

Land Marks

Protecting Land Forever

Protected Land Forever

13 EASEMENT PROJECTS COMPLETED IN 2018

Working collaboratively with landowners and land trust partners, MET staff negotiated the completion of thirteen conservation easement projects in 2018 that protect approximately 816 acres of significant scenic, environmental, agricultural, and historic land. The new easements were accepted in nine counties across the state. Eight of the easements are co-held with a nonprofit land trust, and one is co-held with a county government. Another of the projects involved providing significant assistance to a land trust in acquiring an easement. Highlights by region are as follows:

CENTRAL-WESTERN REGION

In Frederick County, MET accepted an easement granted from the Civil War Preservation Trust on a historically important 65 acre property, which is located along Frostown and Dahlgren Roads in the Turner's Gap section of the South Mountain Battlefield. The easement protects a historically important land area, including the Gaber Farm homestead. Frederick County co-holds this easement with MET. *(Photos 1, 2)*

A 61 acre woodland tract in Edgewood was permanently protected by a conservation easement to MET from the Harford Land Trust, which owns the property. The easement ensures the property's rich ecological resources and scenic land along Willoughby Beach Road are safeguarded for the benefit of future generations. Known as Monk's Creek, the property is located across the road from the Harford Land Trust's 104 acre Otter Creek Preserve, which was also protected with a conservation easement donation to MET in 2017. *(Photo 3)*

Continued on page 4



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Director's Note

Mike Pretl: a Champion for Maryland's Environment



I am dedicating this edition of Land Marks to a champion for Maryland's environment and a defender of Baltimore's communities and neighborhoods. MET Trustee Mike Pretl left a giant hole in the fabric of our state when he suddenly passed from this earth in December. Mike's memorial service was a Who's Who of champions for the environment and social justice in Baltimore, the Eastern Shore, and beyond. It was a testimony to his legacy gift to all Marylanders.

Mike's passion reminds us what matters during this short stay on earth, and that the real work of land conservation is healing work. The Trust's broad body of work, as you'll see in this edition, provides living testimony that the preservation of our state's natural and cultural assets is the work of many caring citizens. At MET, we do all that we do because people have made it their life's mission to help protect what is vital and beautiful in their communities. We

salute our many volunteers who help us monitor easements, serve on our Board, and act as ambassadors on behalf of landscapes across the state. And we salute the families and individuals who generously donate conservation easements for the benefit of all — for our posterity. In this spirit, it is right that we pause to salute Mike as a citizen leader whose leadership and sacrifice ensured that our work is always aimed at the highest moral purpose, one that binds together land and people.

While it's the land we tend to focus on, it's the connections among people, the land, and communities that allow for a more whole and meaningful land conservation movement. Thank you, Mike, for your life's work and gift to us all.



For more on Mike Pretl, see page 14

A Personal Note

As you read this, I will be concluding my tenure as Executive Director for the Maryland Environmental Trust. After careful consideration, I've decided it is time for me to step down — and, so I want to share a few personal thoughts with you.

MET is in a great position right now and the next director will be able to make MET an even stronger backbone land trust for the state of Maryland. We have a dedicated staff who will continue to carry on the important work we've been engaged in.

I am pleased that during my tenure we adopted a new strategic vision plan and initiated several pilot efforts to create an even greater conservation impact in Maryland. We also have begun to make significant strides in monitoring the 1,100 easements on 135,000 acres.

My decision to leave now is a personal one that I have not made lightly. My time here has been rewarding and enriching, but I have an opportunity to return to the consulting practice where I was before coming to MET. There are projects ahead for me that will advance my personal interests and professional focus on helping organizations in the natural resources sector become more successful in building a land and people ethic as a way to achieve broad societal goals.

I am grateful to the MET Trustees, the staff, and the Department of Natural Resources for my experiences during the past four years. And, I hope to see you at the 2019 Maryland Land Conservation Conference (May 16-17). We've been hard at work on this year's gathering and I believe it will be the best one yet. Thank you for all you do to keep Maryland beautiful.

Sincerely,

William Leahy, MET Director



Maryland Conservation Corps

Maryland Environmental Trust is delighted to continue our collaboration with the Maryland Conservation Corps. This past October, we hosted a robust one day stewardship training with the 35 new Corps members. The Maryland Conservation Corps members work to maintain and improve state parks, restore the Chesapeake Bay and educate others on the importance of environmental stewardship. Throughout their 10 month service term, members work alongside Park Rangers, National Aquarium, Maryland Forest Services, and Department of Agriculture and now, for a second year, the Maryland Environmental Trust Stewardship Team.

Our Easement Specialists (Nora and Erin) provided a complete overview of our Stewardship Program, a Monitoring Manual and monitoring assignments for each Corp team. Forty-one monitoring reports have been successfully completed as of January 2019.



On October 30 MET staff trained 35 Maryland Conservation Corp volunteers on monitoring easements throughout the state of Maryland. MET has 1,109 conservation easements on over 135,000 acres.



Protected Land Forever

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1



John and Renae Olver donated an easement on their nearly 12 acre property to protect open land and forest within the My Lady's Manor National Register Historic District of Baltimore County. The easement is co-held by MET and The Manor Conservancy. *(Photo 4)*

Michael Wharton donated an easement to MET and Land Preservation Trust on his 16 acre farm along Western Run Road in Baltimore County. The property also includes a portion of Black Rock Run and is located within the Western Run-Belfast Road National Register Historic District. *(Photo 5)*



MET partnered with NeighborSpace of Baltimore County to accept an easement on nearly seven acres along Brightside Road and adjacent to Lake Roland Park. The easement protects the property's existing forest cover, which buffers Lake Roland from stormwater runoff. This is the first MET easement co-held with NeighborSpace, whose mission is to enhance the livability of communities inside Baltimore County's Urban Rural Demarcation Line (URDL) by protecting and improving open space for small parks, gardens, trails, and natural areas. *(Photo 6)*

Oda Von Berg donated an easement on her 61 acre property in Cooksville to MET and the Howard County Conservancy.

The easement protects farmland and open space just south of Interstate 70. A tributary of the Middle Patuxent River flows through the center of the property. *(Photo 7)*

Also within My Lady's Manor National Register Historic District near Monkton in Baltimore County, Samuel and Michaeline Yaffe donated a nearly 11 acre easement to MET and The Manor Conservancy, which protects their property along Markoe Road. *(Photo 8)*

MET and the Land Preservation Trust together accepted an easement donation from Skyist Enterprises, LLC, on a 21 acre property along Hillside Avenue in Baltimore County. The property is located within the Greenspring Valley National Register Historic District. *(Photo 9)*



EASTERN REGION

Mike Phillips donated a conservation easement to MET and the Lower Shore Land Trust (LSLT) that permanently protects 154 forested acres within the Nanticoke River watershed. The easement is located in rural eastern Wicomico County just outside the historic village of Quantico in close proximity to more than 2,300 acres of protected forests and farmland. *(Photo 10)*

By donating a conservation easement to MET on its 119 acre property in Kent County, Expressway Corporation has forever protected important farmland and forest along the West Fork of Langford Creek. Located roughly two miles east of the village of Rock Hall, the property, with approximately 39 acres of farmland, 60 acres of forest and 12 acres of meadow, makes up an integral part of the scenic rural setting of this part of Kent County. *(Photo 11)*



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11

The Maryland Environmental Trust permanently protected more than 50 acres through its acceptance of a grant of easement within the San Domingo Cove community of St. Michaels in Talbot County. The land will allow for expansive views of nature from the Town of St. Michaels public pedestrian trail. Runners and walkers along the trail will be able to see San Domingo Creek as well as ponds, meadows and growing forest as a result of the protected property. *(Photos 12, 13)*

SOUTHERN REGION

Dolores and Gregory Milmoie donated a conservation easement to MET and the Sugarloaf Countryside Conservancy that protects their 27 acre property within Montgomery County's Agricultural Reserve. The property, containing both woodlands and prime agricultural soils, is located directly across River Road from the 2,000 acre McKee-Beshers Wildlife Management Area owned and managed by the Maryland DNR. *(Photo 14)*



In Charles County, MET assisted the Conservancy for Charles County in its acquisition of a conservation easement on approximately 208 acres of almost entirely forested land adjacent to Chapman State Park near the Town of Indian Head. The easement was conveyed to the Conservancy by the County Commissioners of Charles County. The property also contains ecologically significant headwater tributaries of the Mattawoman Creek. *(Photo 15)*

Meet Ellen Kelly

BY WENDY STRINGFELLOW

I had the pleasure of interviewing Ellen Kelly (Ellie) on a bright, crisp, autumn day at her home in Baltimore County while watching the geese swim on the green pond in her backyard. She is an energetic, smart, caring woman who plays tennis three times a week, is in two book clubs and two garden clubs, has six children, 19 grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. She is a founder of Scenic America and the Women's Committee at the Walter's Art Museum. At 90 years old, Ellie will tell you she is slowing down (she used to be on five national boards and eight local boards) but I don't see it. I wish I had her energy! Here is what Ellie had to say:

When did you become involved with Keep Maryland Beautiful (KMB)?

KMB took the lead nationally. In the 1930s and 1940s, Maryland people took the lead by talking with engineers and legislators to preserve landscapes along roadways for the state of Maryland. Garden groups would plant flowers and restrict billboards, raise money and lobby politicians to create legislature. To create protections for land abutting new highways Maryland enacted a Billboard Act as early as 1957. Later in 1965 the Federal Highway Beautification Act, named Lady Bird's Bill, was passed. Both have become drastically weakened. I got involved in Keep Maryland Beautiful in the late '50s. I was interested in litter prevention, creating landscape plantings along roads and stopping the growing number of billboards from popping up, to protect the vistas.

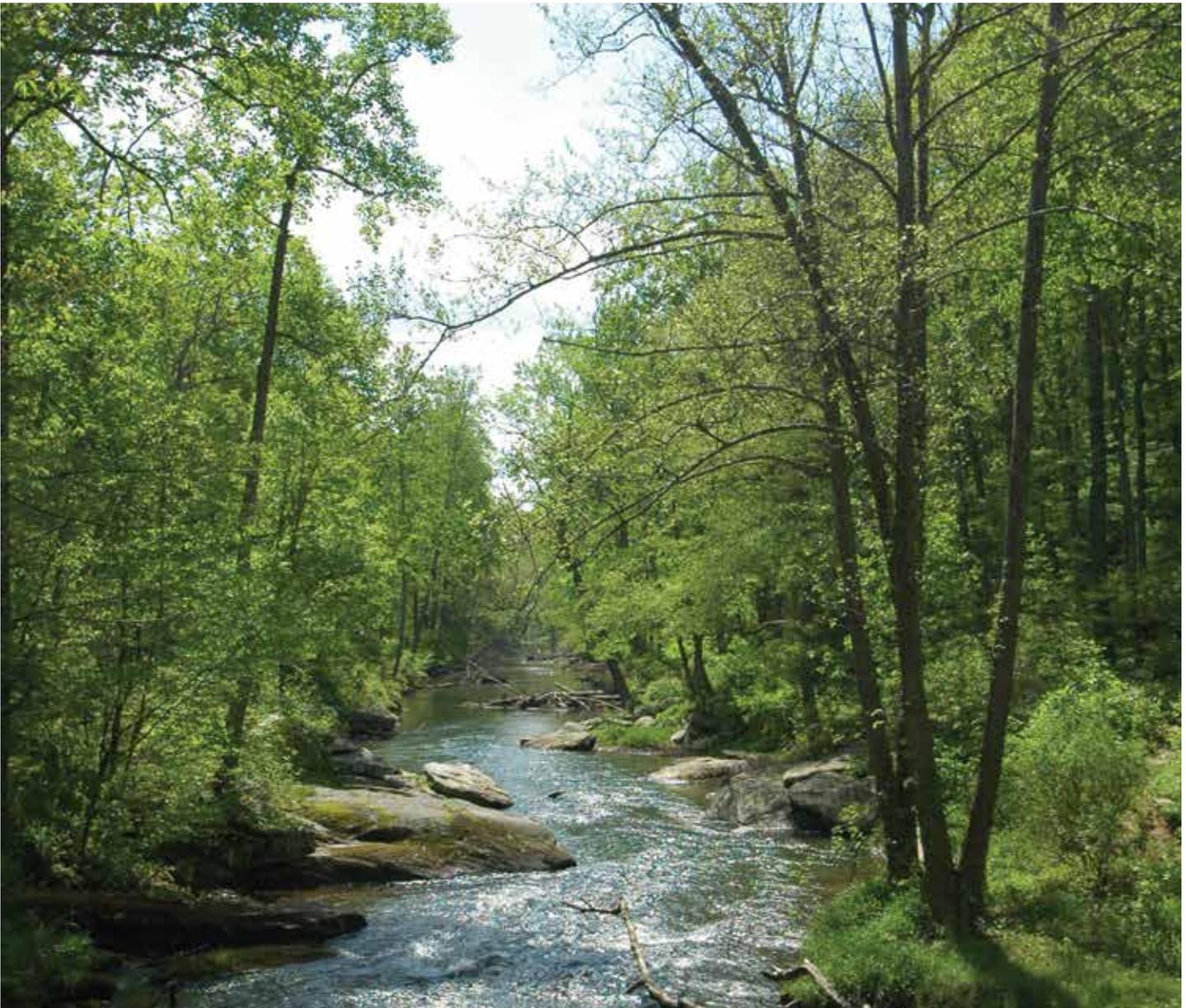


Ellie Kelly is a former Maryland Environment Trust Board member. She served as MET Board Treasurer and on the Keep Maryland Beautiful committee for decades.

What are your concerns today?

I'm concerned about the way the EPA is not fulfilling its mission. Toxic poisons were restricted but those restrictions have been lifted. [I'm also concerned about] mining in national parks — I hope it's not so bad that we can't recover. Today we realize the need for water protection ... streams and rivers lead to the Chesapeake Bay. So how do you protect the Chesapeake Bay? You protect the land. The land buffers the water. When you protect the land, you protect the plants, animals and birds. It's vital for little ones. When you protect the land, you're protecting it for the next generation.





SAVE THE DATE

2019 VOLUNTEER LAND STEWARDS APPRECIATION EVENT

The 2019 MET Volunteer Land Steward Appreciation Event is scheduled for Saturday, May 4, 2019 at Gunpowder State Park from 11:00am to 3:00pm. If you are a MET volunteer and interested in attending please contact us at met.info@maryland.gov or 410-697-9515. In addition to celebrating our dedicated volunteers, we will have a scavenger hunt, games and craft activities.

Volunteers are an essential part of our success and MET was thrilled to have 101 new volunteer land stewards in 2018. Land Steward Volunteers visit protected properties to document changes using a short monitoring form and photographs. Conservation easements are throughout the state of Maryland, allowing volunteers to choose their geographical preference. Volunteers must be physically able to walk rugged terrain, have their own transportation and smartphone or tablet. A one day training is required. If you or someone you know is interested in learning more about becoming a MET volunteer; please contact us at met.info@maryland.gov or 410-697-9515.

Stewardship Corner

YOU ASKED, WE ANSWERED

Why does MET conduct regular monitoring visits? MET is responsible for upholding the terms of its conservation easements forever. To that end, MET staff and trained volunteers regularly visit each conservation easement property to ensure that it is compliant with the easement terms.

What will a monitoring visit be like and with whom will I meet? Monitoring visits are visual inspections of the property for the purpose of comparing its present conditions against the conditions that existed at the time that the easement was granted. MET gives landowners advance written notice of its visits and invites them to be present. Landowners need not be present, but those who do attend often take the opportunity to discuss with MET any changes that they are contemplating making to the property. A MET staff member and/or a MET-trained volunteer and/or (if the easement is co-held with another land trust) a representative of the co-holder conducts the visit. The monitor completes a report and takes photographs of conservation features protected by the easement (scenic views, agricultural fields, stream buffers, etc.) as well as dwelling units, farm buildings and other improvements on the property. MET staff later compares the report and photographs to previous reports and photographs, including those of the original condition of the property.

What happens if an issue is found during a monitoring visit? If the monitor identifies an issue as a result of the visit, MET stewardship staff will follow up with the landowner, possibly making another visit to the property to verify and document conditions. MET addresses violations on a case-by-case basis. If MET determines that a violation exists, it is generally willing to work with landowners to allow them time to find and implement reasonable solutions that will bring the property into compliance. If a violation is the result of trespass activity (like third party dumping), landowners are responsible for taking steps to prevent additional trespass (signage, gates, etc.) and must address the clean-up. If necessary, MET will use legal action to resolve a violation.

What if I need help or have questions between monitoring visits? MET staff members are available by phone or email to answer questions from landowners, their agents and the public regarding any aspect of conservation easement restrictions and permissible activities. MET's website contains general information but please feel free to contact Jon Chapman, MET Stewardship Program Manager, with specific questions or concerns.



Erin McNally, Stewardship Program Manager Jon Chapman and Nora Jackson are happy to answer your stewardship questions.

What if I seek to exercise a right reserved in the easement?

First, review the conservation easement. If your easement permits additional construction or subdivision, MET (and any co-holder) generally have the right to review and approve the plans before construction begins and prior to your submitting plans to local government planning agencies. MET conservation easements usually cite a specific time period by which we must complete our review. When seeking approval from MET for proposed changes, it is important to submit a completed and signed application with all necessary attachments (letters, plans, photos/ images, designs, etc.) at least three weeks in advance of the next MET Board of Trustees meeting. The MET Board of Trustees meets nine times per year. Please check our website for an application form and for the schedule of MET Board meetings: www.dnr.state.md.us/met/. If an easement is co-held with a local land trust, approval will be required from both co-holders.

What should I do prior to building an agricultural structure?

Review the conservation easement. Generally, MET does not have to approve agricultural structures but this is not always the case if there are architectural, archaeological or scenic protections.

What should I do prior to building a replacement dwelling unit?

MET retains approval of the location of a replacement dwelling unit if in a different location than the dwelling unit being replaced. If you seek to replace an existing dwelling unit in a different location, please contact MET so it can evaluate whether the proposed siting of the dwelling unit in a new location will adversely affect the conservation values protected by the easement. When in doubt, please contact MET (and the local land trust partner, if applicable) to ask questions prior to any construction activities on conserved land.

Volunteer Land Stewards in the Field

This year Maryland Environmental Trust recruited and engaged over 100 new and returning Volunteer Land Stewards. Volunteers receive training on monitoring our conservation easements and education on how to best help our many landowners care for their easements. With the help of 35 Maryland Conservation Corps and 66 trained citizen volunteers, MET is working towards monitoring our full portfolio of 1,129 conservation easements.

In addition to training volunteers to assist with our annual monitoring goals, MET incorporates educational seminars in our program. This keeps the volunteers up to date on the latest information concerning conservation practices. Engaging our volunteers is more important than ever as we strive to steward all of our conservation easements across every county in Maryland.

If you would like to learn more about volunteer monitoring opportunities with MET, please email met.info@maryland.gov.



Easement Stewardship Specialist Erin McNally (left) and Nora Jackson (right) at Howard County Conservancy Fall training.



2019

MARYLAND

LAND CONSERVATION
CONFERENCE AND
SYMPOSIUM

MAY 16-17

MARITIME CONFERENCE CENTER

DAY ONE: Day one will include a diversity of speakers, workshops, and networking opportunities including the latest and greatest in conservation finance, and innovative approaches to preserving agriculture and tips and tools for conservation practitioners, and other exciting topics.

DAY TWO: MET is partnering with the Maryland Association of Counties (MACO) to host the Symposium on day two. The Symposium is an opportunity for newly elected and veteran county representatives and administrators to gather and discuss how state conservation programs and land trusts can be a useful tool for advancing the broad community goals for health, vitality, and the future well-being of all Marylanders.

SAVE THE DATE

DNR.MARYLAND.GOV/MET/PAGES/CONFERENCE.ASPX

BECOME A CONFERENCE SPONSOR: MET invites you to be a sponsor for the 2019 Maryland Land Conservation Conference. To learn more about sponsorship opportunities go to MET's Event webpage dnr.maryland.gov/met/Pages/default.aspx

New Faces at MET



MARTHA CLARK

BOARD MEMBER

Martha Clark operates a diversified farming operation in Howard County. In addition to the petting farm, Clark's Elioak Farm, she and her daughter sell 100% grass-fed beef, pastured pork, and locally-grown vegetables.

Martha began her career working for the Maryland Office for Children and Youth and the Maryland Commission for Women. Since her business bridges both agriculture and tourism, Martha is active in each industry on both the local and state levels.



JIM GILCHRIST

BOARD MEMBER

Delegate Jim Gilchrist has served as a member of the Maryland House of Delegates since 2007. He represents District 17 in Montgomery County. Delegate Gilchrist is a member of the Environment and Transportation Committee and was recently appointed as Chair of the Land Use and Ethics Subcommittee. He is also the House Chair of the Joint Committee on Program Open Space and Agricultural Land Preservation. In addition to serving on MET's Board of Trustees, Delegate Gilchrist is also on the Board of Directors of Harry R. Hughes Center for Agro-Ecology, Inc.



MARK HOFFMAN

BOARD MEMBER

A Maryland native, Mark Hoffman's passion for conservation has its roots in his childhood, where at an early age he took a keen interest in birds, and birding. He followed this passion in his career, having served on the Maryland-DC Bird Records Committee, reviewing bird observations for the national data base, eBird, and compiling Christmas bird counts.

Mark enjoyed a 31-year career with the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, ultimately advancing to the position of Assistant Secretary for Mission Support. Mark also had extensive engagement with the Maryland General Assembly on fiscal and policy issues, and dealings with the MET Board and MET's management. Since his retirement from DNR in 2017, Mark has been the Maryland Director for the Chesapeake Bay Commission. The Commission, comprised primarily of state legislators, serves to develop and advance legislative action in Maryland, Pennsylvania and Virginia to restore and protect the Chesapeake Bay. He lives in Annapolis with his wife and their two dogs.



DINA LANSINGER

Dina Lansinger joins the staff at Maryland Environmental Trust as the Keep Maryland Beautiful Grants Coordinator. Dina has spent her career working in various positions that include Program Coordinator, Administrative Assistant, Case Worker and also spent much of her time raising her four children. She is passionate about the issues that plague our environment so she is beyond excited to join our team at MET. Dina is looking forward to providing support in obtaining grants that help clean up, beautify, and educate the community.

Dina has lived in Baltimore, Maryland for her entire life. She loves the outdoors and can often be spotted hiking around the local lake areas with her husband and her Labrador Retriever puppy, Otis. She also is an avid tennis player and yoga enthusiast.



Service Abroad and At Home BY KAT PARDOE

KEEP MARYLAND BEAUTIFUL GRANT RECIPIENT: THE 6TH BRANCH

They have made the ultimate sacrifice by serving our country, and with still more to give, these veterans have returned home to Baltimore City to share their generous spirits with local communities.

What began as an informal group of Iraq and Afghanistan veterans getting together to give back to Baltimore's neighborhoods has expanded over the last decade into The 6th Branch, a nonprofit organization powered by thousands of volunteers, active on over 13 acres throughout Baltimore City. Their work focuses on transforming vacant lots in Baltimore's neighborhoods from unseemly dumpsites to vibrant community centers. Keep Maryland Beautiful was proud to support their efforts with a Clean Up & Green Up Maryland grant awarded to the organization in March 2018.

Scott Goldman, Executive Director of The 6th Branch, explains that The 6th Branch is "veteran-led and neighborhood-guided," and driven by the spirit of teamwork and service. Crucial to their work is the vision and collaboration of the community leaders in the neighborhoods they serve, making each project unique and catered towards the specific needs of the residents. Some vacant lots are renovated into parks where residents can come together for community events or the simple enjoyment of greenspace, others are transformed into playgrounds where



Volunteers of The 6th Branch brought this community garden to life in 2017.

children can socialize and exercise after school, and still others are converted into community gardens that provide nutritious food and educational opportunities to the neighborhood.

The 6th Branch offers consulting, equipment, and labor to neighborhoods all around the city seeking to improve their communities through these vacant lot initiatives. For Scott, these projects represent a connected effort to bring life to Baltimore, increase access to greenspace for city residents, and of course, to give back to the communities we know and love. And the work doesn't stop when a project is completed — every project that The 6th Branch has worked on to date is continuously monitored and maintained by staff and volunteers to ensure the long-term utility of the transformed lot.

With the assistance of funding from the Clean Up & Green Up Maryland grant, The 6th Branch was able to clear two lots in East Broadway and beautify the area with trees and other landscaping. Community leaders requested their services in anticipation of soliciting other neighborhood development projects that would attract visitors and revenue to the neighborhood.

Keep Maryland Beautiful is proud to support the veterans and volunteers of The 6th Branch who remind us of the spirit of service and community.

The 6th Branch offers consulting, equipment, and labor to neighborhoods all around the city seeking to improve their communities through these vacant lot initiatives.



The 6th Branch works nearly year-round on projects across the city. In January, these volunteers cleaned up a vacant lot in Johnston Square.



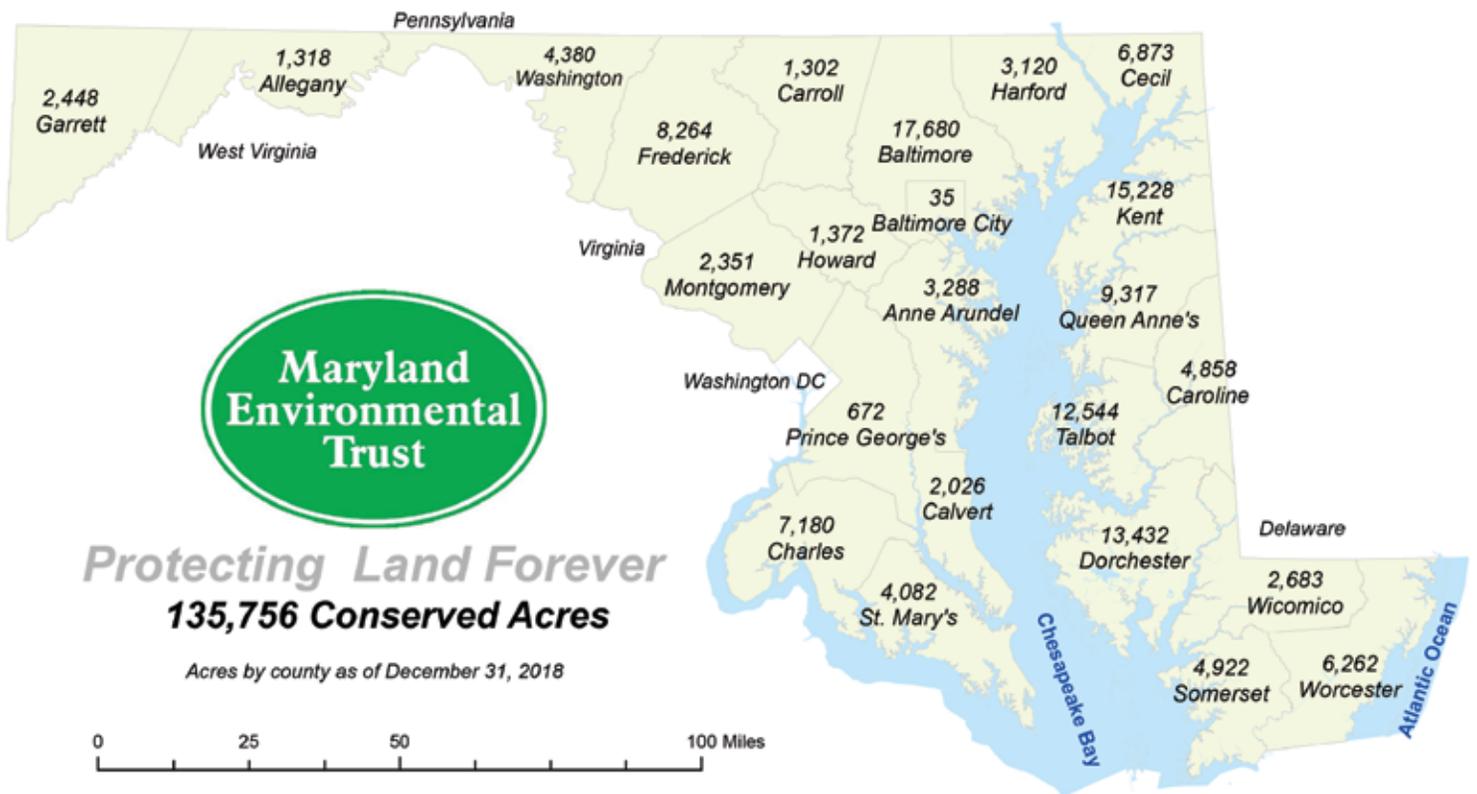
MIKE PRETYL
MET SAYS GOODBYE
TO A FRIEND

MET is saddened by the loss of valued Board member Mike Pretl. He was an active member of MET's Board of Trustees for the past two years and has served as chair of the Governance Committee. Mike was also a long-time Board member of the Lower Shore Land Trust. Mike was a personal injury attorney, neighborhoods and health care activist and environmentalist. He gave up his plans to become a priest when he decided to become an attorney and earned a degree at the Georgetown University School of Law. Mike's obituary can be found in the *Baltimore Sun*, December 28th online issue.

SUCCESSFUL SHOE DRIVE

Thank you all for your participation in MET's shoe drive! We collected 90 pairs of new and gently worn shoes to be delivered to a Soles4Souls collection center.

Soles4Souls has distributed over 22 million pairs of new and gently worn shoes in 127 countries; thus keeping 22 million pounds of shoes out of landfills and creating opportunities for people in need around the globe. Thank you again for donating your new or gently worn shoes and helping someone take a step out of poverty!



Heart of Maryland Conservation Alliance

In November, MET hosted a gathering at Hood College to discuss the newly formed, Heart of Maryland Conservation Alliance, a Regional Conservation Partnership for Frederick and Washington Counties. Local partners have been meeting since January 2018 to develop the mission, vision, and framework for the partnership. Bill Labich from the Highstead Foundation joined MET staff to discuss the partnership with the participants.



Regional Conservation Partnership meeting at Hood College in Fredrick, Md.



Megan Benjamin, MET Conservation Easement Planner, speaking at Hood College.



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Samuel Yaffe and Michaeline M. Yaffe

Open Space Legacy Society

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Ms. Constance J. Lieder
The Honorable S. Jay Plager
Mr. and Mrs. Alan Schmaljohn

2019 BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING SCHEDULE

The Board of Trustees meets the first Monday of each month with the exception of January, July and August.

The board meetings begin at 4:00 pm and are held at 100 Community Place, Third Floor, MHT Board Room 3.218, Crownsville, Maryland, unless notified otherwise. These are public meetings. Please contact MET if you plan to attend.

The following dates have been reserved for MET Board meetings:

| | |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| February 4 | September 9 |
| March 4 | October 7 |
| April 1 | November 4 |
| May 6 | December 2 |
| June 3 | |

Easements sometimes require advance notification and/or written approval for certain activities. Please see MET's website for information and application. If you are unsure whether notification or approval is required, contact MET's stewardship staff to help make that determination. Activities that might require approval or notification include:

- Constructing any new buildings or structures
- Renovating or enlarging existing structures
- Conveying property (provide contact information on new owner)
- Subdividing property
- Recording any other encumbrances on property (e.g. right-of-ways, ingress/egress, other easements)
- Entering wetlands mitigation or restoration programs
- Changing use of property (e.g. from forested lands to agricultural lands)
- Making a boundary line adjustment
- Harvesting timber

For complex matters, it may take a minimum of 30 days for MET to review and approve the proposed activities. Please contact Jon Chapman, Stewardship Program Manager, at 410-697-9519 to discuss your plans. All requests should be made in writing at least three weeks prior to the scheduled board meeting. Thank you!



Protecting Land Forever

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Thank You to Our Recent Contributors

(July 1, 2018 - December 31, 2018)

Whether you make an unrestricted contribution, donate to our stewardship fund, or support a special project or program, your gift to MET is appreciated and essential to our future. Please consider a tax-deductible contribution to MET this year. With your support, we can continue to protect Maryland's diverse natural, scenic, and historic resources. Thank you for your support!

Conservation Champion \$10,000+

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