

Meet LPT



Valerie Fox Becker - Administration

Valerie is LPT's new office admin. Through her passion and work, she brings many years of administrative and fundraising experience to the role. Valerie provides general office support for LPT in areas such as bookkeeping, fundraising, and board activities. In addition to LPT, she also works at Irvine Nature Center having started there in 2011, currently serving as their Database Manager. Originally from Texas, Valerie now lives in Carroll County with her husband and eight-year-old son. In her spare time, she can often be found driving her son to soccer games and practices or walking her Stephens Cur.



Mission Statement

The Land Preservation Trust (LPT) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit which preserves open space for future generations throughout northwest Baltimore County. The LPT's commitment to preserving land and natural resources is demonstrated by

Conservation - Holding permanent conservation easements in trust.

Stewardship - Ensuring the integrity of these easements, and cultivating connections with landowners and people of all backgrounds.

Education - Promoting through innovative methods the value of land preservation, especially its benefits in sustaining healthy resources and habitat.

Our Board of Directors

Victoria C. Collins, President
Edward A. Halle, Jr., Esq., Vice-President, and Secretary
Nancy M. Roberts, Vice-President
Charles E. Vieth, Treasurer
Jack O'D. Fisher
Jack S. Griswold
Gail P. Riepe
Michael Sonnenfeld
Michael T. Wharton

Part-Time Staff

Easement Director (contract) – Ann Jones
Administration – Valerie Fox Becker
Shawan Downs Coordinator - Danielle Oster
Communications – Anne Litz
Course maintenance – Rene Mancia Guerra
and Kevin Howard
Hay Farming – Branchwater Farms

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thelandpreservationtrust.org

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thelandpreservationtrust.org/support

DARK SKIES



“As light pollution spreads, we are slowly losing one of the oldest and most universal links to all human history.”

- Peter Lipscomb, Santa Fe Astronomer

Pittsburgh promises to become the first city in the eastern United States to become “dark sky” compliant in 2022. International Dark Sky week will occur the week of April 22 – 30, 2022. Massachusetts has a bill in the State House Senate to make one state park “dark sky” friendly. The Appalachian Mountain Club’s Maine Woods property became the first “dark-sky” park in New England in May 2021.

What is the “dark sky” movement? And, more importantly, what nexus does it have with land conservation?

At its core, the “dark sky” movement is a campaign to reduce light pollution. The movement began decades ago with professional and amateur astronomers who were alarmed that the nocturnal skyglow from urban areas was blotting out the sight of the stars. This resulted in the creation of the International Dark-Sky Association (“IDSA”), a United States based non-profit incorporated in 1988 by professional and amateur astronomers. The mission of the IDA is “to preserve and protect the nighttime environment and our heritage of dark skies through environmentally responsible outdoor lighting.”

The benefits are not simply an enhanced sky vista at night. The movement seeks to reduce the myriad effects of lighting on the environment. For example, light pollution has been found to effect human circadian rhythms. Nocturnal animals are hurt because they’re biologically evolved to be dependent on an environment that provides a certain number of hours of uninterrupted day time, and night time. Light pollution has been shown to change food gathering and feeding habits, mating and reproductive behavior, migratory behavior, and their social behavior. And, of course, reduced night time light usage also cuts down on energy usage.

The principles to implement this goal are best said by the Santa Fe Conservation Trust in it’s “Five Easy Ways to Bring Back the Stars:”

- ★ Ask yourself does it really need to be lit, and if so, does the light need to be on all the time?
- ★ Shield all exterior lighting
- ★ Light downward so the fixture does not permit light above a horizontal plane
- ★ Use motion sensors if you must light at night; and
- ★ Buy lighting according to lumen (light output) not wattage (power consumption.)

There is a connection between land and sky vista conservation. There are few if any places on earth that look the same as they did thousands of years ago, but when we look up at the night sky, we see a sky as seen by our ancestors. Light pollution is taking away those vistas as much as development takes away our land vistas. Conservation is not limited to land – there is protection for skies too. For example, the IDSA grants certifications to regions that have low to no light pollution. And, in a very proactive move, the Santa Fe Conservation Trust requires language to add the requirement of compliance with New Mexico’s Night Sky Protection Act in its conservation easement agreements.

Anecdotally, the State of Maryland has reached out to and is following the developments in Pittsburgh that opened this piece. For a deep dive on this subject, the LPT recommends the IDSA’s website, www.darksky.org.



2021 Stakeholders Comment

While, we in the countryside prefer dark skies, we hope to never leave you in the dark about our operations or finances. We hope you find this review helpful. For a look at the full audited statements from 2020, please refer to our website at www.thelandpreservationtrust.org. A list of 2021 donors is likewise accessible at this site.

Over the last two years, we have done our best to build structure with defined responsibility. We are extremely decentralized and are fortunate to have an active board which is involved directly in much of what we do. While we have been constant in our efforts to facilitate new easements, we have significantly improved LPT's administration. The recordkeeping was centralized and we made great strides in improving easement monitoring and stakeholder communication. The new partnership with Watershed Environmental to serve as a facilitator of stream restoration is well on its way, with the added significance of a riparian educational effort for city school children, based at the Piney Run Kings Eye restoration site. In 2022 we need to build our board with a focus on bringing in youthful energy and we hope to reach out to the many who enjoy the open spaces but have not previously been involved – bicyclists come to mind.

The land at Shawan Downs is in great shape and hay is produced on over 120 acres of the 170 acres in grass. The remaining open acres support the race course or parking for equine events. Perimeter fencing and the race course infrastructure are due an upgrade and while the old barns are in a state of disrepair, they were built to last and are perfect for our tenant's storage needs. Plans are in place to spend \$10,000 to \$20,000 a year on fencing and another \$10,000 a year on course maintenance. Rental income accounts for most of the Shawan income (race contributions not included), with equine events contributing approximately a third of the total. We welcome friends to walk at Shawan Downs and enjoy its beauty. The events at Shawan, are all low impact and within days after an event the land is returned to its bucolic state. Our calendar can be viewed at www.shawandowns.com

Easements are our primary focus and we serve as the facilitator and administrator for the Piney Run Watershed Rural Legacy Area as well as for Stream Restoration Grants. These projects are accomplished with funds which "pass through" our administration under the watch of our easement director, Ann Jones, attorney Ned Halle, and the easement committee, chaired by Michael Sonnenfeld. The easement expenses for 2021 totaled \$110,534 with close to \$55,000 directly related to Piney Run Rural Legacy easements or monitoring. Another \$30,000 was related to stream restoration and a DNR grant to conserve 70 acres. The donated easement expense was \$16,000 and we are pleased to report a significant new 2021 donated easement protecting 58 acres on Longnecker Road. We hope the trend continues to grow. There are over 1400 acres in the hopeful "pipeline" to be preserved.

You may wonder how much our fundraising efforts generate in a year? We raise approximately \$150,000. Last year we were fortunate to be granted a PPE loan of \$17,000. \$53,000 of the \$150,000 was given in direct support of the Legacy Chase. This generosity helped in the many expenses of creating a sanctioned race. Covid certainly had our measure,

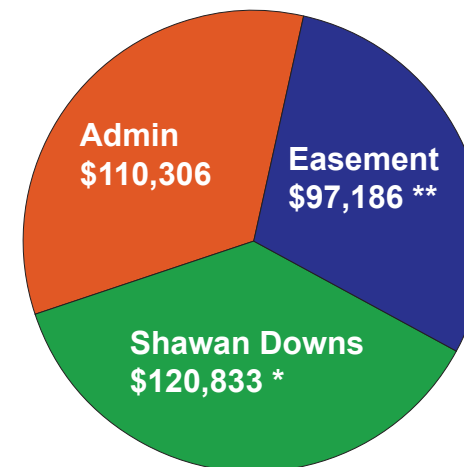
but the Legacy Chase was a huge success the past two years – the 2020 point to point was a popular event for the horsemen as well as a financial plus for LPT. The 2021 race drew a very happy crowd of competitors and spectators. With Legacy Chase "breaking even" over the last two years, we set our sights on increased race sponsorship for the future. Thanks goes to Race Director Charlie Fenwick and his team for their dedication in making the Legacy Chase a success on so many fronts.

Professional administration includes \$74,000 of our expenses – which pays for the newsletters, office rent, social media (emails and website), insurances, auditors, board administration and budgeting, state registrations, checking accounts, processing contributions, and a very modest payroll averaging four or five hours a week. The administrative expenses, which includes marketing, is 23% of our total. Marketing itself represents less than 5% - an unusually low amount. The administrative expenses are the cost of doing business – which we strive to do well and with efficiency.

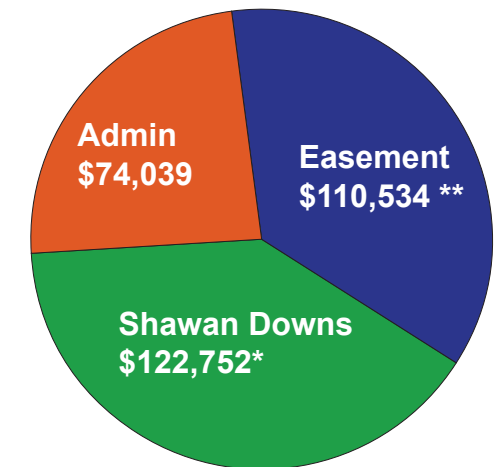
If you have questions about our finances or operations, please contact Charlie Vieth, LPT Treasurer (cevieth@gmail.com) or me, Victoria Collins, LPT President (foxbriar1@msn.com)

Over view of year end 2021 budget actuals (Unaudited)

Total 2021 Revenue



Total 2021 Expenses



* Of this \$53,000 are Legacy Chase Contributions which are officially accounted for as admin. donations in the audited results. Equine events are each incorporated as a net expense.

**Timing can always affect the easement budget. An expense can be incurred in one year and the grant to repay expenses can arrive in the following year.