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summer 2019

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sustains the land and legacy of
Lancaster County.



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A MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

Dear friends,

I recently attended a leadership seminar where one of the speakers said something that struck me.

“If you want to achieve change, start talking about how things will look once that change is in place.”

The speaker indicated that a conversation about a change is easier when the whole team has the bigger picture in mind and can work toward a common goal. If we want our community to take seriously their commitment to the land, then we need to talk about what the future will look like if everyone cares about the land as much as YOU do. It's easy to dwell in the negatives, but real change happens when everyone can rally around an exciting mission – protecting Lancaster County's most valuable natural resource: land.

Together, we can shine a light on the bright future of Lancaster County. Let your support of LFT, and of your community, spark the passion of your neighbors to see the bigger picture and protect the land that sustains us.

Cordially,

Jeff Swinehart
Chief Operating Officer



THE AMOS FUNK Legacy Society



In honor of the “Father of Farmland Preservation,” Amos Funk, Lancaster Farmland Trust has established the Amos Funk Legacy Society. Legacy Society members have made a vital commitment to protecting our farmland for future generations by including Lancaster Farmland Trust in their estate plans.

Do you already have Lancaster Farmland Trust in your estate plans?

Let us know so we can thank you and include you in special activities and mailings.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
Contact us at 717-687-8484 or info@lancasterfarmlandtrust.org

Create a lasting legacy by supporting the long-term stewardship of Lancaster County's treasured farmland.

NEW & NOTEWORTHY



NEW WEBSITE, BLOG LAUNCHED

One year in the making! LFT is very excited to announce that our redesigned website is live and ready to serve you.

Visit www.lancasterfarmlandtrust.org to check out our new site. Make sure to stop by our blog page to find the stories that don't fit in our print publications. And peruse our events page to mark your calendar.



REACHING FOR REACCREDITATION

LFT is in the midst of our second renewal of accreditation since first receiving the distinction from the Land Trust Accreditation Commission in 2008. Accreditation status confirms a land trust meets the highest national standards for excellence and conservation permanence.

For more info or to submit a comment on our behalf, visit www.landtrustaccreditation.org.



OPPORTUNITIES TO LEARN, COLLABORATE

LFT hosted its first ever “Forum on the Future of Farmland Preservation” on June 5, 2019.

“Our community is at a crossroads with regards to growth,” explains Karen Martynick, LFT's Executive Director. “As a County, we have many decisions to make with regards to how to move forward. This event serves to help inform those decisions.”



Jennifer MacNeill | jmacneillphotography.com | IG: @jmacneillphoto

SOCIALLY CONNECTED

Lancaster County's beautiful farmland is well documented on social media. But this image stood out to us. We hope you enjoy it too.

On Instagram? Use the hashtag #LancFarmland to have your photo featured in our IG feed or in a future publication.

Follow us: [@lancasterfarmlandtrust](https://www.instagram.com/lancasterfarmlandtrust)

Protecting Local Foods



↑ Mervin and Shirley Weaver have spent every Memorial Day for the last 40 years greeting customers at their produce stand on their farm. For them, it's a labor of love worth protecting.

“It’s a lot of hard work. Every year we say we should quit. But we just can’t. We love it.”

↓ The Weaver’s work as a family to manage the farm and serve customers at the shed.



↓ Mervin dedicates 60-70 hours per week to his vegetables.



Three and a half miles north of the center of Lititz, along Pennsylvania Route 501, drivers cross the bridge over Hammer Creek and find themselves driving through the middle of Mervin Weaver’s 70-acre farm.

Motorists making the drive between Lititz and Brickerville will know the site of the Weaver farm by the sign and roadside stand, or “shed” as the family refers to it. The structure is perched at the end of the gravel driveway with a sign enticing passersby with a list of the day’s fresh-picked delights.

More than 50-years after Mervin’s father purchased the property, Mervin, his wife Shirley, and their three daughters, have transformed the former dairy farm into a thriving produce farm. “It’s the farmer that’s in a person that motivates you to keep going,” Mervin justifies of his sometimes 14-16-hour days on the farm. “I love to watch plants grow. I get excited in the spring seeing seeds come through the ground.”

Mervin’s love of the land also motivated him to protect it. In 2010, the Weavers signed away their right to develop the land, permanently preserving their farm with Lancaster Farmland Trust. The 70-acre farm serves as a tangible reminder of the Weaver’s family history, and a canvas for future generations of Weavers who also are inspired to cultivate life from the fertile soil along Hammer Creek.

“We’ve gotten to know our own community, and that feels good,” Shirley smiles with

stories of recognizing neighbors at their children’s school events and church gatherings. The family has met people from all over the world through their stand – travelers are drawn to Lancaster County for a taste of Pennsylvania Dutch hospitality and homegrown vegetables. Both of which the Weavers offer in spades.

Mervin and Shirley have found that customers today are less informed on how produce is grown. They take time to explain their farming practices to inquisitive patrons. Mervin is transparent with how their produce is grown – “many people want ‘no-spray’ vegetables, but they don’t fully get the concept. We don’t spray more than we have to, and we eat [the vegetables] too.”

Memorial Day through Thanksgiving, the little shed is chocked full of fresh vegetables, chicken eggs, duck eggs, and more – depending on the week.

The stand is open from 9 am until 6 pm, but before Mervin is chatting with customers at the shed, he’s out in the fields checking on his crop, managing weeds, picking ripe vegetables and cultivating fresh ground for a new batch of sweet corn – his biggest seller.

Farm stands, like the Weaver’s, aren’t hard to come by in Lancaster County. But they are what makes our county so special. Take special time this summer to visit a nearby farm stand and support local farmers.

Your support protects the land that grows long-awaited sweet corn and ever-colorful fall pumpkins.



The Weaver’s farm stand sits at the road-front of their preserved farm in Lititz.

“A lot of people don’t understand why it’s so rural here. You look out there and see nothing but farms. It wouldn’t happen if they weren’t preserved.”



“When I’m riding the bike I also feel that this is something I’ve helped preserve. That’s a different attachment to the landscape. You feel good about it.”



Dale Johnson recently finished his third cross-country bike ride benefitting MS research and awareness. The avid cyclist calls Lancaster County home.

A Connection to the Landscape

In September 2017, Dale Johnson set out on his third cross-country bike ride to benefit Multiple Sclerosis research and awareness. His group rode from San Diego, California to St. Augustine, Florida, a whopping 3,070 miles away.

“It was not overwhelming,” Dale recalls of the trek. “65 miles per day was a nice pace. Still plenty of time in the evening to relax.”

“After three trips, I guess my favorite section to ride is through the desert. There are such beautiful areas in New Mexico, Arizona, and especially Utah. I’ve always enjoyed the

desert. From my geographer’s point of view, I think it’s because of the lack of vegetation. You can see the rugged rocks and landscape more. It’s very nice.”

But it was not the desert that called to he and his wife when looking for a landscape to serve as the backdrop to their retirement.

Back in 2013, Dale and his wife Christine explored Lancaster County as a possible new home.

“I knew Lancaster was known for cycling. But, to be honest, it was better than I expected,” he admits.

“I have had friends who come up to ride. They all agree, it’s an absolute dream to ride up here. I think the best part is that from where I live now I can be in farmland in 5 minutes.”

After a robust career in geography and GIS planning for Baltimore County, Dale knew a thing or two about farmland preservation. Before he even moved to Lancaster County, Dale had his eye on Lancaster Farmland Trust (LFT).

“Shortly after moving to Lancaster, I ran into an LFT volunteer who lived in my

“Lancaster is just a wonderful place to ride. It’s absolutely beautiful, the farmland, drivers are courteous. Most of the big roads have shoulders because of buggies and the rural roads don’t have much traffic.”

building, Larry Lawton. We talked about what he did for LFT; he was a volunteer farm monitor. I immediately thought that would be something I would like doing. Later that year I shadowed Larry and other LFT staff on a few farm visits. In the spring of 2016, I started monitoring on my own.”

That fall Dale decided to connect his passion for cycling with his commitment to protecting farmland. He started riding his bike to his farm monitoring visits.

“I get some interesting comments from Amish farmers; they think it’s kind of neat.

They remember me year after year. I don’t know if it gives me any credibility or not, but I like doing it.”

“I love riding in the area anyway. It’s so beautiful: the farmland, the Amish culture. But the thing that it is for me, is that when you’re on a bike you’re so much more attached to your landscape. You notice things that you don’t notice in a car. In a car, you’re isolated from the landscape. On the bike, you have so much more connection with the landscape.”

Dale is also quick to praise his non-cycling neighbors. “What strikes me is that I don’t think I’ve ever had an issue with drivers on the backroads. In all the years I’ve been here, I’ve never had anyone yell at me or anything.”

Dale recognizes that cycling on roads can be intimidating to many riders. His advice? “If you’re courteous to people, people will be courteous to you.”

Because of supporters like Dale, Lancaster County will remain a beautiful place to ride, forever.

Salisbury Township Partnership

450 
farms in Salisbury Twp.

150 
individual meetings held to-date



LFT is helping local farmers take steps to repair the waterways that flow through their farms.

At the headwaters of the Pequea Creek sits rural Salisbury Township. Farmers there are receiving letters and visits from Gordon Hoover, a local farm owner and part of a special grant-funded project to help local farmers write and implement conservation plans on their farms.

A partnership between Salisbury Township, Team Ag, Lancaster Farmland Trust, and the Environmental Defense Fund is organizing the township-wide grant – including 450 farms, more than 95% of which are Plain sect owned. The grant is funded by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF).

To date, Gordon Hoover has visited one-third of farms in the township. His visits are information gathering to determine some baseline information: who has a conservation plan and manure management plan on their farm, and who needs one.

Landowners who need plans drafted can have their costs covered by special NFWF grant funds, or through the PA Department of Environmental Protection's reimbursement program. Properly written

and implemented conservation plans and manure management plans help reduce harmful runoff into the Pequea Creek and ultimately ending up in the Chesapeake Bay.

In addition to individual farm visits, the grant is funding “learning farms” throughout the community. These learning farms will host field days to show “before and after” examples of fully implemented conservation and manure plans – a way to motivate other landowners to implement these practices on their farms.

Lancaster Farmland Trust is working with all grant partners as a project manager to keep all pieces of the project moving forward. LFT is also following up after individual meetings to connect landowners to technical resource providers.

The goal is to encourage the local Plain sect community to take a vested interest in conservation planning and implementation on their farms. The grant program ends in December 2020. After the outputs from this project are finalized, the hope is to replicate this kind of work in other townships.



Growing the Greenway

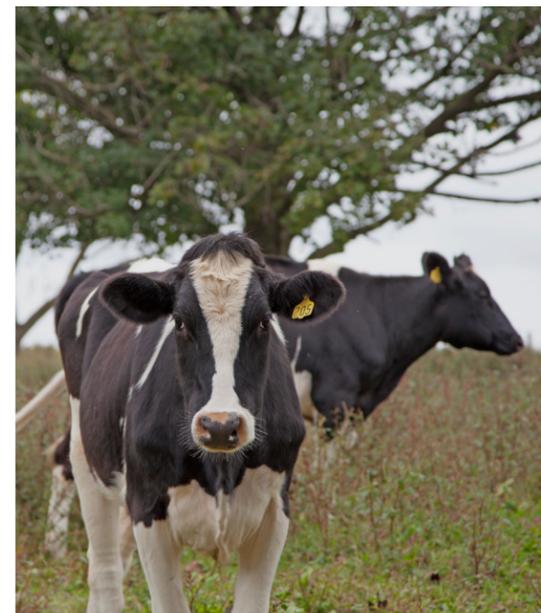
In the fall of 2015, Lancaster Farmland Trust permanently preserved four neighboring farms comprising 300 acres in East Lampeter Township, near Route 30. We called this our “East Lampeter Greenway,” which has grown to 18 farms covering 978 acres of beautiful fields and pastures.

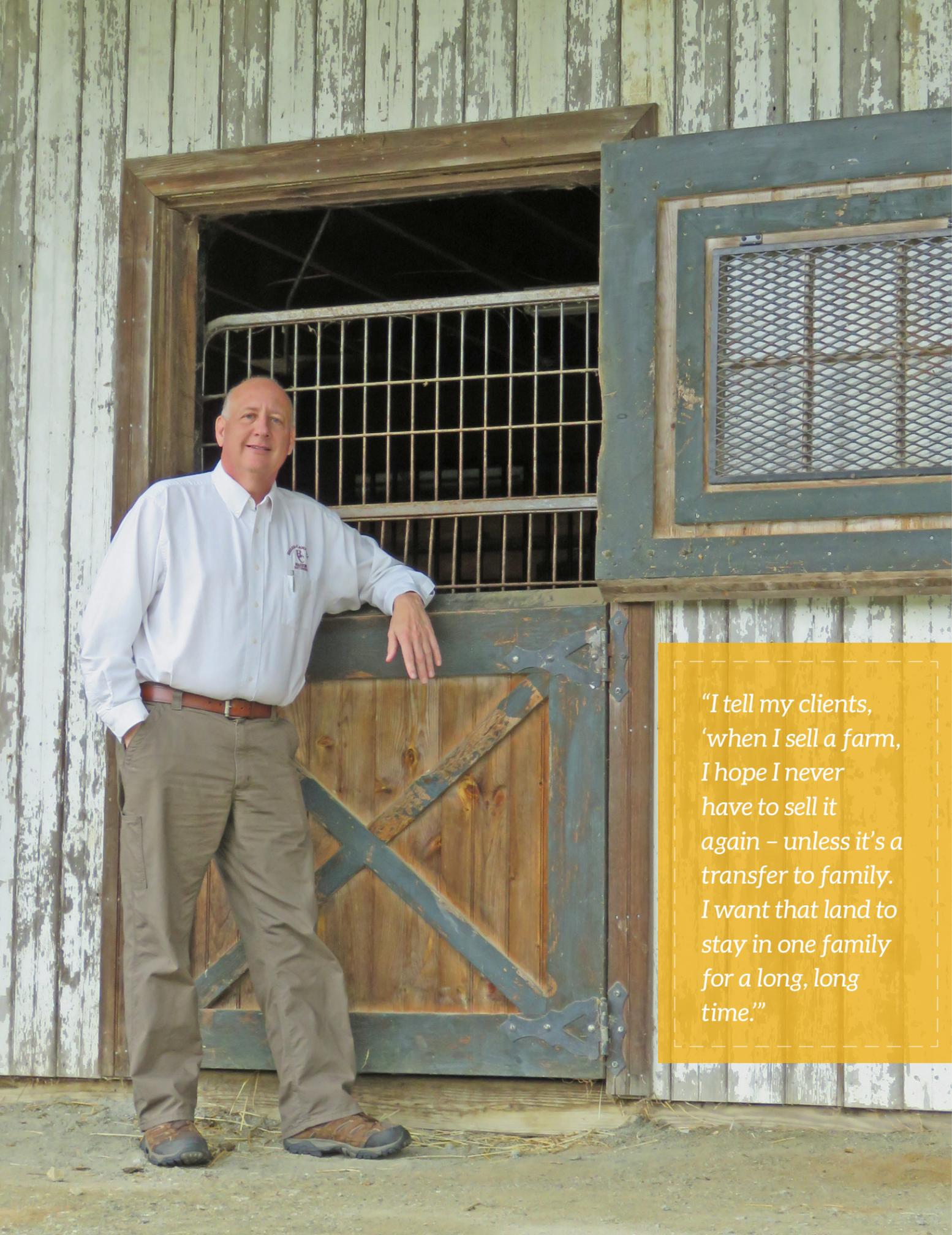
The most recent addition to this greenway is a 50-acre Amish dairy farm nestled in the rolling hills of eastern Lancaster County. The traditional Amish dairy farm, which is home to 60 cows and a few horses, with most of their land split between pastures and fields for support crops of corn and hay.

The family contacted Lancaster Farmland Trust in August of 2016 with interest in preserving their farm. This past January, the Board of Trustees approved their application for preservation – the last step before the family will sign the conservation easement, officially preserving the farm.

Together with their children, the family looks forward to working on their family farm for years to come.

Funding to grow the East Lampeter Greenway comes from The Steinman Foundation.





“I tell my clients, ‘when I sell a farm, I hope I never have to sell it again – unless it’s a transfer to family. I want that land to stay in one family for a long, long time.’”

It Takes A Village

Interview and photos by Laura Brenner



MEET THE PEOPLE WHO MAKE OUR WORK POSSIBLE

If you have bought or sold a farm in southcentral Pennsylvania or Maryland in the last 30 years, you’ve probably heard the name Christ Taylor.

Christ works for Beiler-Campbell Realtors – Farm & Land Division. He helps people in Lancaster, and nearly 30 other counties, buy and sell their farms. It’s a scenario he can personally relate to.

In the 1980s, Christ helped his parents sell the 130-acre dairy farm he grew up on. At that time, Christ explains, farmland preservation didn’t exist yet, so his family had to improvise a way to keep the land agricultural. They wrote a restriction into their deed before selling the farm.

Since then, Christ often connects Lancaster Farmland Trust (and about a half-dozen other land trusts) with landowners who are interested in preserving their farms before selling. It’s something Christ is passionate about.

This year, Christ took that business partnership another step when he agreed to serve on our Board of Trustees. His commitment to the land is evident. And who better to serve our landowners and our community of supporters than one of our own preserved farm owners.

“I have a passion to see farmers and agriculture be successful here.”

Christ is quick to note that he’s not just there for the sale. He works with most of his clients as a consultant and advisor. Christ crunches the numbers with them.

“If I can close the gap enough, show them that through preserving then selling they can make almost as much as selling their farm to a developer, they’ll take a little less on the sale to keep the farm in agriculture.”

He’s optimistic about Lancaster County’s agricultural future. But understands that it won’t be a bright future without a little work. “I feel like you can always turn farms into other uses, but you can’t convert them back to farms.”