



Livingston Land Conservancy  
P.O. Box 236  
Brighton, MI 48116-0236

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**Board of Directors**

- Roy Schwarz, *President*  
Marion Township
- Sara Thomas, *Vice-President*  
Genoa Township
- Gary Edwards, *Treasurer*  
Tyrone Township
- Patti Nicholson, *Secretary*  
Putnam Township
- Bob Henshaw  
Oceola Township
- Katie LaCommare  
City of Howell

**Meeting Dates & Times**

We meet the second Monday of every month at 6:15 p.m. at the Livingston Land Conservancy field office located at 10315 E. Grand River Avenue, Suite 201 at Fonda Place in Brighton.

- April 11, 2011
- May 9, 2011
- June 13, 2011
- July 11, 2011
- August 8, 2011
- September 12, 2011

Livingston Land Conservancy  
P.O. Box 236  
Brighton, MI 48116-0236  
(810) 229-3290  
info@livingstonlandconservancy.org  
www.livingstonlandconservancy.org

# LIVINGSTON LAND CONSERVANCY

Spring, 2011

Volume 12 Number 1

## Year in Review

Our Spring Newsletter is designed to review activities throughout the past year as well as highlight key upcoming events. In summary, the Conservancy had a very good year that surpassed our expectations. We held elections that resulted in a smooth transition in leadership, we acquired new property that enlarged an existing preserve in Hartland, we had a successful year in fundraising and we moved forward on developing strategic plans focusing on conservation, membership/fundraising and Board development. One sad note in 2010, long-time Board member and friend, Kernie King, passed away. His dedication to the organization, his unwavering stewardship of the land, and his friendship will truly be missed.

### Membership

We want to thank all our members and contributors for their continued support in 2010. The Conservancy would not be able to exist and function without this generous support of time, talent, and money. We began developing a new database this past year which will allow us to communicate more rapidly and effectively with our membership. In addition, you will see more web-based applications and we hope to revamp our website and publish an e-version of the newsletter for those who would rather receive information electronically. All of these actions will help lower our overall costs so we can maximize the amount of money going directly towards land purchases and stewardship.

We had two people voluntarily leave the Board of Directors this year and we want to recognize Lori and Bill Cowan for their years of hard work and service – thank you! With a decrease in numbers and to be a more effective organization, we are in the process of recruiting new members to the Board of Directors. If you have interest in being an active Board member, please contact any current Board member. We also have a goal to increase our general membership in 2011 and you will be hearing more about this effort in the coming months.

Our annual meeting was held on June 23rd at the LESA building in Howell. Following a short business meeting, a presentation on Africa was given by Roy Schwarz, PhD. These contained images from trips that he and his wife, Joann, took to Botswana, Malawi, South Africa, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. Watch for more information in the future on the upcoming 2011 annual meeting to be held in June.

### Land Acquisition

The mission of the Conservancy is to protect the natural heritage and rural character of the greater Livingston County area. This is achieved primarily through land preservation resulting from the direct purchase of land, land donated to the Conservancy, or the establishment of conservation easements. At the present time, the LLC has 571 acres preserved across Livingston County.

We celebrated a major success in 2010 – the addition of 35 acres to the Round Lake of Hartland Nature Preserve. This brings the total of the preserve to 45 acres and protects a variety of animals and their habitats, as well as maintaining a high quality watershed. We thank everyone who actively participated in achieving this acquisition, particularly those individuals who financed this purchase through direct gifts or loans.

As detailed elsewhere in the newsletter, we are happy to announce that we completed purchase of a 9 acre prairie fen on Coon Lake Rd. in Genoa Township. This is a unique property that is unlike any other parcel already under our protection.

### Land Stewardship

Once we acquire a property, we become stewards of the land. At a minimum, each property is monitored yearly and this includes checking the condition of the entire property, maintaining signs, documenting plant and animal species, and checking for use violations. In some cases, this entails something as simple as walking the boundary and checking no hunting signs while in other cases it means clearing paths, fixing or replacing signs, cutting brush and fallen trees, or removing invasive plant species. There are many great opportunities for members to go out on the land and at the same time to be actively involved in our stewardship

## JOIN US ON FACEBOOK!

website: [www.livingstonlandconservancy.org](http://www.livingstonlandconservancy.org)  
email: [info@livingstonlandconservancy.org](mailto:info@livingstonlandconservancy.org)

## Upcoming Activities

### Prescribed Burn (Not open to the public)

**Date:** Early to mid-April  
**Location:** Arthur M. Pasinski Memorial Preserve - Howell

David Mindell and his fire crew at PlantWise in Ann Arbor will be conducting a day-long prescribed burn of the majority of the preserve. This will help eliminate the woody, invasive species that are pushing out the native rare plants; provide rich nutrients for new growth; and encourage native fire-dependent seeds to germinate. (See separate article.)

### Preserve Dedication

**Date:** Sat., April 30, 2011 - 10:00 a.m.  
**Location:** Kernie King Memorial Fen - Genoa Township

Preserve is located on Coon Lake Road, just west of Chilson Road. Conservancy will reveal main preserve sign, discuss the history of the property and the unique ecosystem that exists there. Due to parking constraints, please RSVP to [info@livingstonlandconservancy.org](mailto:info@livingstonlandconservancy.org) or 810-229-3290.

### Migratory Songbird Hike

**Date:** A weekend day in May (date TBD)  
**Location:** Round Lake of Hartland Nature Preserve - Hartland

Park along Blaine Road, south of Wal-Mart. We'll walk with well-known birder, Dan Minock, in this floodplain forest to look for some of the rarer warblers like the yellow-throated and prothonotary and other forested wetland dependent songbirds. Boots are a necessity. To be kept informed of the scheduled date, contact us at [info@livingstonlandconservancy.org](mailto:info@livingstonlandconservancy.org) or 810-229-3290.

### After the Burn Hike

**Date:** Sat., May 21, 2011 - 10:00 a.m.  
**Location:** Arthur M. Pasinski Memorial Preserve - Howell

Preserve is located on the south side of Bigelow Road, west of Latson Road. Parking will be at the Hutchings Elementary School entrance

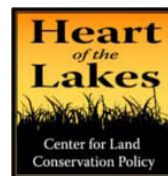
on the north side of the road. Dress for the weather and wear sturdy boots/shoes. We'll explore the regeneration of the landscape after the prescribed burn in April and look for the native species we are protecting.

### Annual Meeting - Butterflies!

**Date:** Thur., June 23, 2011 - 7:00 pm  
**Location:** Brighton District Library

Special guest and butterfly expert, Brenda Dziedzic co-founder and president of the Southeast MI Butterfly Association, will give an interesting program on how to attract butterflies to your yard with native plantings as well as the current state of the butterfly population. Refreshments will be served.

We are members of:



(continued from Page 1)

activities. Let us know if you would be interested in volunteering.

We had a paid intern this year to help with stewardship activities. Tyler Loehr, a college student, was hired to work on various portions of our stewardship plan. It worked out very well and we hope to have Tyler back this summer. If there are additional funds available, we may try to expand the program in the future.

The following is a list of our currently owned properties with a few selected highlights from our stewardship reports:

- Arthur M. Pasinski Memorial Nature Preserve (40 acres in Oceola Township); spring nature walk; land surveyed in fall for future burning to revive plant species.
- Charles & Albert Parker Families Nature Preserve (5 acres in Brighton); trail cleared, invasive plants removed; prairie area put under restoration.
- H. Clare & Harold Salmon Centennial Farm Conservation Easement (72 acres in Oceola Township); boundaries checked.
- Cranberry Creek Meadows Conservation Easement (90 acres in Deerfield Township); boundaries checked.
- Kovacs Family Conservation Easement (109 acres in Handy Township); boundaries checked
- Logan Lakes Nature Preserve (7 acres in Oceola Township); mainly wetlands
- Northumberland Nature Preserve (89 acres in Handy Township); garlic mustard removed; deer stand found on property (removed in Jan).
- Reichert Nature Preserve (100 acres in Putman and Dexter Townships; jointly held with Legacy Land Conservancy); creek heading toward Little Portage Lake explored and monitored.
- Round Lake of Hartland Nature Preserve (45 acres in Hartland Township); boundary signs put up; clean-up day held in March; dedication of preserve held in May.
- Unadilla Nature Preserve (13 acres in Unadilla Township); boundaries checked.

**Fundraising**

The major fundraising event for the LLC is Land on the Horizon and this year, it was held at the Lakelands Country Club on Oct. 2nd. It was a great success with higher attendance than in previous years. There was music, great food, and many unique items were auctioned off during the course of the night (thanks to our auctioneer, Rick Thomas). Over \$8000 was raised for land acquisition and stewardship. A big thank you to everyone making this possible!

The addition of 35 acres to the Round Lake of Hartland Nature Preserve was accomplished by outright purchase of the land. The money for the purchase was raised through donations and also by obtaining loans from friends and supporters of the LLC. At the present time, we have paid back a portion of the loans and are actively fundraising to pay off the remaining \$40,000.00. Our goal for the year is to entirely retire these loans by December.

In addition to Land on the Horizon, a golf outing was held in June at the Majestic Golf Course (thank you to Bill Fountain) in support of the Round Lake land purchase and we hope to hold a second outing in 2011 (date TBD).

**Grants**

The Conservancy works closely with the MI offices of the Land Trust Alliance and the Heart of the Lakes Center for Conservation Policy on issues relating to land conservation and protection. The LLC currently holds grants totaling \$18,000 administered by these offices, with portions being part of a program called Advancing Conservancy Excellence (ACE program). The grants focus on developing a strategic conservation plan, a comprehensive fundraising and membership plan, and Board support and development. In addition to impacting current activities, outcomes associated with these plans will be ultimately be used for obtaining accreditation.

**Education and Communication**

In addition to making the public aware of our organization and its activities, part of our mission is to promote an appreciation and understanding of the environment for the long-term benefit of the public. In the past year, we have participated in Earth Day activities in Howell, Heritage Day in Hartland, set-up information tables at farmer's markets in Brighton and Howell (spear-headed by LLC member Jan Thurston), attended various conferences in MI put on by the Land Trust Alliance and Heart of the Lakes Center such as "Drafting Easements in Perpetuity" and "Recording" and participated in the "Ask an Attorney" series of teleconferences. Also, Board member, Gary Edwards, became a member of the Livingston County Parks and Recreation Committee. In June, we sponsored a hot air balloon at the MI Challenge (Balloonfest) in Howell to gain greater awareness within the community of the Conservancy. On July 19th, Sara Thomas gave a presentation at the Brighton library which included a walk in the Parker Nature Preserve.

**Other**

We had a transition in leadership in 2010 as we re-defined leadership roles for some individuals and moved into a committee-based system of operations. Roy Schwarz, PhD was elected president, Sara Thomas was elected Vice President, Gary Edwards was elected as Treasurer, and Patti Nicholson was elected secretary. As a side note, we would like to congratulate Patti and her husband, Brian, on the birth of their first child, Katie, in December. (That's one way to increase membership in the LLC).

We belong to a variety of civic, conservation, and environment-focused organizations and actively participate with these groups whenever possible. These are: Heart of the Lakes Center of Conservation Policy, Howell Chamber of Commerce, Land Trust Alliance, MI Bird Conservation, SE MI Conservancies Collaboration, and the Stewardship Network. Of note, the SE MI Conservancies Collaboration is beginning to develop a regional "green plan" that encompasses all of southeast Michigan. We also work closely with the Huron River Watershed Council on their Bioreserve Project since the Huron river system is the major watershed in southern Livingston County.

**Acquisition of a Rare Place: The New Kernie King Memorial Fen**

by Sara Thomas

It took some time for this to happen. Six years to be exact - our original pursuit of the 9-acre parcel got stalled out by title complications. The ownership issue did get resolved eventually and now, we are really thrilled to be the owners of a very unique wetland known as a prairie fen. It is located on Coon Lake Road, just west of Chilson Road in Genoa Township, Howell. The funds used for this purchase were from the former MDEQ and were the result of a fine imposed on a developer in southeast MI for damage that had been done to a like ecosystem. Our former long-time board member and Stewardship Chair, Kernie King, who passed away in the spring of 2010, was the person who found this piece of biological paradise and since he had a special appreciation for the rare plants that grow there, we have named this unique place after him: Kernie King Memorial Fen. He would be pleased, no doubt.

Prairie fens are considered very vulnerable due to their limited range - both state and world wide - and to their conversion to other uses. (The original owner had purchased the land back in the 1960s with the intent of mining peat from it to sell.) Fens are dependent on groundwater springs that percolate to the surface. In this case, the Chilson Creek runs through the property eventually making its way to Lake Erie. There are different zones that occur as well depending on soil saturation and topography which make for the diversity of unusual species high. A couple interesting features are the hummocks (mounds of decaying plant material that are essentially their own mini ecosystems) and giant ant mounds that are located on the dryer, woody slope. We are anxious to obtain a botanical review on this property to truly understand everything that might be there.

The Conservancy will be holding a dedication for this new preserve on Saturday, April 30, 2011 at 10:00 a.m. Parking is limited so we ask that people RSVP so we can make arrangements as necessary. Contact us at info@livingstonlandconservancy.org or 810-229-3290.

**Fundraising Opportunities**

When planning your outdoor yard work and pool maintenance, please consider using Todd's Services & Landscaping and Tim's Total Pool Supplies. By mentioning the Livingston Land Conservancy, they will donate 3% of the contract price to us as a donation. Contact Todd's Services at 810-231-2778 and Tim's Total Pool Supplies at 517-552-6088.

We are now participating in the VG's Community Share Fund! Save your receipts and then mail them to us so we can submit them for a 1% rebate of the total. Thank you for helping us!

**The purpose of the Livingston Land Conservancy is to protect the natural heritage and rural character of the greater Livingston County area by preserving quality natural areas and productive farmland as well as to promote an appreciation and understanding of the environment for the long-term benefit of the public.**

If you share our goals, please clip & mail this form:

YES! I want to help preserve the natural heritage and rural character of the Greater Livingston County area. Please enroll me as a member as marked:

_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual	\$15 – \$29
<b>Name</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Subscriber	\$30 – \$49
_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Supporter	\$50 – \$99
<b>Address</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Conservator	\$100 – \$249
_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Steward	\$250 – \$499
<b>City</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Guardian	\$500 – \$999
<b>State</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor	\$1000 +
<b>Zip</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Other	\$ _____

**Area Code & Phone Number**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Email Address**

Please send information about how to include LLC in my estate plans.

Please send information about how to protect my land.

Please mail to:  
Livingston Land Conservancy  
P.O. Box 236  
Brighton, MI 48116-0236

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