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

Summer 2011

Landline

A Western Reserve Land Conservancy newsletter celebrating land conservation in Ashtabula, Geauga and Lake counties

A pause that refreshes, renews



Brett Rodstrom
Northeastern Field Director

Sometimes it's nice to unplug and unwind. I absolutely love my job but I think that often one's mind becomes overly saturated with Blackberry appointments and deadlines and never ending e-mails.

Even though our lives are more connected than ever, I sometimes feel disconnected with the purpose of why I do what I do.

To combat this, every year I take a fishing trip to the wilderness of Ontario. This is my yearly opportunity to spend countless hours on

See PAUSE page 2

Teachers preserve creekside land

Retired teachers and lifelong conservationists Carol and Dan Fishwick of Willoughby have permanently preserved 32 acres on Rock Creek, a tributary to the state-designated wild and scenic Grand River, in conjunction with the Land Conservancy.



Dan and Carol Fishwick wanted to permanently preserve their property.

The property is almost completely forested with several acres of floodplain and vernal pool habitat. It is located in Ashtabula County's Rome Township.

The Fishwicks, who are also accomplished musicians, bought the property over 25 years ago and have managed the woodland for wildlife habitat, created a pond, planted several hundred trees and produced maple syrup.

The property has 15 acres of wetland and floodplains and 3,800 feet of frontage on Rock Creek. The Fishwicks have a weekend home on the land.

The protection of the property will extend an existing conservation easement located on a property to the south and together will now protect over a mile and a half of both sides of Rock Creek. Brett Rodstrom, the Land Conservancy's northeastern field director, said "This is an exceptional piece of conservation because it not only protects Rock Creek and the Fishwick forest, but it also adds to the existing efforts of our conservation partners."

CONSERVATION CALENDAR

- **Aug. 13, 9-11 a.m.:** Grand River Chapter's Hell Hollow Geology Tour at Hell Hollow Wilderness Area,14435 Leroy Center Road, Leroy Township.
- **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. 9:** EverGreen EverBlue, our annual benefit, in Hunting Valley. For details, visit www.evergreeneverblue.org.
- **Oct. 4:** Grand River Chapter annual dinner.

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

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Don't look for him on the beaten path



SPOTLIGHT
Greg Lipps

You might not think there is much demand for a freelance herpetologist.

Greg Lipps would beg to differ.

Lipps, a former Toledo Zoo employee who holds a master's degree in biology from Bowling Green State University, now works as an independent biologist for state agencies and non-governmental organizations such as the Land Conservancy. He has conducted surveys for most of Ohio's rare and endangered amphibians and reptiles, including Green Salamanders, Eastern Massasauga Rattlesnakes and Spotted Turtles.

"In my mind, it has become

See LIPPS 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.

Pause

From page 1

the water and alone with no real agenda other than clearing my head. It's just me and the wind and the walleye.

On this particular excursion the fishing was exceptional. Four trips a day from 4 a.m. to 11 p.m. with a few naps and meals scattered in between. Dozens of fish kept for shore lunches and dinners and hundreds others released back into the pristine waters of Clear Lake.

As I was cruising through Toronto's protected Green Belt region on my return, I



began to contemplate a plan of attack for the undoubted hundreds of e-mails and voice mails that awaited me.

It occurred to me that the stress and franticness I had predicted about these tasks was no longer with me and a sense of calm and perspective had once again returned.

Maybe it was the fishing or possibly the haunting call of a Loon one morning, not 15 feet from the boat.

Maybe it was the mayfly nymph I witnessed crawling up the anchor rope and hatching into a flying creature, or the seven consecutive sunrises I stopped to enjoy each morning.

Maybe the point is simply that I stopped.

I stopped to enjoy, I stopped to reflect and I stopped to recharge. That must be why they call it Clear Lake.

Lipps

From page 1

clear that doing research and doing conservation are two different things," Lipps said. "Within the past few years, my passion has shifted to making conservation happen. I enjoy working for people like those at the Land Conservancy, people who can make things happen."

Lipps recently led a group of Land Conservancy employees, volunteers and supporters in a search for Massasaugas in the Grand River Lowlands. He has generously donated his time and energy to help the Land Conservancy preserve habitat for rare and endangered species.

Lipps is a Cincinnati native who moved to Toledo in 1995 and took a position in the Toledo Zoo's Department of Herpetology before completing his master's degree at BGSU. In addition to his work for state agencies and other organizations, Lipps does some private consulting and is a former co-chair and current advisor to the Midwest Regional Working Group of Partners in Amphibian and Reptile Conservation.

Lipps, his wife Nicole, an animal science teacher, and "a slew of dogs" live in Northwest Ohio's Oak Openings Region, a globally rare ecosystem located southwest of Toledo. Living there has impressed on him the need to protect large swaths of land, not individual parcels.

"It isn't good enough for us to get little fragments. We need to preserve larger corridors with functioning ecosystems," Lipps said.

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.



Rattlesnakes alive!

In the Grand River lowlands, herpetologist Greg Lipps led a group in search of endangered Eastern Massasauga Rattlesnakes. Two snakes were found, measured, tagged and returned to the exact spot where they were picked up.



Grand River Canoe Cleanup

May 14, 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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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.