

Nature News



Quarterly Newsletter of the Cadillac Area Land Conservancy

Fall 2012

CALC Annual Event
Stepping Stones for Martens
November 1, 2012
7:00 pm
Carl T. Johnson
Hunting and Fishing Center



Photo by Larry Colwell

What a special treat we have in store for you! Wildlife Biologist Chris Schumacher will introduce us to the pine marten at CALC's annual event. Chris is assisting the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians and Grand Valley State University with research to determine the size of the population, the habitat needs, and the health of the martens.

Michigan is blessed with significant forest habitat and diverse wildlife populations. Our state's Wildlife Action Plan considers habitat fragmentation one of the biggest threats to wildlife. Urban sprawl and human development can lead to fragmentation or isolation of large blocks of forestland. This can have a negative impact on wildlife, especially on those species requiring large areas of land or specialized habitats. Maintaining these large blocks of habitat and creating and maintaining linkages between them is increasingly important for the future of Michigan's wildlife. Chris's work with the pine marten should tell us more about their particular habitat needs.



Photo by Chris Schumacher

Mark your calendars and join us on November 1st for this entertaining and informative program and the chance to meet with fellow CALC members. Visitors welcome.



Our Founders: A Closer Look

by Fred Sprague

If we thought that George and Vicky Rock were our own private benefactors, we were greatly enlightened during a pleasant summer evening at Fox Hill with 100 friends of George and Vicky, CALC, and the community. The Cadillac Area Community Foundation honored George and Vicky with a crystal philanthropy award featuring a globe to signify world philanthropy.

Like their work with CALC, the Rocks' work in each area includes hands-on work as well as financial support. The areas mentioned during the evening included a presentation by Michigan State University on the Rocks' program to provide solar powered computer systems to third world countries. The Rocks have also supported the Civil Air Patrol, their church, the 4H program at Kettunen Center, Mercy Hospital, the Chestnut Council, and the Community Foundation itself, in addition to their work for CALC.

In addition to posting on their web site an article by George explaining why he and Tom Rensberry started CALC, the Community Foundation gave us the opportunity to make a presentation. During this time we used George's relation to his own land to make very personal the emotional attachment that conservation values give to landowners and the overwhelming need to protect those values. We told of the Rocks' gifts of easements, the Waldeck Island Nature Preserve, and their support of our endowment fund in the foundation. We expressed our sincere thanks to George and Vicky for the work they have done in visiting families to pass on the vision and secure many of our early easements as well as the early work in publishing our newsletter and generally running CALC. We reminded them that, like the lamplighters of old, the light that they have created continually reminds us that they have been here.

We are grateful to the Community Foundation for showing us all of George and Vicky's work, reminding us of the tremendous value of philanthropy, and giving us the opportunity to show the Cadillac community the value of CALC.

For more on George and Vicky's story go to:
<http://calc-landtrust.org/about/george-rock/>





Woodland Property Tax Reduction Program May Change in 2013

by Steve Kalisz, Registered Forester

The Qualified Forest Exemption, known as QF, may be changing next year. Currently any privately owned woodland of from 20 to 320 acres with at least 80% productive forest land, no structures, and a current forest management plan written by a professional forester can apply to have 18 mills of their property taxes exempted from their property tax bill under the current QF program.

The other benefit of having woodlands in the QF program is that property taxes remained capped when there is a change of ownership, like leaving the woodland to an heir, unlike homestead property which uncaps or “jumps up” to assessed value, sometimes increasing property taxes significantly.



Some say that because of the rather severe penalties or “recapture tax” imposed at the time an owner rescinds the exemption (usually due to the desire to build a structure), the QF has been underutilized since passage in 2006.

Proposed changes via various House and Senate bills that have not been passed yet include allowing structures, reducing the severity of the recapture tax, reducing the productive acreage minimum to 50%, reducing the acreage minimum to 10, and increasing the maximum acreage to 640. More info can be obtained by going to the website www.michigan.gov/dnr, then go to the forestry home page and click on QF.

Memorial

We have received a significant bequest from
The Jo Ann Gulyas Trust.
Jo Ann died in March of 2011.
She and her husband Robert made an earlier gift to CALC in memory of Walter Boyce. This unexpected, meaningful legacy is greatly appreciated and will be used to further our mission.



It's Time!

Yes, it's once again time to give your financial support to the Cadillac Area Land Conservancy. Our mission is so very important, but it takes all of us to preserve and protect the land and the wildlife that makes life in Northern Michigan so special. Your children and your grandchildren will reap the benefits of your donation. Send your membership donation to the Cadillac Area Land Conservancy, 124 ½ North Mitchell Street, Cadillac, MI 49601. Thank you!



Bits & Pieces

Start your holiday shopping early at TreeHugger, a one-stop e-shop for green news, green solutions, and green products (think gift ideas). www.treehugger.com/giftguide

The North Woods Call is “an unabashed defender of Michigan’s natural resources.” The newsletter’s new owner, Mike VanBuren, is former president of the Kalamazoo River Protection Association and a recipient of the Ben East Prize for excellence in conservation journalism. He plans to publish bi-weekly. Electronic subscriptions are \$30; \$50 for print editions. Details at www.mynorthwoodscall.com.
~ taken from Traverse City Record-Eagle, 9/11/12

Get involved in the Plant a Billion Trees Campaign. Just one dollar plants a tree in Brazil. The campaign was launched by The Nature Conservancy in 2008. At last count, 11,964,340 trees have been planted.
<http://www.plantabillion.org>

Mission Statement

The Cadillac Area Land Conservancy protects ecologically significant, scenic, and farm lands for current and future generations and fosters an appreciation of the natural environment in Missaukee, Osceola, Wexford and northern Lake and Mason Counties.

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