

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



Beckett farm, Bowling Green Township

Trust Adds 60 Acre Beckett Farm to Conserved Properties

Wetlands, forest, persimmons, black walnuts, and a log cabin among farm's treasures

By Don Wiper, Trustee

On November 8, 2013 the 60-acre Beckett Farm became the 17th property subject to a permanent conservation easement held by the Licking Land Trust. This easement brought total property subject to the conservation protection by the Trust to 1,151 acres.

Our thanks for this easement gift are extended to owners Tom and Louise Beckett and to daughter

Suzette Beckett, the trustee owner of the property. When we first met with Tom, he told us his objective was to keep the farm out of the hands of developers. The conservation easement will not do that but a developer who becomes an owner could not develop the property, not ever. The no-development restrictions in the easement are a permanent part of the title to the property and every owner must abide by them. This is also the rule for other conservation easements held by the Trust.

The Beckett Farm, located in Bowling Green Township, is a very special property. Originally purchased by Tom's father, it has been in the Beckett family for about 65 years. The western acreage is devoted to hay, corn, and soybeans. The central homestead area includes a mid-1800's log cabin along with more than 12 tree species, ranging from massive pines to small groves of walnuts, black walnuts, persimmons, and magnolias, all planted by Tom. The eastern acreage is a wood lot subject to a forest management plan.

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Park National Bank Supports Trust's Accreditation Effort

By Lyn Boone, Trustee

The Licking Land Trust has been awarded a matching grant of up to \$8,500 by Park National Bank to aid in the completion of a major requirement needed in the organization's bid for national accreditation.

Just as hospitals and universities undergo periodic reviews to confirm

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Business Membership Expands With Granville Vet and Hinderer Honda

By Linda Habig, Trustee

"A lot of our customers are very green and naturally attracted to conservation. I enjoy the interaction with similarly minded people."

Doug Wagner, principal, Granville Vet Clinic

The Trust extends a warm welcome to two new business members - The Granville Veterinary Clinic, and Hinderer Honda. Dr. Doug Wagner, D.V.M., founder of the Granville Vet Clinic, and John Hinderer, owner of Hinderer Honda,

both lead businesses whose services are treasured by Licking County citizens, while also strongly advocating land conservation throughout the County and beyond.

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Doug Wagner with wife Becky in the wilds of New Zealand

Counting with Goldfinches: Learning at the Land Lab

By Ivy Jo Gilbert, Granville High School Class of 2014

A group of Granville High School students sat down with one goal in mind; to create and set aside an area of land for students and the community, a place where future generations could discover a relationship with nature. To entice community engagement and intertwine relationships, the self-motivated students on the GHS Land Lab team focused this past year on the Lab's educational components. Now in the process of becoming an outdoor classroom, the 35 acres of resurrected farmland outside the Intermediate School are slated to have wetland habitat and seas of native Ohio grasses sprinkled with wildflowers. The army of trees obtained through a student-written grant has found a home, and one day will become a forest that students can explore while learning the importance of land conservation.

Conserving and reclaiming land, however, was not enough for the students of GHS and their inspiring leader, James Reding. The GHS AP Environmental and Ecology classes have devoted the past semester to enhancing the Land Lab both academically and physically. By planting trees and wrapping them in deer-protective tubes, the students have become the sowers of the future natural playground.

To derive educational merit from the promise of a flourishing ecosystem, students have written curriculum plans for future teachers and students, from kindergarten through middle school. In the future, kindergartners



Granville High School students creating deer barriers for trees at the Land Lab

will go to the Lab and learn mathematics by counting tree buds, fallen acorns and caroling goldfinches. Intermediate students will hone critical thinking and analysis skills through research projects evolving from data collected at the Land Lab, paired with knowledge pulled from the shelves of the library. Sixth graders will compose fictional essays with Land Lab-inspired creatures as their protagonists, detailing their habitat, diet, behaviors, and interspecies relations. Middle school youth will chart the different species they find at the Land Lab and create food webs to track the movement of energy through the ecosystem. This curriculum aligns with Ohio's academic standards, helping the students become proficient in scientific theories and concepts.

Colleges provide their students with similar learning landscapes in the form of field stations, organic farming spaces, and nature preserves. These locations inspire college students to prepare for careers in forestry, environmental law, and wildlife conservation. Granville youth will make the most of their college journeys because of their experiences creating solutions to complex problems at the Land Lab.

The next time you hear of an event occurring at the Land Lab, put on your garden gloves and favorite boots and come help build our new environmental playground.

Ivy Jo Gilbert will be pursuing a double major in Environmental Science and English at Dickinson College in the fall.

Save the Date!

Regional Events - Land and Conservation Focused

Hartford Fair (hartfordfair.com) Aug. 3 - 9

Licking County Local Foods Council (Facebook)
Local Food Week Aug. 17 - 22

Dawes Arboretum (dawesarb.org)
Children's summer camps weekly all summer
Simple Tricks for Tree ID 9:30 a.m. Sept. 6

Licking Land Trust (lickinglandtrust.org)
1st Annual Harvest 5K Run and Walk at COTC/OSUN Oct. 25
Annual Meeting and Potluck Dinner at Bryn Du Mansion Nov. 6

"Growing up in rural Muskingum County and walking in the woods with my Dad put a lifetime appreciation of natural open spaces in me," reflects Scott Miller, who recently became a member of the Trust's board. Scott, along with his wife Susan and their two young daughters Ava and Ivy, continues to cherish and enjoy the great outdoors in the parks and open spaces of Granville and Licking County.

The Trust is delighted that Scott agreed to join the board, adding a wealth of business and financial savvy to the board's competencies. As Controller for L Brands (formerly known as Limited Brands, Inc.), Scott has more than 15 years' experience in corporate financial planning and governance. Upon joining the board, Scott said, "I'd like to use my corporate skills in a different way, bringing them from an international corporate focus to a meaningful local effort that will be more personally gratifying."

Scott's work for L Brands is focused on establishing and growing retail operations in geographies around the world including Canada, the UK, the Middle East, Southeast Asia, China, and Latin America. He's confident his skills in financial and corporate structure, regulatory compliance, risk management, and controls can

be applied locally in helping the Trust safeguard its conserved properties, and work with landowners structuring new easement transactions.

About five years ago, while skiing with his family, Scott read an article about land trust accomplishments in the west. Said Scott, "Sitting in a ski lodge in Colorado, I thought about the explosive growth in suburban Columbus and loss of green space, and I resolved then and there that I wanted to be part of a group that preserves the great outdoors." Welcome, Scott!!



Scott Miller

Business Members and Organizations Support Conservation

The Trust welcomes and thanks our business members. Their products and services help farmers, landowners, and organizations maintain, preserve, and improve the great outdoors.

Aqua Doc Lake & Pond Management Co.
Benjamin D. Rickey LLC
The Dawes Arboretum
Granville Garden Club
Granville Milling Company
Granville Township
Granville Veterinary Clinic
INT Information Systems, Inc.
Jodi Melfi Design Ltd.

John Hinderer Honda
Kussmaul Gallery
Licking County Soil and Water
Conservation District
Park Trails/MI Homes, and
River Road Coffeehouse
Spring Meadow Fencing Company
T. J. Evans Foundation
Tecumseh Land Trust

Business Membership Expands With Granville Vet and Hinderer Honda

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"I see the Trust as a great organization doing great work in Granville and surrounding areas. I am a big fan of the origins of the Granville Land Conservancy which has grown into the Licking Land Trust," said Doug Wagner. His business, located on South Main St. in Granville, provides veterinary, grooming and boarding services to owners seeking the best possible care for their cherished animals. And with the natural affinity between outdoor space and animals, many of the Clinic's clients are also supporters of green space conservation. Dogs exuberantly bounding on a grassy field, horses cantering down a woodland trail, cats lolling under a verdant bush, birds breezing among oaks and maples - our green world is joyful with our animal companions.

Doug feels that it will be hard to assure that any true conservation areas survive unless the areas are protected by such organizations as the Trust. "Conservation needs to be done at the local level to best protect the valuable areas. Local interests are best served by the local people and local government," reflects Doug. Personally, Doug has worked with the Granville Township Open Space Program since 1999, chairing its committee since 2000, and being involved with most of the levies.

John Hinderer commented, "Growing up in Union County, where family members all had farms, I was instilled with

a high regard for the land. While planting lots of different crops, my uncles still set aside areas where no farming was done, and the land was saved for wildlife habitat, including the pheasants we all enjoyed seeing." John's values of open space conservation and sustainability are manifested today at his 70-acre farm in Granville Township, where he's planted hundreds of pines and ornamental trees with an eye to providing wildlife habitat. He's also battling invasive species, such as honeysuckle and grapevine, and gradually replacing them with native plants that are kinder to trees and the environment.

John's company, Hinderer Honda, located on Hebron Road in Heath, provides extraordinary customer service to its clients throughout Licking, Franklin, Knox, Muskingum, Guernsey, Perry and Fairfield Counties seeking new and used autos. John also contributes extensively to the well-being of central Ohio communities through several board memberships, including The Works and COTC, among other organizations.

The Trust is delighted to welcome these two new businesses to its conservation-minded membership!



John Hinderer

Screens Off, Hiking Shoes On!



Families enjoying the Trust's TOYS week hike at Spring Valley

The Trust was proud to be one of the sponsors of the Granville "Turn Off Your Screen" ("TOYS") week which took place during the beginning of May. Part of a national campaign to reduce the use of screen time, the weeklong event offered a variety

of activities for community members of all ages. The Trust hosted a family-friendly hike through the Spring Valley Nature Preserve on a beautiful evening during the middle of the week. Board Chair Doug Spieles led the hike and shared his expertise in environmental biology with those attending. Blooming Jack-in-the-Pulpits, the geological displays of the Preserve, and the freshly restored Salt Run creek added to the evening's enjoyment.

By Wendy Bittel, Administrative Director and Board Secretary

The overall TOYS initiative was led by the Granville Public Library and the Granville Recreation District. Other area organizations involved in sponsoring and hosting events included Robbins Hunter Museum, Granville Historical Society, Granville School District, Granville Senior Center, Bryn Du Mansion, Licking Park District, Granville Kiwanis, and Welsh Hills School. The Trust was pleased to partner with other wonderful community organizations for this event which included a variety of interesting activities, many that promoted the enjoyment of nature!

Park National Bank Supports Trust's Accreditation Effort

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their standards of excellence, so may land conservation organizations. The Trust is working on its application to receive the national Land Trust Alliance's mark of distinction – accreditation. A requirement of that process is that the Trust must have completed raising its Legal Defense Fund – a financial resource the Trust would rely on if it ever needed to defend a protected property in court.

A land trust the size of the Licking Land Trust must have a dedicated Legal Defense Fund of \$53,000. For years, the organization has saved gifts and other revenues toward that goal, and with about \$36,000 now in hand, the Trust finds itself still in need of raising \$17,000 by the end of the year. Enter Park National Bank, which is providing a compelling incentive in the final push by offering to match new gifts to the fund, up to \$8500, on a dollar-for-dollar basis.

"We are incredibly fortunate to have this invaluable help from Park National Bank," said Doug Spieles, Chair of the Trust's board. "PNB's generosity is pushing us forward by inspiring our members and friends to lend a hand as well. This is truly leveraging our success, and we're deeply grateful to PNB." "The Legal Defense Fund is one of the most important criteria of excellence that accredited land trusts demonstrate," added Don Wiper, an attorney and member of the Trust's board.

Members and friends may observe the Trust's progress toward meeting the Park National match by logging onto the matching grant page on the organization's website at www.lickinglandtrust.org. And of course, contributions may be made either via the secure page on the website, or by sending a check to the Licking Land Trust at P.O. Box 196, Granville, OH 43023.

Trust Adds 60 Acre Beckett Farm to Conserved Properties *continued from page 1*

The entire farm is a natural habitat for wildlife of all kinds. A stream which eventually feeds Bowling Green Creek cuts diagonally through the property and a wet spring feeds a wetland at the southwest corner of the property.

Like most conservation easements, this one was not an easy transaction to complete. All easements are special because the properties being protected are different and may be subject to pre-existing rights and restrictions, while each owner has different objectives, and the conservation values are different.

In this case, the Becketts and the Trust had to deal with a mortgage on the property. Fortunately, the locally-based First Federal Savings and Loan, which held the mortgage, understood the transaction and

subordinated its mortgage to the easement. The Trust understands subordination and the need for it, can explain its complexities to the mortgage holder, and has the documents to accomplish this legal task.

The other issue was not as easy to resolve. The holder/lessee of an oil/gas lease was very difficult to locate, and once located was uncooperative despite their many years of non-payment of lease rentals. Eventually the holder/lessee was located and the necessary notices were given to cause a termination of the lease.

Happily, with legal issues resolved and an easement in place, the Beckett farm remains pristine; the scent of blooming magnolias continues to drift through the pine and walnut groves, while the stream and wetlands beckon to wildlife and birds of many species.

Members Enjoy the Land and Help the Trust

The Trust welcomes all member volunteers to assist with the annual inspections of conserved Trust properties. Come along with a Trustee to hike, view, enjoy and inspect one or more of our properties this summer or fall. We'd love to have you, and you'd be making a significant contribution to the work of the Trust. To volunteer, or for more information, contact Wendy Bittel, Administrative Director: lickinglandtrust@windstream.net



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

Join The Licking Land Trust

**Renew your membership, join, or contribute
online at www.lickinglandtrust.org**



**Donate
securely
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