



*Protecting Land For Future Generations*



# Newsletter

Volume 14  
Spring 2008

## *Family Farm Preserved in Jackson County*

### **Southwestern Illinois RC&D Council**

Matt Willman - Bond  
Lester Harnetiaux - Bond  
Emily Hartmann - Bond  
Darrell Brink - Clinton  
Edwin Varel - Clinton  
Ronald Schroeder - Clinton  
Richard Schrupf - Madison  
Zane Schneider - Madison  
Hal Patton - Madison  
Harvey Hoffmann - Monroe  
Ralph Buettner - Monroe  
Delbert Wittenauer - Monroe  
Stephen Gonzalez - Randolph  
Ed Crow - Randolph  
Ray Nitzsche - Randolph  
Kevin Terveer - Regional  
Jonathan McLean - St. Clair  
Patricia Watkins - St. Clair  
C. David Tiedemann - St. Clair  
Glen Bowers - Washington  
David Droste - Washington  
Brent Schorfheide - Washington

### **Stewardship Committee**

Ralph Buettner, Mark Badasch  
Carl Daubach, Penelope Daubach,  
Dave Eustis, Mike Fruth, Philip  
J. Harris, Mitze Nitzsche, Ray  
Nitzsche, George Obernagel, Glen  
Schuetz, Barb Taylor, C. David  
Tiedemann  
Steve Black, Coordinator  
Linda Wegrzyn, Marketing Mngr.

In December 2007, David Warner and his sister Kathleen Warner Manfredi signed a conservation easement to protect their 66.5 acre family farm about three miles southeast of Carbondale, Illinois. Their grandparents, Roy and Gussie McDaniel, bought the land in 1918 from their great grandmother's family. The farm is currently grassland and woodland and contains the original house and farm buildings. The surrounding area is rapidly becoming urbanized with large lot developments and commercial areas along the highway.

David and Kathleen stated that "It is with a great sense of satisfaction, pride, and reverence for this land that we convey certain rights to The Land Conservancy for them to forever hold, monitor, and protect. We do it so that this land we hold so dear can be enjoyed and appreciated long after we are gone. It is our hope that we have made it possible for you to also enjoy and help preserve this bit of wildland for future generations to enjoy."

The farm contains open grasslands and mature wooded areas, two ponds, and diverse wildlife habitat. The farm is located along Giant City Road and will now help to maintain a scenic view that is being rapidly changed by urban development. The conservation easement allows agricultural uses, but prohibits residential and commercial use of the property forever.

David and Kathleen have many memories of family life at the farm and of growing up in that rural setting. "The woods around our house became a sanctuary for our entire family," they stated. "We loved the trees, birds, wild animals, the isolation and the quietness. Dad named our home Woodhaven to describe the feeling he always had there."



There are currently no land trusts operating in southern Illinois. The Stewardship Committee has therefore determined that it is in the best interests of protecting open space to assist with holding easements in this area until a land trust begins operations in this region.

**Illinois has the finest soils in the world for agricultural production. Of the 36 million acres in the state, 21 million acres are considered prime farmland.**

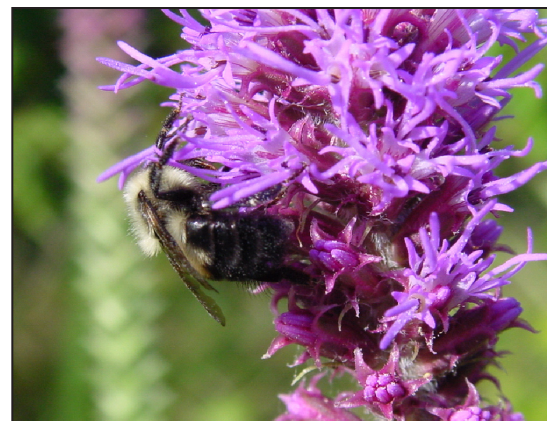
## *Thank You to the Monsanto Fund for a \$25,000 Grant to TLC*

The Monsanto Fund approved a \$25,000 grant to TLC to support continued outreach efforts and to provide assistance to landowners developing a conservation easement. This is the second such grant the Monsanto Fund has provided to TLC. The funding will help support activities through 2008. We appreciate the support of the Monsanto Fund in helping to protect our natural resources for future generations.

## *Help Protect Pollinators*

Imagine living in a world without flowers, fruit, or even a cup of coffee. Thanks to the work of bees, butterflies, birds, and other animal pollinators, the world's flowering plants are able to reproduce and bear fruit. Yet there is recent evidence indicating alarming pollinator population declines worldwide. Domesticated honey bees are not the only pollinators in trouble. Many species of butterflies, moths, birds, bats and other pollinators are also in retreat, threatening not only food crops, but also a wide range of flowering plants, including rare and endangered species.

Over one hundred crop species in North America require a visit from an insect pollinator to be most productive. In the past, native bees and feral honey bees could meet the pollination needs of growers. Today, many farms are large and, at the same time, have less nearby habitat to support native pollinators. Producers must now rely on European honey bees. Research, however, shows that native bees can be important agricultural pollinators as long as enough habitat is available.



**We can all help protect local populations of pollinators in our backyard or farm.** This information, which is provided by the USDA National Agroforestry Center, pertains to all bees; but emphasis is on providing habitat for native species:

- **Provide access to a diversity of plants** with overlapping blooming times so that flowers are available to forage from early in the spring until late in the fall. Find native species at your local nursery or [www.grownative.org](http://www.grownative.org)
- **Give native bees places to nest.** Provide undisturbed natural areas and standing dead trees or branches so bees can be at home. Windbreaks reduce wind speed and provide more favorable conditions for bee activity, which can increase crop pollination and yield.
- **Protect pollinators from pesticides.** Most insecticides are primarily broad-spectrum and are therefore deadly to bees and other pollinators. Furthermore, indiscriminate herbicide use can remove many of the flowers that bees need for food. Never apply insecticides to plants in flower and apply herbicides in the most targeted way possible (e.g., spot spraying). If you must use them, use the most selective and least toxic ones and apply them at night or late afternoon when most pollinators aren't active.

### **For more information, visit these websites:**

USDA National Agroforestry Center -Improving Forage For Native Bee Crop Pollinators

<http://www.unl.edu/nac/agroforestrynotes/an33g07.pdf>

North American Pollinator Protection Campaign [www.nappc.org](http://www.nappc.org)

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service <http://www.fws.gov/pollinators/>

Haagen Daz & Honey Bees [www.helpthehoneybees.com](http://www.helpthehoneybees.com)

## *Farmland Protection Bill for the Metro-East*

Lancaster County, Pennsylvania began a program in 1984 to keep working farms in production and protect farmland from conversion to urban developments. The county purchased voluntary conservation easements and currently have protected 715 farms totaling 60, 542 acres over the last 20+ years. They are currently protecting about 4,000 acres per year with the purchase of development rights programs. The land stays in private ownership and continues to operate as a viable farming unit.

A similar effort could be initiated in the Metro-east area if local citizens, municipalities, and governments wanted to maintain agriculture enterprises and farmland in the region. A current bill in the Illinois General Assembly, SB 1992, would give counties in Illinois the authority to set up a farmland protection program using a county-wide referendum. This legislation would be the first step toward enabling local citizens and governments to develop a process for protecting agriculture and open space in a community. The bill passed the Senate on April 16th.

Farmland provides many benefits to the citizens of this region. We should strive to protect those lands that are essential to our economy and our environment. Tell your local legislators, leaders, and government officials that you feel it is important to protect our farmland and open space in this region.

## *Conservation Easements Are Forever*

A story aired in March by National Public Radio about a conservation easement on a 1,000 acre ranch in Wyoming that was broken by the easement holder, the local county government. Unfortunately, the article focused on one easement of the many thousands in the state and nation and implied that all easements were at risk of being revoked. The facts in this situation are complex, but the bottom line is that the easement may have been unique and because one is revoked does not mean all easements are not a permanent way of protecting your land.



There are some key items that are important to making sure your conservation easement is going to be secure:

- Strong land trusts, like The Land Conservancy, are critical to conserving lands in that their mission is permanent protection of the conservation values. They are not going to be diverted from that goal by other local issues or pressures.
- Land trusts have adopted professional standards and practices to ensure sound transactions and permanent protection of land.
- Conservation easements are drafted as legally enforceable documents that protect the conservation values on the land and they are permanent. They have withstood many legal and court tests.
- The Land Conservancy has a very restrictive policy on amending conservation easements that makes sure the easement donor's restrictions are not changed in the future.

If you have questions regarding the permanence of a conservation easement, please call Steve Black, Land Conservancy Coordinator, at 618-566-4451 x20 to discuss your concerns.

## Farmland Loss in Illinois



### MISSION OF THE LAND CONSERVANCY

*To work regionally to protect agricultural, forest, and other natural lands in order to provide for open space, landscape diversity, sustainable agriculture, wildlife habitat, and conservation benefits for present and future generations.*

Illinois has the finest soils in the world for agricultural production. Illinois is 3<sup>rd</sup> in the nation in the total amount of prime farmland soils. Of the 24 million acres of cropland in Illinois, 19 million (80%) are considered prime farmland. This is the highest percentage of any state in the nation.

Given the large amount of prime farmland, it is easy to think that preservation is not really necessary. There is so much farmland in this state and in this area; who cares if some is converted to urban uses? But the trends are worrisome. We are converting about **5,000 acres** of land a year in this region to urban uses and about **50,000 acres** per year in Illinois. Farmland provides food, fiber, and energy production, wildlife habitat, clean air and water, and open scenic views.

We now import about 50% of our oil from other countries and many feel that is too much. If we get to the point of importing 50% of our food from other countries, will people be concerned? Maybe that won't happen in the short term, but do we want to give up our prime farmland and our producing capacity and perhaps face that situation in the future?

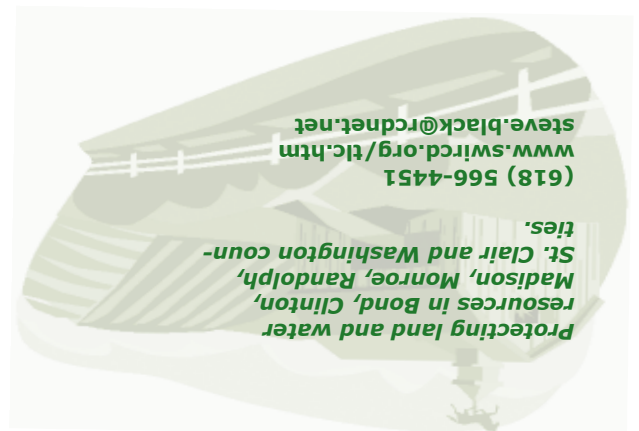


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