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Conservancy!**

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

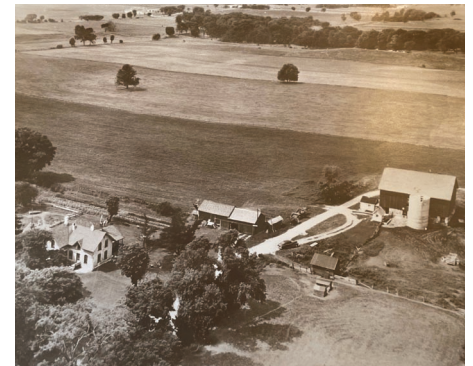
## Preserving Farmland – While Protecting the Past and Future of Our Community

by BETH HOEFER-JEZO, TPC Director of Outreach & Development

Truman Schultz is fond of saying that the crops planted at Hazelglenn Farm in the Town of Oconomowoc failed the first year a non-Norwegian made an attempt to harvest the land. It's true that the first non-native settlers to this part of Lake Country were Scandinavian and predominantly of sturdy Norwegian stock. Their contributions to the history of our community can be found in street names and family trees carefully curated by historians at St. Olaf Church. The beautiful cream city brick farmhouse that still greets visitors to picturesque Hazelglenn, in fact, served as one of the earliest Sunday Schools in the community. And the land, which features old growth trees, still produces a rotation of corn and soybeans.

Once home to many thousands of acres of fertile farmland, the town and its surrounding areas are under tremendous development pressure that continues to increase. The rapid growth in Waukesha County that we are all witnessing has resulted in the conversion of tens of thousands of acres of ag land to both urban and rural residential use. Just down the road from Hazelglenn, new houses are sprouting up where rows of crops once stood. Truman and Barbara Schultz and their

family don't want to see the same thing happen to the land they have cultivated for more than 52 years. That's why they're working with Tall Pines on a conservation easement that will protect this farmland – forever.



Circa 1940s

### Why is Farmland so Important?

Of course, we need farmland to sustain life. And, we don't need less of it, but actually more. Experts predict that we will need to increase food production by 60 percent by the year 2050! (That statistic from American Farmland Trust surprised me, too.) Properly managed working lands also support wildlife and biodiversity, recharge aquifers, result in cleaner water – and sequester carbon. That's right – environmentally sensitive farming practices, like those championed by our partners at Farmers

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# Celebrating Clean Water

## Reflecting on the 2022 OWPP Paddle and River Clean Up

by EMMA HEINRICH

On Saturday, July 9th, the Oconomowoc Watershed Protection Program and Tall Pines Conservancy teamed up to host the 8th Annual Paddle and River Clean Up. Participants enjoyed some beautiful summer weather paddling along the Oconomowoc River, picking up litter along the way. An estimated 350 lbs. of garbage was removed from the river by this spirited crew. Amongst the typical cans, bottles, and assorted plastics were some unique finds like tires, ceramic dishes, large metal pieces and even a small decorative snowman.

At the OWPP Paddle, the focus is water quality and ecosystem preservation. Litter in waterways can harm plant and animal life, as well as be a detriment to human health. Debris can be physically harmful to wildlife as consumption or entanglement pose direct threats. Plastics and other trash can change the properties of waterways, altering the viability of current ecosystems. Given time, plastic litter, rather than biodegrading, will break down into miniscule



pieces called microplastics. After this process happens, it is significantly more difficult to remove these contaminants from water. Drinking water, which can come from surface waters and ground waters, can also be contaminated by this litter.

Paddlers got a glimpse of the visual, cultural, and environmental values of our lakes. The Oconomowoc River boasts tall, lush trees, lily pads, aquatic grasses, and wildflowers, which provide great habitat for turtles, fish, birds, and other animals. Along the river, the clear water provided a perfect lens for a growing fish population. Paddlers also passed areas protected by the Wisconsin Dept. of Natural Resources, which prohibits fishing during spawning season. As the river enters Oconomowoc Lake, the paddlers met with boaters

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## Beaver Lake Event

On Tuesday, August 30th, Stone Bank Farm Market hosted a gathering of Beaver Lake residents in their beautiful Education Center. Representatives of Tall Pines Conservancy, the Faye Gehl Conservation Foundation and the Oconomowoc Watershed Protection Program offered a historic perspective about land and water conservation in Lake Country as well as a glimpse at future projects.



Are you looking for a speaker for your organization, club or lake association to talk about local water quality issues or land conservation? Tall Pines welcomes the opportunity to tailor-make a presentation for you! Please contact us at 262-369-0500 to find out more! ▲

## Thank you, Chris!

In July, we bid farewell to Chris Gutschenritter, TPC's Director of Land Protection & Stewardship. He was intricately involved in and lent his legal expertise to several important land transactions, including the Mary & Ron Preserve at Beaumont Farm adjacent to Beaver Lake and Dukelow Farm – the largest farm easement in Wisconsin in 2021 and TPC's largest to date. Chris was recently named the Director of Land Conservation Law Program for Gathering Waters – Wisconsin's Alliance for Land Trusts, and in that role he will continue to provide guidance and support for future TPC projects. ▲

# Hands-On Experience for Interns

by ANDREW FUJIMOTO



**This summer, I got the chance to work with Tall Pines and the City of Oconomowoc's Watershed Protection Program as a volunteer intern.** My main task was taking water samples from North Lake as part of a study on the impact of wake boats on the watershed. The samples were tested at DNR state labs at the University of Wisconsin Madison before results were sent back to be recorded and analyzed. While residents of North Lake took samples on the water, I was tasked with taking samples of three inflow and outflow streams. One of my favorite observations from the study was

correlating a large outlier in phosphorus levels to fireworks that had been launched over the lake the night before. Without the testing of the inflow and outflow streams that observation couldn't have been made!

I also had the opportunity to participate in the Mason Creek restoration project by documenting progress and taking samples. Mason Creek is one of the inflow streams to North Lake, so the work done there will directly impact North Lake and the watershed as a whole. My internship was an excellent experience that let me work with many people, from chemists and city officials to farmers and engineers. Next year, I plan to study environmental engineering and participate in the Air Force ROTC program wherever I go. I couldn't be more grateful for the opportunity and can't wait for what the future brings. ▲

by EMMA HEINRICH



**My name is Emma Heinrich and I was Tall Pines Conservancy's summer sustainability intern.** I am a junior at UW-Madison this year, studying Environmental Sciences and Public Policy. After graduation, I hope to enter the field of environmental policy and more specifically climate change. From a young age, I spent a lot of time outdoors and learned a lot of ways to protect our environment such as leaving no trace in parks, reducing consumption, and recycling. Now that I'm in college, I've decided to pursue environmental policy as I believe it is extremely important. From clean

water and air, stable agriculture, maintaining beautiful landscapes, and protecting our earth for future generations, environmental policy is crucial to our everyday lives.

Over the summer, I supported several of Tall Pines' events such as the Lake Country Clean Water Festival, OWPP Paddle, Pine Lake History Tour, Ride to the Barns, and the Fall Feast at Gwenyn Hill Farm. Whether it is fundraising, reaching out to local sponsors, raising awareness, or even serving drinks, I had a great time at Tall Pines this summer! One project I took on was a series of tips and tricks that the average person can do to be more environmentally friendly. Oftentimes, I hear people make

## Celebrating Clean Water... (from PAGE 2)

and more people recreating and enjoying the morning. All of these values and more provide excellent reasons for further protection of water for future generations.



After the paddle concluded, participants gathered around freshly prepared brats and snacks while discussing about their finds. An award for remarkable effort was given to Ben Nelson, the strength behind pulling the tires out of the riverbed. Honorable mentions were also given to the sign post that was fashioned as a fishing rod, a decorative snowman, as well as antique ceramic pieces that were determined to be remnants of a sanitarium based on Oconomowoc Lake.

As you enjoy our local lakes, be considerate about your use of the water, as well as be proactive by picking up debris you find along the way. If you'd like to support protecting water quality and the value of the land around us, consider visiting [tallpinesconservancy.org](http://tallpinesconservancy.org) to learn more. ▲

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## Fall Feast

On Sunday, September 18th, Tall Pines Conservancy had the honor to present the Guy Kieckhefer Pioneer Award to Bill Biersach at our Fall Feast at beautiful Gwenyn Hill Farm. Outdoor appetizers and a delicious four-course meal were prepared by farm-to-table chefs John and Carla from



TwoChefs Tosa using locally sourced ingredients from Gwenyn Hill and others such as LaBelle Cheese and Q's Bees Honey while Monarchs and Mushrooms served up delicious mocktails! The evening concluded with a Funda, where \$60,000 was raised to support TPC's efforts in farmland conservation.

Bill Biersach has been involved in Tall Pines Conservancy as a founding member since 1999. As a resident of Pine Lake and through his involvement

with Provident Realty he was instrumental in the formation of the first conservation easements on segments of the former Barkow Farm along Highway C in Chenequa. Since that time Bill has been a steadfast supporter of Tall Pines giving generously of his time through participation in the finance and major gifts committees, and as an advisory board member... and working behind the scenes to make land deals happen!



## Fall Creatures of the Night: Live Owl Program & Owl Prowl

In Partnership with Catholic Ecology Center & Wanakia Wildlife Rehabilitation

**Saturday, October 29th • 5pm • Catholic Ecology Center**



Spend your Halloween weekend learning all about our amazing nocturnal creatures and see live owls 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 prowling hike around the property to call for several species of owl. After the owl prowling stay for the bonfire which includes roasting hotdogs and smores. All ages welcome! Space is limited and will fill quickly.

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Event will take place outdoors at the Catholic Ecology Center amphitheater (weather permitting) or in the spacious JPII Hall. Tickets are non-refundable.

To register, visit [catholicecologycenter.org/events](http://catholicecologycenter.org/events).

The Guy Kieckhefer Pioneer Award is the highest recognition to be conferred by the Tall Pines Board of Directors and is given to an individual or group who has made a significant, long-term contribution to preserving local land and water resources. This award celebrates leadership that has enriched the local conservation community and whose contributions reflect on the legacy of Guy Kieckhefer and the values reflected in his own life and work on behalf of his community. ▲

**Thank You to Our Fall Feast Sponsors:**





## Ride to the Barns

The threat of rain did nothing to dissuade 520 riders from descending upon Camp Quad for the start of the 14th Annual Ride to the Barns on Saturday, August 13th. Perhaps it was all that enthusiasm that kept the storms at bay as participants traveled along three routes through picturesque lake country and the surrounding farmland. Riders were greeted by friendly hosts and volunteers who served delicious and healthy local food and refreshments at our rural rest stops. The famous lunch buffet returned for the post-ride party, as did Brewfinity Beer, and music from The Front band. CBS58s Natalie Shepherd and Dan Vrakas were our Emcees for another successful live auction.



We hope you join us for our **15th Anniversary Ride to the Barns on Saturday, August 12, 2023**. We will have a few surprises up our sleeves, including a commemorative jersey for sale, to mark this important occasion. RTB gift certificates will be on sale in November – so watch your email or visit our website for the details so you can reserve your spot and enjoy a discount.

### Many Thanks to Our Hosts:

Quad, Catholic Ecology Center, Paul and Pam Conway, the Dueklow Family, Dodge County Parks and the volunteer team at Harnischfeger Park, and George and Elaine Monis.

Thanks to you, this year's ride was SOLD OUT several days in advance. We're already planning some special surprises for our 15th Anniversary ride, which is scheduled for Saturday, August 12th. ▲



### Thank You to Our Sponsors



### Thank You to Our Partners





## RCPP Kick Off

In 2009, Wisconsin passed the Working Lands Initiative, creating the state's first ever Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easements (PACE) program.

Unfortunately, after funding just one round of 16 easements (including one for Zwieg Maple Acres held by TPC), the program was de-funded. This lack of financial support presented a significant financial challenge for farmers looking to keep their land available for agriculture.

Enter the Wisconsin Farmland Regional Conservation Protection Partnership Program – a partnership created in 2022 between American Farmland Trust, the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), Tall Pines Conservancy and 16 other organizations.



The project will leverage more than \$7 million in partner contributions for an additional \$7 million in federal funding to address farmland loss, incentivize the increased adoption of regenerative practices on protected land, and identify farmland access opportunities for historically underserved producers. This unprecedented farmland conservation program was launched at Folk Song Farm on Thursday, June 23rd. As a result of this program, Tall Pines is in line to fund conservation easements on two more farms eventually resulting

## Mason Creek Restoration Project

TPC is partnering with North Lake Management District and the Oconomowoc Watershed Protection Program on a stream restoration project for Mason Creek – a Class 1 Trout Stream valued by many residents who have lived in the vicinity for decades. The creek was straightened following European settlement.



Mason Creek – View North on 9/24/22



Mason Creek – View South on 9/24/22

*The images shown here demonstrate how the future stream course will look like during periods of high flow. These photos were taken after a period of high rain and after an artesian aquifer was unearthed with digging equipment.*

The project involves converting the channelized section of the creek to a natural, meandering course to handle periods of high waterflow. This will reduce the movement of phosphorous-laden sediment to downstream properties and North Lake. The new 1600-foot stream course follows the topography of the land, features riffles and pools for improved fish and aquatic life habitat and allows for better establishment of native vegetation to filter nutrients and stabilize soil.

This project is funded by public and private sources including grants from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the City of Oconomowoc, local non-profits and private donors. The property is owned by Tall Pines.

Construction officially began on Wednesday, August 23rd with a ribbon cutting that included members of the construction team from Stantec and Wondra. The project itself is projected to be completed in early November - in one phase – although the natural revegetation and growth of plantings will take place over several years. We encourage you to visit the TPC website for updates. Please note that entrance to this property is restricted. Contact TPC at 262-369-0500 to arrange a visit of the project site. Thank you for your cooperation! ▲

## RCPP Kick Off... (continued)

in 400 more acres protected! Since this is a matching program, your support is needed to help our local producers realize their farm protection goals. Please call Susan Buchanan at 414-559-7460 for more information. ▲







## Spring Owl Prowl

Tall Pines was delighted to again collaborate with our partners at Catholic Ecology Center and Wanakia Wildlife Rehabilitation in presenting a spring Owl Prowl on May 21st. Dozens of wildlife enthusiasts of all ages were treated to an indoor presentation where audience participation was strongly encouraged. The crowd was elated as a barred owl appeared, swooping down and performing for them in the night sky. The evening concluded with a bonfire and s'mores! ▲

## Hands-On Experience for Interns... (from PAGE 3)

comments about how they believe in climate change, but the actions of one person can't make a difference. With this series, I aimed to show people that isn't the case. We can all do our part with very simple things, like checking your air pressure to have a more fuel efficient vehicle, or reducing your plastic consumption at the grocery store. Reducing anxiety about the environment and establishing confidence is a step I think is often overlooked when finding climate solutions that are actionable. This was something that I will take with me forever from Tall Pines. This summer, we were doing environmental work in its most pure form, creating communities of active environmental enthusiasts. ▲

## Preserving Farmland...

(from PAGE 1)

for Lake Country – improve the quality of our local air, land and water for all of us to enjoy.

Of course, not every acre can (or should) be saved from development. Your support of TPC will protect as much of the BEST local farmland as possible – before it's too late. And that



includes Hazelglenn Farm. The Town of Oconomowoc is one of six communities in Waukesha County that currently has a Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) certified agricultural preservation zoning ordinance. Hazelglenn Farm, located in the Oconomowoc and Ashippun watersheds, is included in that zoning.

This local non-financial support is designed to promote agricultural growth, restrict non-ag uses and limit potential land use conflicts. This, combined with other strategies like conservation easements, will help local producers stay in farming – and offer opportunities to new farmers. Be sure to check out page 6 to find out about the Wisconsin Farmland Regional Conservation Protection Partnership Program – another new valuable funding resource that will benefit local farmland conservation.

## How Can You Help?

We encourage you to support your local producers by patronizing local farmers markets. Your purchases at on-site farm stores as well as the selections you make at your local grocer will also make a difference. And we're asking for your help to protect more farmland today through your contribution to Tall Pines. Visit [tallpinesconservancy.org](http://tallpinesconservancy.org) to make an online donation or please use the enclosed envelope. Together, we will protect farmland, water and open spaces within our community to honor generations past, maintain a connection to our rural heritage and preserve these irreplaceable resources for future generations to enjoy. ▲

## Healthy Lakes Conference

Tom Koepp and the Lake Pewaukee Sanitary District were the 2022 recipients of the Lake Country Clean Waters Lake Leadership Award. This honor was announced at the 7th Annual Healthy Lakes Conference, which took place on June 3rd at the Oconomowoc Community Center. The day-long conference included presentations on a Wave Impact Study, Chloride Impact on Lakes, Aquatic Invasive Species, Healthy Shorelines and more. ▲







## Pine Lake Event

On July 29th, members of the Pine Lake Yacht Club were treated to an outdoor reception and historic pontoon boat tour, which set sail from the picturesque Stark boathouse.

Proceeds from the event benefit the Pine Lake Island Restoration Project and the conservation work of TPC. Special thanks to Gallagher Lake Country Real Estate for their support of the event. ▲

## What Does Your Donation Do?

As a nationally-accredited land trust, our most important goal is to ensure that your donation is making a tangible, immediate difference in our community.

Your annual contribution to Tall Pines Conservancy runs the year-round programs that make land and water conservation possible in the Lake Country region.

This includes identifying, evaluating and developing solutions to protect the best local working lands. And partnering with producers, lake owners and other organizations to improve soil health, tackle erosion, and prevent pollutants from reaching our lakes and streams.

### Thank you for Investing in the Future of Our Community.

Please make your year-end contribution using the enclosed envelope. Or, provide your donation to Tall Pines Conservancy by credit card. You can make a one-time online donation or arrange for a recurring contribution of support on a monthly basis. Simply visit [tallpinesconservancy.org](http://tallpinesconservancy.org) and click on the **green** donate button. ▲

*Thank you!*



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