



THE LITTLE FORKS CONSERVANCY

Protecting the places we love for future generations.

Spring 2004

Issue 29

Serving the Tittabawassee, Chippewa and Pine River Watersheds

Conservancy Signs Purchase Agreement to Expand Preserve

What if we could increase the acreage of an existing preserve and protect more river frontage? Wouldn't that be great!

The Conservancy was faced with this question when we learned that a 31-acre property adjacent to our Averill Preserve was listed for sale. The Conservancy's staff immediately began working to find a way to secure the long term protection of this property.

Acquisition of this parcel will expand our ownership in Averill to over **1 mile** of frontage and adjacent floodplain along this stretch of the Tittabawassee River.

"This property is a key addition to the Averill Preserve that will benefit the land and the local community," says Land Protection Specialist Elan Lipschitz. "This will give us critically needed access to the west side of the Averill Preserve and will tie in extremely well with the Averill Master Plan."

The agreed upon purchase price is \$100,000. This will be our biggest and most ambitious purchase of land to date.

The funds to buy this property are being provided by a grant from settlement monies known as the PIRGIM fund. Dollars in this fund were generated as part of a consent agreement for a water quality permit violation that occurred more than eight years ago. Qualifying projects need to

demonstrate clear benefits to water quality in the Saginaw Bay watershed.

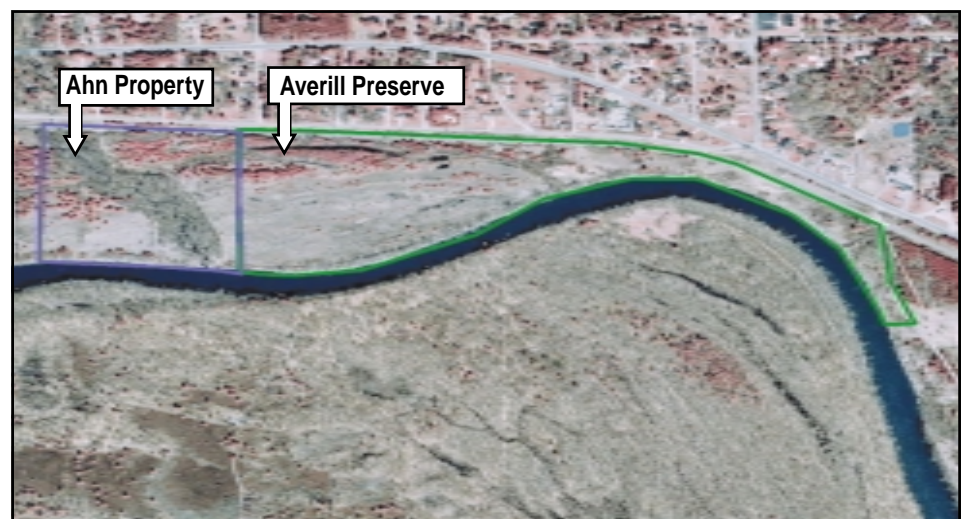
By permanently protecting 1,250 feet of Tittabawassee River shoreline, along with more than 1,500 feet of Averill Creek that dissects the property, and by ensuring that at least 20 acres of critical floodplain will not be encroached upon by unsafe development, we were able to meet the criteria set by the fund administrators.

Help us celebrate!

Join us at the Averill Preserve on Monday, June 21, beginning at 5:30pm, for our annual picnic to celebrate this addition! Registration for the picnic was mailed out to all members on May 27. A buffet dinner will be catered by Bone Daddy's BBQ.



Dr. Eugene Kenaga and landowner Dr. Kyung Ahn stand at the base of a towering cottonwood found on this special property. (photo from 1999)





Spring Brings Changes at LFC



Things change, and our board is no exception. After germanating and caring for this young conservation organization and having found themselves strapped for time, three board members are moving to their next relationship with LFC -- that of retired board members. Join us in thanking **Gene Arnold, Dick Touvell and Will Sears** for the many hours they gave to help build the best Conservancy in Mid-Michigan!

Gene Arnold and Dick Touvell are founding board members of The Little Forks Conservancy. They have seen the ups and downs (hopefully more ups) during their combined 16 years with LFC. Gene has chosen to remain on the Outreach Committee. Dick will also remain an active member of the Conservancy. Will Sears, a board member for 6 years, brought his knowledge of the land and contacts with many landowners to LFC. He will continue to be a key connection to the agricultural community.

"Each of these directors has provided a service to this organization that was crucial to taking LFC from its origins to a strong, healthy organization," says Douglas Koop, Executive Director. "Their knowledge of the community and technical expertise got us through the toughest time of any new organization...the first 6 years. While they will be leaving the management decisions behind, I know I can always count on their continued involvement when the Conservancy needs their advice and leadership skills."

We are excited to announce three new board members of The Little Forks Conservancy.

Jim Luginbill

Jim Luginbill joined Comerica Bank in 1984, and is currently the Regional President for the Midland Region. After moving to Midland in 2002, Jim became actively involved in the community. He is on the Executive Board of the Midland Economic Development Council, Affordable Housing Alliance, and is a member of the Midland Rotary Club.

A graduate of MSU, with a B.S. in Crop and Soil Science, Jim is embracing his role as a member of the Conservancy and a board member. He loves being out in the woods and in natural areas. When asked why he is involved with LFC, Jim says the group "pursues, maintains and protects land in the areas we all love" and believes "through education, fundraising and hard work, conservancies can make a difference."

Jim and his wife, Julie, have three daughters: Kelsey, Taylor and Lindsey.

Neil Hawkins

Neil has worked in a variety of positions with The Dow Chemical Co., and is currently with Public Affairs in Global Issues Management.

Neil's interest in conservation was evident even in high school – he was the president of the ecology club! He holds a B.S. from Georgia Tech, and a M.S. and Ph.D. from the Harvard University School of Public Health. Though his doctoral degree is in Environmental Sciences and Engineering, Neil took time to study ecology for fun while at Georgia Tech.

He believes LFC is at a terrific point in time for private solutions and partnerships to preserve the great natural heritage of the tri-county region. In fact, Neil says "Progress can be made quickly when the community, private sector, foundations and individuals team together to accomplish great things...one parcel at a time. The more land saved now...the more beauty and enjoyment in the future for this region."

Jan McGuire

Jan has worked for Chemical Bank for over 25 years, and currently holds the position of First Vice President and Director of Marketing for Chemical Financial Corporation. She is a graduate of the Robert M. Perry School of Banking at Central Michigan University, and the School of Bank Marketing and Management at the University of Colorado.

Involved in the community, Jan is the chair of the Midland Area Chamber Foundation, and sits on the board of the Midland Symphony Orchestra. Jan explained her involvement with the Conservancy by stating, "I am proud to be a part of an organization that will leave a lasting affect on our community for many years to come."

Jan and her husband, Marty, have five children.

The addition of these three directors creates an organization where 8 of our 15 board members have one year or less of experience on the board. "By balancing this with current board members with three to more than six years of service, we have a strong dynamic of energy and knowledge," says Koop.

"I am very excited about seeing the new directors interact with the returning directors, and I look forward to the insight these professionals will bring to the organization. I feel blessed to have the diversity of experience and knowledge that the entire board brings to the issue of land conservation."

ANNUAL REPORT TO The Little Forks Conservancy Board of Directors

MAY 12, 2004

No matter how you measure it, 2003 was a great year for the Conservancy! We saw increases in all areas of our program. The number of contributing households and the dollars donated by individuals were both up over 40% for the year. The number of acres placed under our purview increased by 289, including more than 2 miles of shoreline, through three wonderful projects.

The Conservancy's long-term financial stability was helped through the completion of the initial endowment challenge grant issued by the Herbert H. and Grace A. Dow Foundation in 1998. Because of the generous contributions of local foundations and many individuals, we successfully reached the \$500,000 goal early in the year.

With the matching grants from the Dow Foundation and the return of a stronger market in 2003, we finished the year with an endowment fund balance of about \$1.1 million. Because the spending policy for distribution of the earnings involves a lagging calculation, we received only \$9,500 from the fund this year. As we move forward, however, we will see that distribution grow rapidly (as the fund balance did) to realize the true potential of that fund in just a few short years.

Although membership numbers increased dramatically, individual contributions were able to provide only 13% of our operating budget in 2003. However, we can not forget that many members made contributions to the Land Fund that helped us purchase the Steiner preserve in Lee Township. Those donations bumped the amount of total funds contributed by individuals to 23% of our income for the year.

Although this financial support is very encouraging, we must continue to work hard to increase our annual operating contributions from individuals and increase the endowment fund balance if we wish to reach self sufficiency soon. We have been fortunate to receive a tremendous amount of operating support from the local foundations. In fact, foundation grants accounted for

73% of our operating income for 2003. This, however, is not a sustainable model for the long-term.

We completed three land projects in 2003. The largest was a 236-acre conservation easement that was donated by Ceo Bauer over 5 contiguous properties in Montcalm County. We followed that project with our first ever purchase of land by acquiring a 9.8 acre property at the confluence of the Big Salt Creek and the Chippewa River. Through contributions from our members we raised over \$17,000 in just a couple of months to close that deal.

At our annual picnic in May we announced the pending transfer of the 43-acre Averill log banking grounds along the Tittabawassee River. That transfer from the Midland Area Community Foundation was completed in November. Planning began immediately to determine what amenities we could add to that property to restore some of its ecological functions, and also to interpret the unique history associated with this site.

Also at that picnic we welcomed five new board members to the Conservancy--Judy Enger, Carol Feider, Steve Kin, Elyse Rogers and Chris Velasquez--while we said good-bye to four of our founding board members, Bill Gibson, Gene Kenaga and Hugh and Eileen Starks.

Overall, 2003 was very exciting for us. As we look forward to 2004 we see many new challenges ahead such as the new endowment campaign, conservation easement donations, property acquisitions, new board members, and other new opportunities we are not even aware of at this time.

I thank each member of the board for the many hours they have given to the Conservancy and to the staff for their dedication and professionalism. I welcome the new board members into our organization and believe we are continuing on our path to a better community through the work of this organization.

—Daniel J. Cline
President



2003 LFC Donors

Thank you all for a great year! We cannot accomplish our work without your support. We've done our best to track your gifts and correctly spell your names. If you see any mistakes, we apologize in advance, and please call us so that we can correct our files!

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STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2003

UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS

Support and Revenue	
Grants and contributions	\$42,633
Contribution of land	124,500
Membership fees and other	33,085
Investment income	3,399
Appreciation (depreciation) of investments	31,170
Miscellaneous income	530
Net assets released from restrictions for specific purposes	
Time restrictions expired	<u>121,356</u>

Total support and revenue

356,673

Expenses

Programs	143,841
Administration	18,920
Fundraising	<u>27,653</u>

Total expenses

190,414

Change in unrestricted net assets

166,259

TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED NET ASSETS

Support and revenue (grants and contributions)	
Restricted for programs for future years	254,653
Restricted for specific purposes	19,601
Net assets released from restrictions	<u>(121,356)</u>

Change in temporarily restricted net assets

152,898

PERMANENTLY RESTRICTED NET ASSETS

Contributions	<u>2000</u>
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Change in permanently restricted net assets

2000

Change in net assets

321,157

Net assets at beginning of year

407,979

Net assets at end of year

\$729,136

Strosacker Matching Grant Continues

The grant awarded by the Charles J. Strosacker Foundation to match new member contributions continues throughout 2004. The Strosacker grant provides up to \$20,000 to match new member donations (and those of previous donors who had not made a gift since FY 2000) throughout 2003 and 2004.

As of May 15th LFC has received qualifying donations totaling \$10,275. We have only until the year's end to raise the remaining \$9,725 in matchable funds.

We are thankful to all who made contributions in 2003 and the first four months of 2004. Without your support we would not be able to move forward with new programs and new opportunities for land conservation in Mid-Michigan.

We will again be conducting a membership drive this summer and fall to seek new contributors to the Conservancy.

Join Us For a Preserve Workday!

Would you like to help clean up our preserves? Call or e-mail Elan (elipschitz@littleforks.org) for details on these scheduled workdays:

Steiner Preserve: Jun. 26, 9am - Noon
Averill Preserve: Jun. 16, 9am - Noon
 Jul. 13, 5pm - 8pm

Spreading the Word To Landowners

On May 12, 2004, the Conservancy hosted a meeting for landowners at the West Midland Family Center. Landowners were invited to come learn about conservation options available for their property. Look for more of these meetings in the future throughout the Conservancy's service area as we work to spread the word on the benefits of land conservation.

We offer a special thanks to Glenn Sanford and Debbie Anderson for their time and help with the meeting. To learn more about the work we do and land conservation options, call us at (989) 835-4886.

Thank You!

- We thank the following donors for their contributions to the LFC Land Fund. *Donations received Jan. 1 to May 15, 2004.*

Ceo Bauer	Glenn and Carol Sanford
Edward and Dorothy Elliott	Russell Teyner
Frank Gerace	Christian and Jenee Velasquez
Neil and Mary Hodges	William Wang
Doug and Shelley Koop	

- Thank you to **Ross and Arlene Thompson** for making a contribution to support the Conservancy's 52 week underwriting of the NPR show "Living on Earth" on WCMU radio.
- A Huge Thanks to **Little Forks Outfitters!** Bo Brines, owner, dedicated 10% of pre-tax sales on Earth Day, April 22 to LFC. A total of \$110 was deposited into the Land Fund in honor of Earth Day, and matched 2:1 under a grant from the Herbert H. and Grace A. Dow Foundation.

Welcome New Members

The Little Forks Conservancy welcomes the following members. Each of their gifts was matched by a grant from the Charles J. Strosacker Foundation. *Donations received Jan. 1 to May 15, 2004.*

Bill and Cathy Egerer	Geoffry and Jenifer Kusch
Rick and Donna Gross	Bruce and Suzanne Richards
Neil and Annemarie Hawkins	Charles and Darlene Wolohan
Ed and Brigitte Haycock	



Membership Gift:

- \$1,000
- \$500
- \$250
- \$100
- \$50
- \$25
- Other: _____

PLEASE ACCEPT MY CONTRIBUTION TO HELP PROTECT SIGNIFICANT NATURAL RESOURCES IN MY COMMUNITY.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

E-mail: _____

Phone: _____

- I would like to make an additional contribution of \$_____ to the Land Fund.
- Please send me information on protecting my land.

Donations are tax deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law.

Work Begins at The Averill Preserve

With the arrival of spring, Conservancy board members Ed Elliott and Glenn Sanford have gone right to work making a couple of quick improvements to the Averill preserve. Hoping to take advantage of the preserve's location between the Tittabawassee



During the flood events this spring we were able to evaluate the effects of high water on our property. Bridging the L&B Drain to provide safe pedestrian access to the lower sections of the preserve will be challenging!

River and the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail, the preserve team is working to create a trail to allow for access to the lower portion of the property.

The Conservancy is working with Justin Arnosky, a local Boy Scout, as part of his Eagle Scout service project to create a safe crossing of the L&B Drain by constructing a pedestrian bridge to span the drain. We will have to deal with Mother Nature as the photograph above shows our preferred location!

We wish to thank Matt Schaar and Brett Schwenke of Wilcox Professional Services, LLC of Saginaw

for assisting in the design and permitting for this project.

Plans are underway to create an historic interpretation area along the overlook, fix a couple of erosion problems on site, and create and install signs to mark our boundaries and recognize the Midland Area Community Foundation for their role in preserving this property.

If you would like to be a part of the work crew for this or other stewardship projects, please contact Elan at the Conservancy office, 835-4886. Work days are scheduled for June 9 (9am - Noon) and July 13th (5:00 - 8:00pm).

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