Western Reserve Land Conservancy
OUR LAND. OUR LEGACY.

Fall 2009



Western Reserve Land Conservancy
Medina Field Office
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Bill Jordan
Land Protection Coordinator

Everyone has his or her favorite season. Mine is fall. With the heat and bugs of summer behind us, it's a great time to be outdoors. Traveling around the area, you can enjoy the corn and soybeans ripening in the farm fields. The leaves starting to change color in the woodlands make a beautiful backdrop for the open fields of blooming asters, goldenrod and ironweed. Migrating birds overhead foreshadow the inevitable transition to winter.

These scenes are also a reminder of the Land Conservancy's mission "to preserve the scenic beauty, rural character and natural resources of northern Ohio." We accomplish our mission by working on projects with private landowners, public partners and others. Some of these projects take on a pragmatic component. There is the farmer in the southern part of Medina County who would like to sell the development rights

See JORDAN page 2

A good partner

Killbuck Watershed group shares Land Conservancy's goals in Wayne Co.

The Land Conservancy works with more than 50 conservation partners in northern Ohio. The Killbuck Watershed Land Trust, one of those allies, is making a difference in Wayne County.



The 5,492-acre Killbuck Marsh is Ohio's largest freshwater wildlife marsh.

The Wooster-based trust was formed in 2000 primarily to protect farmland in Wayne and surrounding counties. The name was chosen to highlight the Killbuck Creek region watershed because of its importance to the region. The Land Trust has since broadened its work to also include preservation of park land, prairies and other natural areas. In 2007, the Land Trust reached an agreement to give 70.8 acres to the city of Wooster to expand Wooster Memorial Park in exchange for a conservation easement on the entire park.

The Land Trust has preserved more than 35 properties and more than 4,000 acres in five counties, including more than 1,700 acres in Wayne County.

"All of us are thankful for the landowners who have come to us to protect their land," said KWLT President Maryanna Biggio, whose own 125-acre family farm is protected by a conservation easement

Upcoming Events

- **Oct. 10, 5 p.m. –** The Land Conservancy's Medina Summit Chapter's annual Hoot and Harvest at the Hill'n Dale Club, 3605 Poe Road, Montville Township. Tickets are $12 for adults and $6 for children 4-12, no charge for those 3 and under.
- **Oct. 24, 7 p.m.** — Medina County Park District presents "The Mysterious World of Owls." Wolf Creek Environmental Center in Sharon Township.
- **Nov. 9, 1 p.m.** — Join the Friends of Wooster Memorial Park for a trail sampler. This is a four-mile hike that will take you on parts of all the trails in the park. Free.

He went against the grain to preserve family farm

Carter Wilmot treasures his family farm.

So much so that when homes began sprouting up all around his 89-acre property at West Boston and Broadview roads in Broadview Heights, he resisted offers from developers and permanently protected 75 of those acres with conservation easements.



SPOTLIGHT
Carter Wilmot

"I realized that if I went ahead and developed (the land) I would be violating the desires of all the family members who came before me," said Wilmot, a member of the Land Conservancy's Medina Summit Chapter since 2003. "I definitely made the right choice."

The farm was established by Henry Carter in 1850 and was one of the first settlements in the Western Reserve. Wilmot, who in 1985 retired as the president and owner of Prince & Izant, a metal brazing alloy

See WILMOT page 2

GRP, Land Conservancy to merge

Members of Grand River Partners have unanimously endorsed an agreement to merge with Western Reserve Land Conservancy. The voice vote took place at an Aug. 31 membership meeting at The Winery at Spring Hill in Geneva.

The merger, which is expected to become official in November, joins northern Ohio's two largest land conservancies.

"We are humbled to have the opportunity to integrate Grand River Partners' land conservation portfolio into our stewardship program, and we are very excited to merge their staff and office into our operation," said Rich Cochran, president and CEO of Western Reserve Land Conservancy. "This will lead to more land protected more quickly. It is an example of the power of multiplication: While five plus five equals 10, we all know that five times five equals 25. Before this merger, we were engaged in addition, where our work and GRP's work produced incremental gains. The merger will produce a transforming multiplication effect that will result in greater mission accomplishment."



The Grand River is considered the cleanest stream that empties into Lake Erie.

Grand River Partners' office in Painesville will become a Western Reserve Land Conservancy field office staffed by three full-time employees who have been working for GRP.

The Land Conservancy has preserved 251 properties and 15,390 acres.

Grand River Partners, which was formed in 1994, currently holds or co-holds 33 conservation easements and owns eight preserves in the watershed for a total of almost 3,700 acres of permanently protected land.

Jordan

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on his 400-acre farm, and use that money to acquire more farmland. Toward the other end of the county, we will work with a family to demonstrate the benefits to them and the community of combining their land with other publicly owned and managed property to create a very large tract of unbroken habitat. And we will also work with the siblings whose land is between tracts of protected property.

Other projects are done on the basis of people acting upon their personal convictions. There is the landowner, who at the age of 93 wants her legacy to include the protection of more than 45 acres on the edge of the Cuyahoga Valley National Park. Or the landowner, working with a public partner and the Land Conservancy, who wants to provide public access to his more than 200 acres of woods, wetlands, fields and lakes. In preserving this property for the benefit of future generations, an added benefit will be the protection of part of a critical water resource in southern Medina and northern Wayne counties.

There's more. A landowner in Medina County wants to preserve the land that his ancestors first settled on over 180 years ago. He grew up on this land, and wants to know that it will remain unchanged for the next six generations and beyond.

Some projects take longer than others to complete. Some are not completed. No matter what the outcome, we will provide leadership in land conservation.

Join the Land Conservancy!

See back page for details.

White Oak LEGACY SOCIETY

Make a lasting gift to our beautiful land.

Join the Land Conservancy's White Oak Legacy Society, whose members make a permanent commitment to land protection through wills, trusts and other estate-planning tools. For more information, contact Jean Gokorsch at (440) 729-9621, Ext. 124 or jgokorsch@wrlc.cc.

Wilmot

From page 1

company in Parma, grew up doing chores on the farm. The chores became the foundation for his love of the outdoors and conservation.

Today, Carter and his wife, Genevieve, live in a house they built on the property. One of their sons, David, now runs the 78-acre farm, which is used for timber, sheep and hay, and lives in the historic farmhouse there. David is also the president and owner of Prince & Izant.

Carter Wilmot, who graduated from Miami University with thoughts of becoming a high school football coach, saw those hopes derailed when he was drafted into the military and served tours in Korea and Japan. He later entered industrial sales, rising from a salesman to owner of the company.

The first conservation easement on the property was held by the Medina Summit Land Conservancy, one of the eight land trusts that merged in 2006 to form the Land Conservancy.

Aelish Wilmot, 19, one of the Wilmots' granddaughters, said some of her fondest childhood memories came from the time she spent at the farm. She recalled when "grandpa would drive down on the big red tractor" to check on her and her siblings as they played in the creek or in the field.

"I can't imagine this place not being here – it is so beautiful," she said. "It would be so bad if it were sold off. You can find a (housing) subdivision anywhere, but places like this are special."

A fabulous evening at Firestone

Western Reserve Land Conservancy's "Evening at the Historic Firestone Farm" on Friday, Aug. 7 drew a crowd of more than 170 people to the Bath Township property.

The event, which introduced the regional land-protection work of the Land Conservancy, took place at Oak Hill Farm, which was formerly part of the Firestone estate. Raymond Firestone, son of Firestone Tire and Rubber Co. founder Harvey S. Firestone, began building the 1,500-acre estate in the 1940s.

Today, more than 400 acres of the original estate has been permanently protected as the Bath Nature Preserve.

Event hosts were Dedee and Rory O'Neil of Seville, John Farber of Hudson, Elaina E. Goodrich of Bath, Grant G. Goodrich of New York, Teresa and Mark Davey of Bath and Dick and Sue Abbott of Kent.



James Gerspacher, left, Elaine Lamb, Eric Daiber and Charlotte E. Karson Daiber.



Above, Land Conservancy Trustee Jeff Holland of Sharon Township addresses the crowd. At right, fellow board member James Gerspacher talks conservation with Pat and Trisha McNamara of Brunswick.



Sisters Michelle Norton of Olmsted Township and Debbie Wood of Brunswick pet the horses.



Event hosts Dedee and Rory O'Neil of Seville.





Above, property owner Hal Rohlik; below, expert guides Larry Rosche and Judy Semroc.





Rebecca Tyrpak, right, points out one of the many creatures in the pond.



The event drew a crowd of about 60 to Brunswick Hills Township.

Dragonfly walk creates a buzz



The 2009 edition of Western Reserve Land Conservancy's dragonfly walk proved to be popular, as about 60 people joined Larry Rosche and Judy Semroc, authors of "Dragonflies and Damselflies of Northeast Ohio," on a hike of Hal Rohlik's property in Brunswick Hills Township on July 26.

Rosche and Semroc answered questions and helped hikers identify the insects. The Rohlik property is permanently protected through a conservation easement held by the Land Conservancy.

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

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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.