

*Our mission is to
preserve our rural heritage
by protecting remaining
farmland, water resources,
natural areas and open spaces
impacting Northwestern
Waukesha County.*



SPRING 2011

PRESERVATION OF THE ZWIEG FAMILY FARM

by Kyle Zwieg

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TPC WELCOMES YOUR FEEDBACK

P.O. Box 65
Nashotah, WI 53058

tel 262-369-0500
fax 262-367-5245

email info@tallpinesconservancy.org
visit www.tallpinesconservancy.org

*Tall Pines Conservancy is a
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Being raised as the sixth generation on my family's 250-acre dairy farm has instilled in me a deep appreciation for conservation and preserving agriculture. Farming has been a part of our family since my great-great-great-grandparents immigrated to the United States from Germany in 1856. From across the Atlantic, Christian and Maria Zwieg came to settle in a river valley that is now in the northwest corner of the town of Ashippun. Over 150 years ago Christian and his wife began creating a homestead farm that saw time pass through the Civil War, World War I, the Great Depression, World War II

and countless other hardships that have brought businesses and a way of rural life to an end. Today, my wife Rachel and I have the ability to look back on the last century and a half and appreciate the toil and work the first generations exerted to create a life and foundation that could exist into the next millennium. Though different than the 1800s, today has brought new challenges to agriculture and rural living, ones that never been conceived over 150 years ago.

Situated just a few miles north of the City of Oconomowoc, our farm, along with many others in the area, provides a unique blend of urban and rural lifestyles. A short fifty-minute drive will put us in the cities of Milwaukee or Madison, something not common to farmers in other parts of our still fairly rural state. This situation provides many opportunities in marketing, and sales – but also leads to many difficult problems. As a whole, the towns of Lebanon and Ashippun are in a high-stakes location. Individuals seeking to escape from the denser, more populated areas have now begun to create exactly what they are trying to get away from. Two new subdivisions, on once-productive soils, have been built in Ashippun in the last five years alone. Sound familiar? Waukesha County, which the Town of Ashippun borders, has lost nearly 50% of its farms and farmland since 1970 due to urban sprawl. This area, between the two largest cities in the State, continues to have more pressure applied to its existing agricultural industry.

Our farm's eastern border is now just a few hundred yards from large apartment complexes and new houses that were built on prime agricultural land during the late 1990s. With one parcel remaining between the farm and Ashippun's residences, we are at a point of



From left: Joe and Lisa Zwieg, Kyle and Rachel Zwieg



Preservation of the Zwieg Maple Acres through the PACE program.

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ask
THE EXPERTS
Q&A



By Jason Dare

QUESTION:

WHY IS FIRE USED IN LAND MANAGEMENT FOR WAUKESHA COUNTY?

ANSWER:

As you drive around Waukesha County during the month of April, you may see prescribed fires being conducted on nature preserves, state lands or even your neighbor's wildflower areas. You may ask yourself, "Why are these fires occurring?" To answer this question, we must first explore the history of fire on our landscape and its impact on our local natural areas.

Fire has been a part of the Waukesha County landscape for as long as the environmental conditions were possible for ignition to occur either by lightning or by the human population that inhabited the area. The benchmark many ecologists look at to guide them is the time leading up to European settlement and the subsequent land surveyor's notes. For our county, 1836 gives us a snapshot of how fire played a role in Waukesha County. During this time our county was a mosaic of natural communities. Our county's uplands were dominated by oak savanna, scattered prairies, oak woodland (dry and dry-mesic forest), and southern mesic forest. Northwestern Waukesha County (Tall Pines' focus area), was covered by southern mesic forest (characterized by sugar maple, basswood and elms), oak woodland (better described as dry and dry mesic forest) dominated by white, red and sometimes bur oaks, and some oak savanna mainly in the southern part of Merton township. One reason much of Ashippun and Merton townships were dominated by forested communities was because of the high prevalence of lakes, rivers and wetlands that would stop or create low intensity landscape fires. This lack of fire is one reason this area was able to continue through succession and allow for forests to be established at that time.

In 1836, fire was started by two methods; lightning (rare in our region) or by humans. Lightning fires could occur anytime there was ample dry litter to burn and little green growth that would be too moist to allow for large landscape fires to occur. Spring and fall in our region provided the best time for this to happen.



Prairies could also ignite in dry summers due to drought if the conditions were right. Dry thunderstorms without rain also could have started fires during this time period.

The second and more frequent ignition of fires was from Native Americans setting them. Fires caused by Native Americans occurred for various reasons, either accidental or deliberately set. Accidental fires happened when campfires or deliberately-set fires escaped and ignited more land than was originally proposed from the action. Deliberate fires happened most often in spring or fall when dead grass and leaves were dry. Native Americans may have set fires in the summer if there

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ZWIEG FAMILY FARM... *(from page 1)*

critical mass. Productive land must be preserved to slow development and retain infrastructure for the surrounding agricultural community.

We as a family are not alone in the struggles of being agriculturalists on the fringe. There are many blessings that come with owning farms near urban centers but in order to preserve the still productive landscape we need incentives, and help, to create buffers. Establishing the Agricultural Enterprise Area (AEA) in the towns of Ashippun and Oconomowoc in 2010 was a necessary first step. Such an establishment is helping to pave the way for many other organizations and individuals seeking to take action and retain our working lands.

CALL TO ACTION!
PACE IS IN JEOPARDY OF BEING
ELIMINATED—WE NEED YOUR HELP!

The PACE program has been eliminated from the Governor's budget.

The first round of the PACE program had 16 selected applicants and proposed to preserve over 5000 acres of prime agricultural land across the State. The American Farmland Trust has orchestrated an amazing effort across the State among the agricultural community, land trusts, county planners, and the Towns Association to contact legislators to impress upon them the need to keep this vital program to not only retain a crucial industry in the State but also to fuel the further development of our State's economy by providing jobs, opportunities for innovation in turn "keeping the best and the brightest" here in our State for years to come.

PLEASE CONTACT YOUR
LEGISLATORS AND TELL THEM
TO RETAIN THIS PROGRAM at
<http://legis.wisconsin.gov/>

It was at a farmland preservation workshop in February of 2010 hosted by DATCP, the Towns of Ashippun and Oconomowoc, and TPC, that my Father, Joe and I became educated on the PACE (Purchase of Agricultural Conservation

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PROTECTING SPECIAL PLACES

by Carol Bell

What will forever be a part of my story? The land and farm. The greatest memorial to our family will be the farmland that stays behind, something you can touch and feel and smell. Something I can share with family and friends, neighbors and community.

"Leaving Behind Stories" by David Mas Masumoto

As a member of Tall Pines Board of Directors for more than 5 years, Steve Traudt assumed the position of Board President in January. Steve takes his new role as Board Chairman very seriously. His vision is that "Tall Pines Conservancy be seen as an asset to the community and a tool for property owners to achieve their long-term preservation goals." Steve views his chief responsibilities in his new role to be three-fold: maintaining the integrity of the organization; implementing new policies/procedures, and preserving more land.

"Having moved to the Lake Country area (Stone Bank) as a small boy, I have fond memories of growing up here. I always tell people, "I grew up in a great place at a great time." I remember what it was like cutting through farm fields with wide open spaces and room to explore. I am thankful for those days and would like my children to have an opportunity to enjoy similar experiences and to see the area the same way." Steve and his wife Kathleen currently reside in Nashotah with their three small children.

Steve's commitment to Tall Pines and its mission is inspired by the farms and beauty of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, where he visits close friends, as well as the natural open areas preserved surrounding St. Louis, Missouri, where his wife's family resides. In these communities, organizations similar to Tall Pines are committed to conserving, protecting and sustaining land and water resources. He believes that the great accomplishments in conserving open lands start with a

personal story, a great vision and then personal commitment.

"In many ways the community 'pays' if a property is developed, and in many ways the community 'benefits' when a property is preserved" Traudt said. "So I see a time



Steve Traudt, TPC's new President

in the near future when it is more common for us as individuals to recognize the benefits of preserving our rural character. We then come to the conclusion that supporting projects we think are important... is in our best interest."

Committed to the organization's mission, he has identified a number of goals to focus on during his 2 year term:

- Secure more land preservation opportunities
- Expand Tall Pines' awareness within the community
- Expand financial capabilities
- Build organizational capacity



Steve considers community awareness and education an area of great importance to Tall Pines. He values open lines of communication and working relationships with other civic associations, conservation organizations, and the general public. It is through these partnerships that our mission and goals will be understood and supported.

Steve believes that establishing and refining the "process" to initiate a new easement opportunities will help build support and awareness throughout the community. Success will be measured by seeing our membership grow and our preservation opportunities increase.

As owner of Traudt Properties, Inc., Steve brings more than 17 years of experience in all aspects of commercial real estate and provides a keen perspective and competence to Tall Pines Conservancy projects. He is licensed in Wisconsin, Missouri and Colorado. In addition to his leadership role with Tall Pines Conservancy, he serves as an HOA Board Member at the Steamboat Grand in Steamboat Springs, Colorado and has served as Vice President at The Captain Frederick Pabst Mansion. He is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee.

Tall Pines is fortunate to have the guidance and support of a Board President who shares a passion for the open lands of Western Waukesha County and the surrounding area. Steve will work diligently to protect the special places that define the community's unique character. ▲

EVERY OTHER THURSDAY

STARTING JUNE 2ND–SEPTEMBER 22ND, 2011
3–6PM • TYME OUT YOUTH CENTER PARKING LOT



LAKE COUNTRY
FARMERS MARKET

W332 N6786 County Road C
Nashotah, WI 53058

Intersection of County Road
C and K, Stone Bank

Local Produce • Dairy • Meat • Bread • Flowers • Workshops • Art

TPC IN ACTION



A team of wetland and stream biologists, North Lake Management District and TPC, study water quality in Mason Creek.

ASK THE EXPERTS... *(from page 2)*

was a reason to manipulate the environment to their needs. The Native Americans set fires for many different reasons, mainly to obtain food, reduce insects, ease daily living, and for war.

Native Americans used fire to drive and concentrate game such as elk, deer, rabbits and bison. It was more efficient to track and hunt animals after fires and concentrate them in areas that were unburned. After a burn, these areas provided more palatable succulent growth of new sprouts which attracted game to be hunted. Burnt areas also provided easier walking and were void of dry grass and leaves. This made hunting easier and less noisy.

Clearing areas for agriculture was no easy task, so Native Americans used fire to conduct the initial clearing of the land for the active cultivation of corn, beans, squash and pumpkins. Besides planting crops, gathering was a huge food source for Native Americans. They used fire to stimulate berry and nut production. Fires also made it easier to harvest and locate acorns and nuts from trees like oaks and hickories after low intensity fires removed the leaf litter from the ground.

Another reason for burning was the daily or seasonal annoyance of insects as pest impacting the native's lives. They used fire to remove unwanted insects like ticks and mosquitoes near their settlements. These freshly burned areas also attracted insect-eating bird species. This made life more tolerable for natives by reducing the insects and also may have made harvesting a few of the larger species of birds such as waterfowl, turkeys, and sharp-tail grouse.

Native Americans used fire for structural and tactical reasons as well. For example, it has been documented that natives used fire in battles with other tribes to drive them away or attempt to burn them during a battle. It could also be

used in communication as a signal that could be seen for many miles. Fires also were set in areas near native settlement more frequently to reduce the chance of a high intensity fire occurring near camp from accumulated thatch over the years.

The natives set the fires for their benefit while promoting the species that were adapted to, could benefit from or could tolerate the fire that they set. Fire therefore played a

major role on what thrived in our region during this time. Some species benefited from fire, others barely tolerated it, but it was a process which provided another check in the balance of nature. As we try to maintain, enhance, restore or recreate our natural areas, ecologists engaged in management are using fire as a tool in their collective toolbox.

The high-quality natural areas that do remain are a measuring stick for ecologists: where fire played a role in the past, we have an option to use it currently. Fire is a tool that, if used appropriately, can help maintain the species' richness in a natural area and potentially enhance local populations. In summary, fire is used on the landscape for management because it historically occurred here and played a role in defining what inhabited the region. In the Fall newsletter, I will describe the process. ▲

Jason Dare is the Principal Ecologist with Dare Ecosystem Management, LLC. An Ecological Services and Management company based in Sullivan, WI. DEM, LLC conducts prescribed burns throughout southeastern Wisconsin. Visit www.dareecosystemmanagement.com.

SAVE THE DATE! 2011 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JULY 24TH, SUNDAY



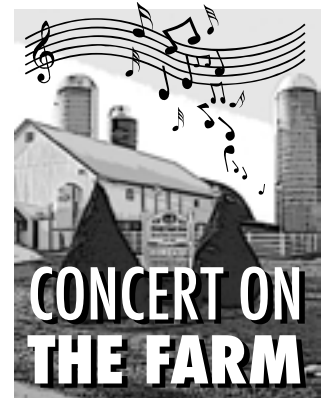
Join us, Faye Gehl Conservation Foundation and the Friends of Beaver Lake for a cookout and learn all about sustainable shoreline restoration.
4:30pm to 7:30pm

AUGUST 27TH, SATURDAY

Ride to the Barns

Sign up for a 32-mile or 60-mile bike tour of Lake Country. Taste farm fresh foods and visit local farms along the way.
8:00am to 3:00pm

OCTOBER 1ST, SATURDAY



Join us for an upbeat concert at the Zwieg Maple Acres Farm. Music by **Michael Perry & the Long Beds**. Michael Perry is the Wisconsin author of *Coop and Truck: A Love Story*. Hear his stories, taste local food, picnic over looking the Rock River and enjoy music!

For more information, visit www.tallpinesconservancy.org or email info@tallpinesconservancy.org.

ZWIEG FAMILY FARM... (from page 2)

Easement) program. Preserving our farm has always seemed natural to our family and the PACE program seemed to be a perfect fit for our operation. John Koepke, of Koepke Farms, the DATCP board and Town of Oconomowoc Board, spoke eloquently about the need for “someone to step forward and go first” and apply to the PACE program. After the day concluded my father and I discussed the possibility of applying, and decided that we should move ahead. We wanted to show our commitment to preserving our farm for future generations and to be an example for others in the surrounding area to follow. TPC worked diligently along side of us and in a month we had an application submitted to the first round of the PACE program. We were ecstatic to learn we’ve been selected for the program in July.

The productive soils, longstanding agricultural heritage, and ability to grow and prosper are cornerstone reasons our farm situated in the town of Ashippun well-suited for PACE. The PACE program works to preserve the BEST agricultural land, and benefits all within communities that embrace agriculture. The timing is perfect, and with the help of a broad coalition of supporters, the history and future of a Sesquicentennial Farm like ours will be bright for another 150 years to come. ▲

Securing funding and placing a conservation easement on the Zwieg Farm, through the PACE (Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easement program) would create an example and place state resources in arguably the most critical area of Wisconsin. The towns of Lebanon and Ashippun are still very rural areas, but are on the fringe, and with assistance could be preserved for many generations to come. Many jobs and services provided by all local farms positively contribute to the area’s economy and community.

Both communities are largely dependent on production agriculture and residents’ support and embrace the conservation of agriculture. Let’s not forget that Agriculture is a \$5- billion industry in this state and these programs not only work to retain an important industry but also to expand it and, in return, it will provide economies of scale within the surrounding area for growing more business and jobs.

FROM THE... EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

CHANGES IN THE WIND

TRUMAN SCHULTZ LEAVES A LEGACY

A lot has happened since Truman Schultz took the reins as President of TPC in 2008. Truman came to the TPC board in 2006, bringing a solid background in landscape architecture and land use planning, having worked for Waukesha Parks and Planning for over 30 years. Adding the fact that he owns and resides on a lovely historic farm in the Town of Oconomowoc, covered a lot of bases in rounding out our board. When asked to become the President in 2008, Truman stepped up to the plate and accepted the role with determination, decency, humility and humor. During his tenure, he moved us forward toward accreditation, by making sure we crafted new policies and procedures up to standards of excellence. We made great strides in our farmland preservation efforts due to Truman’s leadership; he was instrumental in the development of the Ashippun/Oconomowoc Agricultural Enterprise District and the selection of the Zwieg farm in the PACE program. Truman never missed a



meeting and especially enjoyed his role on the conservation committee, where our conservation plan was crafted and our land management practices implemented. As staff, we enjoyed working with Truman, who always plied us with compliments and gratitude, as well as his unique perspective on matters! Even though his tenure as President has ended, and we embark on a new era with our new President, Steve Traudt, we are thrilled that Truman will remain on the board and continue to work with us to meet our future goals.



Susan Buchanan

A BIG THANKS TO KATIE BRUMDER

In 2006, when our only staff person left the organization, Katie Brumder volunteered to step in and help out for “a while.” Four and a half years later, and after a lot of great work, Katie has resigned from Tall Pines to pursue other opportunities and ambitions in life. Katie has been a true joy to work with, managing to create and facilitate our fundraising and events with ease and grace. She contributed an amazing amount of time and energy to Tall Pines, demonstrating her commitment to the organization and, as a result of her hard work, we achieved our fundraising goals every year! She will be sorely missed, however the good news is she agreed to continue working with us as a volunteer on our development committee!

WELCOME TO CAROL BELL

Please help us welcome Carol Bell as our new development coordinator. Carol comes to us with a significant background in fundraising, business development, client relations, marketing and event planning. We look forward to her contributions! Carol will be in the office on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays. Alex Haroldson has joined us as communications intern once again, from UW-Whitewater. Alex is working on our social media—you may already have seen the fruits of her labor on our new and improved Facebook page!

IN MEMORY OF GUY KIECKHEFER—A CONSERVATION HERO

Guy Kieckhefer cherished his 65 acre family farm in the Town of Merton and was dedicated to preserving it as his legacy. In 2005, Guy and his wife Paddy, worked with Tall Pines to place a conservation easement on the property with a purchase of development rights on 43 acres. Tall Pines is continuing the program incrementally each year until the development rights on the remaining 22 acres are purchased. An article celebrating Guy’s life and commitment to land conservation will appear in the Tall Pines Conservancy Fall newsletter. ▲

Read more at WUWM Milwaukee Public Radio at:
www.wuwm.com/programs/news/view_news.php?articleid=8337.

Executive Director

TALL PINES CONSERVANCY PRESENTS
Ride to the Barns
 SATURDAY, AUGUST 27TH
 2011

A FUND-RAISING EVENT
 TO BENEFIT LAND CONSERVATION



BIKE TOUR OF LAKE COUNTRY
 REST STOPS AT LOCAL FARMS
 TASTE LOCAL FOOD

Schedule of Events: 9:00am, 62-mile route departs • 10:00am, 30-mile route departs
 1:00-3:00pm, join us for post ride refreshments and more local food
 Bikers depart from Camp/Quad, 6886 County Road Q, Washington Cty (Hwy Q & Hwy 83)

Registration: Before August 1st: \$50 per person • After August 1st: \$75 per person
 To register, visit www.tallpinesconservancy.org or email info@tallpinesconservancy.org.

WE NEED YOU!

Join us for a
Garlic Mustard Pull at
 Camp/Quad on Wednesday,
May 11th from 4-7pm.
 We'll bag up that nasty stuff,
 then celebrate with a barbeque
 in the warming house!
 Please RSVP to
info@tallpinesconservancy.org.



*Garlic Mustard is a threat to Wisconsin's
 woodlands and wildlife areas.*

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