

Nature News

Newsletter of the Cadillac Area Land Conservancy



Spring 2022

NEW! Osprey Nesting Platform Installed



On January 19, 2022 volunteers with the Cadillac Area Land Conservancy (CALC) erected a raptor nesting platform in the marsh behind Waldeck Island preserve on Stoneledge Lake. While the platform may be used by Bald Eagles. The more likely residents will be ospreys, a fish eating bird of prey. The idea for the platform came from lake residents who have been seeing both Bald Eagles and Ospreys on the lake the last few summers. Ospreys readily accept artificial nesting platforms, provided they are placed in favorable habitat. The marsh next to Waldeck Island provides just such a location. The birds naturally use dead trees and snags for their nesting sites which frequently decay and fall over. Therefore, artificial platforms are a safer substitute and can be an effective tool for encouraging nesting efforts by these birds. In addition, CALC already has a wildlife viewing tower near the nesting platform for public viewing. If you're looking for a local fieldtrip this spring, stop by Waldeck Island preserve and check out the nesting platform. With any luck, we hope to see one of nature's great events, the successful nesting of an eagle or osprey.



Thank you Volunteers! Gary VanHouten, Frank Youngman, Richard Harvey, Dan Valley, Ruthann French, Doug Pavloryec, Steve Cunningham.





Remembering Tom Harris

By Fred Sprague

It has been 35 years since we have heard the famous slogan “When A J Obie talks, people listen”. I am reminded of it because when Tom Harris talked, I listened.

Tom had a keen mind which he kept all the way to his death. He was well educated in biology and forestry including a masters degree. He had several hard life experiences which generated great wisdom, and it was a joy to be in his company whether on the CALC board, in hunting camp, or in Curry house.

Tom liked to talk about wilderness hikes with his son Chris, and he had lots of stories of these and other experiences. My favorite was when his small charcoal heater burned down his big hunting blind made of railroad ties. Phil Potvin built him a fireproof one of bricks. He spent one short term on the CALC board where he and Steve Cunningham were the initiators of the bear corridor emphasis. He was good at thinking outside the box.

Tom was a great financial supporter of CALC, and his annual gifts to our treasury were matched by an equal annual gift to our endowment. He was much impressed by the knowledge and dedication of our board and volunteers. He particularly remembered the outing at Bob Hess’s property with Bob’s work to bring back natural habitat and his tremendous knowledge of all forms of wildlife.

Tom witnessed God’s miraculous healing of a friend, and he had an unshakable faith. With the death of his dear wife and his decreasing mobility, Tom was ready for the end of his life; but he kept a good attitude and did his best to keep as healthy as he could.

Tom had a great love for his 135 acres which I called his hunting camp but he called “the farm”. It is in the heart of a bear corridor, has a stream, mixed hardwoods, and wetlands along with several openings and a cabin. Tom knew the trees, the terrain, and the wildlife. After he developed mobility issues, he still vastly enjoyed riding his 4 wheel mule thru the property. The farm will stay in the family under the watchful care of his daughter Jennifer who shares Tom’s love of the property, and it is protected forever by a conservation easement which is unique—as Tom’s thinking was unique. The main philosophy behind the easement is to let nature be nature. We can all envision that this will create a very mature forest, but Tom thought beyond that. No one knows what will come after the mature forest. Maybe as each tree dies, others will fill its spot. On the other hand, after generations of the mature trees killing everything under them, they, themselves, may die and leave a grass savanna. If so, that is OK with Tom. The important thing is to let nature do what it will do. That is different from any of our other easements. Maybe we need to listen to Tom one more time.



Tom and Fred at a CALC Annual Meeting

Volunteers Needed!

CALC is looking for volunteers to help with easement monitoring, newsletter editor, and preserve mowing and maintenance. Call (231) 775-3631 if you can help.

To contact the CALC Office call (231) 775-3631
Email: calc@calc-landtrust.org
Mail: 124 1/2 N. Mitchell St., Ste. 115, Cadillac 49601
Visit our webpage at www.calc-landtrust.org



Volunteerism at its Best!

This is the first newsletter in many years without Pat Paveglio as editor. She was a blast to work with. For every article submitted, she worked her magic and transformed it into a fun and informative part of the quarterly newsletter. She also baked a mean cookie and provided all the refreshments at most of CALC's annual events. She opened her home to the CALC board for their annual holiday celebrations. Rather than a potluck, she did the cooking. The board then passed a hat to donate the proceeds to a local charity for those who know hunger. It wasn't only indoor work that she excelled at. She also rolled up her sleeves and chipped in outdoors at almost every CALC Preserve work-bee.

Thank you Pat for a job well done! It was fun having you on board. We wish we could clone an army of volunteers with your spunk and can-do attitude.

Dear Readers, If you have a desire to write for the conservancy and are creative with newsletters, please call 231-775-3631.

IN MEMORY OF BOB BORAK

By Fred Sprague

CALC is missing a great friend with the passing of Bob Borak. If we ever needed to tell anyone what it means to care for the land, we only needed to tell them to look at Bob. His love for the land was infectious, and he passed it down to his family (even the dog who knows every inch of the 125 acres).

Bob retired many years ago from his position as a forester for the DNR. He occasionally reminded us that he was the one who hired Ruth Ann French (herself now retired and a past president of CALC).



Bob with Steve Cunningham and Larry Copley at the Borak easement.

Located in the northwest corner of Wexford County and at the headwaters of Fletcher Creek is the Borak easement. As soon as Bob learned there was a land conservancy, he established his easement. Prominent on the property are northern hardwoods, red and white pines, a sugar bush and wetlands.

In 2016 Bob and his family worked with us to invite the congregations of local churches to an afternoon on the property. The speaker was the executive director of Au Sable Institute of Environmental Studies who spoke on "5 Things I Wish Everybody Knew About God and His Creation". Bob, himself, told how he can now rest easy knowing that the land is protected forever by CALC. The whole family did a great job of hosting and giving a walking tour with the history of the property. It all began when the family would walk into the wetland sand to get buckets of water from a spring that led up to a cabin and a quiet area for soothing, healing, and putting your senses in order.

If there were more Bob Borak's in the world, the world would be a better place.



Director's Corner

We've recently worked with Cadillac Printing to create a map of Cadillac Area Land Conservancy's (CALC) service area that you see inserted with this newsletter. The map denotes the general location of CALC's conservation easements and preserves. The scope of CALC's commitment is to perpetually preserve land through our partnership with land owners as is illustrated on the map.



Owners of each property have committed to preserving conservation values through conservation easements with CALC. In turn CALC has committed to the owners and community to ensure these values are permanently maintained and preserved.

CALC's monitoring program is one of the tools we use to ensure conditions laid out in these conservation easements are being met. A CALC volunteer monitor personally visits each property every year. These visits serve to touch base with our land owner partner; keep an ongoing understanding to changes in the property over time; identify early detection of any potential easement violations; and add to the historic record of the property. Through these efforts CALC ensures that the conservation values we committed to preserve through an easement are in fact being applied.

Our monitoring teams are dedicated volunteers who take responsibility for one or multiple easements to visit. They review the easement document and past monitoring reports; set a time with the land owner to visit the site; note changes and conditions during their visit, and complete an annual monitoring report. Should follow-up be needed the monitoring committee chair and board chair confer and initiate any further action.

Spring time kicks off our annual monitoring effort. This process is important to our fundamental responsibility to preserve land in our care. It's also a fun, interesting activity for monitors – providing positive interaction with owners; outdoor time in some splendid spots; and providing the personal satisfaction of helping preserve open spaces for future generations.

I hope you will join us in appreciation of our landowner partners and volunteer monitors for their efforts in the long term preservation of some of the special places in the CALC region.

If you have an interest in easement monitoring please contact the CALC office @ 231-775-3631.

Chris Gentry, Executive Director

IN MEMORIAM

An omission was made in the Winter 2022 giving newsletter and we must thank Loraine Young for remembering Bud Oliver with a donation to CALC. With donations like hers we are able to carry on in the footsteps of Bud and others who inspire us in land conservation.

Calendar of Events

- **Spring Autumn Olive Removal**
Volunteers needed for spring project to perform autumn olive control on a CALC conservation easement property. The owner has asked us to help in this endeavor. If interested please call the CALC office at 231-775-3631 or email calc@calc-landtrust.org and give your name and phone number.
- **CALC Preserve Work Bee and Picnic**
Saturday, June 4th from 9 a.m. to noon. Work will be available at our preserves. A picnic gathering will follow at the Johnson Preserve. Food will be ordered so please RSVP by calling or emailing the office at 231-775-3631 or calc@calc-landtrust.org. All are invited whether or not participating in the morning activities.
- **CALC Annual Meeting**
Sunday, October 9th at 2:00 p.m.
Featuring noted outdoor author Jim DuFresne!
Save the date - more info to come.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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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.