



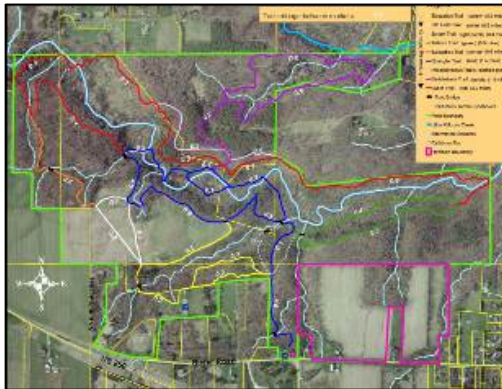
FRIENDS OF WOOSTER MEMORIAL PARK

P.O. Box 1776, Wooster, OH 44691
www.friendsofWMP.com

SPECIAL WINTER 2014 NEWSLETTER

FWMP ACQUIRES THE 50-ACRE KENWOOD PARCEL FOR WMP THROUGH FUNDS FROM CLEAN OHIO & THE NOBLE FOUNDATION

The Friends of Wooster Memorial Park (FWMP) Board of Directors is excited to announce the acquisition of 49.154 acres (outlined in pink on map) for addition to Wooster Memorial Park (WMP). The sellers of the parcel, Norma (Hartman) and Gerald Stair of Wooster and Larry and Judy Hartman of West Virginia, waited patiently last spring while the Board applied for a Clean Ohio Fund Green



Space Conservation Program grant to purchase the land. The addition of this tract, named the Kenwood Parcel in honor of the sellers' parents Kenneth Woodrow Hartman and Gladys Mary Hartman who settled the Parcel almost 100 years ago, will increase WMP's functional size to 375 acres and help to preserve and enhance a family legacy for all to enjoy.

CRITICAL LOCAL FUNDING – FWMP's \$419,000 Clean Ohio grant required a 25% local match, the lion's share of which came from a generous donation by the Donald & Alice Noble Foundation. The Board approached the Foundation in early March 2013 after learning of the

Kenwood Parcel's availability and only a few weeks before the grant's April 1 due date. The Noble Foundation responded quickly and with full support: "The Board of Trustees of the Noble Foundation believes that the purchase of this property will be a wonderful addition to the park, which should benefit many generations of Wayne County Residents. I thank you for the opportunity to participate in this project" (David Noble, March 26, 2013). FWMP is extremely appreciative of the Foundation's continued support with this and past projects in WMP, which have included two previous Clean Ohio grants.

KENWOOD PARCEL BECOMES A REALITY – With the backing of the City and guidance from Ron Holtman (Killbuck Watershed Land Trust), FWMP submitted the Clean Ohio application on April 1, received funding in late summer, and took ownership of the Kenwood Parcel on September 28, 2013. The Parcel, which is adjacent to the southeast border of WMP, is 1/3 hardwood forest and forested ravines and 2/3 farmland, and protects and expands valuable upland and riparian forests and open areas conserved in the park. The FWMP Board is deeply grateful to the Kenwood Parcel family for their dedication to this project.



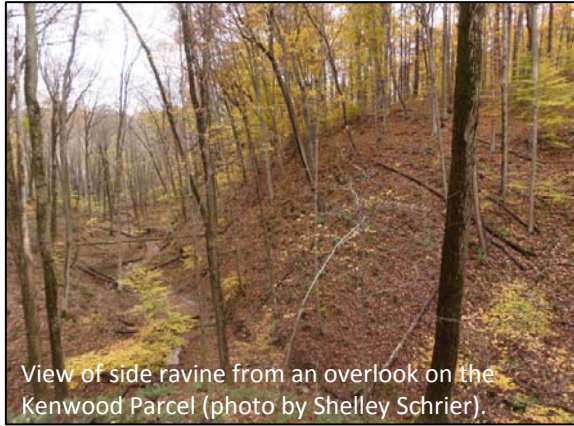
Closing celebration (R-L): Jay Mosley, Gerald Stair, Norma Stair, Larry Hartman (back), Judy Hartman and Cathy Herms.

OVERALL VISION FOR THE PARCEL – The collective vision for the Kenwood Parcel is to create a seamless connection between the Parcel and WMP to expand the recreational, educational, conservation and research opportunities for residents in Wooster and surrounding communities. Trails

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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will be created on the Parcel to link with the park's existing trails, and an alternate park entrance and parking lot will be created along Silver Road. A portion of the Parcel's farmland (18 acres previously in corn) will be restored to a mix of native grasses, wildflowers and trees, and the remaining open areas will be managed to allow forest succession. With the gentle topography of the



View of side ravine from an overlook on the Kenwood Parcel (photo by Shelley Schrier).

Kenwood Parcel, a key objective is to have the alternate entrance and trails ADA-accessible to accommodate WMP users of all ages and abilities. The Parcel has been placed under a conservation easement similar to WMP, and FWMP plans to offer the tract to the City at a future date once its grant obligations are completed.

SHORT- & LONG-TERM GOALS – The FWMP Board has outlined some goals for site improvements that are in keeping with the conditions of the Clean Ohio grant, which require the Kenwood Parcel be minimally managed to provide recreational

opportunities while preserving and restoring its natural features and habitat potential.

Approximately \$20,000 of the Clean Ohio matching funds will be used for basic improvements (Goals I & II), and the Board will continue to work to raise funds for future projects.

- *Goal I – Create connecting trails and restore the previously cultivated corn field.* The Trail Committee has flagged trails on the Parcel that connect to WMP's Trillium and Outer Trails, and hopes to install signage by fall 2014. The 18 acres previously in corn will be planted with native vegetation to prevent soil erosion and weed invasions, restore habitat, and protect the Rathburn Run watershed. FWMP members began collecting and planting tree seeds this fall, and a generous donation to FWMP in December 2013 will facilitate the seeding of a native mixed prairie this winter/spring by Ohio Prairie Nursery (Hiram, OH).
- *Goal II – Create an alternate park entrance.* An alternate Silver Road entrance on the Kenwood Parcel would augment WMP's current main entrance, which is limited in the number of parking spaces. To do this, a dilapidated farm house on the Parcel will be torn down and replaced with a gravel 20-car parking lot and driveway. A kiosk will be installed to display the trail map and other park information. FWMP has applied through the Plain Township for a Moving Ohio Forward grant to help with this.
- *Goal III – Improve the alternate entrance for handicap accessibility.* FWMP will seek funds to pave the Parcel entrance to meet ADA standards.
- *Goal IV – Create handicap-accessible trails through forest and prairie, to include a beautiful overlook.* FWMP will seek funds to install an ADA-compliant trail that traverses forest and prairie habitat, with an overlook affording views of the beautiful, deep side ravines of the park. Local Boy Scout Troops are eager to participate in planning and installation.
- *Goal V – Install ADA-compliant restrooms and pavilion.* In the future, FWMP will seek funds to build an ADA-compliant restroom and picnic facility.

ADDITIONAL DONATIONS & FUNDS FOR PARCEL PROJECTS – This fall, FWMP received generous donations from the Killbuck Watershed Land Trust, Gerald and Norma Stair, and Joan Buehler in memory of Gene Buehler, to be used for some important improvements on the Kenwood Parcel. The Board will continue to seek grants and other financial assistance, including donations of labor and materials, for future park projects. We are currently waiting to hear about a USDA NRCS grant submitted last fall that would help fund tree planting on the Parcel.

**** PLEASE RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP FOR 2014 ****

Your continued membership is essential to the success of FWMP. Whether you are an active member or quiet supporter, your renewal will help care for WMP, and shows that you value this wonderful natural area. Please read on to learn of some of the ways FWMP worked in 2013 to benefit the park. *Included is a renewal form for your convenience, or go to www.friendsofwmp.com.*

FWMP MEMBERSHIP DUES NOW \$10 TO HELP COVER INCREASING COSTS – It has been a busy and productive year for FWMP. In addition to acquisition of the Kenwood Parcel, FWMP became a 501(c)(3) organization, so that all donations to FWMP federally tax-exempt. However, FWMP is now required to provide a greater level of record keeping and documentation for all activities and donations and must submit a federal tax return to maintain tax-exempt status. These increased administrative activities, along with the increased costs for management of the Kenwood Parcel and expanded WMP, have necessitated the Board to increase our yearly membership dues from \$5 to \$10. This is the first increase in dues since FWMP’s inception in 2002, and we hope that this increase does not provide a hardship for any of our existing or prospective members.



Greg Miller autographs *The Big Year* for Maryanna Biggio, President of the KWLTL (photo by J. Swank).

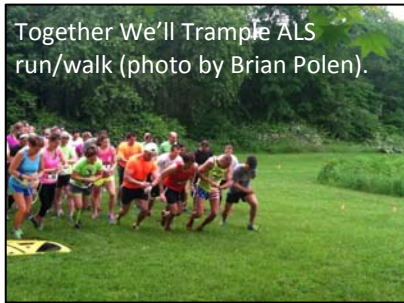
RECORD TURNOUT AT 13TH ANNUAL MEETING – FWMP was fortunate to have Greg Miller, renowned birding expert from Holmes County, as guest speaker at the 13th Annual Meeting on April 10, 2013 at the Freedlander Park Chalet. Greg is a feature character in the book and movie, *The Big Year*, which chronicles his adventures in 1998 as he roamed 130,000 miles across the continent trying to see as many bird species as he could in one year. In "My Big Story", Greg gave an animated, funny and often touching account of how he came to do a Big Year, how his story became a book and then movie, and what it was like to be on a Hollywood set. When asked about his

favorite part of the whole experience, Greg responded, “I get to travel around the country talking about a book I didn’t write and a movie I didn’t star in!”

EDUCATION AREA REPAVED WITH THE HELP OF A NOBLE GRANT AND PARK FUNDS – In July 2013, the crumbling Education Area driveway and parking lot were repaved, thank you in large part to a generous grant to the City from the Noble Foundation. The project, which cost ~\$36,500, also included replacement of non-native trees along the driveway with native ones. The Noble Foundation provided a 50% match toward the project, and the remaining funds came from the City, including the Lillian Long Fund (~\$10,800) donated to the City many years ago for WMP use.

SUCCESSFUL TRAIL RUNNING EVENTS IN SUMMER 2013 – Several trail running events were held in WMP last summer. The Wooster Sweaters Running Club and Club president Jason Burgett organized a popular **Wooster Unplugged Cross Country Series** from June to July. Over the course of 6 weeks, more than 150 runners came out to race, and enjoy the park in the process. As in 2012, the weekly race started/finished in the Education Area, and went on trails along the perimeter of the Farm Field. The Club donated \$600 of the proceeds to FWMP. The Wooster Sweaters are excited

about hosting the event again this summer. Runners love to spend time in WMP's woods, and the race series is a great way to support park projects and educate people about the amazing opportunities for recreation and fitness at WMP.



Together We'll Trample ALS run/walk (photo by Brian Polen).

Brian Polen and Vertical Runner Wooster sponsored two awesome events. **Together We'll Trample ALS** on June 9, 2013 featured a solo 5K run/walk, as well as a 3-person team event where participants started out tethered together. The event had 30 solo participants and 35 teams (total of 135 entrants), and featured post-race refreshments provided by Buehler's and a live band. It was a glorious day in WMP, and over \$6,000 was raised for The ALS Association Northern Ohio Chapter to help fight Lou Gehrig's disease. This event will be held again on June 14, 2014.

Vertical Runner also sponsored the **Running is Fun Kids Running Camp** on Tuesdays and Thursdays for 5 weeks from July to August. Forty-five boys and girls (ages 5-12) took part, working hard toward the end goal of competing in Wooster's annual Heart and Sole 5K. For many kids, this was their first attempt at running a long distance, so the group approach was critical. Each "practice" lasted 1 hour and featured 10 minutes of warm-up, 25 minutes of training in the Education Area, 15 minutes of games designed to keep the kids active, and snack time to finish up. The running camp was a success and all participants finished the Wooster 5K. WMP was the perfect venue for the camp, introducing kids and their parents to this great resource in our community. The 2014 kids running camp will be July 15 through August 14.



Kids running camp (photo by Brian Polen).

ANOTHER GOOD YEAR FOR PUBLIC PROGRAMS – The Education & Public Awareness Committee (Marty Griffith and Edith Swank, co-chairs, Mary Hetrick and John Abt) offered another great array of public programs in WMP last year, and program leaders generously volunteered their time and knowledge for these events. Marvin and Sandy Smith led early and late spring wildflower walks along with a summer walk in the prairie. Steve Upperman led two walks instructing participants on improving nature photos. John Abt shared information about insect threats to trees at WMP.

Evening events in the Education Area were new for 2013. In August, participants gathered to watch the Perseid Meteor Showers and call owls with Carrie Elvey, The Wilderness Center Naturalist. The meteors and owls remained elusive, but everyone had a great time roasting hot dogs and S'mores and enjoying the peace of WMP. In October, participants watched the harvest moon rise above the horizon, as they kept warm by the campfire. The light from the moon was bright enough to allow participants to circle the prairie, walk through the woods to the farm field, and walk the field trails. It was a magical experience, and folks were slow to leave the park. We expect to repeat the evening events in 2014.

MANY TRAIL PROJECTS ACCOMPLISHED IN 2013 – Over 30 people, including FWMP members, College of Wooster students and faculty, Vertical Runner running club volunteers, and scouts from Scout Troop 68, volunteered 148 hours in WMP since the annual meeting last April. At \$15 per hour, this is a savings to the City of \$2,220. Trail projects included:

- invasive plant control, including garlic mustard pulls and removal of multiflora rose
- removal of tree falls and hazard trees

- installation of posts for the Spangler Trail reroute
- spreading mulch on the Education Trail
- clearing the Saddleback Trail of overgrown vegetation
- bridge repairs
- cleanup of the Silver Road pavilion area and restrooms
- clearing dirt and debris away from water bars on the Spangler Trail hill
- installation of directional signs to the parking lot



Troop 68 Scouts spreading mulch on the Education Trail (photo by J. Parker).



Duane Steiner razing a shed on the Kenwood Parcel (photo by J. Parker).

Volunteers have already donated 119 hours on the new Kenwood Parcel planning trails, gathering and spreading tree seeds, mowing and shed demolition, with an in-kind value of \$1,785 towards the Clean Ohio grant.

Thank you to all our volunteers (listed at the end) for helping to keep WMP safe and sustain its beauty, and for helping to establish the new Kenwood Parcel as a great addition to the park:

MORE TRAIL PROJECTS PLANNED FOR 2014 – There’s never an end to projects in the park. Trail Committee co-chairs Jay Mosley and Shelley Schrier have identified tasks for spring 2014, including: 1) installation of trails and signage on the new Kenwood Parcel, 2) repainting trail blazes along the Spangler and Strock Trails, and 3) painting trail blazes along the new trails on the Parcel. Volunteers are always needed for these important projects. If you would like to help, please contact Shelley Schrier (330-262-9307; sschrier@sssnet.com).

FWMP WEBSITE BEING IMPROVED – FWMP member Jennifer Hugon has generously been volunteering her time to revamp the FWMP website. The upgraded site should be live soon. With the new format, it will be easier for us to update the current events and other website elements, add photos, and even have photo contests. We also plan on having a blog (where members can submit photos) and Facebook link, and will make available special photo collections, such as those of Dave Taggart and Stan Watson.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS TO BE SENT OUT FOR TAX-DEDUCTIBLE DONATIONS – Now that FWMP is a 501(c)(3) organization, any donations that have been received since January 1, 2013, are tax deductible. Donors will receive a letter in early 2014 to document tax-exempt donations for their 2013 tax returns. Thank you again to Ron Holtman and the Killbuck Watershed Land Trust for helping us through the process to become a tax-exempt organization.

SPECIAL THANKS TO:

- The Noble Foundation for a generous grant to the City for repaving the Old Education Area, and for their huge financial support in FWMP’s Clean Ohio grant and the acquisition of the Kenwood Parcel!
- The generous donation from Joan Buehler, in memory of Gene Buehler, in support of the Kenwood Parcel.
- efco (member of the Emak Group) and D+S Distribution, Inc. for their generous donations toward our new gas-powered pole pruner with sickle bar attachment.
- Daryl Decker and Public Properties for paying for the printing of new park maps.

- Marty Griffith for her great job on the Board. Her term ended in 2013.
- WMP neighbor Gary Bickel and FWMP member John Parker for being in charge of gate opening and closing every weekend at the Old Education Area entrance.
- Support of the City of Wooster for mowing, trash pick-up and restroom maintenance.

THANK YOU'S – Many people have supported the park and/or FWMP this year through generous contributions of time, sweat, funding or other means, and we are very grateful. For any contributors inadvertently omitted from this list, our apologies and thanks.

FWMP Members:

John Abt
Dan Buehler
Nancy Burkholder
Roger Downer
Jeanne Durkalski
Marty Griffith
Bob Haugh
Kris Hawke
Cathy Herms
Mary Hetrick
Harry Hoitink
Jennifer Hugon
Jay Mosley
Don Noble
John Parker
Sandra & Randy Rowe
Shelley Schrier
Marvin & Sandy Smith
Gerald & Norma Stair
Duane Steiner
Edith Swank
Steve Upperman

College of Wooster:

Kate Barcau
Raianne Demetrius
Roy Hadfield
Matteo Lanzarotta
Dr. Meagen Pollack
Galen Schwartzberg
Lucas Skoglund
Jonathan Skurnick
Siyang Zhou

City of Wooster:

Daryl Decker (Manager, Wooster Public Properties)
Dan Yarnell and other City crew

Vertical Runner Wooster:

Brian Polen, owner
Taylor Singleton
Molly Thomas
Jay Williams

Other Contributors:

Gary Bickel
Boy Scout Troop 68
Joan Buehler
Jason Burgett, Wooster Sweaters Running Club
D+S Distribution
efco
Carrie Elvey, The Wilderness Center
Larry & Judy Hartman
Ron Holtman and the Killbuck Watershed Land Trust
Paul Martin
David Noble and the Donald & Alice Noble Foundation