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



Farming is dangerous work



Andy McDowell
Western Field Director

The change of the season from summer into fall is eagerly anticipated by many outdoor enthusiasts.

For me, it sparks my adrenaline for another deer-archery season and making sure there is enough firewood for the upcoming blustery northern Ohio winter. For others, simply the colors of autumn and the cooler temperatures are the highlight of the four seasons.

For the farmer, however, it typically marks the busiest time of the year, and per-

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Conservation Cooperation

Sharing may help Medina Co. park grow



The West Branch of Rocky River flows through the property the Medina County Park District is now acquiring.

Land conservation is a big job. And the Land Conservancy can't do it alone.

That is why projects such as the pending addition to the Medina County Park District's Palker Wildlife Preserve in Medina Township are worthy of special note within the conservation community.

The district's proposed acquisition of the Medina Township property was actually the result of a cooperative effort involving a member of the Medina Summit Chapter Board, the park system and the Land Conservancy staff.

When real estate professional Jim Gerspacher learned that property adjacent to Palker Wildlife Preserve was coming on the market, he contacted the Land Conservancy's staff in Medina. In Gerspacher's words, "This is dirt that should not be built on, and should be conserved."

The Land Conservancy's land protection team determined that the park district would be the organization best suited to own the land.

So the Land Conservancy

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Landowners show faith in the future



Bill Jordan
Associate Field Director

A quote attributed to the Scottish poet Alexander Smith says, "A man does not plant trees for himself, he plants them for posterity."

I thought of this as we recently walked the beautiful protected property owned by Judy and Dan Buttler in Lorain County. While the habitat is varied, one common feature throughout the property is trees. That observation is easy to make when you consider that Dan has planted nearly 50,000 trees on the property! That's an astonishing number when you

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Contact Western Reserve Land Conservancy

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He has a park district on the right path



SPOTLIGHT
Tom James

At the time Tom James became director of the Medina County Park District, houses were sprouting up everywhere, or so it seemed. It was 1993, and Medina was the third-fastest-growing county in Ohio.

The housing boom worried conservationists like James.

"With all the growth taking place, there was a real concern about preserving some of that pristine land," James said.

Under the leadership of James, the park district and its conservation partners moved to preserve land throughout Medina County with the goal of creating a close-by park for every resident. Today, the system, thanks to the foresight of park district officials and the support

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James

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of county voters, has 22 parks and preserves.

The largest single land acquisition came in 2007, when the park district acquired the Chippewa Lake property.

The park district worked with the Land Conservancy on the addition of land to Plum Creek Park in Brunswick Hills Township and last year's preservation of the Harrison land, a property at the Medina-Wayne County border.

In addition, James said the park district is excited about the possibility of creating,



The Land Conservancy worked hand-in-hand with the Medina County Park District last year to preserve the Harrison property, which is located at the Medina-Wayne County border.

along with the Land Conservancy, the Cleveland Museum of Natural History and others, a significant green corridor along the West Branch of Rocky River in Medina Township.

James, who grew up in Uhrichsville and graduated from Kent State University, was a park ranger and manager for the Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District in southeastern Ohio before coming to Medina County.

He and his wife Crystal live in Seville. Their son Patrick recently graduated from Mount Union College with a degree in computer science while daughter Kati is a freshman music major at the University of Dayton.

James said the district and the Land Conservancy have "a very good working relationship because each entity has its own specialty. It's a win-win situation."

Jordan

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understand the time, money and physical labor required to complete the job.

The magnitude of his work, while considerable, doesn't fully reflect the significance of the effort. While his trees are growing nicely, many of them may not reach their full potential and maturity until a new generation of landowners assumes the stewardship responsibilities for the land. Planting trees is the domain of those with faith in the future and a desire to leave something good for generations to come.

It's in this same spirit that land is protected and left for the benefit of future generations. Landowners donate easements in part so that people they will never know can enjoy the natural features and beauty that they value. Decisions to protect land are sometimes made on an individual and very personal basis. Cynthia Szunyog has donated an easement on the 93 acres that have been her home since childhood. She has ensured that the streams, valleys and trees that make up her special place are protected. And in doing so, she has been rewarded with the realization that her gift to other generations will be there forever.

Protecting property is often a family decision, especially when the property has been in the family for many generations. Genevieve and Carter Wilmot have protected their family farm that was established in 1850. They did it with the full support of their family, including the current generation of grandchildren who are creating their own special memories about the farm. It's not surprising that a portion of the farm is designated as a Certified Tree Farm.

Whether they are planting trees or preserving land, these generous visionaries are owed our sincere thanks.

Park

From page 1

contacted the park district, with which it had partnered on other projects. The park system – knowing the land contained frontage on the West Branch of the Rocky River and was adjacent to existing park property – was very interested.

Now this 24-acre property may become part of the existing 43-acre preserve that is just west of U.S. Route 42 and north of Fenn Road. The acquisition is not yet final.

Significantly, this undeveloped county park is also adjacent to the Medina Sanctuary, a 33-acre parcel owned by the Cleveland Museum of Natural History.



Rocky River is noted for its excellent steelhead trout and smallmouth bass fishing.

These properties, together with land transferred from the Land Conservancy to Medina Township, form the basis for an important corridor of more than 100 acres of protected property in the Rocky River watershed.

Farming

From page 1

haps the most dangerous.

In a recent article, farming and ranching was ranked as the third most dangerous job in the U.S.

Many of us do not think about the dangers farmers face on a daily basis while producing the food we consume. Many farm families have been affected by farm-related tragedies and accidents, including my own.

That said, I want this column to end with wishing our region's farmers a safe and bountiful harvest season.





Cleveland Yoga instructors led the outdoor class at Orchard Hills Park.



Yoga on the Preserve

August 29, 2010

Orchard Hills Park, Chester Township

More than 450 people took part in the second Yoga on the Preserve at Orchard Hills Park. The event, which included a 75-minute yoga class and a guided nature hike, was cosponsored by Cleveland Yoga and the Land Conservancy.

The Land Conservancy would like to thank Cleveland Yoga, the Geauga Park District, Master Pizza, Pete McDonald, Patterson Fruit Farm, Marni Task and Enchanted Hearts for making the event such a big success.

Photos by Amanda Skingel-Synecky



A guided nature hike, above, preceded the yoga session, below.





The Land Conservancy's Jean Gokorsch presents Carter Wilmot with a White Oak Legacy Society pin as his wife, Genevieve, looks on.

Medina Summit honorees

August 7, 2010, Rustic Hills Country Club, Montville Twp.



Dan Nelson, left, Eric Daiber and Lindsey Doermann.



Land Conservancy trustees Jeff Holland and Ned Baker.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Saturday, Oct. 9, noon– 5 p.m.** — The Land Conservancy will have a booth at "Fall into Nature," an event sponsored by the University of Akron and Bath Parks at the Bath Nature Preserve, 4240 Ira Road, Bath. There will be hayrides, a pumpkin patch, children's activities and prizes.
- **Saturday, Oct. 16, 5-8 p.m.** — Medina Summit Chapter's annual Hoot and Harvest Festival, Hill'n Dale Club, 3605 Poe Road, Montville Township. Bring a potluck dish. Hayrides, an owl walk, pumpkin painting and birds from the Medina Raptor Center. Free. RSVP to kbihler@wrlandconservancy.org or (440) 729-9621.
- **Sunday, Oct. 17, 1 p.m.** — Firelands Fall Foliage Hike at Augusta-Anne Olsen State Nature Preserve in Huron County. Free. RSVP to kpilacky@wrlandconservancy.org or (440) 774-4226.
- **Sunday, Oct. 17, 3-6 p.m.** — The Land Conservancy's annual Fall Festival at the Geauga Park District's Sunnybrook Preserve , 12474 Heath Road, Chester Township. Games for children and a hike around the park. Hot dogs, fixings and s'mores will be provided; bring a dish to share. Free. RSVP to kbihler@wrlandconservancy.org or (440) 729-9621.

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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.