DeWine Family Donates First Farm Easement in Cedarville

On June 6, 2008, the DeWine family finalized the first TLT donated agricultural conservation easement in the history of Cedarville Township. The 87-acre farm, located on the corner of Fishworm Road and St. Route 42, is known to many as the location of Greene County’s Bicentennial barn. The permanent conservation easement on the property prevents any future development, but allows for a wide variety of agricultural and conservation practices.

Dick and Jean DeWine had long been part of the farm community, selling seed to Greene and Clark County landowners over many decades, and developing an innovative worldwide mail-order seed operation. Dick loved farmland and invested in numerous farms in the area.

When Dick and Jean’s only child, Mike, began his career in public service, his experiences with farmers and farm economics went with him to the court house, the state house, and to Washington, D.C. As a senator, Mike brought together farm preservation proponents across Ohio to conceptualize the Center for Farmland Policy Innovation at OSU. The center is currently sponsoring Ohio’s first Transfer of Development Rights pilot program in Portage County, along with several other promising approaches to sustain agricultural viability.

“The DeWines have planted the seed for agricultural conservation in Cedarville Township,” said Krista Magaw, TLT executive director. “What a fitting commemoration of Dick and Jean’s love of the land.”
CHANGING OF THE GUARD

It’s a time of change for Tecumseh Land Trust, with the departure of our first associate director, the wonderful, energetic Kate Bush. As one of the founding mothers of TLT’s fabulous Harvest Auction, and arguably the best Ag Easement Purchase Program essayist in the State, it is not surprising that Kate was accepted into the highly acclaimed Ohio State University Law School.

Many land owners, board members, and friends from throughout the community came to Whitehall Farm for a goodbye party in August. Best wishes to Kate!

Amazingly, our new associate director, Michele Burns, and her family moved to her husband’s family’s land just as TLT began the search to fill the position.

Michele and her husband, John DeWine, both have graduate training in management of agricultural and natural lands. Yellow Springers are likely to have met them at their Flying Mouse Farms stand this summer, along with their charming daughters.

Michele has pitched in fast— with this year’s auction, funding applications, newsletter, and information for new landowners. Welcome, Michele!

NEW BOARD MEMBER

Carolyn Smith came to us via our Yellow Springs Street Fair booth last spring. When asked about her interest in land preservation and conservation, Carolyn said that it became increasingly important as she watched the unchecked development in Beavercreek.

Carolyn is an Antioch graduate with a B.A. in psychology. She has an M.S. in counseling and guidance from the University of Wisconsin. In 2007, she retired from Wright State University. Carolyn is a member of our Education Committee and we welcome her commitment and energy in our effort to increase public awareness of land preservation.
Preserving Glen Helen a High Priority for TLT

Glen Helen Nature Preserve affects Ohioans in many ways: 3,000 children attend the Glen’s ecology programs every year. 200,000 people hike through the Glen enjoying all four seasons. The numbers are impressive, but they pale in comparison to the changes the Glen produces in the people who come to love it.

Visitors learn how to leave a light footprint in the natural world, how to protect our water resources, and how to nurture native trees, plants, and animals. The effect is intergenerational — people come back to the Glen to get married, to share their love of nature with their children and grandchildren, and to volunteer their time and support.

What does this mean for TLT? At a time of huge transition for Antioch, university administrators are partnering with TLT to secure funding for a permanent conservation easement on the Glen. A decision is anticipated before the end of the year on TLT’s current proposal to the Water Resource Restoration Sponsorship Program.

What if the college can be re-established, under the auspices of the Alumni Association, in the next few months? “The conservation easement will work the same way, whoever owns the land,” says Krista Magaw, TLT executive director. “That’s the beauty of a conservation easement—it provides an extra layer of protection into perpetuity. We can’t know with certainty where Antioch University or College will be in 20 years, let alone 100. But we know that the benefits of the Little Miami and the amazing, forest within the Glen will be preserved.”

Is there an immediate risk of development to the Glen? No. University Chancellor Toni Murdoch has been consistent in her desire to honor the perpetual vision Hugh Taylor Birch had when he gifted the Glen to the college.

The addition of an up-to-date, enforceable easement on the Glen, however, is prudent. “If this grant is not funded, we’ll continue to explore other avenues,” said Magaw. “The Glen is so precious—it’s our job to facilitate access to resources and partners who can help to design the best possible protection for it.”

TLT Farm Market

’Tis the season for giving and receiving. For your family and friends who have it all, consider TLT’s alternative gift program. We have a variety of gifts in our Farm Market, all of which help support farmland preservation in Clark and Greene Counties.

Farmland preservation is one-size-fits-all and everyone loves it! We all benefit from preserving our prime lands because it secures our food supply, protects open space, and maintains our rural heritage.

On Sale Now

Gift Memberships
Preserve-an-Acre Certificates
T-shirts & Polo Shirts
Hats
TLT Notecards

The Measure of Everything
by Ed Davis

For more information about items in our Farm Market:
Visit our website www.tecumsehlandtrust.org
follow the “farm market” link.

Or call our office
TLT Needs You!

TLT welcomes Bill Runyan to the Land Preservation Committee. In January 2008, Bill placed an easement on his 52-acre farm through the Agriculture Easement Purchase Program. The farm, located in Pleasant Township, Clark County, has been in the Runyan family since 1864. Bill’s parents bought the farm in 1934 when Bill was two months old. Bill has been farming since he was seven years old and World War II made it a necessity that he milk cows, feed hogs, and drive draft horses. Today the farm is in wheat, corn, or soybeans. Placing an easement on the family farm was a way for Bill to give back, “I had the privilege of farming a decent farm and someone else should have that privilege, too.”

On his other farm in Champaign County, where he lives with his wife, Mary, Bill milked 145 Holsteins before retiring this year. He and Mary raised three children there, have six grandchildren, and one great-granddaughter who keeps them on their toes. Ever since working with TLT on his easement, Bill has been active in the organization. This summer he joined the Land Preservation Committee and accompanied Krista to Pittsburgh for the Land Trust Alliance Rally. In October, Bill made a presentation at the Ohio Farmland Summit with board member Charlie Swaney. Bill is enthusiastic about TLT and its cause because, he says, “I feel strongly that we should be good stewards of resources. Farmland preservation does that by providing resources for the future.”
Mike Haubner is TLT’s new easement monitor. After just three short years of retirement, he joined our team to monitor farms and work with landowners. Mike is Professor Emeritus at The Ohio State University and was the chairman and extension educator of Agriculture, Natural Resources, Community Development in Clark County. He was on the faculty of the College of Food, Agriculture and Environmental Sciences for 35 years.

Mike began his agricultural career in 1978, after serving as a 4-H youth agent for seven years. Mike received his B.S. in Agriculture in 1970 from the University of Kentucky in Agronomy Science and his M.S. from The Ohio State University in 1975. Mike continues to teach agricultural history to the local Clark County Community Leadership Academy.

Mike and his wife, Debbie, live on their farm in Clark County, where they are involved with rotational grazing of dairy heifers. When Mike isn’t on the farm, he enjoys Florida, the Clark County Fair, and spinning lively tales for those of us in the office. Mike brings a great deal of agricultural knowledge and expertise to TLT and we feel fortunate to have him on our Stewardship Team.

Harvest Auction Raises Funds and Friends

The 2008 Harvest Auction not only raised over $22,000 but was also an energetic evening filled with great food, drink, music, and good-natured bidding competition.

The many attendees enjoyed the elegant Springfield Art Museum, lively music from “Loosely Strung,” and an exciting live auction conducted by auctioneer Doug Sorrell. Current Cuisine provided delicious hors d’oeuvres. Fresh flowers graced all the tables.

Auction items were generously donated by local businesses and individuals. Mark your calendar for Friday Sept. 11, 2009—next year’s Harvest Auction!
February 2009 is the 10th anniversary of a landmark event in Yellow Springs: the preservation of Whitehall Farm.

It was 8:30 in the evening, on February 22, 1999, when the auctioneer brought the hammer down on the last bid and delivered the Whitehall Farm—all 940 acres of it—into the hands of Dave and Sharen Neuhardt.

Most of the 800 people packed into the ballroom of the Springfield Holiday Inn helped the auctioneer count down—eight, seven, six . . . three, two, one, SOLD—and, then nearly brought the roof down cheering and clapping.

And while the Neuhardts were clearly the heroes of the hour, their acquisition of the farm, and their agreement with TLT to put a conservation easement on the land, was the culmination of a remarkable grassroots campaign that involved hundreds of others in a marathon six-week effort to keep the farm out of the hands of developers.

The land trust, acting behind the scenes for several years, had tried to work out a way to preserve the property as farmland, but had been unable to negotiate a deal. In early January, signs announcing the sale at auction of the land, divided into 34 parcels of varying sizes, had gone up north of the village.

Gene Klingaman of the Schrader Auction Company knew it was his job to get the best price for the sellers. But he was sympathetic to the community’s concerns. The way the parcels were divided, he said, would give the community a chance to buy what it could, instead of “trying to eat the whole elephant.”

What followed was what Al Denman, then president of TLT, called “benevolent anarchy.” With no real plan in place and no time to make one, individuals and groups took matters into their own hands.

A Farmland Preservation Task Force, co-chaired by Denman and Glen director Rick Flood, went after big donations. The Village of Yellow Springs kicked in its entire green space fund: some $385,000. Miami Township, Greene and Clark County Commissioners, New Carlisle, and South Charleston trustees donated what they could.

In the meantime, village businesses held benefit sales, and citizen groups had benefit concerts, bake sales, silent auctions, and car washes. A small child turned up on the doorstep of TLT treasurer Bud Marsh carrying a coffee can filled with seven dollars worth of change she had collected.

Altogether, individual citizens raised almost half a million dollars in that short time period. When it was all over, the money—more than a million dollars—was used to buy a conservation easement on the farm. The Neuhardts sold 300 of the 940 protected acres to Lamar Spracklin, who had agreed earlier to buy it . . . and somehow, the community had managed to eat the whole elephant.

Our 10th-anniversary celebration begins on Friday, February 20 at the Emporium with wine tasting and music by the G. Scott Jones ensemble.

Saturday, February 21 at 5 p.m. we will have a potluck dinner at Mills Lawn featuring speakers who were involved with saving the farm, a showing of Patti Dallas’s video about the auction, followed by contra dancing with a caller and music (a $10 donation is requested for the dance).

A commemorative book and DVD of the auction will be on sale at both events. Schedules and additional events will be announced, so stay tuned—www.tecumsehlandtrust.org—for more details.
Williams Restaurant Joins 1% for Green Space Program

Sit down at a table in Williams Eatery and Gathering Place and one of the first things you’ll notice is a 1% for Green Space logo, right on the front of the menu. This logo demonstrates Lawren and Diana Williams’s commitment to their community.

“I want to be a part of making good things happen in Yellow Springs. Supporting 1% helps me communicate that dedication to my customers,” said Lawren. He and Diana will make the donation themselves rather than add it to customers’ bills.

Bob Barcus, TLT board member and 1% for Green Space Program manager says that support from the Yellow Springs community has been remarkable. “A third of our businesses now make the donation themselves. The owners appreciate TLT’s mission to preserve the rural character of the village and its surrounding countryside.”

The 1% program now has over 35 participating businesses. 1% funds were used to preserve 100 acres of farmland at the northwest corner of town in 2007. The rest of the money is set aside for easement acquisition, specifically in Yellow Springs and Miami Township. As this program finishes its third year it has raised over $18,000 through the generosity of merchants, professionals, and customers.

Land Trust supporters can help by “shopping their values,” says Bob, “and when patronizing the 1% businesses below, let them know you appreciate their generosity.”

Yellow Springs 1% for Green Space Businesses

Adoption Link
Arthur Morgan House
Basho Apparel
Carlos Computer Service
Chen’s Asian Bistro
Cozy Critters Pet Sitters
Current Cuisine
Curves
Dolbeers Cleaners
Earth Rose
Garden of the Goddess
Glen Garden Gifts
Global Gallery
Greenleaf Gardens
House of Ravenwood
Ken Simon Framing
Little Art Theatre
Living Green

Miami Valley Pottery
NOLAA Gallery
Peifer Orchards
Pass It On Kids
Ritz Caz Jewelry
Selwa’s Hairstyling
Springs Motel
Toxic Beauty
Village Greenery
Wavelength Salon & Spa
Williams Eatery & Gathering Place
Yellow Springs Country Bed & Breakfast
Yellow Springs News
Yellow Springs Pottery
Yellow Springs Psychology Center
Yellow Springs Sock Shop
Zephyr Studio

$50,000 Donation Looks to the Future

As Shoeless Joe Jackson says in Field of Dreams, “if you build it, they will come.”

Within months of our successful campaign to seed TLT endowments at the Springfield and Yellow Springs Foundations, an anonymous donor made a $50,000 gift to our Springfield endowment. These endowments are now available to donors who wish to see the onus of their gift preserved, so that it can produce annual interest income that can fuel TLT’s work in the years to come.

Note that other giving vehicles are also available:

Gifts to TLT’s Stewardship Fund generate interest to pay for our annual monitoring visits and, if necessary, enforcement actions.

Gifts to TLT’s Land and Easement Acquisition Fund provide easement or fee purchase dollars to projects such as Whitehall Farm.

Last, but not least, Unrestricted Gifts give the TLT board the most flexibility — outreach or education projects, or added to any of the funds above.

Please give Krista or either of the foundations a call if you would be interested in more information or in creating an income-producing option tailored to your needs.

Springfield Foundation
(937) 324-8773

Yellow Springs Community Foundation
(937) 767-2655
TLT WELCOMES SHAWNEE ELDERS

In June 2008, TLT President Jim Campbell, Stewardship Monitor George Bieri, and Executive Director Krista Magaw, along with local author Bill Vernon, and Greene County Historical Society Executive Director Catherine Wilson, welcomed visiting elders of the Absentee Shawnee Tribe to a TLT preserved farm in Xenia Township.

This farm is the site of the longhouse where Tecumseh met with the tribal elders and where Chief Tecumseh organized several tribes to hold off Europeans in the late 1700s.

The elders’ trip retraced the steps of their forebears, who were pushed westward from our area in the eighteenth century to Oklahoma, where they live today.

The group also visited the believed birthplace of Tecumseh and the historic spring used by the Shawnees, located in Glen Helen.

Tecumseh Land Trust

Founded in 1990, we are a private non-profit conservation organization serving Clark and Greene Counties. Our mission is to preserve agricultural lands, open spaces, and historic structures in voluntary cooperation with landowners and their heirs, and to educate the public about methods of private land conservation.

TLT is a member-based organization. We rely on our members to support our annual operations.

Become a Member!

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If you are interested in placing an easement on your property, or making a bequest to TLT in your will, please contact us at 937-767-9490.