Western Reserve Land Conservancy
OUR LAND. OUR LEGACY.
Summer 2009



Western Reserve Land Conservancy
Firelands Field Office
P.O. Box 174
Oberlin, Ohio 44074
Phone: (440) 774-4226



Andy McDowell
Field Director

It was early July when I pulled over along the back road in southeastern Huron County on a beautiful sunset evening.

The temptation to absorb the smell of a freshly-cut hayfield was more than I could resist. As I was thinking this was likely the farmers' second cut for the season, my thoughts began to stroll back in time and I chuckled to myself as I remembered growing up that, for some reason, the smell was always better

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Pianist strikes note for conservation

A Cleveland-based concert pianist who has performed all over the world has preserved an oasis close to home.



Marguerite Stell Bartlet, Jean Geis Stell and Barbara Stell Prunty.

Jean Stell, a noted pianist, teacher and founding board member of the Rocky River Chamber Music Society, has granted Western Reserve Land Conservancy an easement that will permanently protect her 78-acre, heavily wooded plot in Ashland County.

Stell and her late husband, Ed, purchased the property in the late 1970s for a vacation home. Two years ago, Jean Stell approached the Land Conservancy in an effort to learn what conservation options were available. It led to the agreement this year.

"We want to extend our gratitude to Jean Stell for her contribution to preserving Ohio's natural beauty," said Andy McDowell, field director for the Land Conservancy's Firelands Field Office.

Stell has a beautiful vacation home on the property in Ruggles Township. Younger forests there boast red maples in abundance, whereas the property's more mature wooded areas include elm, red oak,

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UPCOMING EVENTS

- **September 26,** 10 a.m. – Hike at Firelands Scout Camp, 13782 Gore Orphanage Road, five miles west of Oberlin. The camp was preserved by the Land Conservancy in 2007.
- Thursdays through **Oct. 29,** 3:30-6:30 p.m. – First Federal Farmers Market at the Huron Boat Basin, Huron.

EverGreen EverBlue

Friday, Sept. 11, 2009
White North Stables
Hunting Valley
For more information, call (440) 729-9621 or e-mail kbihler@wrlc.cc

Talented Oberlin grad now seeking new challenges

A 2009 Oberlin College graduate has already left her mark on local land conservation.

Elizabeth "Liz" Fabis, a multi-talented Murrysville, Pa. native, spent all four of her undergraduate years working at the Land Conservancy's Firelands Field Office in Oberlin, where her accomplishments included creating a database of significant riparian landowners in the Lake Erie watershed and creating supplemental materials for a successful $500,000 conservation grant.



SPOTLIGHT
Liz Fabis

She is now seeking a career at a nonprofit environmental organization specializing in land conservation or sustainable agriculture.

"Liz stands out with her contribution to the Land Conservancy," said Kate Pilacky, associate field director for the Firelands Office. "We have no doubt that she will excel in her future pursuits. We will miss her and wish her the very

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Volunteers needed

Can you spare a few hours a week to help at our office, lead a hike or work at one of our events? We'd love to talk to you. Contact Kate Pilacky at kpilacky@wrlc.cc or (440) 774-4226 to discuss volunteer opportunities.

Join the Land Conservancy!

See back page for details.

Help us take our show on the road

Help us spread the word about our mission of land conservation. We have a brief educational program available to groups interested in learning more about the Land Conservancy, land protection and conservation easements.

If you are interested in hosting our program, or if you know of any groups that might be interested, please call Kate Pilacky at (440) 774-4226 or email kpilacky@wrlc.cc.

Fabis

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best."

Fabis, who earned a bachelor's degree in environmental studies with a minor in geology, spent one term studying ecology and conservation at the School for International Training in Botswana.

Her internships included Project Vote Smart in Montana, the American Farmland Trust in Washington D.C. and George Jones Organic Farm/City Fresh.

She also taught creative writing at Oberlin for a term, worked as a copy editor for *The Oberlin Review* newspaper and had an article on bird conservation published in the journal *Birdlife Botswana*.

Fabis did several college research projects of concern to the Land Conservancy.

Studying riparian buffer policy, she made policy recommendations to township trustees of the Black River Watershed. Using geographical survey data, she mapped agricultural infrastructure in the Firelands region. This infrastructure of supplies and services is critical to the future of farming in our region.

"Liz has performed invaluable services for our office and we will miss her very much," Pilacky said.

Pianist

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shagbark hickory and black cherry trees.

Jean Stell is a founding board member of the Rocky River Chamber Music Society, which organizes professional concerts free to the public. In more than 60 engagements, she has performed a repertoire of 30 concertos with internationally famous orchestras, including the Boston Symphony, the Cincinnati Symphony, the NBC Orchestra and the Cleveland Orchestra.

Andy

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when you're not the one tossing the bales.

Regardless, for me this ranks as one of the top five best smells and one that everyone should have the pleasure to experience. I began to wonder when my 14-month old daughter would have her first experience with this smell, and how many people never get to.

Some may say "so what." I say it is priceless. As I drove off heading for home I found solace knowing that our work in preserving farmland will always allow for priceless moments in time for many people such as the one I just had.

Steelhead Spectacular



U.S. Sen. George Voinovich, above left, was one of the more than 40 anglers taking part in the April 18 Steelhead Spectacular, a joint effort by the Ohio Central Basin Steelheaders and the Land Conservancy. OCBS members served as volunteer guides on the Grand River, Chagrin River and Conneaut Creek. Here, Voinovich gets a hand from guide and OCBS member Jerry Darkes.

Have you remembered the Land Conservancy in your will?

Few contributions will have a more lasting impact than those that forever preserve our natural areas. Please consider a testamentary gift to Western Reserve Land Conservancy. For more information, contact Jean Gokorsch at (440) 729-9621 or jgokorsch@wrlc.cc.

Give a buck a week and support our work

You can support the work of the Land Conservancy with a donation that will barely dent your wallet.

The Land Conservancy is teaming up with EarthShare of Ohio on a workplace giving program in which employees can have as little as a buck or two taken out of their checks each pay period. Giving just a dollar a week would add up to a $52 annual donation to the Land Conservancy.

EarthShare Ohio

More than 79 Ohio employers ranging from the state of Ohio to Walmart are now in the program. If your employer is participating, you can designate Western Reserve Land Conservancy as the beneficiary on a pledge form or make a donation to EarthShare that will be shared by dozens of leading environmental and conservation organizations. Check with your company's payroll office to see if your employer is participating in the EarthShare of Ohio payroll donation program.

To inquire about getting your employer involved in the program, contact Earth Share of Ohio at info@earthshareofohio.org. For more information about the Land Conservancy's participation, contact Jean Gokorsch at jgokorsch@wrlc.cc.

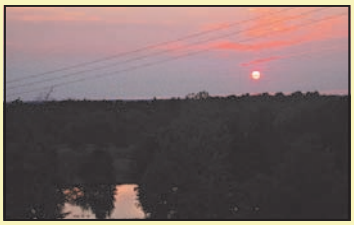
Honoring conservation heroes

June 24, 2009, Orchard Hills Park/Patterson's Fruit Farm



Land Conservancy President/CEO Rich Cochran presents a hand-carved walking stick to Stephen C. Morris Sugar Maple Award winner Jim Spira, right, as Morris looks on.







Live music, above, was followed by a gorgeous sunset at Orchard Hills. At lower right, Rich Cochran and Dick Grimm, right, present the Grimm Family Conservation Medal to Evelyn Frohring and her brother, Ernie.



OHIO BREEDING BIRD ATLAS

In June, the Land Conservancy took part in this birding survey at the protected Buttler and Babcock family properties in Lorain County. Brad Phillips of Erie MetroParks was the guide. About 50 different species of birds were found at both locations, including a barn owl, green herons and cerulean warblers.



TREE-PLANTING

In April, a magnolia tree was planted with the Wendt family at Lorain County Metro Parks Columbia Reservation Briarwood Lodge in memory of Dr. Wallace Wendt, one of the founders of the Land Conservancy's Firelands Chapter.

An up-close look at the Vermilion

About 20 residents of Kendal at Oberlin enjoyed a Land Conservancy hike on the Vermilion River at Hostile Valley Campground in Huron County. The river was very high during the May hike and participants experienced a brief shower.

John Katko and Dan Styer were the guides. This program was offered as a followup to a Kendal presentation by the Land Conservancy Firelands Chapter board member Mary Garvin about her book, "Living in the Vermilion River Watershed." The book was produced in 2008 by the Land Conservancy in partnership with Oberlin College.



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

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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.