin and master's degrees from Columbia University and the Chinese University of Hong Kong, has continued to support the Land Conservancy – which absorbed the Firelands Land Conservancy in a 2006 merger – even though she lives halfway around the world.

"It is something positive that I can do, and I am happy to do it," she said.

Flora recently accepted a position in the Office of Sustainability at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, where she will be exploring potential green initiatives on campus. She said she is also excited about having her own community garden plot, one in which she grows vegetables.

She is also the illustrator for "Whale Fables," a newly released children's book written by Bonny Jacobson of Canal Fulton in Stark County. The book follows the kidnapping of a killer whale and the lessons learned about friendship, trust and respect. For Flora, a student of Lingnan-style Chinese painting, it was an opportunity to experiment with Chinese watercolor effects on Western watercolor paper.

Firelands Associate Field Director Kate Pilacky, who supervised Flora as an intern and has kept in touch with her over the years, said there is little her friend cannot do. "She is," Pilacky said, "immensely talented."

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.

Firelands Spring Walk

April 30, 2011

Firelands Scout Camp



About 35 people hiked Firelands Scout Camp in Lorain County. The camp is permanently preserved by a conservation easement held by the Land Conservancy and Lorain County Metro Parks. Dan Styer and John Katko were the hike leaders.





Firelands Garlic Mustard Pull

May 7, 2011

Wendtwood, Columbia Township



Invasive plants were no match for this group.

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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We thank you for supporting our mission.

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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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Western Reserve
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.