



## Living With The Land, Not On It

by KYLE ZWIEG, TPC President

**Land evokes a sense of commonality between all of us. It is where we choose to live or build a house,** it is the geographical place we create communities, and it is what our feet touch every step we take for the entire duration of our lives. For my family, land includes a path to meaning. We've had the opportunity, for seven generations, to care for a piece of the earth that returns care and a living to us. For us, our land is our life.

I am proud to live in a region we commonly refer to as Lake Country. It possesses nearly endless beauty and diversity in where we place our feet. The founders of Tall Pines were some of the first residents to fully grasp what this area meant to the community and they recognized the threat posed to future generations that may not be able to share in seeing this natural gift. They took action and formed an organization, beginning the work of protecting the rolling farmland, diverse forests, and glimmering lakes. This was, and is, the only way to guarantee their kids and grandkids could share in seeing this beautiful landscape we all call home.

**Editors Note:** At our January 2024 board meeting, Kyle Zwieg was elected as TPC's President of the Board. His family farm in Ashippun, known as Maple Acres, was permanently protected by a conservation easement with Tall Pines in 2011. John Koepke will serve as Past President, while Tom Hofbauer will continue as board Secretary. In addition to his duties as Treasurer, Mark Wierman now holds the title of Vice President. ▲



This vision is what led me to become a part of TPC and it is the same vision that led our family to place an easement on our 7th-generation homestead farm. I am incredibly proud, and humbled, to play a part in the continuation of this mission over the next two years. The work of Tall Pines has never been more important and we all share the desire to create a life better than our own. Let's leave a piece of earth, not pavement, where we can actually see some footprints! ▲

### Board of Directors

Kyle Zwieg, *President*  
Mark Wierman, *Vice President & Treasurer*  
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John Koepke, *Past President*

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Anne Sheedy Seidel  
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### Staff

Susan Buchanan,  
*Executive Director*

Beth Hoefer-Jezo,  
*Director of Outreach & Development*

Paul Meuer,  
*Land Protection Manager*



YouTube



**Join Tall Pines  
Conservancy!**

Get involved and join TPC today.  
Visit [tallpinesconservancy.org](http://tallpinesconservancy.org)  
or call 262-369-0500.



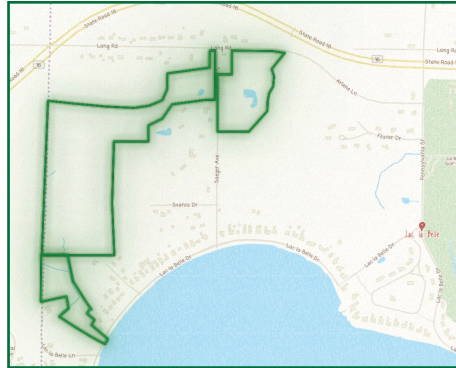


## Lac La Belle Preserved in Perpetuity

After 6 months of intense Village of Lac La Belle board meetings, Tall Pines has played a crucial role in negotiating the preservation of Saeger Creek wetland complex and the headwaters and ponds that feed it, totaling over 75 acres. The stream feeds directly into Lac La Belle and the streambank is degraded and has been eroding into the lake in recent years. The Village has been on the verge of selling both parts of the property to private parties. As a result, the future of the lake was in question.



*Over 80% of the protected property consists of wetlands. Wetlands are critical natural features that provide flood control, clean drinking water, and important wildlife habitat. Since the late 1800s, nearly 50% of Wisconsin wetlands have been lost to development, raising the need to protect these valuable resources.*



*Map of the acquired Lac La Belle property protected.*

We are deeply grateful to the Tall Pines board and staff for their commitment, expertise, and perseverance in acquiring this land that is so important to the integrity of our environment in the Village and the health of Lac La Belle. We deeply appreciate that this land will be preserved in perpetuity and look forward to the opportunity to build partnerships to restore the degraded portions of the land to better health. ▲

—Bob and Lisa Conley,  
Village Residents



*Saeger Creek, which flows through the protected property and discharges into Lac La Belle, is a significant contributor of nutrients and sediment that negatively impact the lake. Tall Pines Conservancy seeks to collaborate with partners and secure grant funding to restore the degraded creek and improve water quality.*

## Two Incredible Gifts Received

*TPC was delighted to close an eventful 2023 with the addition of two new conservation easements! Please join us in thanking these generous donors for helping to protect the rural character of our community.*



**The 16-acre Chester Read Farm is located in the Village of Oconomowoc Lake on scenic Nashotah Road – a stone's-throw from the Cullen conservation easements on Upper Nashotah Lake. The property has and continues to be utilized as open space and small-scale hay production for neighboring horse stable, while also featuring**

*"Our family welcomes this unique opportunity to give back – in a meaningful and permanent way – to the community that has meant so much to our family for the past several generations."*

—Ross Read

wooded sections of shagbark hickory and black walnut trees. The northeast portion of the property is located within a designated isolated natural resource area and the northwest

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# Ride to the Barns Team Profile

## Safety Director Bill Ochowicz

Bill Ochowicz has served as the Ride & Safety Director of Tall Pines Ride to the Barns since 2016. He's also a member of Tall Pines Conservancy Finance Committee and has been an Advisory Board Member since 2019.



An avid cyclist, Bill's passion is a family trait. Both his father and brother raced bikes. Bill's dad Irv was also a race director for a number of high profile races held in Wisconsin and his brother Jim is a well known icon in professional racing having founded the 7-11, Motorola, BMC and CCC teams. Bill raced at an international level in the early 1980's and qualified for the 1984 Olympic Road race trials as well as representing the US in international competitions.

In 2008, Bill and several other passionate Wisconsinites formed the Tour of Americas Dairyland (ToAD) multi-day race series. ToAD, which was presented by Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board upon its inception, and now Kwik Trip, features professionally produced bike races open to multiple categories of participants. Now in its 15th year, it's the largest competitive US bicycle race with 5000 race registrations from athletes representing more than a dozen countries and nearly 30 US states. Bill was ToAD's Race Director until he sold his partnership interest in 2021.

These days Bill directs his cycling passion toward nonprofit organizations and bicycling events, including Tall Pines and the UPAF Ride for the Arts, for which Bill has also served as race director since 2022. His goal is to help these organizations provide a safe and scenic ride experience for participants of all ages and abilities.

Outside of his cycling pursuits, Bill has nearly four decades of health care and commercial real estate experience. He has planned, designed, engineered, negotiated, leased, permitted, and built over two million square feet of medical and allied health office space in numerous buildings and healthcare facilities nationwide.

Ride to the Barns is truly blessed to have such a knowledgeable and experienced cycling professional in charge of route design and safety. Thank you, Bill! ▲

## Mark Your Calendar!

July 8 – July 22

Featuring a great assortment of items donated by local restaurants, businesses and bike shops.

Please contact Beth at 262-993-9481 if you'd like to make a donation for the auction.

STARTS  
July 8

**Silent**  
**Ride to the Barns**  
**ONLINE AUCTION**

ENDS  
July 22

## Thank You for a Decade of Support!

by STEPHANIE OHLFS, Waukesha State Bank Vice President


**Waukesha State Bank has proudly partnered with and supported Tall Pines Conservancy for the last decade** because of its mission to "preserve our rural heritage and aesthetic beauty of open space by protecting farmland, water resources and natural areas."

As a 14-branch, full-service community bank in Waukesha County, Waukesha State Bank is committed to investing into the communities we serve. From sponsoring the county school districts, theaters and parks, to providing loan opportunities to local nonprofits, we are helping to create a vibrant community for people to live and work in.




Supporting Tall Pines Conservancy through our sponsorship of the "Ride to the Barns" event, demonstrates our unwavering commitment to our community. "Ride to the Barns" is such a well-run, unique event, which allows us to partner with a great organization and gives our employees an opportunity to give back through volunteering. ▲





**16TH ANNUAL**  
**Ride to the Barns**  
**AUGUST 10TH, 2024**  
 A FUNDRAISING  
 EVENT TO BENEFIT  
 LAND CONSERVATION



**PRESERVE**  
 where you **RIDE**

**BIKE TOUR OF LAKE COUNTRY**  
**REST STOPS AT LOCAL FARMS**  
**TASTE LOCAL FOOD**  
**30 | 45 | 60 MILE ROUTES**

Registration \$85 per person thru  
 July 26th and \$100 thereafter\*

**Register online at:**  
[tallpinesconservancy.org](https://tallpinesconservancy.org)  
**Or email:**  
[info@tallpinesconservancy.org](mailto:info@tallpinesconservancy.org)

\*Tall Pines Conservancy is a 501 (c) (3)  
 non-profit organization. Registration is  
 a tax deductible donation.

## I'm not a bicyclist. How can I get in on the fun with Ride to the Barns?

*We're glad you asked!*

*You can...*

### • Volunteer at a rest stop!

An ideal company or family "give back" opportunity – or a fun activity for you, your bestie or significant other. You'll greet riders and help prep and serve food at a rest stop. The shift is generally three hours and will be scheduled between the hours of 8am–1pm. There will be a rest captain to provide you with all instructions once your location is assigned.

When your shift is over, come on over to the post-ride party for lunch, refreshments, and music!



*Frankie Garr of Next Stop Photography*

### • Donate to the silent auction – or place some bids on your favorite items!

A few years back, we moved our silent auction online – in July – to allow more people to participate AND give greater exposure to our generous donors. Our riders love to support the businesses who support local land conservation.

### • Become an event sponsor!

Event sponsors receive a number of terrific perks, which include complimentary registrations that can be shared with your team of employees, friends or customers.

For more information on any of the above opportunities, please reach out to Beth at [beth@tallpinesconservancy.org](mailto:beth@tallpinesconservancy.org). ▲

### Thank You to Our Sponsors



### Thank You to Our Partners





### **OCONOMOWOC FARMERS MARKET**

Every Saturday May through October  
8a–12p • Bank Five Nine Campus Lot  
155 W. Wisconsin Avenue  
TPC is a friend of the market sponsor!  
[oconomowoc.org](http://oconomowoc.org)

### **OWL PROWL AT CATHOLIC ECOLOGY CENTER**

Saturday, May 18  
Catholic Ecology Center's JP II Hall  
Learn all about our amazing nocturnal creatures and see live owls and other creatures up close and personal. Wanakia Wildlife will be bringing their educational animals which are sure to amaze! After the program, join us on a twilight owl prowl hike to call for several species of owl, while encountering Wisconsin wildlife! After the owl prowl, stay for the Bonfire and s'mores! All ages welcome! Space is limited and will fill quickly.  
[catholicecologycenter.org](http://catholicecologycenter.org)

### **LAKE COUNTRY CLEAN WATERS QUARTERLY MEETING**

Monday, June 10  
Stone Bank Farm Market  
Recreational Impacts and The Public Trust  
How Much is Too Much?  
Examples of successfully navigating competing/conflicting uses on lakes in Wisconsin. What is a lake's "Carrying Capacity", and how to measure it?  
[lakecountrycleanwaters.org](http://lakecountrycleanwaters.org)

### **10TH ANNUAL OWPP PADDLE**

Saturday, June 29  
This FREE, family-friendly event is celebrating its anniversary year!  
[oconomowocwatershed.com](http://oconomowocwatershed.com)

### **16TH ANNUAL RIDE TO THE BARNs ONLINE SILENT AUCTION**

July 8 – July 22  
[tallpinesconservancy.org](http://tallpinesconservancy.org)

### **TWILIGHT WALK AND OVERNIGHT CAMPING AT CAMP QUAD**

Friday, July 19 – Saturday, July 20  
Advance registration required.  
[tallpinesconservancy.org](http://tallpinesconservancy.org)

### **16TH ANNUAL RIDE TO THE BARNs**

Saturday, August 10  
A fundraising event to benefit the farmland conservation work of Tall Pines Conservancy! Three routes will be offered: 30, 45 and 60 miles, with rest stops at local farms serving locally sourced food. The event concludes with a post-ride party featuring a full buffet lunch, local beer and more live music!  
[tallpinesconservancy.org](http://tallpinesconservancy.org)

### **TPC 25TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION**

Sunday, September 15  
Folk Song Farm  
Join us as we recognize and celebrate our past, present and future as your local land trust.  
[tallpinesconservancy.org](http://tallpinesconservancy.org)

### **LCCW HEALTHY LAKES CONFERENCE**

Thursday, September 19  
NEW LOCATION!  
Oconomowoc Lake Club  
Open to all who care about our local water resources. Keynote speaker is Dan Egan, author of "The Devil's Element: Phosphorus and a World Out of Balance." Presentation of LCCW's Annual Lake Recognition Award.  
[lakecountrycleanwaters.org](http://lakecountrycleanwaters.org)

## Two Incredible Gifts Received... (from PAGE 2)

portion of the property is directly adjacent to designated environmental corridors, including the Oconomowoc Lake waterfront.

Development pressures continue to grow in this once very rural stretch of Lake Country, presenting increased concerns about potential adverse impacts to the water quality of both Oconomowoc and Upper Nashotah lakes. The permanent protection of this land helps to address these issues while providing our community with valuable open space for generations into the future.

Another incredible gift was received, from a generous donor, when TPC accepted a conservation easement on a very special 58-acre property located within the Mid-Kettle Moraine in the town of Genesee.



The diverse landscape boasts a unique rolling topography, typical of the Mid-Kettle Moraine, that features forest, wetland, and grassland areas as well as environmental corridor. The property is an ideal choice for

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## Two Incredible Gifts Received... (from PAGE 5)

preservation due to its open rural spaces providing scenic enjoyment for future generations, its prime ag designation as well as its high groundwater recharge and storm water infiltration potential.

The anonymous donor was concerned about growing development pressure within the area. As a result, the property was purchased by them in 2020 with the singular intent of preserving it in its natural state. Through their tenacity and your support, this goal was achieved within three short years! ▲



Visit Us! [tallpinesconservancy.org](http://tallpinesconservancy.org) Join Our Community!   

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LAND & WATER



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