Spring 2012

A RECORD -
17 EASEMENTS
SIGNED IN 2011

TLT LOBBIES
for
CLEAN OHIO
FUNDING

12 FARM BLOCK
REACHES 3,000 ACRES

VOLUNTEERS
HELP
LAND TRUST

2012 CALENDAR
OF
EVENTS

TLT Annual Meeting Will Showcase Glen Helen

It is impossible to know everything about Glen Helen. But that’s no reason to stop trying! Our goal for this year’s TLT annual meeting is for everyone to learn at least one new thing about our beloved Glen. Please be there and bring your friends!

After a brief business meeting, two walks led by resident experts are sure to summon up new and interesting information about the flora, fauna, geology, and history of this living treasure. Glen Helen executive director, Nick Boutis, will lead a “Gems of the North Glen” walk, and Glen Helen’s land manager George Bieri will lead a “Hidden South Glen” walk. Walkers be warned – wear solid shoes or boots along with clothes for protection from poison ivy and sun!

TLT’s Krista Magaw and Dave Neuhardt, Antioch College’s staff and volunteers including Glen staff Nick Boutis and George Bieri, and many technical specialists and funders are finalizing a covenant document and drafting an easement document, both aimed to forever protect Glen Helen’s irreplaceable natural resources. As we assemble maps and photos that depict where building may occur, and the environmentally sensitive areas where it may not, TLT’s education committee is working to make sure that our members – and the public – realize just how special the Glen is. This year TLT is celebrating nature with events scheduled throughout 2012 in Glen Helen. It is so unusual for loving stewards to have cared for such a large, privately owned nature preserve for over 80 years!

Says Magaw, “Tecumseh Land Trust was founded in Yellow Springs and has always envisioned protected farmland buffering the Glen, John Bryan State Park and Clifton Gorge. Purchasing a permanent easement on Glen Helen is our number one priority. Some aspects of the work on an easement with multiple funding sources and partners are always challenging, but the walking part of writing the easement and of ‘ground truthing’ the maps – that’s the part I adore!”

Join TLT for our 22nd Annual Meeting on June 3rd, 2pm at the Glen Helen Outdoor Education Center, 1075 SR 343. Please consider walking, biking, or carpooling as parking is limited. Enter from SR 343 and follow the signs. Live music and refreshments provided.
NEW BOARD MEMBER HAS FORESTRY AND FARMING EXPERTISE

After a long, successful career with the US Forest Service in Montana, Bill McCulloch has joined the TLT board. Born and raised outside Springfield, Bill returned home to manage the family farm just east of Clifton where he grew up and where his mother still lives.

With degrees in both biology and geology from Albion College and the University of Montana, respectively, and a Master’s degree in forestry from Duke University, Bill brings many years of relevant experience to the board. When he’s not tending to the Angus cow and calf herd on his mom’s 133-acre farm, Bill enjoys playing old-time Celtic music with his band *Stuffed Possum and Cornbread*.

We welcome Bill’s commitment to the land as well as his enthusiasm and expertise on the Education Committee, where he’s helping increase awareness of our land preservation mission.

YELLOW SPRINGS NATIVE JOINS STEWARDSHIP TEAM

Ben Silliman credits George Bieri with getting him on board as the new TLT easement monitor. Ben’s interest in the local landscape stems from time spent in Glen Helen while growing up in Yellow Springs.

Since graduating from Northern Arizona University in 2009 with a B.S. in forest management, he’s worked for a local family of corn and soybean farmers in Greene and Clark Counties.

Ben is particularly interested in being an easement monitor because he says “as Ohio is dominated by private lands it is hard for an individual to see how our landscape connects in a very personal “boots on the ground” way. I especially enjoy being able to connect individual properties through the watersheds of the Little Miami River.”

Ben lives on Clifton Road a few miles east of Yellow Springs and spends his free time trying to catch up on the house he and his girlfriend purchased last summer. If he’s not working on the house he’ll probably be found in the kitchen, since he loves to cook and eat!
A Record!
17 Easements in 2011

What a year for easements! In 2011, Tecumseh Land Trust had a record year, closing 17 easements between April and December.

Of these easements, two were donated and 15 were purchased. Easements can be paid for through a combination of funding sources including the Clean Ohio Fund from the state of Ohio, Farm and Ranch Protection Program from the federal government, and several local funding sources including townships and municipalities, and the Upper River Fund at the Dayton Foundation. Landowners who donate easements can receive tax benefits.

These 17 easements account for just over 3,500 acres and increased TLT’s number of eased acres recorded to over 19,000. That’s almost 20% of our overall goal of 100,000 acres in Clark and Greene Counties. Achieving this goal will secure agriculture as an industry in each county by ensuring support services needed for agriculture are not lost. To date, TLT holds easements on 7,239 acres in Greene County and 10,533 acres in Clark County. The remaining 1,775 acres under easements are held in Champaign, Madison, and Clinton Counties. Between this year and next, TLT will close on easements consisting of over 2,000 more acres.

2011 was an exciting year for TLT and with your help, we hope to increase our pace. You can help by becoming a member or donating to our land preservation fund today.

EASEMENT PRESERVES FARM ADJACENT TO GLEN HELEN

When Debbie Alexander’s farmer mentioned the possibility of selling an agricultural conservation easement on her land, it didn’t take her long to contact Tecumseh Land Trust to get more information. The farm has been in her family for over 70 years. Debbie and her late husband, Mike, have lived there and farmed the property for the past 20 years. “It’s lovely living where I do,” Debbie says, “with Glen Helen bordering the west part of our farm, John Bryan Park touching it on the south, and the Boy Scout Camp nearby.”

The value of Glen Helen’s 1000 acres of forest, streams, wildlife, and educational opportunities to the Yellow Springs community is unquestioned. For these reasons, preserving the Glen in perpetuity with a conservation easement is a high priority for TLT. The land trust is collaborating with Antioch College and the Glen Helen Ecology Institute to make this a reality. This concern helped TLT bring into sharp focus those properties that adjoin the Glen. It hastened our effort to encourage these landowners to consider placing a conservation easement on their property to help provide a protective buffer zone to the Glen.

The Alexander’s 68-acre farm on route 370 is one of those properties. With the help of TLT, Miami Township’s Farmland Preservation Fund, and the Farm and Ranchland Protection Program, Debbie was able to sell a conservation easement on her farm. The easement will remain integral to the property deed and provide protection in perpetuity against commercial encroachment or other forms of undesirable change.

With the support of her children, Debbie closed the easement last December and can rest assured that the farm will remain a farm for at least another 70 years.
Thank You For Making Us Financially Strong

Thanks so much to everyone who contributed to TLT in 2011. During these challenging economic times, we have managed the resources of the land trust very carefully, expanding our capacity slowly and cautiously. Thanks to our members and supporters, we actually exceeded our budgeted income for 2011!

With this support, our office manager is now nearly full time, making it possible to do high quality conservation projects (17 this year and 17 more in process) as well as field more calls than ever from landowners, other conservation organizations and groups, government staff, and individuals. People call us with all kinds of questions! “Is there a landowner who has preserved their land that I could talk to? Which restaurants and caterers use local foods? If I put a conservation easement on my land, can I change what I farm?”

We’re delighted to have so many new and renewing members! We hear your message, loud and clear. You love our land and water and are committed to keeping them healthy! There is no greater affirmation of our work than your investment in TLT.

As more people engage with our mission, we can protect more land and reach out to more families and landowners. Thanks for your support in 2011! We’re looking forward to another great year.

Testifying Before Ohio Senate Committee on Clean Ohio

Some have likened the legislative process to that of making sausage. They’d prefer not to see it being made! But I’d recommend that everyone, at least once, make the trip to Columbus or Washington to discuss an issue of concern with their elected officials.

After scores of such visits, I’ve concluded that legislators actually enjoy visiting with their constituents. This is an important part of their job. They may not always vote for a bill you favor, but they respect your opinions, experiences, hopes, and fears.

Legislators are especially interested in the concerns of farmers and landowners. In addition to being voters, farmers and landowners hold and care for resources upon which we all rely. Land and water are necessary for every aspect of life and health, including the health of the economy. Also, full-time farmers are not lobbyists or nonprofit agency staff. It means more when a farmer with cattle to feed takes the time and trouble to visit a legislator.

Clark County farmer, Jim Timmons and his wife, Marilyn and I made the trip to Columbus March 28, to testify before the Senate Finance Committee, in support of issuing bonds for Clean Ohio. Jim and I submitted written testimony and we both spoke. Jim, as a full-time farmer, seemed to have the greatest impact of the nearly twenty speakers from all over the state! He described the value of the Agricultural Easement Purchase Program from the perspective of a farmer whose operation depends on reliable access to good land.

As the newsletter goes to press, the outcome on Clean Ohio bonds for the Agricultural Easement Purchase Program and the Open Space Program is not clear! We will post updates on this issue on our website. Several senators and representatives are working hard with their staff to develop legislative language to put the bonds in place. Many discussions with Governor Kasich’s staff about the importance of this program have occurred as well.

There is no denying that our state leaders face some huge economic challenges right now. But some state investments can strengthen our economy. Our senators listened carefully as we told them why we believe Clean Ohio to be one of those investments.

Krista Magaw
Preserving 12 Working Farms Along the Little Miami River

Just outside of South Charleston in Clark County lies Tecumseh Land Trust’s largest block of preserved properties. Over 3,000 acres of permanently preserved farm fields with some of the best soils Ohio has to offer, sit just west of town. All, but one of these farms were preserved through the Clean Ohio Fund’s Agricultural Easement Purchase Program (AEPP).

In addition to preserving the flat, black soils that are prevalent around South Charleston, this particular block also protects over 3 miles of the Little Miami River as it flows gently across these farms. TLT’s executive director, Krista Magaw, explains “buffering our rivers and tributaries with preserved farm land is a great combination. TLT is helping to preserve the land and our water resources all under one easement.” Additionally, these farms will always use best conservation practices, thanks to our partnership with the Natural Resource Conservation Service.

Last year, two easements were added to this large block. In May, TLT closed an easement on Suzanne Trotter’s 605 acre farm. Suzanne had first contacted TLT in 2006 about preserving her family farm. TLT began applying to AEPP for Suzanne because the farm was a good match for the priorities of the program. In 2009, her farm was accepted into the program.

With such a large piece of land it isn’t surprising that the farm includes fertile fields, healthy woods, and a long stretch of the Little Miami River. Several roads dissect the farm, but with the easement 2,000 feet of road frontage is now protected. When asked why she wanted to preserve the farm, Suzanne replied “portions of our farm have been in the family for 200 years, and it is my desire to continue this heritage. It is, also, important to protect the scenic river area from encroachment.”

Just upstream from the Trotter farm was a 44 acre unprotected parcel. This parcel was a critical piece to connect 89 acres that backs up to South Charleston with the rest of the protected block. Fred and Daphne Berge happily stepped up to donate an easement on their farm. Without buildings or roads, the 44 acres is entirely cropped. It connects to Fred’s family’s 750 acre farm - the Roberts farm.

Thanks to all of the dedicated landowners in this area, the view from South Charleston Pike is a seamless sea of farm fields and the Little Miami River that will forever be protected.
ABUNDANCE OF LOCAL FOODS INSPIRES CULINARY CREATIVITY

With an abundance of local food, the Winds Cafe co-owners, Kim Korkan and Mary K. Smith, use great creativity in designing the menu for TLT’s Local Food Dinner. Last August, over 170 people filled the cafe with lively chatter, high spirits, and a great appreciation for local food and land preservation.

TLT greatly admires Kim and Mary K. not only for their inspiring culinary visions, but also for their commitment to using fresh, local food in their restaurant day in and day out, and for their continued support of TLT’s mission to preserve farmland.

TLT is looking forward to this year’s dinner on August 6, and the culinary pleasures it brings. This is an sell-out event, so don’t delay in making your reservations which will open after June 18th.

JULIA CADY SOCIETY VISITS HISTORIC FARMS

Last year’s gathering of the Julia Cady Society members at the Folger Howell farm, where Julia Cady grew up, was truly a privilege and a pleasure.

TLT’s major donors explored the Epley House, a newly restored home originally built in 1826, and now converted to overnight lodging, with a guided tour by Julia. Then a bountiful picnic style dinner was served in the huge barn within sight of several very curious sheep.

This year’s Julia Cady Society event will be held at another historic farmstead owned by Jay and Kathy Eben in Springfield Township. The Ebens have worked tirelessly to restore the historic home on the property while also moving a log house to this location from another farm.

Join us for this event by becoming a member at the $500 or above level. If you are already a Julia Cady Society member, we’ll see you there.

SEASONS BISTRO HOSTS 2ND ANNUAL CELEBRATION FOR TLT

For many, Seasons Bistro and Grille is Springfield’s best kept secret. It’s a jazzy little restaurant tucked away in downtown, juxtaposed to the daunting City Hall building. But once inside, the space becomes alive with bright colors, intriguing art work, and an ambrosial menu.

For the second year, Seasons owners, Margret Mattox and Doug McGregor, have hosted Spring into Seasons, a fundraiser for TLT. This event features local musicians and heavy appetizers with as much local food as is available in May. After indulging in the delectable bites, TLT members have been seen dancing the night away.

Krista Magaw, executive director of TLT, says “drawing attention to our urban businesses compliments our mission to preserve our rural spaces. Bringing our members to downtown Springfield allows them to also support those who are working to revitalize our urban centers.” Don’t miss this great event next year!
Clark County farmer Burleson “Burley” Grimes likes to keep busy, even when he’s not on his tractor farming some 3,000 acres of land he owns or rents.

When we caught up with him on a cold rainy day in April, he was working on an addition to the old barn on land he owns in Moorefield Township. Grimes recently donated a conservation easement on this 316-acre farm in northern Clark County where he raises corn and soybeans.

Criss-crossed by creeks that empty into the CJ Brown reservoir and bordered by a wooded ridgeline on the south, and a local railway line on the north, fertile fields spread out to the east and west almost as far as the eye can see.

One of the special things about this easement, is that it is building upon a new block of preserved property that just started in Pleasant Township, comprised of now 716 acres with more projects in the works. TLT executive director Krista Magaw, says “this easement helps us meet one of our goals, which is to preserve large blocks of agricultural acreage, rather than just isolated farms.”

Grimes was born and raised on a large farm in Christiansburg, Ohio, but he appeared headed for a different career at OSU where he graduated in pre-law. “I’ve done a lot of different things,” Grimes says —everything but practicing law. He served in the U.S. Navy for 7 years and owned a John Deere dealership for 10 years, he says, but eventually the land lured him back full time.

Burley’s connection with the land goes back for generations. Colonel John Grimes served under General George Washington in the Revolutionary War and, for his services, was granted 10,000 acres of land in Chillicothe. Not long afterwards, he traded the property for a tavern in Dayton, a deal that brought the Grimes family to this part of the state.

Grandfather Grimes bought the land in Christiansburg (where Burley grew up) at a sheriff’s sale during the Great Depression. Burley is now making plans to donate another easement on this farm as well.
Spring 2012 Newsletter

Learn about the Glen!
TLT’s Annual Meeting & Walk
June 3, 2 pm
Glen Helen Outdoor Education Center
The public is invited

Tecumseh Land Preservation Association
P. O. Box 417, Yellow Springs, OH 45387
www.tecumsehlandtrust.org
937-767-9490

Join Us Again This Year!

Mark your calendars for TLT’s 8th Harvest Auction on September 21, 2012 from 6-10pm. The auction is the most fun you’ll have raising money for TLT! Last year, we raised a record $27,000 for our operating budget.

The event epitomizes the diversity of TLT’s membership by attracting both our city and country supporters. It features heavy appetizers by Current Cuisine, live music by WildWater, wine, beer, and soft beverages. The main attraction is, of course, our live and silent auctions. There’s something for everyone at this auction. Tickets will go on sale in the middle of August.

Tecumseh Land Trust
Founded in 1990, we are a private non-profit conservation organization serving Clark and Greene Counties and surrounding areas. Our mission is to preserve agricultural lands, natural lands, water resources, and historic sites in voluntary cooperation with landowners, and to educate the public about permanent land preservation.

How Can You Help?
Become a Member!

TLT is a member-based organization. We rely on our members to support our daily operations -- making us available to consult with landowners.

Give to Our Endowments
Make a Planned Gift
Preserve a Property

To learn more about how you can help contact our office at 767-9490.