



## **Philander Chase Conservancy**

**Annual Report  
2015 - 2016**



## **Report from the PCC Board Chair**

What an incredible year this has been! Since succeeding Peter White '66 P'01 as chair of Philander Chase Conservancy's board of trustees in October 2016, I've learned more about PCC's history and day-to-day activities than I ever thought possible. More importantly, I've gained an understanding of PCC's role in the community and the tremendous job that it has done over the past 16 years to build lasting relationships with land owners, local residents, and people who are committed to agriculture and land conservation.

While our mission is to preserve land, we can only do this in partnership with the community and with an understanding of the region's important history as well as the economic and market issues that make its preservation sustainable and economically viable.

We have able to protect over 5,367 acres because of the very hard work of the staff: Amy Henricksen, Lisa Schott '80, and Jill Shriver, whom I refer to

collectively as "the Three Graces." We are saddened by the passing of a fourth colleague, Nikki Taylor P'12, in April 2015.

They, along with my dedicated colleagues on the board and our very generous supporters, including Dr. John Woollam '61 H'08, are responsible for PCC's accomplishments. We have exciting plans for the future and we look forward to your continued partnership.

-Zali Win '84



### **Current Easement Holders:**

Spence & Nancy Badet  
Mike & Krys Clifton  
Clutter Family Farms  
Jay Dorsey & Beth Waller  
Chuck & Rita Dudgeon  
Jim '78 & Kim Giles  
Mary Hall Family  
Eric & Kate Helt  
Paul & Sue Holeski  
Tom Jegla P'89 H'97  
Kenyon College  
Bill Lawhon / White Oak Farms  
Jay & Christine '01 Laymon  
Jane Laymon-Kasper  
Steve Lanning  
Nathan McKee  
Mary McManus & Keith Plocki P'07  
Lee & Mary Ann McPhail  
Jerry & Elizabeth Mickley

Tim & Heidi Norris  
Angela Porter  
Tracy & Florence Schermer  
David & Lisa Seitz  
J. Shorey '80  
John & Rebecca Simpson  
George Smith  
Sharon Sweeney  
Cornel Van Gorp / Casey's Way LLC  
Norman White / Bent Canoe Farm LLC  
Howard Workman

### **Previous Owners:**

Jean Briggs  
Kathryn Morey  
Don & Alesia Thomas  
Harlow '57 & Carole Walker  
Rose Wolfe

## Managing Director's Report

It is a special pleasure to reflect back on the significant events and achievements of the 2015-2016 year and to present our first *Annual Report* to all of you who care about conserving the scenic and productive lands surrounding Kenyon College. Since the land trust was founded in 2000, it now holds 41 agricultural and conservation easements within a five-mile radius of Kenyon College. These easements conserve over 5,000 acres; we own and protect another seven properties in fee. Together with Owl Creek Conservancy, our sister land trust that works through the rest of Knox County, the two land trusts hold easements on over 8,200 acres, representing 2.4 percent of the 530 square miles of land in the county.\*

“Land matters.” You may see Philander Chase Conservancy board members wearing green buttons with these two words, which serve to remind us of the numerous reasons it is important to conserve land, ranging from protecting Knox County’s farmland and agricultural heritage, to keeping our beloved waterways healthy, and providing us all with the green spaces that nourish us physically, emotionally, and spiritually.

At Philander Chase Conservancy, my colleagues Amy Henricksen and Jill Shriver and I consider it a privilege to serve as stewards of the rural landscapes and environs that surround Kenyon and Gambier. We are grateful to the many partnerships with landowners and others who support our work.

The hallmark achievements of the past year were the conservation of the Mary Hall and Jay and Christine '01 Laymon farms, the dedication of Kokosing Nature Preserve, and the dedication of Woollam House, named in honor of John Woollam '61 H'08, who has made many of Philander Chase Conservancy's conservation successes possible.

We hope you enjoy our first Annual Report. Thanks for your interest in the work of Conservancy and for sharing the belief that land matters.

-Lisa Schott '80

\*statistic provided by Owl Creek Conservancy Board President Ray Heithaus



### Special Thanks to Our Partners:

Rob Alexander	Chuck Martin
Amanda Bennett	Shane McGuire
Bentley Boyd	Eli Norris
Stephen Christy '71	Shirley O'Brien
Rob Clendening	Nicole Pagano-Percy
Jamie Currie '16	Cary Purcell
Guy Denny	Alan Reed
Jack Esslinger P'05	Howard Sacks P'08 H'16
Siobhan Fennessy	Stu Schott
Doug Gifford	Darrel Severns
Doug Givens P'03 H'10	The Shriver Family
David Heithaus '99	Cindy Shy
Ray Heithaus '68 P'99 H'14	Justin Smith
Chris Henricksen	Richard Stallard
Cassie Hudson-Heck '19	Lori Totman
Mark Kohlman	Jennifer Windus
David Kridler '75	Roger Yarman

## Conservation Achievements

### Mary Hall Farm Conserved



Located on New Gambier Road less than two miles from the Kenyon campus, the 112-acre Mary Hall Farm raises row crops and cattle. Mary Hall, who is in her early 90s, still lives at the farmhouse that was built in 1852 and works in her garden. The Halls have welcomed numerous Kenyon students over the years to study local rural life with Professor Howard Sacks P'08 H'16. The Halls granted a conservation easement to Philander Chase Conservancy in July 2015 preserving not just a productive and beautiful farm but also a family legacy.

### Jay and Christine '01 Laymon Farm Conserved

In March, following the purchase of their farm, Jay and Christine '01 Laymon granted a conservation easement on 169 acres of their 185-acre farm. The farm has road frontage on Big Run Road, Hopewell Road, and Jacobs Road, and Big Run Creek runs through the property. Christine shared the following thoughts about the history of the farm and their hopes for the future with the Philander Chase Conservancy board.

*This farm is important to us not only because it has been in the family for three generations but because*

*of its historical and agricultural significance to the county. To my knowledge only two families have owned the farm, the founding family the Smiths, who moved to Knox County in 1839 and began farming the original 200 acres, and my husband's grandfather who took over the farm in the 1950s, which means that this farm has been actively in production for the past 177 years! Little has changed in the vista and I can imagine that the view out the upstairs window is very similar to the view Susannah Smith must have looked upon when the house was completed in 1878.*

*We see this as not only an opportunity to preserve the family farm but also as an opportunity to preserve the land, wildlife and rural vistas that make this area unique. Our long range goals include: management of the woodlands, increasing the wetland environment, caring for the existing Big Run Creek that runs through the property, and reintroducing native grasses and wild flowers to sections of the farm. We hope to see an increase in diversity and numbers of wildlife as well as vegetation.*

The Laymons are restoring the 1878 farmhouse and will be wonderful caretakers of this farm and property.



**(Left to Right) Amy Henricksen, PCC Staff, Jay & Christine '01 Laymon and children, John Woollam '61 H'08, and Cyndi Woollam.**



## Special News & Events

### Philander Chase Corporation becomes Philander Chase Conservancy



Philander Chase Conservancy's Board of Trustees decided in November 2015 to change the name of The Philander Chase Corporation to Philander Chase Conservancy to better represent the work of the land conservancy, to better align the name with our mission, and to reflect the strong working relationship with our sister land trust, Owl Creek Conservancy. With the approval of the Kenyon College's Board of Trustees and the Ohio Secretary of State, the name change became official in February 2016.

### Woollam House Dedicated to Dr. John A. Woollam '61 H'08

On May 26, Woollam House, the new home of the Philander Chase Conservancy, Kokosing Nature Preserve and the Kenyon Institute was dedicated by Kenyon College in honor of Dr. John A. Woollam '61 H'08, who has been unmatched in his devotion to and support of the Conservancy. Remarks were made by President Sean Decatur, Philander Chase Conservancy board member Thomas Sant '65 H'13, local landowner and farmer Lee McPhail, and PCC Managing Director Lisa Schott '80, who offered the following words:

"Good afternoon friends and welcome to the dedication of Woollam House. I can think of no finer way to inaugurate Reunion Weekend 2016 than to welcome John and Cyndi Woollam back to campus to celebrate the gift of friendship, a shared love of Kenyon, and an absolute passion for conserving the lands that we hold dear.

I remember my first Philander Chase Conservancy board meeting in the fall of 2010. I told the board about two trees I fell in love with during my four years at Kenyon that still exist today on the now Brown Family Environmental Center pine plantation hill. I was determined to sit under them before I graduated and thanks to my husband Stu, I did. It was a touchstone memory for me and one born of my deep affection for the lands surrounding the College. What I remember most from the telling of that story is John's smile as I was telling it. It was the smile of a kindred spirit. Someone who knew exactly what I was trying to express. A fabulous partnership was born.

Theodore Roosevelt said:

*The conservation of natural resources is the fundamental problem. Unless we solve that problem it will avail us little to solve all others.*

John, in his quiet, unassuming way, took Roosevelt's words to heart and has worked steadily and tirelessly to conserve the lands that matter to him. How fortunate it is for Kenyon - and for us - that John fell in love with Kenyon's rural environment when he was a student and that 55 years after his graduation he still calls me almost weekly to see how things are going and to see what he can do to help. How fortunate we are too that Cyndi supports his land conservation passion! Thank you, Cyndi.

And help he has...to date, the land trust has protected over 5,000 acres in a five-mile radius

around the College and John has partnered with us to protect 19 properties that total over 1,800 acres. Most importantly, these lands are protected in perpetuity. John's singular gift to us all is a landscape that will always please the eye and nourish the soul.

John was already planning to return this week to remember his beloved swimming coach, Tom Edwards. Sometimes stars align in a meaningful way. When we learned that the offices of the Philander Chase Conservancy, Kokosing Nature Preserve and the Kenyon Institute were moving to a new house, we asked the College for permission to name the house in honor of the alumnus who has been Philander Chase Conservancy's greatest advocate and supporter. We are grateful to President Decatur, Vice President for College Relations Heidi McCrory, and the Kenyon College Board of Trustees for saying yes.

Thank you, John, for being such a generous, good-hearted, warm, caring land conservationist. You are always the first to say that it is a team effort, and it is. But our team would have had a lot less fun and success without our strongest partner.

We are grateful to you and delighted that our new home will carry your name.”



## PCC Annual Picnic



On the last Sunday of June each year, Philander Chase Conservancy hosts a picnic at a conserved farm to thank our landowners and partners. Rita and Chuck Dudgeon have generously hosted the picnic the past two years. The Dudgeons have two protected farms, including one that has been in the Dudgeon family for over 200 years.

## Earth Day Festival



Kenyon hosts an annual Earth Day Festival at the Kenyon Athletic Center and Philander Chase Conservancy participates each year. This year we had a second booth for Kokosing Nature Preserve to introduce conservation burial and the preserve to the community. We were pleased that representatives from two local funeral homes joined us and brought examples of biodegradable burial containers.

# Kokosing Nature Preserve

## Dedication of Kokosing Nature Preserve



On October 8, 2015, Kokosing Nature Preserve was dedicated as Central Ohio's first conservation burial ground. Established by the Philander Chase Conservancy, the preserve offers a natural burial (or green burial) setting on 23 acres of native prairie and woodlands.

Following remarks by Lisa Schott, '80, Amy Henricksen, and Peter White, '60 P'01, Royal Rhodes, Donald L Rogan Professor of Religious Studies, read a poem he wrote for the occasion, *Returning Naturally: Words on Kokosing Nature Preserve*. A capella music was provided by the Kenyon College Chamber Singers under the direction of Ben Locke, Professor of Music. An ecumenical consecration and blessing was provided by Marc Bragin, Kenyon's Jewish Chaplain and Director of Spiritual and Religious Life. At the conclusion of the service, participants were invited to hand-seed a designated section of the preserve to prairie grasses and wildflowers, and a tour of the preserve was given.

Interment rights are now available for purchase. For more information, contact Amy Henricksen, Steward, at 740-427-5040 or [info@kokosingnaturepreserve.org](mailto:info@kokosingnaturepreserve.org).

## Prairie Management

In just its second year of growth, the prairie at Kokosing Nature Preserve is looking fabulous! Black-eyed susans, lance-leaved coreopsis, purple coneflower, rattlesnake master, monarda (bee balm), and blue vervain are just a few of the wildflowers that you will see when walking



through the preserve. We are already seeing an increase in the diversity of wildlife on the property as a result of our prairie restoration efforts. Most notably, we were thrilled to see (and hear) a bobwhite quail take up residence in our prairie this summer!

Kokosing Nature Preserve is open from dawn to dusk, and we hope that you will walk the paths and enjoy the beauty of this space. It is located at 10620 Quarry Chapel Road, Gambier, Ohio.



# Kokosing Nature Preserve

## Wetland Restoration Project

A wetland restoration project is underway at Kokosing Nature Preserve in an effort to improve the overall health and appearance of the larger of the two ponds at the preserve.

This project has included some grading of the shoreline, a slight lowering of the water table, installation of a water control gate, and the planting of over 1,000 wetland plants around the pond's shoreline. Overseeing and executing this project are Dave Heithaus '99, Director of Green Initiatives at Kenyon College; Siobhan Fennessy, Professor of Biology & Sheila Jordan Professor in Environmental Studies at Kenyon; Shane McGuire, Land Manager & Naturalist at the Brown Family Environmental Center; and Jamie Currie '16, a recent Kenyon graduate with double majors in Biology and Film. A grant from US Fish & Wildlife has provided a portion of the funding for this project.



This wetland restoration project will also begin a series of long-term studies conducted by the Kenyon Biology Department. Carbon and nitrogen cycling, soil chemistry, uptake of atmospheric carbon, methane emissions, plant diversity and water chemistry will all be assessed over time, in order to better determine the role each of these factors play in the process of wetland restoration.

## Tours for Kenyon Reunions

Kenyon alumni had the opportunity to tour Kokosing Nature Preserve at both the Kenyon Reunion Weekend on May 27 and at the K80s' Reunion on June 24.





**The Lee & Mary Ann McPhail Farm  
View of Kenyon College in the  
distance**

**The Mary McManus &  
Keith Plocki P'07 Farm**



**Kokosing Nature Preserve**



**The George Smith Farm**

*Our mission is to protect the natural beauty of the farms, woodlands, waters and open spaces surrounding Kenyon College and to preserve the rural character of the region at large.*

**Board of Trustees:**

Richard S. Alper '71  
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President Sean Decatur  
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Thomas R. Sant '65 H'13  
J. Duncan Shorey '80  
Peter A. White '66 P'01  
William J. Yost '68  
Zali Win '84, Chair

**Emeritus Trustees:**

Kathryn Batchelder Cashman '73  
Stephen F. Christy Jr. '71  
Douglas H. Stevens '65 P'89  
John A. Woollam '61 H'08

**Staff Members:**

Lisa Schott '80, Managing Director  
Jill Shriver, Administrative Assistant  
Amy Henricksen, Project Coordinator  
& Kokosing Nature Preserve Steward



*You can make a tax-deductible gift in support of Philander Chase Conservancy and its land conservation mission online at:*  
**campuspartners.kenyon.edu**

**We have moved! Our new address is:  
306 Gaskin Ave, Gambier, OH 43022  
Phone: 740-427-5902  
www.philanderchase.org**