



Western Reserve Land Conservancy  
OUR LAND. OUR LEGACY.

Spring 2009

Volume 2, Issue 1



# Landline

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

## Western Reserve Land Conservancy

Firelands Field Office  
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With snowflakes as big as quarters on a windless January morning, I stood on hillside adorned in snow camo with my trusty re-curve bow overlooking a stream valley. It seemed like a perfect moment in time as I listened to the hoots of a barred owl being absorbed into the deep, snow-covered valley.



**Andy McDowell**  
Field Director

I watched a group of eight deer make their way north along the stream, browsing their way to the security of their bedding area. Another group then passed by on the same trek, followed by a lone buck a few minutes later. I descended into the

See MCDOWELL p. 3

**Become a member of Western Reserve Land Conservancy!**  
See back page for details.

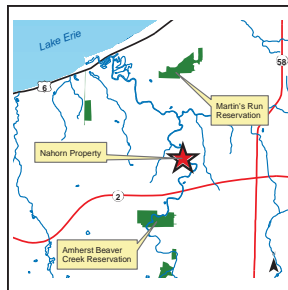
# A landmark

*Historic Amherst homestead is preserved by owners, Land Conservancy*

A homestead originally owned by Amherst's first settler has been permanently protected.

The Historic Shupe Homestead, owned by William, Diane and Matthew Nahorn, was permanently preserved through the donation of a conservation easement, according to Andy McDowell, director of the Land Conservancy's Firelands Field Office.

The 15-acre property can trace its history back to 1816, when the first settler in Amherst, Jacob Shupe, purchased property on the banks of Beaver Creek. Designated as a Lorain County historical landmark and



listed on the Ohio Inventory of Historical Properties, the property contains critical floodplain forest and older growth forest, and it plays an important role in maintaining the water quality of Beaver Creek.

The property includes about 1,700 linear feet of Beaver Creek. Shupe used the stream to his advantage, powering his early mills.

"We are so pleased that this historically significant property is now preserved in

See SHUPE page 3

## Hard-working conservationist is one rare individual

Seven years ago, Dr. James Bissell started identifying rare plants and animals on properties the Land Conservancy hoped to protect. Today, it is hard to imagine a time when Bissell, the director of conservation for the Cleveland Museum of Natural History's Center for Conservation & Biodiversity, wasn't searching for tamarack bogs and spotted turtles at the Land Conser-

### SPOTLIGHT



James Bissell

vancy's request.

"I view Western Reserve Land Conservancy as one of our most important partners," Bissell says. "I think it is a great outfit — passionate peo-

### UPCOMING EVENTS

- **March 11**, 7 p.m. — Land Conservancy open meeting with interested landowners about conservation easements and tax incentives at Wakeman Community Library, 33 South Pleasant St., Wakeman. Call (440) 774-4226.
- **April 5**, 1-4 p.m. — Hike the Wendtwood property in Columbia Township. To register, call (440) 774-4226 or send e-mail to kpi-lacky@wrlc.cc. Directions will be sent to participants.

### Create your own economic stimulus package.

Act now before tax incentives expire! See page 2.

ple, great expertise and a staff willing to help us out at a moment's notice."

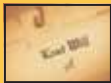
He adds, "It's a great partnership."

Bissell, 61, who grew up on a farm in Austinburg Township and still lives in Ashtabula County, has been with the museum for 37 years and has been the curator of botany

See BISSELL page 3

**Have you remembered the Land Conservancy in your will?**

Few contributions will have a more lasting impact than those that forever preserve our beautiful 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.



*Clark Hahn: 'It's got be now — today'*

Brothers Clark and Richard Hahn have granted a conservation easement on their 122-acre Erie County farm to the Land Conservancy.

Clark, who was one of the founders of the former Firelands Land Conservancy in 1997 and was its president when it joined seven other land trusts to form Western Reserve Land Conservancy in 2006, had long considered granting an easement. He said some of his neighbors were close to the land but passed away before protecting their own property.

"It's got to be now – today," Clark says. "I'm afraid that the next generation does not care



Clark Hahn

about the farm and the land nearly as much as my brother and I. I'm so glad that the farm is finally preserved. Our parents, grandparents as well as other descendants would be pleased."

Clark and his wife, Sharon, live on the Berlin Heights property adjoining the farm. The Hahn brothers are the third generation to own the property. In 1897, Clark and Richard's great-aunt and uncle built the original farm house on the Berlin Heights farm. Over time the farm has been an apple and cherry orchard, housed 100 beef cattle and maintained a productive grain crop rotation with beans, hay, corn and wheat.

*Mastodon fossil was found near protected site*

A Lorain County parcel preserved by the Land Conservancy is part of a larger wetlands complex where a fossilized mastodon skeleton was found in the 19th century.

Though most of the skeletal remains have fallen apart over the years due to poor storage conditions, the skull of the mastodon is still on display at the Lorain County Metro Parks Carlisle Visitor Center.



A mastodon fossil was found near this land in 1886.

In 1886, a farmer unearthed the fossil in Brownhelm Township on property adjacent to a 51-acre tract now owned by Arlene Sahr, who

last year donated a conservation easement to the Land Conservancy to permanently protect her land. Sahr, 87, who was born and raised on the property, wanted to protect the land from development, as it has been in her family for several generations.

Most of the land is currently used for agriculture and contains five farmland soil types listed as prime by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

**Tax incentives expire after 2009**

The generous tax-incentive program for farmers and others who voluntarily conserve their land is set to expire on Dec. 31 unless Congress renews it. Grantors of conservation easements may take a charitable deduction of up to 50 percent of their adjusted gross income in the year of the gift. Conservation easements donated in 2009 are eligible. For more details, call us at (440) 774-4226.

**Land Conservancy a semi-finalist for national award**

The Land Conservancy was one of 30 semi-finalists for The Collaboration Prize, a national award for which more than 644 organizations were nominated. The \$250,000 prize was created by the Phoenix-based Lodestar Foundation to recognize non-profit efficiency.

The winner will be named in March.

*Group works to bring back native Ohio brook trout*

The Land Conservancy is part of a group that is helping reintroduce the colorful and threatened native Ohio brook trout into streams here.

Once found only in tiny Spring Brook in Geauga County, the trout — which need cold, clean water to survive — now live in 10 streams in Northeast Ohio, thanks to the efforts of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources and the Brook Trout Advisory Committee.



"They're the most beautiful fish ever." — Anne Murphy



"This has been a very successful program," said Anne Murphy, the Land Conservancy's director of stewardship and conservation resources and

the committee's chair. Member groups range from local park systems to Trout Unlimited.

Murphy said the group is now developing a Habitat Sustainability Index in the hope of finding even more streams where brook trout can live. "Ohio brook trout seem to be a little more tolerant of stream conditions," she said.

The group also hopes to establish a local trout hatchery and build a new exhibit at the Cleveland Metroparks Zoo.

## *Kendal volunteers always ready to help*

The Kendal at Oberlin Volunteers is a wonderful group who reflect Quaker values by getting involved in community service. For about eight years, I could always count on the help of 12 friends who cheerfully would help with various newsletters and mailings. These volunteers, organized with a smile by Doris Sable, have been such a pleasure to work with over the years. Strong friendships have formed through the various mailing parties and I wanted to properly thank them for all their time, energy and enthusiasm. Thanks so much to Barbara Bennett, Mae Alice Donner, Joyce Dugan, Joan



Front: Doris Sable, left, Ann Potter; Back: Mae Alice Donner, left, Dorothy Holbrook, Eunice Schaeffer, Catherine Rauch, Joan Ernst.

Ernst, Helen Fitzhugh, Dorothy Holbrook, Esther Hunt, Ann Potter, Catherine Rauch, Doris Sable, Eunice Schaeffer, and Pauline Warch for your contribution to our organization and the community.

**Kate Pilacky**

*Associate Field Director*

## LAND CONSERVANCY PRAIRIE TOUR

*August 9, 2008, Kendal at Oberlin*



About 40 folks from Kendal at Oberlin attended the Prairie Tour hosted by the Firelands Chapter of Western Reserve Land Conservancy. Two buses transported residents - one Kendal bus and one bus from Oberlin College driven by Firelands Chapter board member and Oberlin biology professor Mary Garvin. John Blakeman, president of the Ohio Prairie Association, was the guide.

## *Historic Shupe Homestead is preserved*

### From page 1

perpetuity for future generations to enjoy," Diane Nahorn said.

The Nahorns hope to preserve more land in the coming years. Their son, Matthew Nahorn, has founded the New Indian Ridge Museum, located in the basement of their historic house, in an effort to preserve the local history and



**The property includes about 1,700 linear feet of Beaver Creek.**

educate others.

The forest on the property

contains older growth, mature trees, including one white oak estimated to be approximately 250 years old. There are numerous spring wildflowers on the property, composing a beautiful palette of colors in the springtime.

Matthew Nahorn calls the property The New Indian Ridge Museum, Historic Shupe Homestead and Wildlife Preserve.

## *Bissell*

### From page 1

since 1972. Bissell and other staff members do extensive

fieldwork, identify and protect rare natural communities in northern Ohio. The center regularly does field surveys for the Land Conservancy.

Bissell won the 2004 Natural Areas Association George B. Fell Award, which honors a person who exemplifies lifelong dedication to preservation and stewardship.

## *McDowell*

### From page 1

valley to investigate the trails and tracks left behind. For me, the late archery season often serves as a scouting mission and time for reflection. I began to think about their

trails and bedding area having likely been used for decades by generations of deer. As America's first leaders in conservation, sportsmen have also been walking the same trail for generations by leading the charge for land and wildlife conservation.

By joining the Land Conservancy, sportsmen will continue walking that path by supporting our land protection efforts here in northern Ohio. For without the land, the trail will lead to nowhere and only tracks will be left behind.

## Land Conservancy's preserved acreage tops 14,000 mark

In December, the Land Conservancy reached a milestone in its work to protect the area's natural resources.

The Land Conservancy topped the 14,000-acre mark in total protected properties when it secured conservation easements in Huron and Erie counties, according to Director of Land Protection Mark Skowronski.

The eight land trusts that merged to form the Land Conservancy together protected about 8,000 acres over a 20-year period. In the three years since the merger, we have preserved more than 6,000 acres - a 75-percent increase over a 20-year total. To date, we have preserved more than 230 properties.



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Our members make our land protection efforts possible.  
We thank you for supporting our mission.

*Are you LinkedIn? Join the Western Reserve Land Conservancy group at [www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com)*

*If you would rather get Landline online, e-mail us at [gpausch@wrlc.cc](mailto:gpausch@wrlc.cc).*

**Yes, I want to join the Land Conservancy.**

Please check your membership level:

- \$15 Student
- \$25 Introductory
- \$50 Supporting
- \$100 Donor
- \$250 Contributing
- \$500 Sustainer

**Member benefits:** Car decal, event notices, regional newsletter, satisfaction of supporting our work plus additional benefits for those contributing \$50 or more.



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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.