



# Leelanau Conservancy

*Conserving the Land, Water and  
Scenic Character of Leelanau County*

Newsletter: Summer 2011

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## Farmland Program Blossoming Three New Family Farms Slated for Preservation

Standing between the rows of cherry-laden trees on the family's historic farmstead, Blaise and Sarah Korson, with their grown children Allen and Julie and their 16-year-old grandson Brandon, look out at the Manitou Passage of Lake Michigan. "Just beautiful," Sarah says, then laughingly jabs, "You're not really going to wear that shirt for the picture are you, Blaise?" Blaise merely shakes his head and chuckles. "The farm has been in the family since the 1870s when my great-grandfather farmed here." Then, looking at Brandon who represents the 6<sup>th</sup> generation on the farm, he adds, "It's



*Korson family, generations 4 - 6. From l-r: Allen, Blaise, Julie, Sarah & Brandon*

nice to think about future generations of Korsons farming this place."

A quick rewind to 2009: The Korsons were one of the first families to sign up for the innovative FarmAbility Program—a 10-year conservation agreement launched by the Conservancy in partnership with the Leelanau Conservation District, Michigan State University Extension and the Northwest Michigan Agricultural Research Station. Now, they're one of the first FarmAbility families to partner with the Conservancy to protect their 153-acre farm forever.

In addition to the Korson Farm, which has acreage in both Leelanau and Leland Townships, the Send & Emeott Farm in Bingham Township and the Stanton Farm in Centerville



*View of The Manitou Passage & south end of North Manitou Island from the Korson's orchard in Leelanau Township*

Township are slated for preservation. Each of these family farms are partnering with the Conservancy and the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service to match local private funds with a grant from the Federal Farm & Ranchland Protection (FRPP) Program. Between 2010 and 2011, the Conservancy successfully applied for \$2.87 million in federal grants to preserve six farms in six townships. The Conservancy must raise \$1.52 million in private dollars to access these federal grants, and the six farm families will donate \$1.52 million in value. If these farms had been sold for development, their aggregate fair market value would have been about \$8 million (See sidebar on page 5 for more details.) All in all, nearly 1,000 acres of family-owned farmland are currently slated for permanent preservation in Leelanau through the FRPP program.

Back in 2008, before any of us knew the national economy was on the cusp of the worst downturn since the Great Depression, we first explored the concept of *continued on page 5*

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## Message from our Executive Director



Sometimes important work is done by a small handful of committed individuals who never seek the limelight

Important work gets done every day. Some of that work requires big-time publicity to achieve wide-spread buy-in or the kind of “buzz” needed to revive a sleepy run-down neighborhood or launch a movement like buying local foods. But sometimes important work is done by a small handful of committed individuals who never seek the limelight, confident that what they are doing is essential and good for the community.

I began thinking about all this because, after 22 years of taking water samples for our water monitoring program, Dr. Tim Keilty has decided to pass the torch, or pass the Hydrolab, if you will, to another generation.

Many people know Tim and his wife, Nancy, pretty well. They run Cottonwood Springs Farm near Cedar, for many years now a provider of grass-fed, all-natural beef primarily for local consumption. What many don't know is that Tim has volunteered his time (and often his own money) to conduct a regular and consistent water sampling program at nine lake stations in Leelanau County. He does this because he has the training and personal interest in aquatic science, but also because he knows that the health of our lakes and streams is the foundation of our local economy, and a critical indicator of the overall health of our environment. Tim knows that to really understand what's going on in our waterways observation and anecdotal evidence will only take you so far. You need real verifiable scientific data, so he's been collecting it.

Back in 1989, the Conservancy partnered with the Conservation District and county lake associations to found a water monitoring program on inland lakes and streams. We realized that no one was collecting important data on a regular basis and no one else could be counted on to do so. Since that day three individuals come to mind as the mainstays of this effort, each with over 20 years of providing their expertise for free. In addition to Tim, Walt Neilsen and Dr. Ray Canale have provided thousands of hours of effort to monitor water quality.

Why has this program, which has created one of the most complete, long-running, and scientifically valuable datasets of water quality in the state, been so quiet? Partly it's because Tim, Walt, and Ray have never sought the limelight, quietly taking water samples, analyzing data, publishing their work, and keeping costs at a minimum. Tim, for instance, has volunteered his time for over a decade, and when equipment needs to be fixed, he often covers the cost himself. That's how you run such a valuable program on a mere \$10,000 per year.



In the preface to the First Annual Report of the Water Quality Monitoring Program (February 1991), Tim explained his philosophy. In talking about the start-up of a monitoring program Tim noted that “dedication and work, embroidered with lively discussion, and most assuredly some scheming, have resulted in a modest, privately-supported water quality monitoring program serving Leelanau County... Think of it as you might a yearly physical, and how important a role it can play in the early detection of disease. The program, even with the substantial growth we envision, costs so very little relative to the value of our lakes.”

While Tim won't be loading the Conservancy's boat with gear for his six-times-per-year rounds of sampling our lakes, he will remain one of the principal advisers to the program. He will help identify trends, direct research to promising areas, and make sure that the annual check-up safeguards the health of our lakes. And he'll do that without a lot of fanfare, just as he and Walt and Ray always have.



*Long-time volunteer Dr. Tim Keilty collects and labels water samples from Little Traverse Lake. We thank Tim for his many years of collecting water samples, analyzing the results and helping to create an extensive database of water quality information for Leelanau County lakes and streams.*



### Wetlands at Snow Moon Ranch Preserved

One of the many things that gives Leelanau County its unique charm is the way that people make a living here, and how our landscapes figure into their livelihoods. Take Juliet Berkshire Sprouse, whose llama and alpaca ranch doubles as a wedding site. Her Snow Moon Ranch sits on top of the world overlooking Glen Lake and features one of the most spectacular views on the peninsula. She also owns a large chunk of wetlands in the Hatlem Creek watershed that are critical to the health of Glen Lake.

This winter Juliet took steps to preserve a portion of her beautiful and ecologically significant land and hopes to do more in the future. She sold a conservation easement on 18 of her 100 acres that will forever protect sensitive wetlands along 1,400 feet of Hatlem Creek. Michigan monkey flower is present here; the federally endangered plant requires wet, mucky areas where cool water flows and Juliet's land is just the ticket. The land which is located along Plowman Road also backs up to other protected lands owned by Robert MacKenzie, thereby creating a 38-acre block of preserved wetlands.

"This is incredibly important habitat and protecting Hatlem Creek means we are also protecting the health of Glen Lake," says Yarrow Wolfe, Land Protection Specialist. "Hatlem Creek is the only major tributary feeding into Glen Lake, and enters on its south shore. It is a significant source of fresh water and has long been a high priority area for the Leelanau Conservancy. We are grateful to Juliet for her willingness to work with us and for contributing some of the value in a bargain sale of the conservation easement."



Snow Moon Ranch sits among the treetops and as a result, hawks and eagles, song birds and swallows swoop and flit near a wooden arch or the split rail fence where couples pose for photos or recite their vows. In the distance are Alligator Hill, the Dune

Climb and azure blue Glen Lake. "The fun thing about hosting weddings up here is meeting all the people who come from all over the country, who have never been to Leelanau," says Juliet. "It's fun to see how excited they are about it and to be able to share it."

Juliet has been talking to the Conservancy for a number



*Juliet's wetlands in the Hatlem Creek area are important to the pristine water quality of Glen Lake*

of years about protecting her land. "It's a big commitment and there were lots of variables in the decision making process," she says. "In the end it's a good thing. We retained a foot print that has value. For me this land is an important investment and I had to consider that. This is a good starting place."

Juliet first saw the land one summer evening when she was up north visiting during a college break. "A friend brought me up here to watch a sunset and I was just blown away," she says. Years later, when she and her then-husband were looking for property, the very same piece of land was available.

"I had no idea at the time that some day I would be looking for property in the very same place," she says. "It's funny how life takes you around." She raised two children here who are now grown and live on the West Coast, but come home every chance they can.

In addition to keeping the grounds tended for weddings Juliet cares for a herd of 15 gentle llamas and 15 alpacas. At one time the ranch was home to a great number of llamas, alpacas and Tibetan yak. She chose the name Snow Moon ranch after, she says, "We had one of those spectacular nights where the moon came up and seemed to sit right here in our front yard on top of the snow. I had never seen anything like it."

In July Juliet hosted our Leelanau Conservancy Sustainers at their annual summer gathering. As for her conservation easement, Juliet says, "I hope it encourages other people to think about trying to keep as much of this area the way it was when we saw it for the first time. We are so blessed to live in a place like this."



### New Farmer at Swanson Property Digs In

On a sunny day in early July, farmer Ben Brown welcomed over 100 curious visitors to the old Sonny Swanson Farm. He met the group near the iconic yellow farm stand, which had just received a fresh coat of paint a week earlier. "I took in an old board to have the color matched," he told the group.



*New farmer, Ben Brown, has given the iconic stand a new coat of paint since this photo was taken*

Then he laughed as he told the story of several passersby stopping to supervise his work. "We had just put a coat of white primer on and some guy stopped and said, 'You can't paint it white for crying out loud!'"

As in all things Swanson these days, Ben asked the visitor to have a little patience. The shed turned the right color soon after and he assured the group that he is working as fast and as hard as he can to bring the farm back to life and to stock the stand again with fresh produce. This spring, Bardenhagen strawberries were sold from the stand where Ben also takes orders for the chickens and turkeys he is raising in a small scale, sustainable fashion on the land.

The farm had stood idle since Sonny's passing at age 89 in 2008. Last year the Conservancy purchased the farm along with 90 acres—including 73 acres of wetlands and 2000 feet of shoreline on Little Traverse Lake.

One of the Conservancy's goals was to see agriculture revitalized on the 15-acre farmstead adjacent to the 75-acre new preserve. A committee heard proposals from local farmers interested in carrying on the land's agricultural legacy.

Brown's business plan won the favor of the committee charged to evaluate the options. "It was a hard decision," says Director Brian Price. "We were encouraged to have a number of strong contenders who want to farm out there. Ben's credentials and his philosophy of small scale sustainable agriculture really fit with our mission, and we're excited to have him on board."

Ben explained that philosophy to visitors as he gave visitors a first-hand look at everything from Sonny's 100-year old asparagus patch that is still producing to baby chicks housed in Sonny's old maple syrup shack. In his short tenure here, Ben has become a repository for all things Sonny Swanson, a

well-loved local character. Ben relishes learning the history and details of Sonny's operation. But visitors to the farm also got a look at they way he is using the land.

The bearded, bespectacled Brown, 27, earned a degree in Ecological Agriculture from the University of Vermont in 2007. He has apprenticed or worked on seven different farms—from family operated CSAs in Pennsylvania to cherry orchards on Old Mission Peninsula. Most recently he has worked growing vegetables for Leelanau Cultured Veggies, while running his new business Haymaker Poultry Co. on rented land. The Conservancy's Board approved a 30-month lease with an option to buy possible after 24 months, if both parties are satisfied with the arrangement at the time. "I had been looking for something to call my own," says Brown. "Something permanent."

Brown grew up near Chicago but spent summers on Long Lake at his family's cottage. To earn money, he sold knives door to door, and rented jet skis. One day he drove out on Old Mission Peninsula and asked about working cherries. He was hired—and was subsequently hooked on farming. "I wasn't in love with all the chemicals, but everything else about it was great," he says. "My goal is to be chemical free."

To get up and running at the Swanson farm, Ben has had help from friends and family. Like Sonny, Brown is living in a newer trailer he has parked near his chickens. (Sonny's old trailer will be removed.) If all goes well, Brown says he would like to purchase the farmstead and move on-site permanently.



*Ben explains how the moveable chicken pens work and how moving birds daily helps to improve the soil while giving birds a fresh place to graze.*

In the meantime, the Conservancy and Ben are taking steps to stabilize the barn and sugar shack.

Ben's plans depend on how successful he is in realizing his business plan. His main income will come from small-scale grass-fed poultry raised on site that will also help restore the land's fertility and eliminate the need

*Continued on Page 11*





## Farmland Projects, Continued

FarmAbility as a way to put very limited financial resources to work to help hold the line on the loss of our family farms and incentivize opportunities for farming know-how and to help families plan for transferring the farm to the next generation. Despite the financial crisis, we persevered. In 2009, nearly 30 families enrolled in FarmAbility, several of whom have already committed to protecting their farms forever. "It's incredibly gratifying to see this community's commitment to farming really snowballing in the last five years," says Tom Nelson, the Conservancy's Director of Farm Programs.

While it means enhancing our local economy and food systems, creating jobs and maintaining real quality of life for Leelanau and the Grand Traverse Region, permanently protecting the farm is becoming part of sound business planning for more and more farm families. "It wasn't too many years ago that the prevailing school of thought in the farming community seemed to be that it was only a matter of time before the County's family farms became something else," Tom remarked. "In the last few years, that seems to be changing. We've begun to see a new generation of farmers looking to carry on the family business." No doubt, the farm has to be profitable, but the Conservancy's preservation program can be a very smart way to provide older farmers with the resources to retire and younger farmers with the means to own the farm and keep the operation—and the family tradition—going strong. As we see it, it's a huge 'win-win' for these hard-working farm families and the community too. Says the Korson's daughter, Julie, "This is the way it should be."

### 2010 FRPP Farm Projects

Olsen Farm – Cleveland Twp	228.3 Acres
Sedlacek Farm – Leelanau Twp	79.0 Acres
Spinniken Farm – Suttons Bay Twp	172.0 Acres

### 2011 FRPP Farm Projects

Korson Farm – Leelanau/Leland Twps	152.3 Acres
Send & Emeott Farm – Bingham Twp	144.9 Acres
Stanton Farm – Centerville Twp	172.5 Acres

### Totals:

950 Acres to be Forever Protected  
\$7.94M in Value  
\$1.52M - Conservancy Match



Spinniken Farm



Olsen Farm



Stanton Farm



Sedlacek Farm



Send & Emeott Farm



The Leelanau Conservancy preserves lands for future generations. But a big part of our job also includes caring for and enhancing the lands we have protected. Our Stewardship staff and volunteers have been busy doing everything from blazing new trails to building a wetland boardwalk to killing invasive species. Every Wednesday we gather a group of volunteers and head out to one of our natural areas to work on a project. If you would like to be a part of our rewarding Volunteer Stewardship Network, email Fields Ratliff [fratliff@theconservancy.com](mailto:fratliff@theconservancy.com) or call 231-256-9665.

## Invasives Species Removal



*Phragmites before and after: Last year we took this photo on the Duff property on Lake Michigan north of Leland before the huge stand of invasive phragmites had been treated. At right is the same area after being treated. We're happy to announce that this year's monitoring reports indicate an overall 90 percent success rate in eradicating phragmites on our Lake Michigan shoreline. Vigilance and continued monitoring will be necessary to keep this invasive under control. Early intervention thanks to our volunteers and partners has made all the difference in controlling phragmites.*

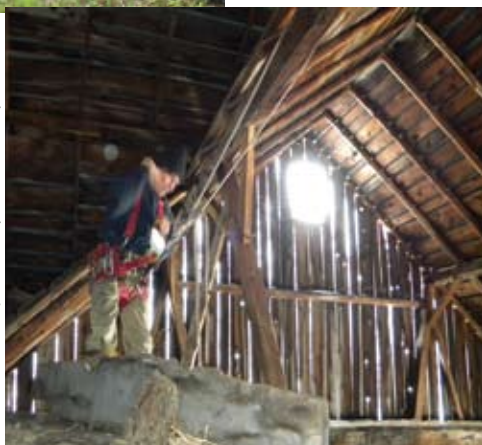


*With the help of volunteers and contractors, the Conservancy removed over 200 garbage bags of garlic mustard throughout Leelanau County. Garlic mustard is an invasive plant that invades high quality forested habitats and can displace native plants and woodland wildflowers like trillium. This was the second year of removal efforts; it takes 4 to 5 years to deplete the seed bank and we are hopeful that after a few years garlic mustard will be contained or eradicated.*



*SEEDS Youth Corps crew leader and former Conservancy intern Peter Povolo demonstrates proper removal of the invasive plant bladder campion. The plant, along with spotted knapweed, is being eradicated at the Houdek Dunes Natural Area to maintain and restore critical dune habitat.*

*Volunteer Nick Carlson uses his tree cutting equipment and safety gear to remove old boards from the barn at the Swanson property adjacent to the Swanson Preserve. Other volunteers helped clean out the barn, recycling old metal and tires, and ripped down overgrown grape vines from the side of the barn.*



*A Wildflower Rescue volunteer rescues native ferns from a hillside slated for development. The Wildflower Rescue Plant Sale, held over Memorial Day weekend, raised \$17,500 toward stewardship of our lands.*







## DeYoung Natural Area Projects



*(left) Students from the Traverse City High School "Green Team" plant native shrubs as part of a stream corridor restoration project at the DeYoung Natural Area. Another group spreads mulch. TCHS Green Team is an alternative education program that gives students the opportunity to work outside and earn school credit.*

*(right) A local engineering firm, Gourdie-Fraser Associates, sent employees, (l-r) Jason Borchert, Brian Rowley, Tim Russell and Erik Arbut out to volunteer their brains and muscle to help restore the DeYoung Natural Area stream and remove old farm culverts. The banks of the stream are eroding and depositing sediment into the water; removing culverts and planting vegetation along the stream will help to shore up the bank and improve the quality of the stream.*



*(far left) Work Bee volunteer Keith Johnson moves a load of wood chips to put down on one of our many beautiful trails—the Cedar Lake Trail at DeYoung Natural Area. Work Bees help Conservancy staff and Trail Stewards maintain our natural areas for public enjoyment. (left) Work Bee volunteers James Shannahan and Ivy Saur put together plant guards to help protect newly planted trees and shrubs from deer. Volunteers and school groups assisted Conservancy staff by planting several hundred native plants this year as part of restoration efforts on our natural areas and preserves.*

## Teichner Natural Area Boardwalk

*Bill Watson, SEEDS Program Director, uses his chainsaw to help construct a new boardwalk at the Teichner Preserve on Lime Lake. Materials used for the boardwalk came from locally cut and milled black locust trees- an invasive species in the area that makes a great building material because of its durability. At right, the finished boardwalk, ready for your enjoyment! (far right) Kai Segerlind watches for tadpoles in the newly connected wetland. Our docent, Ann Mason, on a recent hike also reported seeing a snapping turtle laying her eggs in the restored wetland.*







## A Personal First

**T**his April I had a personal first that I'd like to share with readers of this newsletter. As the Stewardship Monitor for the Leelanau Conservancy, it's my task to walk all of its conservation easements, natural areas, and preserves once a year. We protect land in perpetuity, and monitoring ensures that the terms of a conservation agreement are upheld. Those terms might include prohibiting logging or the building of structures.



I've been doing this, either as a volunteer or paid contractor, since 2004. I love my job because I get to see Leelanau County like few others have seen it, and I get to meet many of the interesting people who love their land and Leelanau County enough to have taken the necessary steps to insure that it will be here, intact, for their grandchildren.

So, with more than 8,000 acres of land protected by the Conservancy, you can imagine that I do a lot of walking. I've walked well over 100 miles already this year and will probably more than double that by the end of the year. One of the goals of the Conservancy is to protect contiguous lands to create

corridors for wildlife, which brings me back to the topic of my personal first.

The Conservancy is indeed making progress on that goal and this year I decided to try walking connected easements. On a beautiful day in April, I parked my car and started walking the Buffum conservation easement. From there I reached the corner of the Cook/Rice Creek easement, then on to the Bowmaster easement. From there I was able to cross Sharnowski Road where I concluded my walk on the Nelson easement.

My walk included an incredible variety of habitats and terrain. I traveled up and down hills, through upland forests, lowland cedar swamps, open dry and wet meadows, across streams, and old orchards. The views were spectacular. At the end of the day I had walked 5.6 miles without ever leaving Conservancy-protected land. I called Chris, my wife, who came to transport me back to my vehicle. Reflecting back on the day I am grateful for opportunities like this, and for the legacy we are leaving for both wild things and people.

Later in the month, a friend joined me for another monitoring day in which we shuttled cars just once and were able to connect six easements for a more than 9.1 mile walk. That was a great day, too, but the first experience of walking alone through beautiful country with heightened awareness was really special. Thanks to the Conservancy and to our landowners, the plan to protect connecting ecosystems is working!

*~Rick Halbert*

## Dr. Scharf's Gull Island Research

**D**r. Bill Scharf, a gull, tern, and colonial waterbird biologist, has dedicated much of his career to studying Herring Gulls on the Conservancy's 5-acre Gull Island Bird Sanctuary, also known as Bellows Island, in Grand Traverse Bay. With over 30 years of research here, he has examined trends, noted abnormalities and has used this information to help the Conservancy write a management plan for Gull Island. This vast knowledge and dedication to birds has made Dr. Scharf an extremely valuable volunteer on many sails aboard the Inland Seas' outings to Gull Island as well as a leading source of information for any matters regarding gulls.

Most commonly, people ask the Conservancy why we want to protect an island of gulls, a seemingly abundant, annoying, creature, but there is much more to this story. Jenée Rowe, Stewardship Director, and Juliana Lisuk, Outreach Intern, sat down with Dr. Scharf in late June to discuss the importance of protecting Gull Island and the research performed on the



island. Go to our website to read a full Q&A from everything to why we keep Gull Island as a Preserve to the importance of herring gulls in the greater eco-system. Look for the article in the Natural Areas section of our website, under Gull Island.



## Deck Honors Houdek Family

Three years ago Lori Beurele took a hike at Houdek Dunes Natural Area with her mom and aunt. Our beautiful 330-acre area is land that Lori's grandparents, Isabel and Charles Houdek, had homesteaded and farmed over 100 years ago. In 1998 the Conservancy purchased the property from a developer who was considering putting in a golf course here and today, hundreds of people visit Houdek Dunes at all times of year.

Lori says she had not yet hiked the natural area, and on the day they visited, all three were charmed. "We came to the big old maple tree and saw the benches there," says Lori. "And my Aunt Barb (Kirt) said, 'It would be so nice if our family had something here.'" Her mom, Gen Beuerle, agreed.

That conversation got Lori thinking about what she and her siblings and cousins could do at Houdek Dunes to honor their mothers and grandparents. She set up a meeting with Stewardship Director, Jenee Rowe, to brainstorm possible projects that fulfill our mission for the property.

The result is this wonderful deck that overlooks beautiful Houdek Creek. Lori spearheaded the family fundraising to make it happen and recruited extended family to come help build it. Ed Beuerle, who owns Northern Lumber, provided many of the materials. Last fall, family members flew in from all over the country to help build the deck as well as to blaze a new trail leading to it.

Nikki Hursey, Lori's cousin, was among those who helped



*Three generations of the Houdek family helped build this new deck at the Houdek Dunes Natural Area, overlooking beautiful Houdek Creek. It was built to honor their mothers and grandparents.*

that day. "Being out there, being able to reminisce and to listen to my mom and my aunts reminisce, it was just so special," says Nikki, who adds that she and her dad used to fish Houdek Creek. "I wanted to show my children a part of my past and I told them how important it was to me that they help. They loved being out there and when we came back in the spring to finish the work I didn't have to ask twice. Family is just so important."

The new deck is off the main hiking loop at Houdek Dunes. We have posted temporary signs to direct hikers to the new overlook, which is about 3/4 mile from the main staircase. "We're grateful to the Houdek family, who wanted to give a gift that would honor their moms and grandparents," says Conservancy Director Brian Price. "But in doing so, they have really given a gift to the entire community."

If you would like to see the deck being built from start to finish, visit our Flickr site:



*Volunteers work to blaze a new outer loop at Houdek Dunes Natural Area in June. The new 1.6 mile trail, which is not yet open to the public, is being installed to bypass and help protect the critical dune area. We hope to have the new trail open for snowshoeing this coming winter!*



## 2011 Schedule of Hikes and Events

**Hikers Take Note:** We are pleased to offer this schedule of outings at no charge led by our knowledgeable volunteer docents. Do dress according to weather. So that we may provide the best experience possible and be fully prepared, we require (and appreciate!) advanced registration by calling 231-256-9665. Most hikes last around two hours unless otherwise noted. Directions (both written or via our Google mapping feature) can be found on our website. Learn about our natural areas and the docent leading your hike at [www.theconservancy.com](http://www.theconservancy.com). If your schedule does not mesh with ours, or you have a special event such as a

family reunion or wedding, our docents may be available to lead groups of five or more if given two week's notice to plan. School groups also may be accommodated with enough notice.

**Worker Bee Basics:** As of our publication deadline, stewardship work bees were still being planned for late summer and fall. If you would like to help at at Wednesday work bee, or to learn of other planned project days, sign up for our weekly emails, watch our website for updates, or contact Fields Ratliff at our office: 231-256-9665, or email [fratliff@theconservancy.com](mailto:fratliff@theconservancy.com)

### *Thursday, August 4<sup>th</sup> 5pm* **Annual Conservancy Friends Picnic and Auction**

Don't miss this great event, where Conservancy supporters gather to celebrate our love for the Leelanau Peninsula. This year, the picnic will be held at the Ruby Ellen Farm in Bingham Township, one of the first farmland protection projects of the Leelanau Conservancy. See the back cover for more details.

### *Saturday, August 6<sup>th</sup> 10am* **Fruits of Summer at Chip Run**

The flowers of spring have now given way to the fruits of summer. Let's see what we can find amidst the trees, fields, and waterways at



Chippewa Run Natural Area in Empire. Apples are ripening in the orchard and we may find evidence that deer like them. We might even find some to eat ourselves. So much is constantly changing on this diverse property at the gateway to Empire. Join docent Jack Schultz and Roland Drayson on this exploration of nature's bounty.

### *Friday, Aug. 12 7:30pm* **Milliken Auditorium: "Grow a Bird Feeder."**

Renowned author Douglas Tallamy returns to the Grand Traverse Area with his engaging PowerPoint program about the critical impor-

tance of native plants to wildlife – especially birds and butterflies. If you want to attract more birds and butterflies to your yard, join us to learn what's great about caterpillar larvae, and why an oak tree may be your best friend. Dr. Tallamy Chairs the Departments of Entomology and Wildlife Ecology at the University of Delaware. He is much in demand as a speaker on the importance of native plants to a healthy ecosystem. This free presentation is sponsored by 17 different partners in our area and seating will be on a first come, first served basis

### *Saturday, August 20<sup>th</sup> 10am* **Tour the Swanson Preserve**

Please join docents Sharon Oriel, Dave Amos, and Ann Mason as we begin to explore the wonders of the Swanson Preserve. This wonderful land not only feeds the body thanks to Farmer Brown and nurtures the soul with treasured memories of Sonny Swanson; it also features ecological treasures. We will walk quietly to discover streams, ponds, and plants that help keep Little Traverse Lake healthy.

### *Saturday, August 27<sup>th</sup> 10am* **Explore Teichner Preserve**

The Teichner Preserve has undergone a "major makeover." Docents Ann Mason, Sharon Oriel and Roland Drayson will guide you along the amazing new boardwalk that allows communication between the wetlands. We've seen frogs, turtles, tadpoles - even a "mama" snapping turtle laying eggs. If Mother Nature cooperates, the Cardinal flower/red lobelia should be blooming, along with Grass of Parnassus, asters, Joe Pye Weed and other late-summer wildflowers. Tree Huggers are welcome to hike into the upland woods and admire the 100+

year old American Chestnut. Insect repellent recommended.

### *Saturday, September 10<sup>th</sup> 10am* **Discover Houdek Dunes Natural Area**

Join docents Ann McInnis and Holly Pharmer and discover evidence of the wonderful assemblage of native wildlife with whom the "people" residents still share this fabulous Peninsula, and for whom Houdek is "home." Hike the new trail to the Houdek Creek overlook to view the headwaters of Lake Leelanau while exploring Houdek's glacial history and its current, ever-changing wildlife communities found within this unique 330-acre natural area.

### *Sunday, September 18<sup>th</sup> 1pm* **Great Goldenrod Hike at Chip Run**

The Chippewa called it gizisomukiki or 'sun medicine' for its beautiful yellow color and healing power. The Latin term is *Solidago* meaning 'to make whole'. Goldenrod, a native to north America, helped calm stomachs, cure wounds, and relieve sore throats. Did you know there are at least 11 Goldenrod species that bloom in Leelanau County? Learn about this plant's undeserved bad rap with docents, Lou Ricord and Ann Mason. We'll locate and catalog the many species of goldenrod. Other colorful wildflowers we'll likely find are Turtlehead, Cardinal Flower, Bottle Gentian, and Viper Bugloss.

### *Tuesday, September 27<sup>th</sup> 10am* **Mushrooming at Kehl Lake**

Join local mushroom expert Ed Reinert and docents Holly Pharmer and Lou Ricord and discover the many types of fungi that call Kehl





## Hikes and Events



Lake home. If conditions are right, hikers will get a close-up look at the different species of mushrooms that grow around Kehl Lake.

### **Saturday, October 8<sup>th</sup> 10am** **Hike at Lighthouse West Natural Area**

Hike ancient glacial beaches and bluffs with docent Ann McInnis to reach the modern Lake Michigan Beach while keeping an eye out to discover the variety of strategies used by animals, plants, and other wild things as they prepare for the winter season ahead. This former farmland is part of a large Conservancy corridor project in this part of the Peninsula to enhance wildlife opportunities especially for migrating and nesting birds.

### **Saturday, October 15<sup>th</sup> 10am** **Color Tour at Whaleback**

Colors should be glorious this weekend. Join docents Judy Hoeffler and Roland Drayson for a hilly walk to the top of the forested hill 300 feet above the western shoreline of Leelanau County. From here you'll see the work of the glaciers 10,000 years ago. Standing on the viewing platform overlooking the Manitou Passage below, you'll learn of the dangers of late-autumn passage to vessels of the past.

### **Saturday, October 22<sup>nd</sup> 10am** **Explore Teichner Preserve**

Join docents Ann Mason and Jack Schultz as they lead you along the splendid new boardwalk through the wetlands to see the tamarack trees in their glorious golden fall color. The wetlands are beginning to prepare for winter - see cattails at their finest and the last of the late summer wild flowers. Our "tree guy" Jack can tell you all about all of the trees on the Preserve. If we've had frost, the deciduous trees in the uplands will be showing their fall finery. Once again, we can hike into the uplands woods and

admire the 100+ year old American Chestnut tree. October is unpredictable - dress for the weather.

### **Sunday, October 30<sup>th</sup> 1pm** **Fall Colors at Chippewa Run**

Why do leaves turn colors and ultimately fall to the ground? Did you know leaves have a natural sunscreen? Bug repellent? Conservancy docents Lou Ricord and Jack Schultz will discuss these and other fall color topics as they explore the Chippewa Run Natural Area. Chippewa Run is unusual because of its diverse habitats. Within its preserved 110-acres, Chippewa Run has wetlands, streams and ponds, old fields, red pine and spruce/fir stands, hardwoods, and an old apple orchard to explore.

## Traverse Magazine: Giving Their Best!

*In May Traverse, Northern Michigan's Magazine presented us with a check for \$2193, proceeds from their first annual Red Hot Best of the North event. We were one of three charities to benefit from the event, where winners of everything from best coffee house to best wineries were highlighted. In addition to being beneficiaries, magazine and mynorth.com fans also voted our Lake Leelanau Narrows project into second place for the "Best Tract of Protected Land." Thank you, Deb Fellows (former Conservancy Board Member and owner of the magazine) and everyone who helped to put this promotion together. Pictured is Jill Hayes from the magazine presenting the check (l) to Carolyn Faught, our Communications Director.*



## First Leelanau Birdfest a Success

The Conservancy partnered with the Leelanau Peninsula Chamber of Commerce, Saving Birds Thru Habitat, Dave Barrons, and several other sponsors in the first annual Leelanau Peninsula BirdFest. The festival ran from June 1-5, and included birding hikes on many properties, one of which was the Conservancy's Lighthouse West Preserve. Ed and Linda Ketterer led three hikes on the property, which turned out to be one of the "hot spots" during the BirdFest. Over 44 species of birds were seen, including Scarlet Tanagers, various warblers, and a Black-billed Cuckoo. Most of the hike participants were new to the area, so this provided an excellent opportunity to talk about the Conservancy, its mission, and how it preserved the Lighthouse West property. The hikes were such a success that the property has already been scheduled for next year's BirdFest.



## Swanson Farmer, Continued from page 4

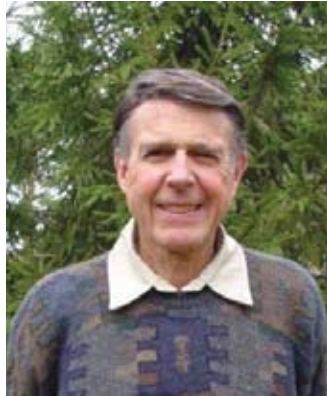
for any fertilizer or chemicals. Chickens and turkeys graze in the fresh air in moveable, open pens, (see photo) foraging for insects, grazing on rotated crops, while simultaneously enriching the soil. The result: hormone-free, antibiotic-free chickens and turkeys he will sell right from the farm. (To order a fresh bird—available every two weeks June through October, email Ben/Haymaker Poultry Co. at [shasta707@yahoo.com](mailto:shasta707@yahoo.com) or sign up at the stand.)

The size of the site limits the number of birds Brown will tend to no more than 1,000 total birds annually. "I view the entire farm as one living organism," he says. "When you tweak one part of the land, it affects the whole web. It's important to have the right management practices in place to benefit the entire ecosystem. I will limit the stocking densities to prevent any nutrient runoff because we've got these precious water resources nearby."



## The Gift of a Lifetime

At the end of last year, Frank and Judy Bracken put the Christmas gifts and decorations away and prepared to welcome another new year splitting time between their home in Indianapolis and their vacation home at Gills Pier. And yes, they decided to make one more significant gift that they had been contemplating for a long time. At the very end of 2010 the Brackens donated a beautiful lakefront lot on Good Harbor Bay, just south of Duck Lake Corners, to the Leelanau Conservancy. The lot was given with the explicit direction that the Conservancy would sell the parcel, using the proceeds of sale to support current land protection projects and other Conservancy priorities.



A gift of this type and magnitude (see box for more on the property) does not happen on a whim. Frank has a life-long, deep attachment to the Leelanau Peninsula. He doesn't recall exactly his first trip to Leelanau because he was only two or three years old. From childhood to a full working life as a practicing attorney in Indiana, two different stints with the Department of Interior (the last as Deputy Secretary in the second half of the Reagan Administration), and corporate posts with the Ball Corporation and others, Leelanau provided a refuge and a second home to Frank and Judy.

A devotion to Leelanau County specifically was embedded in a larger commitment to conservation and the environment. In this respect Frank's contributions reflected interests that spanned a very wide range: He was a Civil War buff who visited battle sites and played a key role in the continuing effort to preserve these special places with the Civil War Preservation Trust. He served on the board of the Historical Society and the Environment Institute in his home state of Indiana. Frank served on the Nature Conservancy's Board of Governors and was a member of the Leelanau Conservancy Board during the crucial period in the 2001-04 when the framework to preserve the Crystal River was hammered out.

Frank's advice and counsel was particularly important during those early years. Back then, there were just a handful of people around here who really understood how big conservation deals came about. We relied on people like Ed Ball and Frank Bracken. With his experience in the Interior Department,

Frank's advice was particularly important as we worked for years to put certain land protection projects together. The Crystal River project is a great example, but Frank also played a really important role behind the scenes in preserving Whaleback. What I most admired about people like Frank and Ed was that they would simply stop by the office, often in shorts and maybe with a dog or two in tow. They knew what we were working on, and either one of them would ask for a report, then say, "Well, I've been thinking that we could approach the problem like this....." and off they'd go after leaving me with a helpful suggestion or an important contact. Things got done and both of them loved to be effective behind the scenes.

The gift of the lakefront lot on Good Harbor Bay represents a pattern of service and giving that has stretched over a lifetime. Judy explained Frank's deep commitment to the Peninsula, and his conviction that the Leelanau Conservancy has already proven its effectiveness in making Leelanau a different and better place. In a recent conversation, Judy said that Frank's service on the board of The Nature Conservancy and also the Leelanau Conservancy "has meant everything to him over the years" and that they both share a love of Leelanau that made this gift a sensible contribution consistent with their mutual goals. "We always felt that you don't give to the Leelanau Conservancy as much as you give through the Leelanau Conservancy," said Judy. "The Conservancy does the things with my money that I want to see done but can't do by myself. It's an extension of ourselves and our land ethic." --Brian Price, Executive Director



To learn more about this 2.26-acre property with sandy Lake Michigan beach one mile south of Leland, call Realtor Perry Penttiuk at Venture Properties: 231-256-7937 or email [perryp@chartermi.net](mailto:perryp@chartermi.net). The MLS ID# is 1723913.



## Meet Our Fantastic Interns!

### Juliana Lisuk

Having spent my entire life in Leland, I decided to further my education in Ohio and will be a senior next year at Denison University working toward a B.A. in Environmental Studies and Sociology/Anthropology. Last summer I worked as a Stewardship Intern in the Pacific Northwest with the Vashon-Maury Island Land Trust work-

ing on trails, land preservation and removing invasive species, including spearing the voracious invasive American Bullfrogs that have taken over the region.

Working out West has excited me to further explore the roles Conservancies and similar organizations play in protecting the natural world and educating communities about their surrounding environment. Recently back from a semester studying sustainability and environmental action in Australia, I am thrilled to have the opportunity to work for the Leelanau Conservancy as the Outreach Intern and to actively play a part in protecting my own home and community.

Already, I have been overwhelmed by the generous support of our volunteers, the helpfulness of the wonderful staff, and the positive responses from the community to the Conservancy's many projects. I look forward to learning more throughout the summer!

### Wesley Paine

Hi, my name is Wesley Paine and this is my first year working with the Conservancy as an intern. I am originally from Ludington, but I have grown up summering in Leland since before I could walk. I always look forward to the few months I get to spend in this wonderful place every summer. Currently I'm attending the University of Colorado studying Environmental Science. This fall will be my junior year at Colorado and I hope that the knowledge and skills I have learned so far can help contribute to this internship.

I am looking forward to working with the Conservancy this year and learning more about the land that I enjoy so much. It will be fun getting the opportunity to help out with the various projects the Leelanau Conservancy has planned as well as being able to work every day in a place that I love.



*Interns l to r: Wesley Paine, Taylor Smith, Juliana Lisuk*

### Taylor Smith

Hi, my name is Taylor Smith and I am one of the Stewardship interns at the Conservancy for the summer. I was born in New York City and grew up in Pelham, just north of the city. This spring I graduated from the University of Denver with a BSBA in International Business and a minor in Environmental Science. Having a science and business background allows me to pursue my interest of working with and managing the environment in a sustainable yet productive manner.

I have spent every summer since I was old enough to remember in Northport and have grown to appreciate Leelanau County and the vast natural splendor it has to offer. I am very thankful for the opportunity to work with such an amazing organization as the Leelanau Conservancy, not only to pursue my main interest but also to maintain the environment that I have grown to love. Working outside is a great change of pace for me coming from college, and I bet it would be for you too. Join us for a workday and see if you enjoy the great outdoors as much as we do.

### Robin Ostrowski



Management program. I hope to work within the National Parks Service or go on to graduate school in environmental conservation.

Hello, my name is Robin Ostrowski and I am the volunteer/intern this summer. I was born in Tennessee, however, my family moved back to Suttons Bay (where my mom grew up) when I was six and we have lived here ever since. I will be a senior this year at Northern Michigan University studying in the Outdoor Recreation Leadership and Management program. I love Leelanau County including everything from the small towns, the dunes, trilliums in the spring, to the Caribbean colored lakes. My love for this land has only inspired me to help protect this beautiful habitat. I feel honored to work with such an important organization. There is a never-ending amount of work that needs to be done, but still all the members of the Conservancy and co-partners work so diligently day after day to "get 'er done". It is exhilarating to be a part of this team and help spread the concern and importance of protecting the environment. It is a deeply satisfying feeling one encounters after completing a hard day's work outside. I encourage you all to try it yourself and volunteer!



## Honorariums & Memorials

4/4/11 through 7/11/11

Undesignated honorariums and memorials support the George & Mary Ellen Gotshall Stewardship Fund, created to care for permanently-protected lands in Leelanau. From creating and maintaining trails to replacing invasive species with more wildlife-friendly habitat, your gift helps ensure that natural areas and conservation easements are cared for. Thank you!

### Correction:

Bill Rastetter and Cary Weed should have been listed in our Annual Report as Contributors (\$100)

*Jennifer Poteat and Michael Staebler*

Mr. and Mrs. Richard A. Rossman

*Lucy Lowe and Scott Leier*

Anonymous

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Ms. Hilary Smith

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Mrs. Susanne E. Geier

*Constance C. Jones Forcier*

Mr. and Mrs. Ronald L. Jones

## Happy Anniversary

*Norbert and Paula Gits - 60<sup>th</sup>*

*Wedding Anniversary*

Mr. and Mrs. Mark Carlson

Linda and Jim Shad

## Happy Mother's Day

*Ann McInnis*

Mr. and Mrs. John McInnis

*Joanie Woods*

Stephanie and Mark Duckmann

## Happy Birthday

*Aaron Ellenbogen -40<sup>th</sup> Birthday*

Bob and Judee Sternberg

*Austin Fellows*

Kurt and Eleanor Luedtke

*Marc Gallini - 65<sup>th</sup> Birthday*

Rev. and Mrs. Albert Chaffee

Mr. and Mrs. Brian Gallini

*Janet Kelley -60<sup>th</sup> Birthday*

Mr. and Mrs. A. Grant Heidrich, III

*Judie Leece*

David Leece and Kathy Brewer

*Mary Lyons*

Mr. and Mrs. Kent N. Holton

*Marie Petroskey*

Mr. and Mrs. Paul T. Leugers

Mr. and Mrs. Eugene L. Petroskey

*Eleanor Stephenson*

Mrs. Elizabeth Drinkaus

*Deborah Sturdy*

Ms. Donna Rothschild

## Happy Father's Day

*Joseph E. Faggan*

Jerry and Mary Faggan Churchill

*Doug McInnis*

Mr. and Mrs. John McInnis

Mr. and Mrs. Edward McInnis

*David Noling*

Ms. Victoria Bailey

*L. J. Noling*

Mr. David E. Noling

*Robert Risbridger*

Ms. Julie Willis

*Kent Shoemaker*

Ms. Sarah Olson

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Mary M. Harrison

Mr. and Mrs. Wilbur L. Hazlegrove

Mrs. Mary Ann Meanwell

One Beacon Insurance

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Jane and Sonny Rouse

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*Eloise Basta*

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Rick and Cheryl Hejl

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Mr. and Mrs. Kevin J. McCarty

Ms. Laurie G. O'Brien

John and Beth Orr and Family

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TASC

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Walt and Sally Utterback

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*Beverly Hatt Heiny*

Ms. Alice Droeger

*Eva Hollerbach*

Ms. Elisabeth Hollerbach

*Betsy Holt*

Elizabeth Bracken Wiese & Fred

Wiese

*Thomas M. Hunter*

Mr. and Mrs. Dan S. Harkness

*Susanne Rose Kraynak*

Mrs. Marie E. Bahlke

## Wedding Wishes

*Michael and Sherri Brom*

Richard and Sally Brom

John and Brenda Brom

## In Honor of

*Carol Benner*

Ms. Amy Benner

*David and Janice Kleiner*

Ms. Amy R. Acton

*Cyril Moscow*

Mr. and Mrs. Perry Driker-Ohren

*Janet Peppler*

Mr. Terry Sutherland





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### *Mary Schaff*

Mary M. Harrison

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Mr. Willis N. Terry  
Bob and Anne White

## Welcome New Sustainers—

Conservancy Sustainers provide the lion's share of our operating support and are a big part of our success. Giving levels start at \$500. Benefits include special recognition in our publications, and two events per year where Sustainers can meet our staff and others who share their commitment to our work. Want to join? Call Gayle Egeler: 231-256-9665. The following people have joined since publication of our last newsletter. Thank you!

Alexander and Sally Bracken  
Catherine S. Davidson  
Dan and Nancy Devine  
Mary Emmett  
Mike Kaselnak and Michelle Taylor  
Bob and Peg Laven  
Larry and Ruth Lezotte  
Michael and Lori Lyman  
Jody Marquis  
Franklin B. Mead

Lisa A. Meils, MD  
Caroline and Ed Oberndorf  
Tom and Martha Phillips  
Eric R. Ray  
Melanie Rogers  
Bill and Kate Rohlf  
Don and Tricia Stogsdill  
Richard and Sera Thompson  
Bill and Betsy VanWesten  
David and Carolyn Wollenhaupt



Leonard and Anne Marszalek of Empire joined our Sustainers Circle in June. Here's why: "We believe the Leelanau Conservancy is a significant force in linking the environment with people. Through stewardship, interpretive programming and education they are sustaining the 'sense of place' we love."



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## Leelanau Conservancy

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P. O. Box 1007  
Leland, MI 49654  
231-256-9665  
[conservancy@leelanau.com](mailto:conservancy@leelanau.com)  
[www.theconservancy.com](http://www.theconservancy.com)

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## Be a Part of the Celebration! Annual Friends Picnic & Auction

**Thursday, August 4th - Rex Dobson Ruby Ellen Farm  
(5946 S. Center Hwy., Bingham)**

Pre-Picnic Field Trips beginning at various times. Choose from 8 fun and informative options for all ages that highlight our work. Check out all the trips online at [www.theconservancy.com](http://www.theconservancy.com)

### 5 pm The Main Event Begins!

- Social hour
- Silent Auction bidding on over 100 items (you can bid online at [www.theconservancy.com](http://www.theconservancy.com))
- Leelanau Wine and Beer
- Appetizers utilizing local produce created by seven area chefs/caterers. Taste the local foods difference!
- Kids Tent with activities for children 3-12

### 6 pm Picnic Dinner featuring local foods

### 7 pm Short program with Volunteer and Business Partner of the Year Awards

**7:20pm** President's Paddle Raise and Live Auction, with five fabulous items, including Mario's Batali's Big Apple Weekend for 6

