

Giving credit

"It takes a village to raise a child," says an old proverb. But what does it take to nurture a whole village, or borough, or township? To do it well, it takes a lot of work, quite a bit of money and a lot of caring by many people.

That's made clear in the report recently issued by D&R Greenway Land Trust, a group that since its inception in 1989 has helped preserve 237 properties valued at more than \$328 million. That's more than 23 square miles of prime property.

In addition to explaining the importance of its work and a year's achievements, D&R's report is filled with acknowledgements to those who helped. Many are entities that rely on taxpayers for funding, such as the state Green Acres program, or the federal Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Then there are the large, private entities, such as the Doris Duke Foundation or big companies, such as Merck. Some of D&R's funding comes from more reluctant contributors, such as those who support the state Natural Resource Damages Fund. Its money comes from damages paid by polluters.

Individual donors abound; some have familiar names, some are anonymous. And many are thanked who gave no money at all. Instead, these people give of their time.

D&R's determination to share its success by also sharing credit — in its report and its news releases announcing purchases — sets a standard for other nonprofits. Few of them, whether they work for land preservation, affordable housing or healthcare, could be effective without broad support.

Nurturing a community requires the contributions of many. There should be plenty of gratitude to go around. Even if the only person to thank is the lowly taxpayer, every group would be wise to emulate D&R's practice.