



A NEWSLETTER PUBLISHED FOR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS OF TALL PINES CONSERVANCY  
 Spring/Summer 2020

## 8th Generation Mayer Family Farm Protected Forever Through Easement

by SUSAN BUCHANAN, Executive Director

**We are thrilled to announce our newest farmland easement—150 acres of the Mayer family farm.**

Located at the northernmost tip of the Oconomowoc River watershed south of Slinger, the Mayer Farm includes rolling hills and pasture and is nestled in the Kettle Moraine within view of the



*"Our grandchildren mark the 8th generation at the Mayer Farm. It was the love of working with fine dairy cattle and farming that brought us together. While high development pressure has surrounded our community, it's reassuring to know that due to the work of Tall Pines, the Oconomowoc Watershed Protection Program and NRCS, we're able to transition our land, passion and way of life to our children. Farming is more than a career, it's our love."*

—Shelly & Ike Mayer

historic Holy Hill Church. Working under the auspices of the Natural Resources Conservation Service's Regional Conservation Protection Program and in conjunction with the Oconomowoc Watershed Protection Program, Tall Pines was interested in protecting the property for a number of key reasons, the first being for water quality as the Coney River runs through the property. We are so happy to have such willing partners in the Mayer family who have readily implemented water quality protection strategies such as buffers along

the creek, repaired tile, and seeding perennial grasses and cover crops. Another reason for protection is to preserve a productive multi-generational working farm in an area of high development pressure. Farm viability is the biggest

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**Join Tall Pines  
 Conservancy!**

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

## OWPP Continues Success

### *With Golf Course Streambank Restoration & Other Projects*

Oconomowoc watershed work to reduce erosion and nutrient loss continues robustly thus far in 2020. A WDNR TRM Grant (Targeted Runoff Measure) is being written for the Golf Course Creek that runs through the Lac La Belle golf course. This is a project that will have input and financial support from four partners including the Village of Lac La Belle, Prestwick, the Lac La Belle Management District and OWPP. We hope to start this streambank restoration project late this year and complete the project in 2021. This creek corridor has been a reoccurring problem for decades and has been made worse by the last three years of above normal precipitation. The creek drains to Lac La Belle on the north shore and has been noted to be a major source of sediment along this shoreline.

We have also just confirmed a long term agreement for field buffers on farm land on the west side of the City of Oconomowoc. This project will

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## How You Can Support Your Local Farmer

Tall Pines Conservancy has recently launched a Support Your Local Farmer program through our e-newsletter. In these bi-weekly issues, we will be sharing opportunities to purchase produce, dairy and meat products from local producers – some of whom are offering discounts to our members. Sign-up by e-mailing Beth at [info@tallpinesconservancy.org](mailto:info@tallpinesconservancy.org).

The new Wisconsin Dairy Recovery Program, created by the Dairy Farms of Wisconsin and the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP), provides relief to the growing numbers of underfed and unemployed by connecting milk to emergency food organizations throughout the state. Wisconsin dairy farmers are paid to supply milk to farmer-owned dairy cooperative Kemps. Hunger Task Force will then distribute milk to Free & Local partner food banks and food pantries through the Hunger Relief Federation of Wisconsin, a statewide association that supports food distribution in local communities. Learn more by visiting [hungertaskforce.org/dairy](http://hungertaskforce.org/dairy). ▲



Photo courtesy of Three Brothers Farm, Oconomowoc, WI

## An Important Note About this Year's

### **Ride to the Barns**

Each year, TPC looks forward to hosting Ride to the Barns. It's a wonderful opportunity for us to share with you the importance of farmland conservation and showcase delicious and nutritious local food – all while having a lot of fun in the process. During the past 12 years, this fundraising cycling event has grown to be significant for our organization and the dollars raised are critical to sustaining our work and mission. THANK YOU FOR YOUR TREMENDOUS SUPPORT!



Please know that in the age of COVID-19, we're doing everything within our power to make this ride safe for our hosts, volunteers and, of course, our loyal riders. As a result, this year's ride may look a little different. As we all know, there are still a lot of unknowns – especially when we are considering an event that is still months away. If circumstances cause us to unfortunately cancel the ride, you will be provided with a donation receipt for the cost of your registration fee. If you have any questions regarding this policy, please e-mail [info@tallpinesconservancy.org](mailto:info@tallpinesconservancy.org).

Also please note, the schedule for training rides starting in June is subject to change as well. Limitations on the number of riders will likely apply based on COVID-19 guidelines. ▲







### HEALTHY LAKES CONFERENCE – ONLINE

Friday, June 5 • 9a–3:30p  
[lakecountrycleanwaters.org](http://lakecountrycleanwaters.org)

### OWPP PADDLE

Saturday, July 18 • 9:30a–1p  
Hwy. Q Launch  
[oconomowocwatershed.com](http://oconomowocwatershed.com)

### 12TH ANNUAL RIDE TO THE BARN

Saturday, August 15 • 8a–3p  
[tallpinesconservancy.org](http://tallpinesconservancy.org)

### LAKE COUNTRY CLEAN WATERS QUARTERLY MEETING

Wednesday, September 23  
[lakecountrycleanwaters.org](http://lakecountrycleanwaters.org)

### TPC 20TH ANNIVERSARY GALA – UPDATE

Tall Pines Conservancy had originally planned to host our anniversary gala on September 17th at the Chenequa Country Club. We're now looking at hosting a few smaller events with capacity limitations throughout the summer and fall to celebrate our anniversary and some may be virtual.

\*Event schedule subject to change.

## Intern Gains Hands-On Experience with TPC

Hello! My name is Christiana Fiedler. I am a graphic design student at Waukesha County Technical College and will be graduating this May with my Associates Degree in Graphic Communications. Last year, I earned a Digital Photography certificate. I love photography and feel it goes very well with graphic design. As far as career goals, I see myself working for a small to medium sized graphic design or printing company. I am currently working at Tall Pines Conservancy as a graphic design intern. I've really enjoyed my experience and would like to share with you some of the projects I have done thus far.



The first project I completed for Tall Pines was a postcard to advertise the organization's upcoming events. In addition, I've created a logo, event invitation and designed several event flyers for events associated with Tall Pines Conservancy like the Oconomowoc Watershed Protection Program's Paddle Event set for July 18th. ▲



## Help Us Meet Our Match!

We couldn't do our work without you. And, now, more than ever, we need your help to continue our momentum!

We're excited to announce that the TPC Board of Directors has issued a \$5,000 Challenge Grant! All donations received until July 1, 2020, will be matched dollar-for-dollar until the goal is met!

Please consider a mid-year donation – one that will have double the impact (thanks to the Challenge Grant) and provide potential new tax benefits. Recent legislation allows for an up to \$300

TPC

CHALLENGE  
\$5,000 GRANT

in charitable contributions to qualified non-profits like TPC as an above-the-line deduction, meaning you don't need to itemize to claim the deduction. If you do itemize, this bill increases the cap on annual giving from 60% to 100%. As always, check with your tax advisor for all the details.

Together, we have conserved more than 1500 acres – and counting, and in fact we are really excited to be working on bringing **approximately 800 more acres under protection** in the next year! We continue to work together with our local farmers, lake owners and partners in implementing a watershed conservation approach that is improving the quality of our rivers, lakes and streams, keeping you up-to-date on the benefits of getting out into nature, supporting our local farmers and the importance of protecting our land and water resources. Your contributions will make these projects possible. ▲

## 2019 Annual Report Available Online

This June, Tall Pines Conservancy will be unveiling a dynamic new website! As a result of our collaboration with Poppy + Maple, you'll enjoy a fresh navigation approach, more compelling project information, quick access to the latest news and an overall more enjoyable user experience. Please visit [tallpinesconservancy.org](http://tallpinesconservancy.org) to view the 2019 Annual Report, which will be posted by June 30th. ▲





## Virtual Views of Nature – OWL PROWL Goes Viral

**So, what do you do when a popular event like the Owl Prowl is impacted by a pandemic?** You gather your partners together and film an event that can be viewed by everyone from the comfort of their own homes – and at their own convenience!

In our new video, Wanakia Wildlife Founder and Rehabilitator Marty Thompson introduces and shares

interesting tidbits about American Crow CJ (a natural enemy of owls and hawks), Rosie the Red-Faced Eastern Screech Owl and Merlin the Great Horned Owl – among others. The ultimate goal of Wanakia Wildlife is to rescue, rehabilitate and release birds and small animals, but when these creatures are not able to survive in the wild, they are lovingly cared for by the rescue and serve as educational ambassadors.

Joe Meyer of Laudato Si' Project provides in-the-field commentary within the cedar trees and tall pines of an area woodland, sharing the calls of these majestic

creatures. Many thanks go to our talented videographer Zach Steinbach for capturing and editing the footage into a captivating program.

You can view the Owl Prowl video on TPC's Facebook page as well as on YouTube.

### Speaking of which... Did you know that TPC has a YouTube channel?

We've been adding new videos to the play list so you can enjoy a kayak trip along the Oconomowoc River or a spring time stroll through the woods. Our YouTube channel contains 19 videos, including one featuring the 2019 Ride to the Barns. Visit [youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com) and search Tall Pines Conservancy to subscribe. ▲

## Mayer Farm Protected...

(from PAGE 1)

threat to farmland right now and this will allow for generational transfer to the Mayer's three children who will continue farming. Dairy farming is the Mayer's life's work. Their passion is their cows. They take pride in raising quality cattle and growing them naturally for dairy and beef. Tall Pines Conservancy purchased the development rights on the land with the assistance and support of the NRCS Agricultural Conservation Easement Program within RCPP and a donation by Shelly and Ike Mayer. ▲

## OWPP Continues Success... (from PAGE 2)

address severe erosion occurring along fields that eventually drain to an unnamed creek that enters the Oconomowoc River near the County line. Several nearby areas will also be addressed to control streambank erosion and nutrient loss.

In the headwaters of the watershed in Washington County we will be addressing a field this spring which has been a source of sediment and phosphorus that drains to the Coney River north of Hwy E. The Coney River joins the Oconomowoc near Pleasant View Rd and Hwy 164.

The Camp Whitcomb Pollinator Project will be planted this spring. This field is just east of Lake Keesus and drains directly to the lake. The 9.2 acre project area was prepped for this planting last fall and once this planting is established, the deep rooted pollinator species will control runoff of nutrients from this area and protect water quality in the lake.

The OWPP will hold a cover crop workshop in June (Covid protocol permitting) in the Town of Concord on the Novak farm. Date is yet to be determined. ▲

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# 5th Annual Healthy Lakes Conference *Takes a Virtual Approach*

Lake Country Clean Waters' 5th Annual Healthy Lakes Conference will be hosted online Friday, June 5th! The benefit of virtual programming is that it allows LCCW to pull in experts from around the country to share experiences that will guide us all to be the best stewards of our own lakes!

The theme for this year's conference is "Seeing 20/20 – A Clear Vision of Clean Waters." Speakers have been selected from outside of Lake Country so that we can become aware of future issues already impacting the greater Midwest region. This will enable us to identify the tools needed to solve problems – both now and in the future. Presentations will also focus on how we can motivate our communities to remain focused on clean waters throughout the state.



Program highlights include: Using Great Lakes Research to See A Clear Future for Local Lakes; Wave Action – the Risks and Problems Caused by Boaters, and The Greatest Places on Earth: Our Lakes and How We're Loving Them to Death. The conference will also feature the presentation of the first LCCW Lake Recognition Award.

The Zoom Meeting takes place on June 5th from 9:00am–3:30pm. Advanced registration is required and must be completed by 8:30am on June 5th. The registration fee is \$15. For a full conference schedule and to register, please visit [lakecountrycleanwaters.org](http://lakecountrycleanwaters.org). ▲



## Tune In!

**The Discover Wisconsin Land Trust Days Episode**, featuring the 2019 Ride to the Barns, will air on June 13th–June 14th, 2020. This special show was made possible by Gathering Waters – Wisconsin's Alliance for Land Trusts. Visit [discoverwisconsin.com/broadcast-guide/](http://discoverwisconsin.com/broadcast-guide/) to learn how you can tune in! ▲

Instagram



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