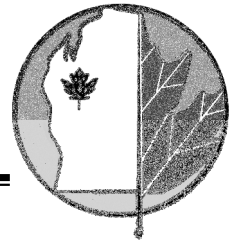


Nature News



Quarterly Newsletter from the Cadillac Area Land Conservancy

Spring 2009

Students & Spring Return to Waldeck Island... Can wood ducks be far behind?

Given the beautiful spring weather and the fact that nesting season is just around the corner, it was



time to reinstall the nesting boxes on the Waldeck Island preserve. On March 17, students from the Career Tech Center Natural Resources program made the short trip out to the island and installed 10 new and rebuilt nesting boxes around the island's perimeter.

In addition, some wind damaged trees down over the walking paths were removed under the supervision of the program's instructor, Mark Johnson. The field trip included instruction on tree species present on the island and nesting requirements of wood ducks.

"The students love the opportunity to work on projects like this, partly because it gives them the chance to see something they worked on over the winter actually installed, and also they get out of the classroom and into the field!" said Johnson.

All ten nesting boxes were installed with lag screws, so they can be more easily removed. Many boxes were damaged in the fall because the nails holding them to the trees split the wood. The new boxes were all constructed of cedar and incorporated hinged designs, so they can be cleaned without removing them from the trees. Hopefully, they will stay in place for several seasons—if they're maintained regularly. Ideally, wood duck houses should be checked monthly for activity, and inva-

sive starling nests should be removed and destroyed. Each box should have 3 - 4 inches of cedar shavings inside for nest material. Boxes can be placed anywhere from 8 - 15 feet high, and can be as far as 50 yards from surface water and still be perfectly acceptable to hen woodies.



Next October, the class will be back to find out which boxes were successful based upon the presence of empty shells.

Of those removed last year, just one contained the shells from wood duck eggs. Hopefully, next year there will be more!

MANY THANKS TO:

- **Sara Marr** of Focus on Massage who often covers the office for us.
- **Gary Brower** of Printer Technologies of Ewart for fixing our office printer at no charge.
- **Robert and JoAnn Gulyas** of Mayfield Heights, Ohio, for donating a Garmin GPS unit.
- **Tom and Diane Jobson** of Cadillac for their donation of a digital camera.
- **Lakeside Title** for donating various office supplies.



MEET OUR NEW BOARD MEMBERS

- Representing Osceola & Missaukee Counties -

Jim Peterson



I developed a love for the outdoors as a child growing up in a wooded area rich with hills, ravines, wetlands, and big timber. This was influential in directing me towards an outdoor adventure across northern Michigan and later throughout the

United States, Canada, and Alaska. These experiences on the land, combined with further education and outdoor education work, led me to purchase my first piece of property in northern Osceola County in the mid-seventies. My wife Julie and I have been there ever since, purchasing six more contiguous parcels of land and consolidating them into a satisfying, unified piece of property.

Throughout the years I have studied and practiced land and soil conservation, forest and wildlife management, and gardened extensively. Protection of land values led me into local planning and zoning issues in Sherman Township where for ten years I received an education in the often times emotional and complex relationships that we land-owners have with the land.

As a custom builder for over twenty years and a past board member and president of our local Home Builders Association, I have witnessed the individual, business, and legislative pressures for more development. As a long time member of various conservation organizations, I strongly believe in good stewardship and land conservation.

In my upcoming term on the board of the Cadillac Area Land Conservancy, I plan to continue to educate myself in the process of land conservation and contribute to these important issues. Working together we can have a positive impact on conservation education and land preservation in our four county area.

Joe D. Elenbaas



I was born in Cadillac and lived in several small towns in Northwestern Lower Michigan during my grade school and teen years. I grew up with a deep love and respect for land, wildlife, and natural resources. Over the years I developed a love for hunting, fishing and

in general, wild places. My previous vocation as an ordained minister offered me several opportunities for national and international travel working on sustainable projects and community development.

Now retired from ministry, my wife Mary and I live on our eighty-acres near McBain where we enjoy developing and managing wildlife habitat, gardening, and doing our best to live a sustainable lifestyle. We have two children, and have been married for thirty-four years. My hobbies include ruffed grouse hunting, kayaking, hiking, reading, and collecting and playing indigenous musical instruments.

Mary and I have a strong ethic of responsible land use and consider it a sacred trust to preserve and conserve our natural resources. Presently I am completing a graduate degree in Sustainable Natural Resources from the College of Forestry, Oregon State University. I look forward to serving on the CALC board and will offer whatever abilities and knowledge I have to further the cause of responsible land conservancy.

*We did not inherit the land from our fathers.
We are borrowing it from our children.*

~ Amish Proverb~



Why a Conservation Easement?

by Jim Skipper

The “Whys” of a Conservation Easement are as varied as the whys of land ownership.

Why do we own land?

- It was given to us.
- We inherited it.
- We bought it.
- We bought it as an investment.
- We bought it for a place to hunt.
- It was close to our favorite fishing spot.
- We bought it for snowmobiling, skiing, mushroom-picking, walking.
- We bought it as a getaway.
- We bought it to add to the farm.
- We want to see wildlife.
- We needed a place to cut firewood.
- _____ (**What’s your reason?**)

Why do we want to keep our land?

- Land prices are down.
- We fell in love with it.
- We want to pass it on to our kids.
- We want our children to be able to enjoy it.
- We want to hunt on it.
- We want to retire to it.
- Its value is rising faster than the stock market.
- They’re not making any more of it.
- We need to plant crops to feed our family.
- It’s been in our family for generations.
- We love the peace and quiet.
- The property is so unique.
- The timber will be valuable in the future.
- The timber pays for keeping the land.
- _____ (**What’s your reason?**)

Why should we put a conservation easement on the land?

- We don’t want to see it turned into a subdivision or developed.
- It will give us a tax write-off if we donate the easement to a conservancy.

- If we want to pass it on to our children, it will save them taxes every year by capping the property tax bill at its current level.
- We want to leave this place to our children.
- We want to provide a place for wildlife.
- We want a place for our kids to hunt.
- _____ (**What’s your reason?**)

One of the biggest problems facing both wildlife and hunters in this country is loss of habitat. Groups like the Nature Conservancy buy rare and unique habitats, and our State and Federal Forests own millions of acres of wildlife habitat. But, of course, these entities cannot own all the critical pieces of habitat needed to provide homes for wildlife and to provide the vital corridors for wildlife movement. By donating Conservation Easements, we can help assure that there will always be some undeveloped land for wildlife. For example, the Cadillac Area Land Conservancy is promoting the Cherry Grove Wildlife Corridor to protect the movement of bears between parcels of government land.

Your local land conservancy can answer your questions about costs and benefits and can tell you how to conserve your land. You can also visit our web site at www.calc-landtrust.org

Please share with us the reason you love your land. You can snail mail us at:

CALC

124 ½ N. Mitchell, Suite 115

Cadillac, MI 49601

Or e-mail at calc@core.com

Or call (231) 775-3631.

We’d love to hear from you!



THANK YOU!

Thanks to these wonderful new donors.

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- Grainger Charitable Match Program

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- John and Lois Bishop
- Kerry Sprigg
- Chris Schumacher

HORNS OF A DILEMMA

Our mission is to protect the land and foster an appreciation of the environment with our limited financial resources. Of course, we need to spread the word about land conservancy and explain what it's all about. This newsletter is one way of doing that, but it does cost money. So how do we use our limited financial resources? Protecting land or telling people about protecting land? You can help us. If you have not made a donation to the Cadillac Area Land Conservancy, please do so now—at least enough to cover the cost of your newsletter (and then be sure to share it with a friend).

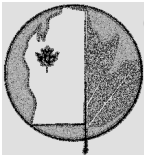
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