

**O**ur mission is to preserve farmland, open space and water resources in NW Waukesha County through open space preservation techniques and smart growth planning.

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**TALL PINES CONSERVANCY**

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# TALL PINES

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## CONSERVANCY

### TALL PINES GROWS INTO ITS NEW MISSION

*Written by William D. Biersach*

In the last issue of "Tall Pines" we introduced our new Strategic Plan for 2003-2008. The new "Mission" of the conservancy contained in that plan calls for an expansion of our scope of operations to all of Northwestern Waukesha County which includes the townships of Merton and Oconomowoc. To fulfill this new mission the plan also recognized that we needed to increase the size and diversity of our board of directors by adding people from outlying communities and others with skills critical to our broadened activities. In addition the plan calls for a larger base of volunteers to support the ongoing conservation monitoring work we would be undertaking.

We have been fortunate to have added three outstanding new board members over the past several months. Dan Burkward, who lives in the Town of Merton, is a long time resident of the area. Dan is active in the North Lake Management District's efforts to protect the quality of the lake environment and will share his expertise in lake management with us. He will also be working to expand our outreach with rural land owners in the area.

Truman Schultz from the Town of Oconomowoc and a farmland owner in the Mapleton area is a lifetime resident of the area. Truman is retired from the Waukesha County Parks and Land Use Department where he gained vast experience in land use and property maintenance. He will use his background in land planning and his many contacts in the county to help identify and conserve key open space properties.

Carran Frater Quadracci grew up in Nashotah and is happy to have returned to the area with her family after a period of big city living. She is eager to put her communication skills to work to help us improve our educational materials



*Photo by Patrick Dean*

and programs for landowners and community leaders.

We are also pleased to have John Paul Mesching from Ashippun as our new volunteer coordinator. John Paul will be leading a team of conservation monitoring volunteers who will be checking all of the conservation easements Tall Pines holds on properties throughout the area. It will be their job to see that only those changes provided for in the easement documents are undertaken on these properties. They will be looking at such things as their adherence to a conservation or land management plan, whether woodlands are being maintained, and if there has been any change to the topography of the land.

We welcome these new directors

*(continued on page 4)*

ask

# JEFF Q&A



Jeff Kante  
Village Forester

**QUESTION:**

**Why do we need to be watchful with Wild Parsnip?**

**ANSWER:**

Wild Parsnip is one plant that should have a warning label, "handle with care." Contact with the juice of the plant can cause a burn and blisters to the skin if exposed to sunlight. Affected areas may remain discolored for months after the blisters have healed.

An introduced plant, it has spread to Wisconsin and across much of the US. It is most often



found in open sunny areas such as roadsides, old fields and meadows. Anyone who spends time hiking or working in the field should learn to identify wild parsnip.

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## MIDWEST LAND TRUST CONFERENCE

*Written by Ted Rolfs*

Several Tall Pines Conservancy Directors were fortunate enough to attend the Midwest Land Trust Conference and came away re-energized and re-educated for their work in open space preservation. The conference was organized by the Land Trust Alliance, a national organization supporting local land trusts around the country, and Gathering Waters Conservancy our Wisconsin land trust support group. The conference brought together 200 land conservation devotees from throughout the Midwest to share their passion for land preservation and their different expertise with fellow attendees.

Technical seminars were interspersed with several inspirational talks dealing with the great importance of open space to our way of life and our feeling of security and well being. Topics ranged from "Legal and Tax Planning for Land Conservation" to "How to Deal with Invasive Plants" and provided a wealth of information to participants in virtually all critical fields. Each session emphasized participation from the audience, which led to lively sharing of experiences and ideas. It was apparent that all attendees had vast

stores of practical knowledge in the areas being discussed, and with a bit of encouragement were happy to share their experiences with their classmates in the interest of furthering conservation efforts.

The conference was also a wonderful opportunity to meet other conservation minded volunteers, staff members, and academics and to share stories about triumphs and setbacks in efforts to conserve open spaces. We were amazed at the similarity of issues in different parts of the Midwest and heartened by the success of conservation efforts in the face of relentless development pressure. We made important contacts with neighboring conservancies, which should be very helpful as we expand our scope of operation over the coming months.

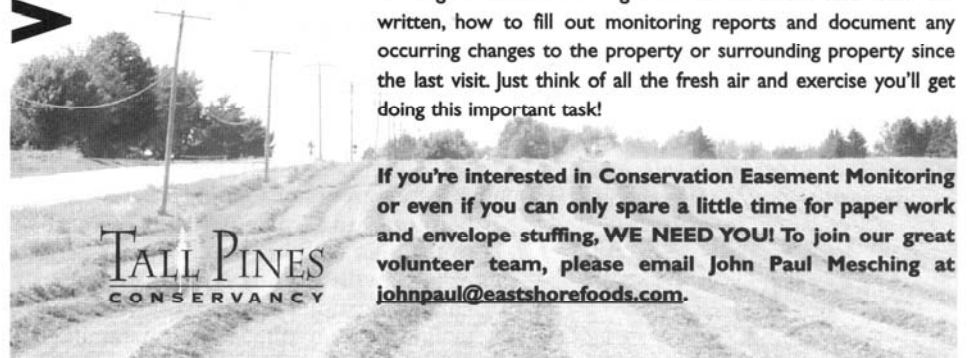
As one of our speakers said in concluding his remarks, "I can feel the strength of your commitment, and it gives me great comfort knowing we are all in the fight to preserve open space together." I think we all felt the same way as we headed back to our local conservation work at the end of the conference. ▲

## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR CONSERVATION EASEMENT MONITORING

TALL PINES CONSERVANCY NEEDS YOU!

**We have a new name, a new mission and many new projects that we need your help with. Even if you can only spare a little time, WE NEED YOU! If you love open space, farmland, lakes and streams, you'll be the perfect volunteer for us.**

One of the most important roles the Tall Pines Conservancy plays when accepting a conservation easement on a property is to oversee and enforce the terms of the easement into perpetuity. It's TPC's policy to monitor all conservation easements on an annual basis. Representatives of the TPC meet with landowners and walk the properties to ensure conditions of the easement are being upheld. We're looking for volunteer monitors to help us in this very important yearly task. Volunteer responsibilities include: attending a 2 hour training session held by John Paul Mesching, and a commitment to monitor at least one property per year. Depending on the size, each visit takes approximately 1-2 hours to complete. Training consists of seeing how conservation easements are written, how to fill out monitoring reports and document any occurring changes to the property or surrounding property since the last visit. Just think of all the fresh air and exercise you'll get doing this important task!



**If you're interested in Conservation Easement Monitoring or even if you can only spare a little time for paper work and envelope stuffing, WE NEED YOU! To join our great volunteer team, please email John Paul Mesching at [johnpaul@eastshorefoods.com](mailto:johnpaul@eastshorefoods.com).**

# A CAPITAL FUND FOR TALL PINES CONSERVANCY



We are hearing a familiar lament from local residents with increasing frequency. "If only we had moved more quickly to gain control of XYZ property, we wouldn't be fighting against unwanted development on it today." Often the property in question was owned by a family who would have much preferred conserving their land, but who for financial reasons felt that they needed to sell it to the highest bidder for maximum development value. If Tall Pines were able to approach such land owners with alternatives to the outright sale of their property and with the funds to implement these alternatives, we believe that a good deal of unwanted development could be avoided. This leads us to the need for a Tall Pines Capital Fund.

Our Capital Fund would actually be made up of two separate funds, an Acquisition Fund to support purchases of land and development rights and an Endowment Fund to generate income to help cover the ongoing expenses of monitoring conservation easements, the maintenance of Tall Pines properties, and the support of educational programs to make our community more aware of the conservation techniques available.

Fund raising for the Acquisition Fund would in most cases be directed toward the purchase of a particular parcel of land or the development rights to that parcel. Land owners often wish to remain in residence on a portion of their property, but need to raise cash while doing so. They are happy to hear that they can do so by selling the development rights to their "extra" land to Tall Pines rather than selling the land outright to a developer. In some cases the land owner may decide to retain some limited development rights for the property to achieve their financial goals.

Local residents who appreciate the value of our open space lands will be able to make tax deductible contributions to Tall Pines designated for a particular preservation project, knowing that their contribution will be used to limit or eliminate development of the

land involved. Land owners will have the satisfaction of seeing their land preserved in its natural state, while at the same time enjoying significant financial rewards.

Other local landowners may wish to make their own tax deductible contribution to Tall Pines of a conservation easement on their property. The conservation easement would limit

**LAND OWNERS WILL HAVE THE SATISFACTION OF SEEING THEIR LAND PRESERVED IN ITS NATURAL STATE, WHILE AT THE SAME TIME ENJOYING SIGNIFICANT FINANCIAL REWARDS.**

most development of the property in perpetuity, with Tall Pines given the task of monitoring the easement and insuring that the land remains in its natural state. Funds raised for the Tall Pines

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*Photo by Patrick Dean*

## WILD PARSNIP...

*(continued from page 2)*

The plant begins as a rosette of leaves early in the spring. This stage can last for several years before a thick, tall stalk topped with an umbel of yellow flowers appear. The stalk is often four feet tall and flowering can begin in late spring to early summer.

Wild Parsnip can spread rapidly once established, so early detection and removal is important. Due to the likelihood of serious skin problems when contact is made with the plant's juices, it is recommended to wear pants, long sleeves and gloves. Unlike poison ivy, no one is immune from its effects.

Control methods include cutting the root below ground with a shovel and mowing just after peak flowering or chemical control.

For more information, photos and links to other related sites, contact the WI DNR web page by visiting:

[www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/er/inv/asive/factsheets/parsnip.htm](http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/er/inv/asive/factsheets/parsnip.htm)

*If you have a question that you would like answered in the Ask Jeff column, please email him at [jkante@chenequa.org](mailto:jkante@chenequa.org) or write to the Tall Pines Conservancy, P.O. Box 65, Nashotah, WI 53058. ▲*

## TALL PINES FEEDBACK

*Email Us!*

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262-369-0500

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soon be seeking donations to the Acquisition Fund.

We are all coming to understand that our open spaces and the rural character they help create are themselves an important form of "capital." As we see these open spaces disappearing around us, we become more willing to trade some of our "financial" capital for "rural character" capital, by supporting conservation over full development. This bodes well for our efforts to build a Capital Fund to support our conservation initiatives. ▲

...ments can be put in place for them and their heirs.

Tall Pines Conservancy goal is to reach an increasing number of local

...preserve the remaining open spaces in our community. See *Volunteers Needed* on page 2 or fill out the enclosed *Annual Membership* form today! ▲

### Special Thanks to Patrick Dean Photography

Many of the photographs seen in the Tall Pines Conservancy newsletter as well as in other TPC communication materials have been donated by Patrick Dean Photography. Patrick has been involved in film photography for 27 years and digital for 8 years. Weddings, people and nature are his primary focus, as well as his recent work with the Milwaukee Ballet.

Please visit [www.patrickdean.com](http://www.patrickdean.com) to view his studio and gallery.

Visit Us & Join! [WWW.TALLPINESCONSERVANCY.ORG](http://WWW.TALLPINESCONSERVANCY.ORG)

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