



HERITAGE CIRCLE

Leaving a Legacy for the Next Generation:

Robert and Susan Klebacha

Whether biking along the Great Allegheny Passage trail through Ohioyle State Park, hiking along creeks in the Pennsylvania Wilds, cross-country skiing through the forested valleys of the Allegheny National Forest or kayaking in Lake Erie along the sheer cliffs of Erie Bluffs State Park, Bob and Susan Klebacha can often be found enjoying Pennsylvania's spectacular places. In fact, as we sat discussing their story at their lovely home in Warren, Pa, we were treated to soothing sounds of nearby Conewango Creek. Because of their love of the outdoors, they made protecting the environment a priority and became members of the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy in 1984.



Susan and Robert Klebacha

Bob recalls growing up in Reynoldsville, Pa., a town near Dubois that was surrounded by strip mines. "It was like a moonscape. We called the streams 'sulfur springs' because they smelled so terrible." For Bob, this experience translated into an even greater appreciation of nature, and led to a desire to "do better" to positively impact the environment.

Susan grew up in nearby Punxsutawney, famous for groundhog Phil, and inherited her love of the outdoors from her dad. He was an avid fisherman and hunter and encouraged her to get outdoors at any chance. She fondly recalls Sunday family drives in the country where they would enjoy the beautiful countryside.

Bob and Susan's commitment to nature was cemented in college when they took part in the first Earth Day celebration in 1970. This reinforced their respect for the environment and the need to protect it. Soon after, they realized the Conservancy, with its focus on land and water protection, was the organization that embodied their goals for a healthier environment. Now, after being members for more than 30 years, Susan and Bob still love how WPC quietly accomplishes its work and partners with local organizations to protect our land and conserve our waterways.

The Klebachas try to live by the Iroquois proverb of the seventh generation, which states that the decisions we make today should result in a sustainable world for the benefit of those seven generations into the future. They put this philosophy to work in 2002, when they named WPC as a beneficiary of their estate. More recently, they decided to add the Conservancy as a beneficiary of their individual retirement accounts, a thoughtful move that removes taxable income from their estate while at the same time providing support for WPC. We are grateful for Bob and Susan's generosity and that they continue to tout the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy as "a cause everyone in Pennsylvania should support."



Inspiring the Future



The Western Pennsylvania Conservancy works to preserve our natural resources for future generations, as flourishing landscapes, clean water and healthy communities are all necessary for a vibrant region. It is also equally important to ensure that future generations have an appreciation, if not a passion, for the natural environment. You've probably noticed that today's youth are in nature far less than any previous generation — and this is a serious concern.

One of the ways we are doing this is by meeting them where they are – through their electronic devices. The Conservancy is planning a more dynamic and engaging communications strategy by using updated technology to help people connect with our mission and reconnect with nature. The first improvements are new websites, and **Fallingwater.org** was just launched this fall. Look for the Conservancy's new website in spring of next year.



WPC scientist Ephraim Zimmerman with Fulton Elementary students during a Scientists in Schools program

The Conservancy is looking to engage the next generation of members, who, like you, realize that we need to take proactive steps to conserve our region's exceptional places. It's our obligation today to make sure the Conservancy remains strong and vibrant, so we've launched *Engaging Every Generation*, a multiyear effort to reach the next generation with our mission. We hope to inspire a love for the outdoors, and get young people interested and involved with the Conservancy.

Earlier this year, we hired a volunteer coordinator, Kaylee Horvat, who is working with volunteers to match interests to projects, improve their experience, keep communications flowing and promote membership. We are also in the process of hiring an education coordinator to synchronize our youth education efforts with educators throughout the region. We are looking to incorporate more opportunities into all our work for people of all ages.

As a current WPC member, you can help us be successful by sharing your story. What originally inspired your love of the outdoors and why did you first support the Conservancy? We'd love to share your story to inspire others. Or, be an advocate for our work by sharing your passion with friends and family — introduce someone to one of our beautiful protected areas in the region, take them to Fallingwater or point out a neighborhood garden. Share a *Conserve* magazine or even purchase a gift membership for a young family. Please help us to reach this new audience and share our vision for a vibrant region, as ultimately, we all have a share in the future.

To share your story, please contact Nicole Walsh at 412-586-2322 or nwalsh@paconserve.org.

With Gratitude for Our Heritage Circle Members

The following individuals have informed us that they have included the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy in their estate plans. Their generosity will work to protect landscapes, restore streams and rivers, plant trees and gardens and preserve Fallingwater well into the future.

Heritage Circle members receive closer access to the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy's work through special communications, talks and invitations to 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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Ultimate Legacies

We are deeply grateful to the following donors whose ultimate legacies are supporting the Conservancy's mission.

Robert Bradburn
William Cadwallader
Jerry Cecil
Richard Flinn
Guy E. Mahoney
Sue Rotharmel

* We are pleased to welcome these new Heritage Circle members from March to October of this year.

WPC received bequests from these donors between January and October 2017.

Western Pennsylvania Conservancy



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Help us plant trees and gardens, restore streams and rivers and protect our exceptional landscapes.

Please consider an extra year-end gift to the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy this year. To make a donation, or to give a gift of Membership, please contact Kathy Patrignani at 412-586-2340 or kpatrignani@paconserve.org.

www.WaterLandLife.org

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.

Program Updates

So far this year, WPC has protected seven properties totaling approximately 500 acres in Bedford, Centre, Crawford, Fayette and Somerset counties. These acquisitions and easements preserve scenic and heritage views, old growth forest and high quality tributaries.

The Conservancy's watershed conservation team focused their restoration work this summer on Brokenstraw Creek, a tributary of the Allegheny River in Warren County. They stabilized more than 4,000 feet of streambank with logs and boulders, and by planting nearly 7,900 native tree and shrubs. The overall goal is to prevent more than 150 tons of soil from washing into the creek each year.

While the community gardens program is wrapping up for the growing season, our community forestry program is in the midst of fall tree plantings. Hundreds of volunteers and staff are projected to plant 2,000 trees in Pittsburgh neighborhoods and parks through the Pittsburgh Redbud Project and TreeVitalize by year-end. In all, 28,000 trees have been planted along streets, trails and in parks since 2008.

At Fallingwater, the recently completed renovation of High Meadow and the Cheteyan Studio provide additional lodging and workshop space for participants in the Fallingwater Institute. This year, we've hosted 3,224 participants in residency programs, workshops and virtual programs.

Fallingwater Director and Vice President Lynda Waggoner recently announced that she will retire in early 2018 after nearly 40 years at Fallingwater. Lynda's unique expertise and remarkable leadership have been central to Fallingwater's success. She is responsible for numerous accomplishments, including record visitation, a robust education program, improved site accessibility and landmark preservation efforts, including the 2001 stabilization of the cantilevers. Lynda will continue to advance Fallingwater's nomination to the United Nations' World Heritage List of significant cultural landmarks. She leaves Fallingwater well poised to carry forward the work in engaging and dynamic ways.