

BE PART OF THE LICKING LAND TRUST!

To join or renew for 2008, complete the information below and mail with your check to:

Licking Land Trust
P.O. Box 196
Granville OH 43023-0196

Student: \$10
Individual or Family: \$50
Business or Organization: \$150
Conservator: \$250
Steward: \$500

The Trust’s suggested membership dues levels are indicated above, but the Trust welcomes all members at whatever contribution level is possible.

Name_____

Address_____

City/Town_____State_____Zip_____



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The mission of the Licking Land Trust is the preservation and permanent conservation protection of our central Ohio green spaces—wetlands, woodlands, farmlands, riparian corridors, and scenic vistas, and education about the importance of green spaces and their conservation, all for the public benefit.



NEWSLETTER

A Publication for Members and Friends Summer 2008

Seeking to preserve, protect and enhance land in perpetuity for the public benefit

“I am thrilled to know I have done my part to assure that the land will stay in agricultural use forever.”

Kayla Hughes, Newton Township

Century farm preserved for all time

Kayla Hughes of Newton Township has given an agricultural easement to the Licking Land Trust. Hughes is the sole owner of a 96-acre farm on Horns Hill Road, north of Newark. “I am thrilled to know I have done my part to assure that the land will stay in agricultural use forever,” Hughes said.

“A conservation easement is a legal agreement to preserve land, and is given to a qualified organization such as the Trust,” said Candi Moore, Trust board chair. She added, “The landowner retains ownership of the land, and the right to control access to it.” The Licking Land Trust works with land owners who wish to preserve land. It seeks to preserve and protect significant natural, scenic, agricultural, historic and recreational resources.

Hughes’ current 96-acre farm was purchased over two decades beginning in the 1890s by Robert Stair, Hughes’ great grandfather. Hughes’ grandmother, F. Mae Stair-Hughes was born in a cabin on the property. Although the cabin no longer stands, the Hughes farming tradition lived on.

Robert Stair raised various crops and produced cattle and hogs for market. He was the founder and original owner of Stair’s Meat Market in Newark. Hughes’ parents, Robert and Ellamae, continued the farming tradition. Mr. Hughes, a full time farmer, managed over 200 acres of crops and



Hughes family ancestors at Newton Twp. Farm, about 1900

about 150 head of livestock during his peak farming years. Mrs. Hughes milked cattle, produced chickens and eggs, and helped in the fields. “We weren’t rich, but my parents were able to earn a living and save a little money,” Hughes said.

Hughes produces sheep, beef cattle and hay. “It is unfortunate that farmers cannot make a living the way they used to,” Hughes said. “That’s why it’s important to plan, to make sure that the next generation doesn’t have to sell their land to pay estate taxes.”

Hughes strongly encourages land owners to meet with an estate planning advisor to discuss the best options for individuals and their families. “OSU Extension just released a series of estate planning fact sheets to assist individuals with preparing an estate plan,” Hughes said. More information on estate planning can be found by contacting your local extension agency, or visiting the OSU Extension website at: <http://ohioline.osu.edu/ep-fact/>

In addition to farming, Hughes works full time as a family nutrition educator with OSU Extension Licking County, and as the coordinator of the Extension’s Ohio Certified Volunteer Naturalist Program.

--- Pat Deering, LLT Board Member

Progress and promise at Spring Valley

Two years ago, the Spring Valley property, located just south of Granville, was on the market. Its owners no longer wished to manage the pool that had been under family operation for decades and they decided that it was time to sell. But these owners were not willing to sell to just anyone. With a deep understanding of and love for the natural beauty of this property, they were seeking buyers that would preserve Spring Valley as a park. Today, thanks to a broad collaboration of community organizations and dedicated individuals, that dream is a reality. In 2007, the acquisition of Spring Valley by Granville Township and the granting to the Licking Land Trust of a conservation easement on its 45 acres were completed.

If you haven't been to Spring Valley since the pool closed, you are in for a surprise. In the fall of 2007, the pool was demolished and sculpted into a meadow. This spring, the former pool location was planted with native Ohio prairie species. You'll notice other changes, too. Some of the buildings have been removed, the tennis courts near Rt. 16 are gone, and some of the concrete wall along the stream has been removed. If you are particularly adventurous, you'll notice that the trails have been expanded and improved. These are welcome changes, but to me, the most exciting things are those that have remained unchanged. Salt Run still tumbles through the valley on its way to Racoon Creek, the skunk cabbage still grows in the early spring, and the massive sycamores still wave in the summer breeze.

Spring Valley is still a work in progress, and aside from the structural modifications there are a number of other new initiatives taking shape. One important effort is focused on the establishment of a nature studies center. This spring, a team of Denison students led a group of Granville children



A local Brownie troop and Denison University students enjoy nature exploration at Spring Valley on Earth Day, April 22, 2008.

on a stream and forest exploration at Spring Valley. This was undertaken as a pilot for an after-school nature studies program that will be launched for the first time in the fall of 2008. Our children have fewer and fewer opportunities to interact with nature, and this program has the potential to promote environmental education on this magnificent property. At present, this will be a program without a building, but there are hopes to renovate one of the remaining Spring Valley pool buildings into a nature center. This, too, is a dream that will require some funds—but some dreams are worth pursuing.

On April 22, 2008, about 60 people gathered at Spring Valley for an Earth Day picnic and celebration. Those in attendance were former members of the Spring Valley pool, Licking Land Trust members, and area residents eager to enjoy a beautiful spring day. We all came to celebrate this place—to stroll on the trails, to sit in the shade by the stream, and to enjoy nature with each other.

But you don't have to wait until the next Earth Day to do this; Spring Valley is open from dawn to dusk every day of the year! Maybe I'll see you there.

--- Doug Spieles, LLT Vice Chairman

New, expanded incentives available for conservation easements

In May 2008, the U.S. Congress renewed a powerful tax incentive that makes it more attractive for landowners to donate conservation easements to qualified charitable conservation organizations like the Licking Land Trust. Specifically, the law:

- Raises the maximum deduction a donor can take for donating a conservation easement from 30% of their adjusted gross income (AGI) in any year to 50%,
- Allows qualified farmers and ranchers to deduct up to 100% of their AGI; and
- Increases the number of years over which a donor can take deductions from 6 years to 16 years.

Under law prior to 2006, an agricultural landowner earning \$50,000 a year who donated a conservation easement worth \$1 million could take a total of no more than \$90,000 in tax deductions! Under the new law, that landowner is able to take as much as \$800,000 in tax deductions – still less than the full value of the donation, but a significant increase.

Not surprisingly, The Licking Land Trust and land trusts across the country have experienced a significant increase in landowners wanting to give conservation easements since the law was originally enacted in 2006. In fact, the legislation has helped conserve over one million acres of farms, ranches and natural areas across the U.S. The legislation has created a true win-win situation – thousands of acres of beautiful lands preserved for the enjoyment of future generations and a much better tax deal for the generous donors of these lands.

While Congress let the original 2006 law expire at the end of 2007, its action in May 2008 makes the renewed law retroactive to the beginning of the year and it will last through the end of 2009.

The Licking Land Trust is a key player in the national land trust community that successfully persuaded Congress to pass both the original 2006 law and the new 2008 law that renews these compelling tax incentives. For more information on the provisions of the tax law, please contact the Licking Land Trust at lickinglandtrust@windstream.net or call Greg Sharkey at (614) 787-4739. We welcome the opportunity to help you explore the possibility of granting a conservation easement for the permanent protection of your land.

---Greg Sharkey, LLT Board Member



A favorite activity for members and the public is the Wildflower Walk. This one took place at the Fryman Reserve.

Join us at the Hartford Fair

August 2 – August 9

The Licking Land Trust will host a booth at the Hartford Fair again this year. Volunteers are needed to staff the booth, hand out literature and answer questions about the land trust. (Last year 99% of questions were very basic.) Volunteers may select a three-hour shift that is convenient for their schedule. If you are interested in learning more about this volunteer opportunity, please contact LLT Board member Mary Fitch at 740-924-2293 or mfitch3@columbus.rr.com



A soybean field on the Neeley Farm near Millersport.

LLT and farm owners preserve historic land

A total of 128 acres of Fairfield County farmland that’s been in one family for eight generations since it was bought from the Federal government in 1813, will now be protected as farmland forever. The owners, Larry and Janet Neeley, recently completed the second of two transactions with the Licking Land Trust, placing a conservation easement on 53 acres of the property.

In 2003 the Neeleys began their major conservation project by protecting 75 acres of their family farm with an easement to the Licking Land Trust. The second part was completed in December 2007, resulting in a third of the farm being preserved forever. The property, which has been in their family for 195 years, will remain agriculturally productive and undeveloped for the benefit of many future generations.

“Those of us who own rural land need to do everything we can to keep it available for agricultural production,” said Janet

Neeley. Historic and scenic preservation are also important to the Neeleys, whose property adjoins the historic Deep Cut of the Ohio and Erie Canal. The Deep Cut segment, which has been cited as one of the greatest engineering feats of Ohio’s first half century, was hand dug from 1825 to 1831, and extended south from Buckeye Lake. Conservation of the Neeley land protects scenic views of this historic canal area from Deep Cut Road, for the benefit of the general public.

Under the easement terms, the Neeleys continue to own the land, but it is forever protected from development and any changes that impair the natural resources, conservation, and agricultural usage. The Neeleys are hopeful that both of their children, both of their grandchildren, and many future generations of the family will want to own, live, and tend the conserved land.

--- Linda Habig, LLT Board Member

Spring Valley has much to offer visitors

Below is a partial list of its treasures

Plants

- Mayapple
- Bloodroot
- Dutchman’s Breeches
- Jewel Weed
- Christmas Fern
- Yellow Trout Lily
- Bluets
- Cut-leaved Toothwort
- Jack-in-the-Pulpit
- Skunk Cabbage
- Wild Blue Phlox
- Marsh Marigold
- Wild Geranium



Trees & Shrubs

- Maple
- Dogwood
- Beech
- Spice Bush
- Oak
- Wild Black Cherry
- Viburnum
- Sycamore
- Witch Hazel



Birds

- Wood Thrush
- Cardinal
- Downy Woodpecker
- Northern Flicker
- Baltimore Oriole
- Belted Kingfisher
- Tufted Titmouse
- Robin
- Chickadee



Some Impressive Numbers!

Land Trusts

33 Land trusts in Ohio

1600 Land trusts nationally

Land Conservation

2 MILLION

Acres conserved nationally in 2007
More land conserved than developed

37 MILLION

Acres protected nationally

Wow!

Membership of the
Licking Land Trust

July 14, 2008

Emily G. Akerstrom
Ann Albershardt
Mary M. Albright & Bernard J. Lukco
Kenneth & Carol Apacki
Beth & Sterling Apthorp
Lynne Ashbrook
Linda & Barry Badertscher
Gary & Suzanne Baker
Ann D. Baker
Margaret & Cyrus Banning
Patricia & Theodore Barclay
Ella Mae Bard
Constance Barsky & Steven Katz
Norma & Andy Bastone
Ron Beitzel
Jon Bennet
Karen & Clarke Berdan
Doug & Mary Bibee
Laurence & Elizabeth Bicking
Marian Bieberbach
Regis & Marilyn Birckbichler
Michael & Elaine Boaz
Doug & Marilyn Boldon
Keith & Lyn Boone
Trump & Carol Bradley
Greg & Robin Brown
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C. Bernard & Victoria Brush
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Lance & Becky Clarke
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Dominick & Susan Consolo
Roger & Ellie Core
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John Cox
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Greg & Amy Davis
Irmagene Davis
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Dave & Carol Dicks
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Dick & Judy Doyle
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Robert & Nancy Drake
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Benjamin Englefield
Jim & Di Erickson
Dagmar Farris
Judy Farris
Vic & Marian Feldmiller
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Aaron & Mary Fitch
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Susan & Chip Freeman
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Kussmaul Gallery
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Lafferty
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James & Nancy Siegel
Howard Siegrist

Randy & Sandra Mathern Smith
Mark & Linda Smith
Doug & Beth Spieles
St. Luke's Episcopal Church
T. J. Evans Foundation
Charles & Patricia Taylor
Rainey & Mary Taylor
Sam & Bobbie Thios
Charles Thompson
Lori Totman
Ron & Susan Tower
Paul & Karen Treece
Donald & Doris Tritt
Richard & Mary Lee Van Meter



Members enjoying a nature walk at the Fryman Reserve, a Trust conserved property.

Barbara S. Vockel
George & Lorraine Wales
Craig & Tina Washka
Mark & Lori Weaver
Benjamin Whitehead
Clarke & Sara Jean Wilhelm
Bill & Karen Wilkins
Douglas & Fran Windeles
Pat & Inga Windley
Rose & Jack Wingert
Don & Sally Wiper
Don Yore & Melissa Green

Invite someone you know to become a member of the Licking Land Trust. Membership information and a registration form can be found on page 8.