



Philander Chase Conservancy

Annual Report
2018 - 2019

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.



Report from the PCC Board Chair

As I write this, the newest class of students has just matriculated at Kenyon—students who enrolled knowing that Gambier is a community far from the distractions of urban life. Indeed, many decided to attend Kenyon because of that distance.

Philander Chase Conservancy has worked for nearly 20 years to ensure that the farms, forests, and lands surrounding Kenyon will remain open and unmarred by suburban sprawl. The 5,497 acres that we have conserved will remain as productive farmland, woods, and wetlands in perpetuity—permanently preserving the rural character and resilience of our region.

Our mission of land conservation has been, and will continue to be, our primary goal. To help ensure we will be able to fulfill that goal well into the future, this year we started working with students who represent the next generation of conservation leaders and advocates.

This past year, with the generous support of our new board member, Neil Mortine, and his colleagues at Fahlgren Mortine marketing agency in Columbus, we offered a marketing and communications internship to two students. You can read more about this productive experience in this annual report. We will continue to look for ways to work more closely with Kenyon's academic departments to provide more experiential learning opportunities for students.

Thank you for your continuing support.

Zali Win, Chair



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Managing Director's Report

"Those who contemplate the beauty of the earth find reserves of strength that endure for as long as life lasts." Rachel Carson

It has always been a privilege to be a part of a thriving, inspiring academic community that is focused on education and creating lifelong learners who go on to make a difference in the world. This year the Philander Chase Conservancy has made a conscious effort to focus on students and how we can work hand-in-hand to benefit each other as we promote conservation.

Health Benefits of Land Conservation: Something being discussed on a national level, and that I have witnessed increasingly at Kenyon, is the negative effects of the ever-increasing stress that college students experience. As an antidote, the Brown Family Environmental Center recently hosted a "forest bathing" event for the Knox County community. A decades old practice from Japan, forest bathing has nothing to do with your bath tub! Rather it refers to the mental and physical health benefits of "immersing" yourself in nature.

One of my stress antidotes is to start my morning with a cup of coffee on my deck that looks out on a woodland (as long as the temperature is above 50 degrees!). The birds at our feeders and the songs they sing help ground me for a challenging day ahead full of meetings, email, phone calls, and legal matters. It is my form of forest therapy and I can attest to its benefits.

Student Professional Enrichment: At Philander Chase Conservancy, we feel fortunate to support a mission to conserve the beautiful natural landscapes surrounding the College that help to ease the pressures of life. Each work day is devoted to conserving and stewarding those spaces that provide our community and neighbors, and especially our students, with a balm for dealing with those pressures.

We often take for granted that our natural environment at Kenyon will remain forever. But that is not the case. We need to better engage Kenyon students and the community to increase awareness about the work that needs to be done to conserve land, before it is forever lost to ever increasing development pressures.

We are grateful to Neil Mortine, Fahlgren Mortine President and Philander Chase Conservancy Board member, and his colleagues, Alyssa Smith and Amy Dawson, for introducing communications and marketing best practices to our student interns, Alex Hoffman '20 and Liza Martin '20. This provided real world professional experience as they improved our website and social media outreach in support of our conservation mission. You can read more about their experiences in Alex's story (page 4.)

Together, they worked with us to revitalize our website and develop our Conservancy and Kokosing Nature Preserve Facebook pages. I encourage you to like us on Facebook and read "A Knox County Almanac" at philanderchase.org. The students created this blog to remind us all of why conserving land matters and inspire conservation. We welcome reflections from our reading audience! Please email me if you have a post to share at schottl@kenyon.edu.

In the meantime, enjoy a cup of coffee outside, take a walk in the woods, enjoy a pastoral scene, breathe deeply and I guarantee that your stress level will fall.

-Lisa Schott '80



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Conservation News

A Family Legacy of Conservation

One of the greatest pleasures of our work at the Conservancy is getting to know local families. Anyone who drives along Route 229 or kayaks the Kokosing River between the Laymon Road and Big Run Road accesses is familiar with the beautiful farm that sits across from the Kenyon athletic fields.

The farm is where Jane Laymon raised her two sons, Josh and Jay, who still live in the Gambier area with families of their own. The brothers honor their late father Joe's memory by serving as both firefighters and farmers as Joe did.

Another legacy the three families have created is conserving their farmland in perpetuity. Together the families have already conserved 379 acres of land, all in close proximity to Gambier. In 2016, Jay and Chrissie Laymon purchased a 170-acre farm that had been in the family and are now living there with their four children and raising hay, 4H pigs and horses.

Josh and Jade Laymon most recently purchased and conserved almost 150 acres of farmland on Jacobs Road where they raise beef cattle with the help of their four children.

Josh and Jade were also successful applicants in the 2018 Local Agricultural Easement Purchase Program round and we are working toward a closing on an agricultural easement on their farm on Lee Wolfe Road that will bring the three family total to 460 acres of protected farmland!

We are immensely grateful to all three Laymon families. We were also very excited when Josh and Jade's daughter Emma was named Knox County Junior Fair Queen in July! Congratulations again to Emma!



Local Agricultural Easement Purchase Program update

Philander Chase Conservancy currently holds 17 agricultural easements funded by Clean Ohio Funds that require that the farms remain in farmland forever. In 2019, the Conservancy was awarded \$222,938 in funds to purchase an agricultural easement on the Tim and Karen McKee farm.

With 3,031 acres of Ohio farmland protected by LAEPP agricultural easements, Knox County ranks eighth for the county with the most preserved farmland.

According to the Ohio LAEPP website: The Clean Ohio Local Agricultural Easement Purchase Program (LAEPP) provides funding to farmland owners for placing an agricultural easement on their property.

- **Easement Defined:** An agricultural easement is a voluntary and legally binding restriction placed on a farm. The easement limits the use of the land to predominantly agricultural activity. The land remains under private ownership and management and stays on the tax rolls under Current Agricultural Use Valuation (CAUV). The farmland can be sold or passed along as a gift to others at any time, but the restriction prohibiting non-agricultural development stays with the land.
- **Easement Economics:** Monies are issued for up to 75% of the appraised value of a farm's development rights. A payment cap has been set at \$2,000 per acre, with a maximum of \$500,000 per farm. All easement transactions are recorded on the property deed and transfer with the land to successive owners.
- **Easements Benefit Ohio Economy:** Funds from the purchase of these easements are invested in the local economy by the landowners who use them by expanding their farming operations, purchasing new equipment, reducing debt, adding conservation practices, planning for retirement, sending their children to college or

for other purposes. When the state purchases a farmland easement, the proceeds are plowed into Ohio's economy.

For more information visit their website and watch the video: "Did You Know – Farmland Preservation:

<https://agri.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/oda/programs/farmland-preservation-office>

Conversations on Conservation (Say that 10 times fast!)

by Alex Hoffman '20, PCC Student Intern



During this past spring semester, Liza Martin '20 and I were pleased to work as interns for Philander Chase Conservancy (PCC) dedicated to improving their marketing scope. Thanks to the generous help of Fahlgren Mortine marketing firm, we learned practical tools that helped us achieve our marketing goals by applying what we learned to help increase awareness about PCC.

Our primary mission was to develop writing pieces that would be shared on a newly created blog, *A Knox County Almanac*. The works attempt to express the beauty of Knox County's land, and why that beauty ought to be conserved. It was a really special opportunity to be able to reflect on a subject that is deeply important to ourselves and our shared community in Gambier.

I am back this fall semester with a new intern, Jayne Gellman '22 (see below for more on Jayne) to expand on our communications and marketing work as well as learn some of the other disciplines involved in conservation such as easement monitoring.

The succeeding piece is an example of the content I produced last spring.

Conversations on Conservation: Reflecting on the impact of aesthetic conservation for an alumnus

It is likely true that one's college years are incredibly transformative in the manner in which one views the world. College provides an opportunity for serious self-reflection, and often that self-reflection is guided by one's collegiate environment. At Kenyon, students are afforded the aesthetic beauty rarely found elsewhere. These aesthetics are comprised not only of buildings around campus, but also the surrounding countryside. Undoubtedly this atmosphere has molded the outlook of numerous Kenyon alumni throughout their successful careers. From sustainable agriculture to renewable energy, Kenyon graduates are dedicated to the importance of conservation and sustainability.

Speaking with my grandfather, Calvin Frost '63, one is able to ascertain exactly how Kenyon's natural environment shaped his career interests. Calvin graduated from Kenyon with a Bachelor of Arts in English, and began working in the recycling business. Frost founded Channeled Resources Group, a 100% waste paper recycling company, which has prospered since its inception. As he puts it, "There is no question, at least in my mind, that my pre-Kenyon and Kenyon years helped form my position on the environment today." As a college student it is easy to take for granted the beauty that graces the surrounding landscape, but as Calvin graduated, he became a dedicated alumnus, going on to receive Kenyon's Gregg Cup as recognition for his significant service to the Kenyon community.

"We lived in Columbus and visited Kenyon frequently. Gambier, and the surrounding countryside and farmland was quiet and peaceful. It

teemed with wildlife, flowers and birds. We would walk with our children in the woods and on the country roads."

Like so many Kenyon alumni, Frost's appreciation for Kenyon extended beyond the Hill. His years of visiting the campus helped "firmly shape," his opinions on the environment. In succeeding years, Frost began writing a monthly column for *Label and Narrow Web*, a leading magazine in the label industry. He titled his column, *Letters From the Earth*, an ode to his American Literature class at Kenyon. The column focuses on sustainability within his industry as well as in the world. In 2018, the Tag and Label Manufacturers Institute renamed its Environmental Leadership Award in honor of Calvin's commitment to positive environmental practices within the industry.

It is likely that without the sort of natural environment of Kenyon, the relationship between alumni and nature may be dampened. The active relationship between these two entities is of vital importance to the essence of Kenyon, and is certainly worthy of continual observance. The preservation of this relationship is facilitated by the Philander Chase Conservancy. As Frost puts it, "The beauty of the Conservancy is the effort to protect the natural balance of nature in the community. In my view, the need for preserving our environment in its natural form is of the utmost importance. I can think of nothing more important in Gambier and Knox County...than supporting land conservation...May the Philander Chase Conservancy grow and prosper in the years to come."



Welcome to our new intern

We're excited to add to our team Jayne Gelman '22, an Environmental Studies major. What follows is a piece she wrote about her experiences with the environment.

A Twisted Path

While registering for classes my sophomore year of high school, the only thing on my mind was avoiding chemistry. At the time, I had convinced myself that I was not a "science-person," and I never would be. So, in an attempt to put off my suffering, I took a class called Earth Science. With the help of a fantastic teacher, I actually started to like this whole science thing. Learning about weather and climate actually made sense compared to cellular respiration (no offense, biologists). I ended that year proud of myself, not because of my final grade, but because I understood a concept I learned in the classroom in a broader context.

After begrudgingly taking chemistry the next year, I fell into an Environmental Science class by my senior year. At first, it was an act of avoiding physics at all costs, but it quickly turned into the greatest class of my high school education. I saw issues we learned about in class being discussed on political debate stages, in newspaper articles, and on Twitter. It wasn't until my economics teacher casually said that climate change was not real, that I realized environmental issues are the most important problem for my generation.

At this point, I was already committed to Kenyon, with no real idea of what I would major in. I saw an article about how the Environmental Studies department just graduated their first majors, and it hit me. School was no longer taking common core classes for the sake of fulfilling requirements. My education could now be a four-year passion project on what mattered to me most. With the exception of diversification requirements, of course.

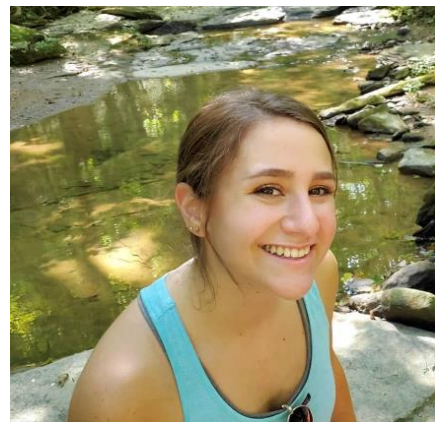
Through my studies, I've found that sustainability is something that we can all aim to achieve. Conservation, however, requires going beyond

ourselves and working together to protect our precious resources.

After moving from the suburbs of Chicago to Morgantown, West Virginia (a story for another time), I spent the summer before sophomore year working for the West Virginia Land Trust. Here, I learned what it means to run a small nonprofit, what it means to acquire land, to return it to its natural potential, and to make people care about it. West Virginia is lush with wildlife, so how can you convince people that it needs protecting?

This experience, invaluable in all that it taught me, led me to the doorstep of the Philander Chase Conservancy through a Facebook post. A twist of fate? Maybe. But, more importantly, another opportunity to pursue my passion for the Earth with people who hold a similar mindset.

I am excited for what the coming months will have to offer, and even more excited to share it with the wonderful people at the Philander Chase Conservancy.



Jean Briggs, Pioneer

At the annual Philander Chase Conservancy picnic on Sunday, June 23rd we were honored to celebrate Jean Briggs and her family who were the first landowners to conserve their farm with Philander Chase Conservancy in 2003.

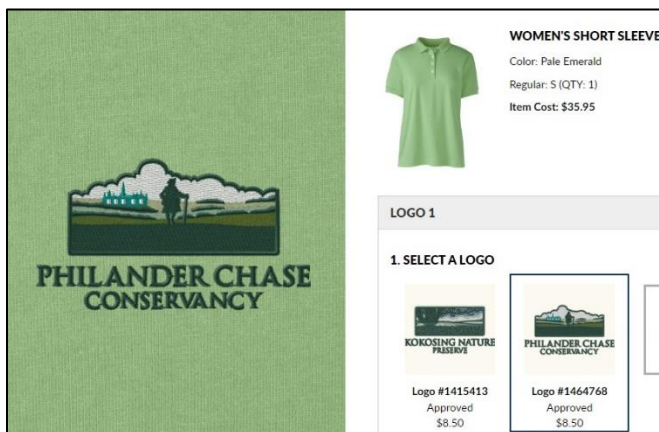


Show Your Pride with “Merch”

In addition to the Philander Chase Conservancy and Kokosing Nature Preserve t-shirts currently available at the Kenyon Bookstore

(<https://www.shopkenyon.com/category/apparel/tee-shirts>), you can also now purchase attire sporting the respective logos of the Conservancy and the Preserve from Lands’ End. Orders can be placed online through the following web address:

<https://business.landsend.com/store/pcclandsend>



Graces are Back!

We at the Philander Chase Conservancy believe in the saying “the third time’s a charm.” We are pleased to announce that Jill Shriver rejoined our staff this summer as a full-time colleague. We received approval in the spring for Lisa to move to a three-day work week (Monday through Wednesday.) Amy Henricksen increased her hours to 27 and we were also able to hire Jill back to a full-time position.

Jill, Amy and I first worked at Kenyon together in the advancement division of Kenyon a number of years ago. Jill came to work with us part-time at the Conservancy in 2014, but had to take another full-time job when her other part-time position was eliminated. We are very pleased to be working together again, like a well-oiled machine, for the third time and look forward to a productive and fun year of land conservation, outreach and Kokosing Nature Preserve support.



Kokosing Nature Preserve

*Come to the forest to visit me
Down by the roots of a tree
Waste not your tears on cold stone graves
Water a flower for me*

*Give me to the earth when my winter comes
Bury me deep in the ground
Mark not my place with statues or caves
Find me where life can be found*

-Lurana Brown

October 8, 2019 will mark the fourth anniversary of the dedication of Kokosing Nature Preserve. This past year, interment rights for 23 lots were purchased and seven interment services were held at the nature preserve cemetery.

For the staff and volunteers, it has been our honor and privilege to work with the families who have chosen to make Kokosing Nature Preserve their final resting place.

While each and every interment service at Kokosing Nature Preserve has been unique, beautiful and poignant in its own way, this past year marked a number of “firsts”:

- the first interment service with full military honors, complete with taps and a three-volley gun salute
- a family chose to scatter their loved one’s ashes, under the canopy of a sturdy oak tree, with a beautiful vista overlooking the Nature Preserve’s two ponds
- a person was buried in a simple, handmade pine casket, carefully crafted by his scouting troop as a final labor of love and respect
- an interment service was held during the winter season, with the backdrop of glistening, snow-covered trees and prairie
- an interment service was held in the wooded area of the Preserve, with the sunlight shining through the trees, lending a breathtaking, ethereal glow to the service

To learn more about planning a green burial, please contact Amy Henricksen at 740-501-4438 or info@kokosingnaturepreserve.org.



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Become a Friend of PCC

When you think of Kenyon College, does the natural setting and beauty figure prominently? Do you think of the rolling and productive farmland, the abundant birdlife along the Kokosing River, the peace of walking among the sycamores and oaks or is it that first sighting of the college steeple peeking above the canopy of trees?

Protecting these resources is a team effort. Inspired by our supporters, we have become a non-profit, *member-supported* land trust. We invite you to join our efforts by becoming a friend of the Philander Chase Conservancy.

Please help us fulfill our mission of protecting the natural beauty of the farms, woodlands, waters and open spaces surrounding Kenyon College and preserving the rural character of the region at large.

Membership levels:

Student/Young Alumni ('14-'19): \$20

Individual: \$35

Family/Dual: \$50

Supporter: \$100

Patron: \$250

Benefactor: \$1,000

Heritage Circle: \$2,500*

*Heritage Circle members are eligible to purchase interment rights at Kokosing Nature Preserve. For more information, visit kokosingnaturepreserve.org

Donations to Philander Chase Conservancy count toward Kenyon College giving societies. All donations are fully tax-deductible as permitted by law. Philander Chase Conservancy is a 501c(3) organization

For more information or to discuss bequests, a memorial contribution, or a planned gift, contact Lisa Schott at schottl@kenyon.edu or 740-427-5902

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



**Philander Chase Conservancy
Kenyon College, Woollam House
306 Gaskin Ave, Gambier, OH 43022
Phone: 740-427-5902
www.philanderchase.org**