October 5, 2013 was a proud day for Tecumseh Land Trust and Little Miami Inc. (LMI). We had the great pleasure of welcoming Shawnee tribal members to the newly dedicated Tecumseh Preserve. As the date of the dedication was the 200th anniversary of Tecumseh’s death, an unveiling of a nature preserve in his name seemed to be a fine tribute to the Shawnee leader.

In the late 1780s Tecumseh gathered his tribe in a council house located above the banks of the Little Miami River where the preserve is today. So the story goes, this where they developed a plan of attack against the Europeans and where Simon Kenton was forced to run the gauntlet.

Now, fast forward to the early 1900s when the Knick family bought the land, began growing crops, and putting down their own roots. As Janette Knick watched the surrounding landscape change over the years, she decided to honor her family and those who came before them by permanently preserving the farm with a conservation easement.

LMI wanted to take the step of conservation further by acquiring 88 acres along the Little Miami River. Their vision was to restore the land to the days of Tecumseh with oak savannas and tall grass prairies. After negotiations with then owner, Rick Miller, and TLT, LMI was able to purchase the ground. They began planting a native grass prairie and thousands of oak trees in preparation for this dedication.

The dedication was a simple, but beautiful ceremony with a Tecumseh reinactor reminding us of the words of Tecumseh. Chief Enhert, Eastern Shawnee chief, praised the conservation work of our two organizations and the resulting tribute to both Tecumseh and the land upon which he lived.
Tecumseh Land Trust

Staff
Krista Magaw, Executive Director
krista@tecumsehlandtrust.org
Michele Burns, Associate Director
burns@tecumsehlandtrust.org
Cathy Holcomb, Office Manager
cathy@tecumsehlandtrust.org

Stewardship Team
Douglas Bailey, Documentation
George Bieri, Monitoring
Mike Haubner, Monitoring
Ben Silliman, Monitoring

Board of Directors
Rosalie Beers, President
Susan Miller, Vice-President
David Neuhardt, Secretary
Jim Timmons, Treasurer

Land Preservation Committee
Richard Zopf
Fred Berge
Jim Clem
Chuck Dolph
John Ritter
Charles Swaney
Jim Timmons

Volunteers: Julia Cady
Greg Kaffenbarger
Linda Parsons
Bill Runyon
Joe Staggs

Development Committee
Susan Miller
Chuck Dolph
Evelyn LaMers
Barbara Rion
Ilse Tebbetts
Volunteer: Bob Barcus

Education Committee
Ed Davis
Anne Randolph
Carolyn Smith
Volunteers: Jim Campbell
Dennie Eagleson
Linda Fuselier
Ron Lewis
Gina Paget
Jennifer Rosengarten

Finance Committee
Richard Zopf
Evelyn LaMers
Jim Timmons
Volunteer: Dave Baird

Newsletter Evelyn LaMers

TLT President Has Deep Roots In Southwest Ohio Agriculture

Tecumseh Land Trust president, Rosalie Beers (pictured on left with TLT Vice-President Susan Miller), has always lived in Ohio. But she hasn’t always been a “Beers.” Born Rosalie McKay, from Clinton County, she has deep roots in agriculture.

The McKays came to southwest Ohio from the Highlands of Scotland where they were farmers. Moses McKay, his wife, and 3 sons floated up the Little Miami River in a flat boat to settle land in Warren, Clinton, and Greene Counties. Rosalie isn’t quite sure when they came to America but she said that the first family picnic in Clinton County was in 1866. The family has been farming here ever since.

Rosalie grew up in Wilmington in a house built in the mid 1870s. He father was trained as a teacher but also farmed the land. They raised chickens, cows, and pigs, as well as grains. Today, her nephew farms the same land growing row crops and raising beef cattle.

Although Rosalie was never a farmer herself, she has always been involved in Ohio agriculture. She entered into an agricultural profession when she took a secretarial job at the Ohio Farm Bureau. The experience connected her with farms and farmers all across the state and with state and local legislators. She then began to work for the U.S. Department of Agriculture and later for the Ohio Department of Agriculture under the leadership of Fred Daily. Around this time, the Clean Ohio Act passed including the Agricultural Easement Purchase Program. Rosalie understood the financial hardships that farmers face and welcomed the opportunity to roll out this program. Rosalie concluded her career in the Office of Farmland Preservation where she worked with easement programs.

After retirement, Rosalie and her husband decided to return to the land and build a house on the farm that has been a part of her family since the land grant by the Virginia Military District many, many years ago. The McKay family is still in the area and still farming. They hold an annual picnic on their family picnic ground on Gurneyville Road that brings together some 200 family members.

Rosalie stays connected to the agricultural community through her service at Tecumseh Land Trust. She enjoys being a part of TLT because she likes getting out on the land, meeting the farmers, and helping those who want to preserve their lands ~ providing them with peace of mind that their land will always be used for agriculture.
SISTER HONORED WITH PRESERVATION OF BEAVERCREEK FARM AND WETLANDS

There was never a doubt that Betty Brill loved her family farm. The land in Beavercreek Township was fertile and the community was warm. Industrial jobs in Dayton and civilian jobs at the air force base were within driving distance. But the beauty of the countryside and the routine of the farming way of life prevailed. Then in the 1960s so many people moved into the countryside that much of it was lost to development.

Over time, many of the farms in the area became housing subdivisions and many of the original farm families moved away. But Betty and her brother Charles never married and saw no reason to live anywhere else. Their sister Patricia did move away and had a family of her own, but often brought her boys to play at the farm.

After many discussions with Julia Cady and Rick Miller, who farmed for the Brills, the family decided to preserve Charles’ Miami Township farm, using funding from Miami Township and the Farm and Ranch Protection Program. Then Betty and Patricia decided to preserve the home farm too. They asked TLT to look for funds to pay for some of the easement value.

Because of the rich natural resources on the property, including a large wetland, partners emerged including Beavercreek Wetlands Association (BWA) and the Nature Conservancy. This farm is contiguous to a large swath of land protected by BWA, so it made sense for these two organizations to provide matching funds needed to attract additional federal Farm and Ranchland Protection dollars. With this combination, Beaver Creek and the surrounding wetlands could be protected, buffered by grass from the cultivated farm fields.

Sadly, Betty passed away before the easement was recorded in May 2013. But Patricia was clear in following through on her sister’s wishes, saying “It was the only home she ever knew and it will always stay a farm.” Travelers on Fairground and Beaver Valley Roads will enjoy this living memorial for generations to come. So will the salamanders!
Unrestricted Bequest Funds
Dayton Foundation Endowment For TLT

A good friend of Tecumseh Land Trust, who wished to remain anonymous, left an unrestricted bequest of $100,000 to us this spring. “This event presented a wonderful opportunity for our organization,” says Krista Magaw, TLT Executive Director. Our board looked hard and long at how best to invest this gift. In addition to beefing up TLT’s reserve and discretionary land acquisition funds, they decided to open a board directed endowment at the Dayton Foundation.

“We’re delighted to be able to create this new giving option for supporters in the greater Dayton area,” says TLT President Rosalie Beers. “We have noticed more and more members from Sugar Creek, Centerville, Kettering, Oakwood, and Dayton in the past few years. I think preserving Glen Helen Nature Preserve is especially important to them.”

Magaw adds that the Dayton Foundation has made recent strides to prioritize conservation, creating the Greater Dayton Partners for the Environment, a group that collaborates on preservation projects and education. The impact of open space and local food production on the economy is also a concern of the group. “We’re delighted to add one more partnership with the Foundation,” says Magaw, “One that will benefit our area for future generations!”

3RD GENERATION FARMER DEDICATED TO REASSEMBLING FAMILY LANDS

Bruce Dickerson has never liked seeing farmland split up. He’s always thought that if easement funding had been available decades earlier, that more farms would have remained intact.

Since the inception of the Agricultural Easement Purchase Program through the Ohio Department of Agriculture there has been funding for easements and the Dickerson family was one of the first to apply. Bob and Elsie Dickerson, Bruce’s parents, had applied for years for their farm in Harmony Township, but it was never accepted into the program in their lifetime. In 2004, Bruce’s neighboring farm was awarded funding for an easement through the program - the first in the family.

This year Tecumseh Land Trust closed on another easement with Bruce on 573 acres in Madison Township, Clark County using funds from the Farm and Ranch Protection Program. This farm included land his parents had hoped to preserve.

This second farm was part of the original Virginia Military Survey from 1818. Since that time only 7 people have owned the farm and it has only been owned by 4 families since 1830. The original owner was Jonathan Pierce, who came to Ohio from Pennsylvania. Jonathan and his wife, Hannah, had 6 children. They were an abolitionist family who ran an important stop on the Underground Railroad from their son’s home. Jonathan and Hannah lived on the land until 1852 and 1839, respectively. Different parts of the farm were then purchased by their children.

In 1935, John Dickerson Sr. came to Ohio and began renting the farm from the current Pierce relatives who were living there. John, Bruce’s grandfather, was able to purchase a portion of the original farm in 1959. Upon John’s death, Bob Dickerson inherited 177 acres of his dad’s farm and began purchasing neighboring land to put the farm back to the original 573 acres.

Bruce and his dad worked tirelessly to reconfigure the farm as a tribute to those who came before them. After his parents’ death, and buying out his siblings, Bruce now owns this farm in its original form. Although the easement prohibits the land from ever being split up in the future, Bruce took the extra step to make the farm one tax parcel instead of five.

Bruce is proud to be the owner of this farm that is rich in resources and history.
TLT Board Evaluates Easement Properties

TLT board members love to get out on the land. Being able to visit beautiful, private properties is one of the perks of being on the board.

However, the walks aren’t just for fun. When a property is being considered for an easement through TLT, the board must walk the land to identify specific conservation values first-hand. By being on the land, the board can be confident in saying, yes this property is worth preserving.

The walk is also a time for the board and landowner to meet. The landowner can explain his or her future plans for the property, which is especially helpful when drafting the easement language.

Conservation easements naturally mean long-term relationships with people. It is critical that those relationships start strong and continue to grow over time, even as the players change.

In the end, the walk ensures TLT has made a good investment in the lands we preserve forever.

---

Calendar of Events

February 5, 9am-4pm
Farmland Preservation Summit
OSU, 4-H Center
2201 Fred Taylor Dr.
Columbus, Ohio
Get connected with current issues and news in farmland preservation. Meet farmers and landowners who have preserved their farms. Get to know the people who make farmland preservation possible in Ohio.

February 7, 7pm
Through the Eyes of a Naturalist with John Howard
Vernet Ecological Center
400 Corry St.
Yellow Springs, OH
TLT staff and interns loved this talk at the Ohio Native Plant Conference so much that they are bringing it here. John will talk about being an amateur naturalist, his observations, and what he learns from nature. A fantastic slide show accompanies his talk.

February 13, 7pm
“Turn Here Sweet Corn” Documentary with Atina Diffley
Little Art Theater
247 Xenia Ave.
Yellow Springs, OH
Be inspired by this in-depth documentary about two farmers who fought off encroaching development and a pipeline to save their family farm. And meet the farmer/author, Atina Diffley for Q&A and a reception. Purchase tickets through TLT.

February 23, 2pm
Sugar Shack Tour
Flying Mouse Farms
100 E. Fairfield Pk.
Yellow Springs, OH
Join us for a tour of Flying Mouse Farms and learn how maple syrup is made. Dress appropriately for the weather and muddy conditions.

March 1, Time TBA
Ohio Moss & Lichen Association Walk and Talk
Vernet Ecological Center
400 Corry St.
Yellow Springs, OH
Interested in moss and lichens, but don’t know much about them? Take a walk in Glen Helen with the experts who will share what they know about mosses and lichens for TLT.

March 15, 8pm
Black & White Soiree
Springfield Museum of Art
107 Cliff Park Rd.
Springfield, OH
The Springfield Art Museum and TLT are bringing you an evening of dancing, great music, and viewing the special Ansel Adams exhibit. Dress in black and white if you wish; cash bar. Purchase tickets through TLT.

June 1, 2pm
24th Annual Meeting
Location: TBA
Find out what TLT has been up to in the last year, take a fabulous walk of a property, enjoy activities for the kids, and light refreshments. Wear good walking/hiking shoes.

June 21, 7:30pm
Solstice Barn Dance
Young’s Jersey Dairy
Outdoor Pavilion
Yellow Springs, OH
Celebrate the solstice and get out and dance! TLT is bringing back the Barn Dance at the Young’s Outdoor Pavilion. There will be great music, children’s activities, and refreshments. Purchase tickets through TLT.
“Where else can you bid on seed corn or a Morocon dinner at the same auction?”

Steve Conn

**Only at the Tecumseh Land Trust Harvest Auction!**

Don’t miss out next year. Mark your calendars for September 19, 2014 at the Hollenbeck Bayley Center in Springfield.

Thank you for supporting TLT!
**ANTIOCH & WITTENBERG STUDENTS**

Tecumseh Land Trust interns are actively engaged in a variety of activities. Since October, I have been maintaining our media pages, attending events and meetings, planning events, making connections to further spread the conservation word, and going on visits to landowners interested in preserving their land. I never knew how much work goes into lowering a speed limit or the extraordinary effort some landowners put in to remove non-native honeysuckle from their land.

My favorite thing about working with TLT is the people and the passion behind them. During site visits, farmers have been adamant that their land remain farmland. They know the stories of those around them who wanted their land to be preserved, but instead was sold off into housing lots because they could no longer take care of the land. The strength that comes from TLT, starting with preserving Whitehall Farm, continues to inspire me and help me further dedicate myself to my work here. The TLT community has been extremely kind and welcoming, and for this I am very grateful. TLT recognizes the importance of community involvement and farm land, and works hard for its preservation.

---

My name is Courtney Van Dyke from Bremen, Ohio. I am a junior at Wittenberg University with a major in geography/urban planning. I decided to volunteer at TLT because I wanted the dual aspect of working with a non-profit organization and an organization whose goal was to preserve farmland.

*I thoroughly enjoyed spending a day with the landscape architects,* says Magaw. *I'm excited about connecting them to other land trusts across the state. These folks are passionate about open space!*

Eric Sauer, a local landscape architect, is actively involved with protecting our landscape, including areas along the Little and Great Miami Rivers. Involved in multiple conservation groups, Eric took notice of the outstanding achievements of TLT under Krista’s leadership and made the nomination for the award. “I thoroughly enjoyed spending a day with the landscape architects,” says Magaw. “I’m excited about connecting them to other land trusts across the state. These folks are passionate about open space!”

Sharon Neuhardt’s sunflower field on Whitehall Farm was given special recognition by the Ohio Environmental Council. The joy these beautiful flowers bring to thousands of passersby each year is impossible to calculate. A special thanks to the Neuhardts for sharing this vista!
Fall 2013 Newsletter

YOUNG ARTISTS AT WHITEHALL

Ten aspiring young artists came to Whitehall Farm on a rainy September Sunday afternoon to draw sunflowers. Allison Paul of the Bryan Community Pottery and formerly a children’s art teacher, led the draw-in. Using just pencils and pastels, the children had fun creating beautiful drawings of the sunflowers surrounding them in the huge sunflower field on the Neuhardt’s farm off of US 68.

We’re hoping for better weather next year but do plan to repeat this simple, yet inspiring event. Check our website, and Facebook page for more information.

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.

Volunteer

Give to Our Endowments

Put TLT in Your Will

Preserve a Property

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