On July 7th, a landscape painting exhibition sponsored by the Tecumseh Land Trust and organized by local artist Jennifer Rosengarten, will open to the public at the Wind’s Cafe, in celebration of the Land Trust’s 25th anniversary and 25,000 acres preserved through conservation easements in our region. The exhibition will feature original art, much of it painted “en plein air” on several of the Land Trust’s preserved properties. Featuring the beautiful work of 26 very talented artists from our area, the exhibit will benefit both the artists and the Land Trust, with proceeds from the sale of the art divided equally between the two. The opening reception will take place on July 12th, from 4-6 p.m. At 5 p.m. Bill Felker, author of “Poor Will’s Almanack” will give a nature reading. The exhibit runs through September 6th.

“We have gathered a terrific group of painters for this exhibition,” said Jennifer Rosengarten, “and, I’d like to add, a highly respected and collectible group. Most of these artists have significant regional and national reputations along with a few emerging talents as well. We even have two artists flying in from Maine and New Mexico to contribute work to the show! The paintings reflect a variety of interpretations and styles, but all of the work has been created from TLT preserved properties. This will be a great opportunity for people to take a little ‘piece’ of preserved land home with them.”

TLT Executive Director Krista Magaw remarked, “the 25/25 painting show exemplifies the partnerships that make our work possible. I can’t transmit how fortunate we are to get to enjoy the gifts of so many talented artists, capturing the joy of the work we do. Our experience of the natural world is so very important to our lives! The gifted artists who have captured these protected landscapes carry the message of our mission -- we must act soon to protect our irreplaceable landscapes.”
Spring is finally here and farmers are getting ready to go out into the fields, and so am I. My name is Andrew Armstrong and I live and work on my family’s farm in South Charleston. We primarily produce corn and soybeans. I currently have a small hay operation and have a couple of cow-calf pairs as well.

Throughout my childhood, I was heavily involved with 4-H where I showed livestock and completed other projects. I graduated from Southeastern High School, in 2012, where I was an active member in the FFA program, the National Honor Society, and was the Class of 2012 Salutatorian. I am currently a Junior at Wittenberg University, studying Business Entrepreneurship. I am interested in the farm land preservation opportunities that Tecumseh Land Trust has to offer agricultural families. I also look forward to all that I can offer TLT with my production agriculture background.

Visitors to Tecumseh Land Trust’s office at Whitehall Farm can’t help but notice the brightly painted sunflower-shaped sign at the entrance to the lane off US 68. The sign is the creative efforts of Jenny Randolph, TLT’s webmaster extraordinaire and past board member Bob Huston.

Jenny has been with TLT going on three years this summer, and in that time she has become an integral part of the team, helping with art projects, children’s activities, and updating TLT’s website and Facebook page. Her duties have also evolved to include maintaining the Facebook page for the Coalition of Ohio Land Trusts (COLT).

Jenny says that Facebook and other social media “have become an important tool to help reach people. … It’s good to post events, let people know what’s going on, get people to participate, volunteer.”

She says that she likes to use nature-related photos to help engage online visitors. Her goal is to “create interest in TLT -- and make people smile.”

TLT is so fortunate to find such talented people with whom to work. We could not accomplish all that we do without our fantastic staff.
Several times a year, TLT will receive a call from a “conservation buyer” – someone who is interested in buying a farm or natural property, with the thought in mind to preserve it. Periodically we also hear from potential “conservation sellers” – folks who plan to sell a property, but hope to be able to sell it to a buyer who will preserve its conservation values. Sometimes we are able to help such buyers and sellers meet their goals.

Jon Paul Rion with his mother, Barbara Rion, recently made such a buy. They purchased their first farm with the plan in mind to preserve it in 2003. That protected property came to be known as Orion Farm, an organic farm in Mad River Township, with lovely prairies and meandering creeks. TLT heard from a neighboring family last year that they were planning to sell their farm, and hoped that they could sell it intact, and that the new buyer would keep it intact. There was potential to carve several house lots out of the property.

Thanks to the support of our members, we were able to link the two families. The sale took place in 2014. The Rions are working to protect the property and restore wetlands on it as well.

What motivates the Rions? “Land is getting used up every day,” says Jon Paul. “Topsoil is stripped, and oil, gas, and limestone are extracted. Or land is covered with houses and parking lots. Either way, you never get it back. The you is not just people, present and future, it’s the animals, the migrating birds and insects. A farm is an oasis where thousands of species take refuge. Protecting land is one of the best gifts possible to all of earth’s inhabitants.”

Also, says Jon Paul, this method of protecting land through conservation easement is protected by law. “Generally, land use is just not thought out. Cities remain vacant while we build low quality houses on beautiful land. In contrast, the IRS policy for tax deductions based on land protection is a very effective policy. You can choose where your tax dollars go. Plus you, your neighbors, and all the earth’s creatures get to enjoy the natural benefits of the land, forever!”

In the case of the Rions, protecting land has become infectious. In addition to the 2 protected farms adjacent to their home farm, a block of 1500 more protected acres begins 100 yards away. “You can buy here knowing the future,” says Jon Paul. “When your neighbors do the same, the value of the entire area is increased. It’s a permanent investment that’s good for the whole county.”

Your local land trust – TLT – received the good housekeeping seal of approval once again this winter. How does a land trust do this? By applying to become “re-accredited,” we have demonstrated that our decisions about protecting land are sound and that we are doing a good job of protecting that land over time. Congratulations to TLT’s staff, Board, members and landowners – we share in this achievement!

The 301 land trusts across the United States that have achieved accreditation are very effective. They are responsible for more than 75 percent of the 20 million acres currently protected by U.S. land trusts.

“Accreditation is the highest national mark of distinction a land trust can achieve and must be renewed every five years,” said Tammara Van Ryn, executive director of the Land Trust Accreditation Commission. “I congratulate the 34 land trusts that achieved first-time or renewed accreditation, bringing the total number of accredited land trusts to 301. Their work helps ensure our children’s children will enjoy the clean air, clean water, fresh local food and other benefits from protected lands that we enjoy today.”
For the past few years, distributions from an IRA account directly to your favorite charity have been a good tax planning tool. This provision expired at the end of 2014. However, there is a good chance Congress will extend this provision in the tax law to 2015 and future years.

Here’s how it works. If you are 70 1/2 or older, you can exclude from income IRA distributions made directly to a qualified charity, such as the Tecumseh Land Trust. This distribution counts toward your Required Minimum Distribution (RMD). The amount excluded cannot be deducted as a charitable contribution, since it wasn’t included in income. This may also result in some savings on your state income tax return as well.

In summary, IRA distributions to your favorite charity might help your tax situation and could increase the amount you are able to donate to charity.

You can make a difference by asking your legislators to extend this provision in the tax code for the coming years. Tax savings and farmland preservation - what a Win - Win situation!

How To Make A Gift From Your IRA

The Glen Helen Association recently purchased Camp Greene on Grinnell Road from the Girl Scouts of Western Ohio with Clean Ohio Open Space funds. TLT will hold a conservation easement on the 30-acre property. As TLT Executive Director Krista Magaw noted, “Over time, organizational changes within the Girl Scouts of America have meant consolidating a number of camps. It made sense for the Glen Helen Association to purchase the property because it is a nice addition to their 973-acre preserve.”

The Glen Helen Association was successful at securing Clean Ohio Green Space money to purchase the camp. We [TLT] are excited to hold this easement just as we are wrapping up an easement on the rest of Glen Helen, another project that used Clean Ohio monies. The remaining funds for the purchase were contributed by The Upper River Fund of the Dayton Foundation, due to the Little Miami River flowing through the property, and the members and donors of the Glen Helen Association.

The conservation easement ensures that the property will forever be preserved as a natural area, and that it can continue to be used for environmental education programs. “It was important to the Glen Helen Association board to have a conservation easement held by Tecumseh Land Trust on the property, so that we have a consistent blanket of protection across all of Glen Helen,” said Nick Boutis executive director of Glen Helen.

There has been hope since the 1960s that the properties adjacent to Glen Helen and John Bryan State Park, including Camp Greene, would eventually all be preserved. They were known as the Country Common. With this TLT easement, the dream gets closer to reality.
May 31, 4-5pm  
Nature Meditation  
Glen Helen Nature Preserve  
SR 343 entrance - straight past the Farmhouse  
Yellow Springs, OH  
Back by popular demand, TLT, Glen Helen and the Dharma Center will offer walking meditations with the help of Bill Felker. Walks will also occur on June 28, July 26, August 30, September 27, & October 25.

June 4, 7-9pm  
Thirsty Thursdays  
Yellow Springs Brewery  
305 N. Walnut St.  
Yellow Springs, OH  
Wet your whistle for green space at the Yellow Springs Brewery. Every 1st Thursday of the month for 2 hours, the 1% for Green Space fund receives $1 for every beer purchased. This will re-occur on July 2, Aug. 6 Sept. 3, Oct. 1, Nov. 5 & Dec. 3.

June 7, 2pm  
25th Annual Meeting  
Vie Design Building  
830 Xenia Ave.  
Yellow Springs, OH  
Come one, come all to our annual meeting. Enjoy refreshments, games on the lawn, and a historic neighborhood walk after our brief business meeting. Wear good walking shoes and bring a chair.

June 20, 10am-3pm  
TLT Yard Sale  
Whitehall Farm  
4627 US RT 68 N  
Yellow Springs, OH  
Treasures galore for sale as we clean out. Watch for details on our website.

Monthly  
TLT Book Club  
Please call or email the office to be added to the Book Club list.

June 27, 5pm  
Songfest for the Glen  
Antioch University Midwest  
900 Dayton St.  
Yellow Springs, OH  
A time to celebrate the Glen with an art show & kids’ activities from 5-6:45 pm and a concert featuring The Trees at 7pm. Presale tickets are $5, at the door $7. Proceeds from the event benefit Glen Helen.

25/25 Exhibition of Landscape Paintings to Celebrate TLT’s 25th Anniversary & 25,000 Acres Preserved  
The Winds Cafe  
215 Xenia Ave.  
Yellow Springs, OH  
•  July 7 - September 6  
View the works of many local artists as you enjoy the delicious fare at The Winds Cafe. The paintings will be for sale and half of the proceeds benefit TLT.
  •  July 12, 4-6pm  
25/25 Reception  
Join us for the opening of this glorious art show celebrating the beauty of land right here surrounding us. Bill Felker, award winning, nationally syndicated nature writer, will present a reading at 5 pm.

August 3, 5:00, 5:30, 7:30, 8:00  
Local Foods Dinner  
The Winds Cafe  
215 Xenia Ave.  
Yellow Springs, OH  
This fabulous dinner is a local tradition. It features a five-course meal made from locally grown foods. Reservations required and seating is limited. Tickets will go on sale in early July.

September 18, 6pm  
Harvest Auction  
Hollenbeck Bayley Center  
Springfield, OH  
TLT puts the fun in FUNdraiser with a fantastic night out in Springfield. Enjoy live music and great food and drink while bidding on exciting auction items. Tickets go on sale through TLT in mid-August. Watch for your invitation in the mail.

The Sunflower Art Show  
YS Arts Council Gallery  
111 Corry St.  
Yellow Springs, OH  
•  Sept. 19 - October 10  
Last year we invited folks to come to the Neuhardt’s beautiful sunflower field in front of our office to create art. Some of the artists are professional, some are hobbyists and some first time painters. Photographs will also be displayed.
  •  September 27, 2-4pm  
Sunflower Show Reception  
Join us for the afternoon to enjoy some lovely sunflower creations. Light refreshments will be served and kids’ art activities will be available.

November 27  
Alternative Gift Fair  
Start your holiday shopping close to home by supporting Yellow Springs nonprofits. There will be a variety of gifts to meet every budget.

December 11, 7pm  
Winter Solstice Poetry Reading  
Vernet Ecological Center  
405 Corry St.  
Yellow Springs, OH  
Join TLT & Glen Helen for an evening of nature poetry reading. This year’s theme is “The Sacred Solstice.”
HOIST A LOCAL BREW FOR 1%

Yellow Springs Bewery co-owners Lisa Wolters and Nate Cornett are contributing to TLT’s mission of preserving agricultural land and natural areas in a way unique to the brewery – beer.

Late last summer, the brewers initiated Thirsty Thursdays on the first Thursday of each month, when $1 for every beer sold between 7 and 9 p.m. goes to TLT’s 1% for Green Space campaign.

“We really truly believe in the efforts of the Tecumseh Land Trust, and that was the initial reason for doing this,” Wolters said.

The event’s purpose was to help TLT, but Wolters said the brewery has seen a benefit as well. “It’s brought many more people into the taproom,” she said. “It’s been a win-win for both sides.”

TLT welcomes the creative way the brewery has become involved. “It’s an easy way for us to contribute while you all have fun,” Wolters said. “It’s a good match.”

2014 WINDS LOCAL FOODS DINNER SELLS OUT!

What better way to celebrate land preservation with family and friends than eating a deliciously prepared meal at the Winds Cafe using locally raised food? Mary Kay Smith and her incredible staff once again went above and beyond to make a perfect evening for the 2014 Local Foods Dinner.

For the first time we had custom-raised meat from Anderson’s Farm for the dinner. Having the Andersons at the dinner was great. Not only do they help feed our community, they live on a protected farm.

In addition to the entree, guests enjoyed four other courses including soup, salad, cheese and honey plate, and dessert. This year’s dinner will be on August 3, with seatings starting at 5:30pm. A Clark County farmer is raising grass fed beef for the dinner. Invitations for the dinner will be mailed in late June. Get your reservations in early as this event usually sells out.

JULIA CADY SOCIETY FEATURES FARMER JON BRANSTOR

Every year TLT honors members of our Julia Cady Society -- those donors who give $500 or more in a year. Last year TLT decided to honor a local farmer along with our donors. Jon Branstrator farms his family’s Century Farm in Clinton County. Not only does he have a traditional row crop operation, Jon also grows fruits and vegetables.

At the reception, Jon briefly talked about the challenges and opportunities of growing the food we eat. He loves what he does despite the challenges.

Our Julia Cady Society members enjoyed the beautifully displayed vegetables that Jon brought along, the delicious food that had been prepared and, of course, the excellent company.

This year’s event will be held in October, with the location TBA. If you’re interested in being a part of this annual event send in your membership before October.
TTT ESSAY CONTEST FINALIST:
"MARIGOLDS"

The summer that I turned eleven I planted some marigold seeds in my backyard, around the edges of the square of unevenly set paving stones we called “the patio.” Someone must have given the seeds to me, an invisible child in a large, troubled family, as I rarely bought anything at the store myself. Wherever they came from, those seeds were planted, watered, and came up with feathered green leaves, soon budding, and then blooming in bold shades of gold, copper, and brass.

I was entranced by this magical metamorphosis. Without anyone seeming to notice, I visited my flowers many times each day, kneeling to inhale their dark, spicy fragrance that transported me to a place uniquely my own.

As school started up again, and the cool nights of autumn arrived, I watched, fascinated, as the blooms closed, forming dried pods, which I broke open to discover neat packets of thin, black seeds. I saved them in a paper bag, and planted them again in spring, a ritual I continue to this day.

Although I have never lived on a farm, or built a cabin on some wild hillside, I live on the land. In the morning when I step outside, I touch the ground, just to feel her aliveness, and breathe in her earthly scent. This land, here, beneath my feet holds and nourishes me, connecting me to my deepest self. The marigolds taught me so.

By Abigail Cobb

TTT AND GLEN YELLOW SPRINGS

In 2014, TLT secured funds through the Clean Ohio Green Space Fund to remove several invasive species from a 6-acre area adjacent to the Yellow Springs Creek as it flows past the Bryan Center and into Glen Helen.

The Tree of Heaven, a non-native, invasive species, has heavily invaded this area. This species, in particular, is a problem for native plants because it contains chemicals that have strong allelopathic (herbicidal) affects on the growth of plants around it. This helps it establish quickly and spread rapidly. Currently, this species has not invaded Glen Helen but if left untreated, it will quickly spread downstream.

The project is a wonderful collaboration between the Village of Yellow Springs, Glen Helen, and TLT. Glen Helen is overseeing the restoration work being done by Habitat Creations and will be responsible for the ongoing stewardship once the grant period ends in two years. The Village will donate a conservation easement to Tecumseh Land Trust, the value of which was used as an in-kind match for the grant.

Being good land stewards is an important part of owning land. By taking care of areas around Glen Helen, it will help preserve the integrity of this precious nature preserve.

George Bieri, Glen Helen Land Manager, removing invasive Euonymus.

HELEN RESTORE CREEK HABITAT

Trip to D.C.

Many working farmers are holding off on donating an agricultural easement on their land because of the ever changing federal income tax benefit for doing so. Instead of protecting this working asset, they are in a quandary, and thus may not be able to protect their land.

It is easy to throw up your hands about broken government. But five Ohio land trust proponents went to Washington D.C. in late April and achieved one of their main goals – getting Sen. Rob Portman’s support for the tax incentive bill – S.330. The bill would permanently stretch the length of the tax benefit from six years to sixteen. It would also allow full time farmers to deduct the value of the donated easement or part thereof against 100% of their income, rather than 30%.

“Farmers don’t make any money some years,” said full-time farmer Jon Branstrator, of Clinton County. “The longer time period provides a real incentive to the people who grow our food, both the specialty crop producers and the bigger corn and soybean producers.”

TLT Executive Director, Krista Magaw, urges you to thank Sen. Portman for his support, and to urge Sen. Brown to sign on to the bill. “This is a reasonable, permanent tax policy with equitable benefits across income brackets. The preserved land stays on the tax rolls, benefits our economy, and will feed future generations.”
Tecumseh Land Trust

Founded in 1990, we are a private nonprofit 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.

TLT 25th Annual Meeting

TLT will hold its Annual Meeting at 830 Xenia Avenue in Yellow Springs, on June 7th. The building on this property has a long and illustrious history as the home of two former presidents of Antioch College, a rooming house, a mortuary, the home of the Jim and Mary Agna family, and the home of the Vie Design Studio. TLT has selected this historic site and preserved property as a way to celebrate our 25 years as an organization and our close ties with Yellow Springs.

The event will begin at 2pm with a brief business meeting, and will be followed by croquet on the lawn, refreshments, and tours of the historic neighborhood led by local experts at 3pm.

 Historic Vie Design building in Yellow Springs preserved since 1995.