



Conservation Excellence

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

[lickinglandtrust.org](http://lickinglandtrust.org)

## LICKING LAND TRUST: REACCREDITED IN 2021!

By Mike Mickelson, Trustee and Committee Chair

*Land Trust Accreditation is a mark of distinction, showing that a land trust meets high standards for land conservation. It sends a message to landowners and supporters: "Invest in us. We are a strong, effective organization you can trust to conserve your land forever."*

- Land Trust Alliance



### Conservation Excellence

The Land Trust Alliance (LTA) is a national organization representing over 1000 land trusts. The Land Trust Accreditation Commission, an independent program of the LTA, oversees land trust accreditations. The Licking Land Trust attained first-time accreditation in 2016. Re-accreditation is cyclical, occurring at five-year intervals, making the Trust eligible for reaccreditation in 2021. To be reaccredited, a land trust must demonstrate successful implementation of the Land Trust Alliance's Standards and Practices in all transactions. Standards and Practices are an extensive set of policies regulating ethical and fiduciary operations of land trusts as they acquire and protect

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## THE TRUST'S NEWEST CONSERVATION EASEMENT: THE CLARKE PROPERTY, PERRY COUNTY

By Amy Mock and Jeremy King, Trustees

The ink is still wet on the Clarke Property conservation easement, the newest addition to the Licking Land Trust's portfolio of protected properties. The scenic Clarke property, located in the southeast corner of Perry County, comprises 58.5 acres of woodland, steep hills, and two small streams.

The Clarke property is located in an exceptionally picturesque part of Ohio. It is bordered on the north by a Wayne National Forest "Special Area" called Eels Run, containing significant

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## 7TH ANNUAL FARM TO FORK HELD IN NEW VENUE



Farm to Fork Tasting & Silent Auction, the Licking Land Trust's popular annual fund-raiser, was a smashing success again this year, with

ticket sales of more than 190 and record-breaking proceeds to benefit the organization. Held on August 14th in the capacious Moon Hall on the Denison University campus, the event was "a home run," according to Trust Chair Jim Bidigare. "We are deeply grateful to all our sponsors, supporters, and participants who helped us knock it out of the park!"

After 2020's on-line version of Farm to Fork last fall, a gratifying success itself despite the need to convene virtually, the event this year seemed extra-celebratory as members, friends and supporters came together

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## WELCOME OUR NEW BOARD MEMBERS!



Angela Farley

### **ANGELA FARLEY**

Angela Farley is proud to have been born and raised in Licking County. While attending The Ohio State University, she enjoyed a summer internship at a small landscape firm in Riverside, California. After graduating with a Bachelor of Science in Landscape Architecture, Angela began her career at Draper Aden Associates, a consulting and civil engineering firm in Blacksburg, Virginia,

where she was involved in many aspects of site design, including preparing plans for environmentally

sustainable landscapes, hand and computer renderings, site grading, and many other design related endeavors.

Angela moved back to Ohio in July 2012 and has been employed as a Planner with the Licking County Planning and Development Department since her return. She also serves as the Ohio Public Works Commission District 17 liaison for the Natural Resources Assistance Council. This council is responsible for administering Ohio's Clean Ohio Green Space Program for a six-county area that includes Licking County.

Angela and her husband, Dan, enjoy living in and exploring Licking County. They consider it a wonderful place raise their son and daughter!



Melissa Kesler Gilbert

### **MELISSA KESLER GILBERT**

Melissa Gilbert is an Ohio native with roots in the Rush Creek area of Worthington. After trekking the seashores of

Baltimore, the bay of Boston, and the mountains of Portland (Ore.), she returned to settle in Granville, where she has lived for twenty years.

Melissa currently serves as the Associate Dean of Experiential Learning at Otterbein University and is founding director of the University's Center for Community Engagement. She develops partnerships with community stakeholders to engage students in learning beyond the traditional classroom -- in nonprofits, government agencies, schools, and outdoor educational landscapes. In 2020, she launched the Otterbein Community Garden, a give-back garden where students cultivate seventy-three varieties of

produce using sustainable practices. This garden is part of a food justice system at the university that also includes the Promise House, a resource center and food pantry managed by Melissa, which helps alleviate socioeconomic barriers to student success.

Melissa, an avid birder, spends her free time hiking with her husband, Bryant, or studying the behavior of woodland wildlife in the woods behind her home. She raised two children in Granville: Ivy, who works in green energy in New York City, and Will, a junior at Ohio State.

Melissa earned her B.A. at The Ohio State University, her M.A. at Baltimore University, and her Ph.D. in Sociology at Boston College. She is looking forward to working with her Licking County neighbors to build strong community relationships to protect greenspaces that humble us with their beauty every day.



## REACCREDITED IN 2021 continued from page 1

land in perpetuity. Each land trust develops its own unique Standards and Practices based on the LTA framework.

As the need for reaccreditation in 2021 approached, the Trust formed an accreditation committee. The committee noted that the LTA had revised its Standards and Practices guidance at the end of 2017. Therefore, the Trust needed to revise its own Standards and Practices accordingly, prior

to application for reaccreditation. Committee members spent many evenings discussing and updating existing Trust policies, and sometimes creating new ones, to meet these new requirements.

All materials and the formal application were submitted online to the Accreditation Commission in late 2020. This was a tremendous improvement in the application process; in 2015 multiple binders full of hard-copy documents had to be shipped to the Accreditation Commission. In August

of this year, the Trust received the long-awaited letter of reaccreditation. A tremendous relief was felt by both the accreditation committee and the Trust board. The Trust is now happily reaccredited through 2026!

**IN MEMORIAM** With sadness we learned of Randal “Rip” Ripley’s passing this autumn. A retired OSU political science professor and former member of the Pataskala planning and zoning commission, Rip also served on the Licking Land Trust Board from 2016 through 2018. He was an invaluable Board Trustee, and contributed many hours and astute ideas as a member of the Trust’s reaccreditation committee. An outdoors enthusiast, an equestrian, and a good friend, Rip will be greatly missed by the Trust and the land conservation community.

## OUR ANNUAL MEETING: A ROMP THROUGH OHIO’S FLORA AND FAUNA

By Jim Bidigare, Chair

Naturalist and photographer Jim McCormac shared A Romp Through Ohio’s Flora and Fauna at the Licking Land Trust’s annual meeting held in Denison’s Herrick Performance Hall on November 11th, Veterans Day. Jim shared his beautiful photographs and his stories while tracing a route around the perimeter of our state, generally following the route of the Buckeye Trail. He pointed out the interdependencies that exist in the natural world among species, and spoke about changes caused by the loss of natural habitat, and effects on watershed habitats caused by development.

The event was well-attended despite the cold and rainy evening. Those who made it were treated to Jim’s vivid close-ups of many of Ohio’s birds and other flora and fauna that he has captured with his camera. Ohio’s rich variety of natural landscapes, from northeastern kettle bogs to the unique, mostly uninterrupted, forest tract known as Shawnee State Forest, to the beautiful Huffman Prairie on Wright-Patterson AFB were also highlighted.

In addition to his spectacular photography, the audience was impressed with Jim’s deep and broad knowledge of Ohio’s wildlife and ecosystems, presented in a very engaging and good-humored way. Jim drew on his 31 years with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources as a botanist and wildlife diversity specialist. Jim has also authored or coauthored six books, including the upcoming Field Guide to Ohio’s Damselflies and Dragonflies.

We felt very privileged to have Jim speak at our annual event!

The evening concluded with the raffle drawing for the beautiful quilt created and donated by Christine Fraser Ramsey. The lucky winners were Trust Steward Members Richard and Jane Scott.



Audience enjoying presentation by Jim McCormac



Doug Spieles and Amelia Smith draw the raffle winner



Rebecca Swab, Jeremy King, Jim Bidigare, Jim McCormac, Mary Fitch, Tom Henshaw, Jen Jacquot



# THE TRUST'S NEWEST CONSERVATION EASEMENT

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populations of Guyandotte beauty, a lovely white flowering plant in the mint family. This species was identified as potentially threatened by the State of Ohio and is considered globally rare.



The property is also situated just northwest of Burr Oak State Park. The beautiful Wildcat Hollow Trail, one of Ohio's best hiking trails, passes nearby. Protecting the Clarke property also safeguards extended habitat for threatened and endangered species such as the bald eagle and the Indiana bat that live in the Wayne National Forest.

With their permanent residence in Worthington, Gary and Kay Clarke purchased the initial 30 acres in Perry County in the 1990s so they could enjoy the natural landscape and take their young son

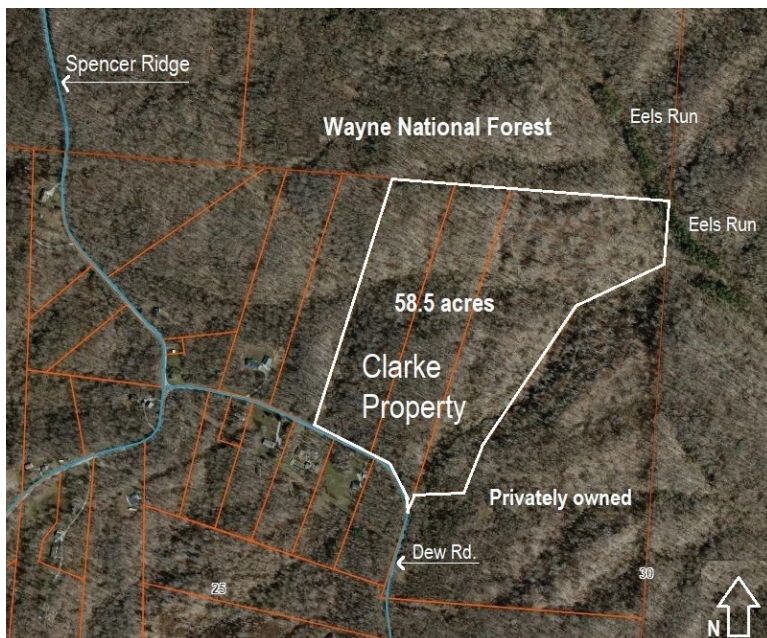
hiking and camping. They purchased the final 28 + acres in 2017. Although the property was timbered prior to their purchase, the Clarkes' goal is to keep the property in a natural, forested state, and help to steward future old-growth woodland. In fact, seeing the results of a timbering operation on a neighbor's property was what pushed the Clarkes to look for a permanent measure.



In 2020, the Clarkes sought out the Trust to establish a conservation easement that would protect their property from development. A conservation easement is a legal tool through which a property owner can preserve his/her property in perpetuity. An outside organization – the Licking Land Trust in this case – must hold the conservation easement and monitor the property regularly to make sure the terms of the easement are followed, even if new owners purchase the conserved property in the future. A conservation easement “runs with the land.”

The Clarkes have worked hard to create a system of low-impact walking trails, and have built benches and two decks to enjoy panoramic views. They have also been planting additional native trees such as burr and swamp oaks, hickories, and eastern redbuds, as well as removing invasive species.

Many thanks to the far-sighted generosity of the Clarkes!





## KEEPING RACCOON CREEK – AND THE OHIO RIVER – CLEAN!

By Rebecca Swab, Trustee

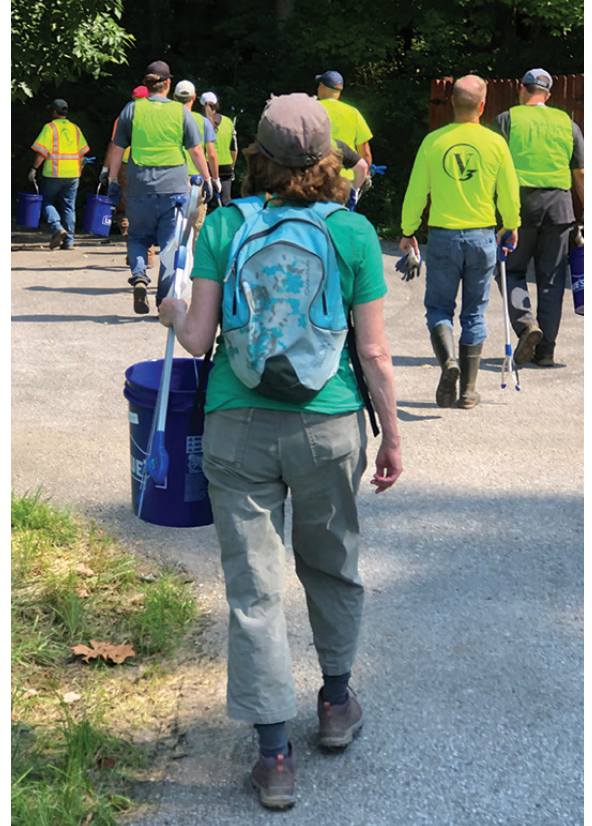
Harnden Preserve is one of several Licking Land Trust properties bordering Raccoon Creek in the Granville area. Natural buffers along rivers, like that of the Harnden Preserve, are essential in preventing structure flooding, in filtering runoff on its way to the river, and for wildlife habitat. Unfortunately, these areas can be collection points for trash that washes down from parking lots and other areas.

To keep Licking County rivers clean, the Licking County Soil and Water Conservation District hosts the annual River Round Up. During this year's River Round Up in September, the Trust led a Harnden Preserve clean-up group. It was a great day, sunny but not too hot!

The group split into two, one focusing on the river itself -- luckily little trash was found there -- and one headed up the wooded hill, toward Route 16. Here a seemingly endless stream of plastic bottles and fast-food wrappers was discovered. While some litter would probably stay near the highway, rainstorms could wash much of it into the river.

Thanks to valuable volunteer assistance from the V3 Companies, many bags of debris were collected, helping keep this area clean, improve the river ecosystem, and make sure we have clean water!

Raccoon Creek is part of the Ohio River basin, so its waters eventually flow into the Ohio River and the Gulf of Mexico. Keeping Raccoon Creek trash-free helps keep downstream waterways clean as well.



## IT WAS A GREAT DAY FOR A PICNIC!

Licking Land Trust members and friends had a wonderful time at the Trust's family picnic at Spring Valley Nature Preserve on Saturday, September 18th. We hope to do this again!

# THANK YOU FOR MAKING FARM TO FORK 2021 POSSIBLE!



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## Special Thanks To:

Denison University  
Ryan Jacquot  
Susan King  
Sarah Marks  
Michelle Newman  
Kay Studer  
LLT Interns Mary Kosin &  
Emily Smith



Mary Kosin and Nick Weber



# 7TH ANNUAL FARM TO FORK continued from page 1

in-person in the new venue. Held in previous years at the Granville Inn, Farm to Fork had reached room capacity in that site. The two large rooms and outdoor spaces of Moon Hall allowed the sale of about 50% more tickets.



Guests enjoyed grazing bountiful buffet tables of gourmet delights catered by Bon Appétit. Some of the most popular offerings included beef kofta, curry satay, edamame pot stickers, and grilled peaches with cream. Much of the fresh food was generously donated by local sources, as were the flowers for the stunning floral decorations.

Volunteers arranged the floral centerpieces, staffed the registration desks, assisted guests with parking, contributed photography and technology skills, and oversaw the silent auction tables. The auction featured sixty-five items donated by local businesses, organizations, and individuals. Bidding was highly competitive across the broad range of gifts, including artworks, domestic goods, personal services, children's gifts, landscape and gardening items, and gift cards from local restaurants, hotels, and B&Bs.

Net proceeds from the event exceeded \$18,000, a large portion of which will help fund the Trust's annual operating expenses, said Treasurer Lyn Boone. The balance will likely be used to support one or more of the Trust's dedicated funds, such as its Stewardship Fund. "Every dollar counts," she said, "toward the mission of preserving natural areas and agricultural lands in Central Ohio. Thank you, one and all!"



Jim Bidigare, Scott Hanning, and Jessi Hannig



Tom Henshaw, Wendy Miller, and Thomas Miller



Above: Kyra Schloenbach and Nicholas Salisbury  
Below: Ann Fischbein, Bill Fischbein, Sarah Lynn, Matthew Copp, Jody Copp





Licking Land Trust  
 P.O. Box 196  
 Granville, OH 43023



**LICKING LAND TRUST**

740-587-4104  
 lickinglandtrust@gmail.com  
[www.lickinglandtrust.org](http://www.lickinglandtrust.org)

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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

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