



HERITAGE CIRCLE

Baughman Rock Overlook
at Ohiopyle State Park

Transformational Giving: Pam Meadowcroft and Jim Holland

Heritage Circle members Pam Meadowcroft and her late husband, Jim Holland, are people who invest themselves fully into everything they do. They have a long list of accomplishments between them, but are also known for their compassion, humor and spirit of adventure. They became involved with the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy through not only their love of our region's natural landscapes, but of their family.



Pam Meadowcroft and Jim Holland at Fallingwater

Pam and Jim share a professional background in psychology, and each of them influenced established models of thinking within their specialties. Pam's focus was working with and advocating for troubled youth, especially within the foster care system, while Jim's body of work focused on the psychology of human behavior and understanding social problems and solutions.

Pam earned her Ph.D. in research psychology from the University of Pittsburgh. Through the 1980s and 1990s she was a nationally recognized leader of innovative services for

troubled children and youth at Pressley Ridge, an international mental health, education and social service nonprofit organization. She helped prove the effectiveness of therapeutic foster care as an alternative to hospital treatment for emotionally troubled youth, and established two national foster care organizations. After "retirement" in 2001, Pam founded Meadowcroft and Associates, a consulting group to help nonprofits measure and improve their effectiveness.

Jim was Professor Emeritus of Psychology at the University of Pittsburgh and Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Early in his career, celebrated psychologist B.F. Skinner recruited him to Harvard University to develop "programmed instruction," a landmark method of teaching and learning. They co-authored *The Analysis of Behavior*, a leading psychology text for over 50 years that taught about human behavior. In 1965, Jim joined the University of Pittsburgh's Learning Research and Development Center and the Psychology Department, where he remained until his retirement in 2003. While teaching an estimated 10,000 students over the span of his career at Pitt, he continued to find new methods of using behavioral principles as a way to understand social problems and solutions. He applied this experience to numerous international advisory roles, including in areas of education and child health in Central and South America.

Even with intensely busy careers, the couple's four children were their first priority. They enjoyed outdoor activities, such as traveling, skiing, hiking and even scuba diving in the Caribbean and South America. But their outdoor life especially centered on the Laurel Mountains, which served as their "family retreat and place of wonder." They spent whatever time they could at their weekend home in Hidden Valley, exploring the terrain, especially at Forbes State Forest, and swimming at Cucumber Falls in Ohiopyle State Park.

Continued

With Gratitude for Our Heritage Circle Members

Welcome to the Heritage Circle

We are pleased to welcome the following members who joined the Heritage Circle between November 2017 and February 2018.

Lester A. Brunell
Gregory and Kathleen Wright
Anonymous (2)

Ultimate Legacies

We are deeply grateful to **Jean L. Bloom**, whose legacy is supporting the Conservancy's mission into the future. The Conservancy recently received a bequest through Jean's estate.

Heritage Circle members have informed us that they have included the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy in their estate plans. Their generosity will support our work into the future.

Heritage Circle members receive close access to the Conservancy through special communications and exclusive events. If you have included the Conservancy as a beneficiary of your will, trust, life insurance policy or retirement account, please let us know by returning the enclosed envelope, or contact Julie Holmes at **412-586-2312** or jholmes@paconserve.org.

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Pam attributes these experiences to their children being outdoor enthusiasts as adults. Son Ben was even a wilderness guide in Alaska who fought forest fires out West and worked to save wildlife after the Exxon oil spill. Ben died suddenly in 1998, and for two years Pam and Jim deliberated about how to honor his memory.

"Then, on a hike in the Laurel Mountains it dawned on us: we would commemorate his life and love of the outdoors through major contributions to the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy," Pam explained. Reflecting on Ben's love of the land, they decided to specifically support land stewardship work, and created The Benjamin Holland Fund for Land Stewardship to help care for the properties that are owned and managed by the Conservancy. True to their hands-on nature, they volunteered as land stewards themselves, learning about invasive species, sustainable agriculture and forestry, and generally "how best to protect our natural world."

With their leadership giving, combined with the donations of many others, The Benjamin Holland Stewardship Fund has equipped the land stewardship program with staffing, training, and increased the scope of work that is accomplished each year. The fund is now endowed so land stewardship will be sustained in perpetuity.

Andy Zadnik, director of land stewardship, explains: "the Benjamin Holland Fund is vital for enabling us to effectively manage our preserves and monitor our easements. This responsibility continues to grow with our expanding land portfolio and as our management practices are refined using the best available science. Furthermore, the fund affirms WPC's commitment to land stewardship to landowners, our members and other supporters."

Pam continues to be an active volunteer with many community groups and serves in leadership roles on a varied list of

nonprofit boards. Sadly, Jim just passed away in January at the age of 90. Ever adventurous, he learned to ski at 60 and became a member of an improvisational acting troupe with Pam in their retirement. He was a passionate advocate for peace and social justice his entire life. And perhaps most telling of his legacy, B.F. Skinner told Pam that Jim was the kindest man he ever knew. "He never spoke ill of anyone; he fought over ideas and policies, but in the end, even his rivals were called friends," she notes.

We're grateful that Pam and Jim have been close friends of the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy for nearly three decades and chose to honor Ben's memory through our work. From their vibrant 40-year marriage and family life, to their extraordinary careers and significant mission-oriented work, they've made an undeniable impact in every aspect of their lives. We're especially thankful for their lasting influence on the landscapes of Western Pennsylvania; their dedication to the land stewardship program has been transformational.

WPC's New Stock Transfer Information

Gifts of stock are a great way to avoid capital gains taxes on highly appreciated stock while supporting WPC's mission.

Please note our new brokerage information:

PNC Bank - Attn: Erika Egglar

DTC: # 2616

Reference: 21-10-001-6883606 WPC STOCK GIFTS

412-762-7089; ClevelandAssetTransfer@pnc.com

Please let us know of the incoming gift by contacting Max Staudacher at 412-586-2336 or mstaudacher@paconserve.org.

Saplings enclosed in biodegradable tubes at Helen B. Katz Natural Area will help reforest a portion of the property.

Fulfilling our Responsibility to the Land through Stewardship

It takes a good share of resolve to trek into a forest and decide that it needs a good weeding, or to cart boulders up a hillside or logs across a swamp to establish a trail. The Conservancy's three-person land stewardship team faces many challenging scenarios in their work.

While a majority of the properties that WPC protects are conveyed as additions to state parks, forests or gamelands, the Conservancy owns 45 properties totaling nearly 13,000 acres, including well-known areas such as Wolf Creek Narrows in Slippery Rock, Lake Pleasant Conservation Area in Erie County, the Helen B. Katz Natural Area in Crawford County and Bear Run Nature Reserve surrounding Fallingwater. Each property has a custom stewardship plan based on its conservation values that is



Volunteers Chelsea Attwood, Bob Chesky and Dan Nydick install open stone culverts at Bear Run Nature Reserve.

designed to promote or restore the health of the site. This can include removing manmade structures and invasive plants, shoring up stream banks and restoring native species and wildlife habitat.

In order to make these properties accessible to the public, the Conservancy's stewardship staff create and maintain trails, provide signage and maps, establish parking areas when necessary and even build ADA-accessible shelters and canoe launches. Additionally, each year they monitor and conduct maintenance on more than 36,000 acres of private property under conservation easements.

All of this work is accomplished with the help of dozens of committed volunteers, including trained land stewards who are assigned to help monitor specific properties on a regular basis. Last year, staff and volunteers removed invasive plants,

repaired trails and planted native trees. They built a canoe access site in the Bennett Branch Forest in Elk County and treated hemlocks at Bear Run Nature Reserve with insecticide to fight the woolly adelgid, an invasive insect that could decimate the region's iconic hemlocks. They also removed more than 200 tires from the Helen B. Katz Natural Area, tore down a dilapidated hunting tower and a barn, and rebuilt foot bridges damaged by summer storms.

A more unusual project was accomplished in partnership with the Google Trekker program. In order to capture panoramic imagery of Conservancy-owned hiking trails, Google loaned the land stewardship staff a Trekker backpack, a 50-pound device containing 15 high definition cameras that capture images from every angle. The stewardship staff trekked ten Conservancy preserves, including the entire Bear Run trail system, logging more than 24 miles. The cameras and data were then sent to Google to synchronize the images, creating a unique 360-degree perspective that will be available to the public through Google Maps.



Land Stewardship Director Andy Zadnik, sporting the Google Trekker

This summer the stewardship team will tackle an exciting new project – the creation of a scenic hiking trail in Somerset County near the Great Allegheny Passage Trail. The trail will wind about a half mile from River Road in Confluence to the top of Klondike ridge. Various scenic points along the way will overlook the GAP Trail, the town of Confluence and the Youghiogheny and Casselman rivers. It will be named after former Conservancy President Joshua C. Whetzel, Jr., the leader behind many major Western Pennsylvania land protection initiatives.

The most challenging part of land stewardship may be that landscapes are ever-changing, but there is a reward in knowing that there is tremendous effort to protect and care for our region's exceptional natural places.

If you are interested in visiting the Conservancy's properties or would like to learn more about volunteer opportunities throughout the year, visit our new website www.WaterLandLife.org and click on "Explore" or "Volunteer."

Western Pennsylvania Conservancy



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It's your day!

Join us for Members' Day at the Barn at Fallingwater and Bear Run Nature Reserve on Saturday, May 5th. Enjoy a free continental breakfast, learn about a range of WPC projects, hike with our naturalists, tour Fallingwater and enjoy other family activities. For a complete activity schedule and to register, please visit bitly.com/membersday2018 or call 1-888-564-6972.

Mission Statement: The Western Pennsylvania Conservancy protects and restores exceptional places to provide our region with clean waters and healthy forests, wildlife and natural areas for the benefit of present and future generations. The Conservancy creates green spaces and gardens, contributing to the vitality of our cities and towns, and preserves Fallingwater, a symbol of people living in harmony with nature.

Insight/Onsite at Fallingwater

Imagine experiencing Frank Lloyd Wright's Fallingwater the way the Kaufmann family did: relax on the terrace, enjoy dinner in the living room, engage in lively conversation with the people who know it best. This immersive three-day experience provides a one-of-a-kind opportunity to gain deeper understanding of Fallingwater through quiet exploration, group inquiry exercises and mealtime discussions.

The all-inclusive package features cuisine prepared by Fallingwater's chef and accommodations at our award-winning High Meadow residence.

Reservations are limited to 12 guests. For more information visit Fallingwater.org or contact Ashley Andrykovitch at aandrykovitch@paconserve.org.

