



# Driftless

A Land Trust for the Driftless Area

Spring 2011

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## Celebrating 10-years as Southwest Wisconsin's Regional Land Conservancy!

**A**s a founding board member and current board president, I am very pleased to announce Driftless Area Land Conservancy's 10-year anniversary! We started this organization knowing that we were taking on a perpetual responsibility to the land and people of the region, and though we have accomplished great things over the past 10-years, we are very excited about our prospects for growth in the future.



Mark Mittelstadt

In 2002, during an organizational planning retreat at the Merry Farm of Gotham in Lone Rock, the board came away with an ambitious but realistic set of goals. Facilitated by Gathering Waters Conservancy, Wisconsin's land trust service provider, we resolved that agricultural land protection and key endangered habitats were leading contenders for our future attention.

Since that time we have protected over 2,000 acres of farms, forests, grasslands and natural beauty that define the Driftless Area. It has been a true pleasure working with board and staff of this organization, and witnessing the outcomes of all their hard work. And recently the Conservancy brought on a new executive director, David Clutter, to lead the charge over the coming years.

We are very excited to have David's experience, energy and leadership at the helm of this vitally important community organization. He has over 18 years of experience in the conservation world, and the board is confident that he is the right choice to help the organization build on our many past achievements. Please join us later this fall, October 9, at our annual meeting to celebrate our 10-year anniversary and meet David and others who care deeply about this organization and our important mission.

As a landowner and forester, I clearly understand the importance of working farms to the economy of the region. As one who appreciates the beauty of our rolling hills, winding valleys and open spaces, it's good to know that caring people can come together and craft positive solutions. It's all about working together. Thank you for your interest in and support of our efforts to protect this beautiful region, our Driftless Area. 🌿



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Mark Mittelstadt • President
- David Kopitzke • Vice President
- Jim O'Brien • Secretary
- Alice Godfrey • Treasurer
- David Clutter • Executive Director

NEWSLETTER EDITOR • Anne Bachner

SUPER VOLUNTEERS • Anne Bachner,  
Brenda Mittelstadt and John Meredith

NEWSLETTER DESIGN • Kristin Mitchell Design

[www.driftlessconservancy.org](http://www.driftlessconservancy.org)  
608.930.3252

*The Driftless Area Land Conservancy is a local grassroots non-profit organization dedicated to protecting the rural landscape and quality of life in southwest Wisconsin – this includes protection of farms, forests, grasslands, wetlands, soils, and the natural beauty of the area.*

# From the Executive Director



David Clutter with daughter Colette

There is no disputing that southwest Wisconsin's Driftless Area is an incredibly unique, beautiful and life-giving landscape. Farmers prosper from its fertile soils, cold-water streams bisect its winding valley floors and the land supports rare species and habitats unique to the region.

As incoming executive director it is difficult to express the excitement I feel in being given the opportunity to work in this bountiful region and to be a part of an organization with such promise and wonderfully dedicated people. Over the course of the past 10-years our organization has accomplished terrific things, however as we continue to grow we will accomplish a great deal more for the land and people of southwest Wisconsin.

For over 18 years I have committed myself to protecting and stewarding natural and agricultural lands, water resources and biological diversity; and, during that time I have seen land trusts like ours succeed and fail. Though many of these organizations came and went, the Driftless Area Land Conservancy remains rooted in our mission to protect the rural landscape and quality of life in southwest Wisconsin.

Our board and staff recognize the perpetual commitment that we make to landowners, our supporters and to the health and economic well being of future generations. Though a nonprofit, we clearly understand that we are also a business. The

Conservancy, like other land trusts, is tasked with protecting land and conservation values in perpetuity... and that's a long time. It is a commitment that we do not take lightly.

During my youth, and again later in life, I fished, hiked and worked in the Driftless Area. I fell in love with the rolling farmland, waterways and wild places of a truly special place. And as someone who shares your passion for the people and places of this unique landscape, I look forward to working with each of you to help safeguard the waters, lands, wildlife and rural character of our Driftless Area. 🌿

*Prior to joining the Conservancy, David served as Director of Lands Programs for the Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin; Program Director for The Conservancy Fund; Project Coordinator for Gathering Waters Conservancy; and Director of Land Protection for the Natural Land Institute. Earlier in his career he also served in seasonal positions as assistant arborist with Winnebago County Forest Preserve District (IL) and as wildlife technician with the US Fish & Wildlife Service (TX & AK) and the University of Wisconsin-Madison.*

*David has a MS in Environment and Resources from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, with an emphasis on collaborative conservation, land trusts and policy/program implementation. His master's thesis focused on implementation of Wisconsin's Nonprofit Component of the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program. David and his wife, Meredith, have a beautiful and bright 17-month old daughter, Colette, who may well love the outdoors as much as her dad.*



# Thank You!

Board and staff of the Driftless Area Land Conservancy would like to thank you for helping us surpass our \$50,000 year-end fundraising goal. We raised nearly \$53,000 in the final quarter of 2010! Your gift enables the Conservancy to meet our mission of protecting the rural character and quality of life of Southwest Wisconsin, and provides a direct benefit to generations of people of Iowa, LaFayette, Richland and Sauk counties. Thank you for your commitment to our work and this very special region – our Driftless Area. 🌿

With sincere appreciation, DALC Board of Directors and Staff

For more information on Driftless Area Land Conservancy and our latest efforts please visit our website at [www.driftlessconservancy.org](http://www.driftlessconservancy.org), or contact our executive director, David Clutter, at [dave@driftlessconservancy.org](mailto:dave@driftlessconservancy.org).



## Legacy Gifts:

Sandra Bennett  
gave a gift in memory of  
Florence and Barney  
Holland

## The Giving Oak – 2010 Year-end Campaign Total: \$52,805

### Thank you...



## Driftless Area Land Conservancy's 2010 – \$50,000 Year-end Campaign

# Meyers, Thompson and Oimoen Families' Commitment to Conservation

In 2010 the Driftless Area Land Conservancy worked closely with landowners and land trust partners to permanently protect three very important properties covering nearly 800-acres. In fact, this past holiday season brought with it a special reason for the Driftless Area Land Conservancy to celebrate. On 20 December 2010 after much work on the part of the Meyers family, The Natural Heritage Land Trust and our own organization, the Meyers permanently protected their 350-acre property with a conservation easement. Active farmers for many years, the Meyers have long been leaders in the community, and by protecting their land, which includes important remnant prairie, pasture and cropland, they again are leading the way in our beautiful part of Wisconsin.

On 13 September 2010 Thomcor Homestead, Inc. and the Driftless Area Land Conservancy protected over 244-acres in Iowa County with a conservation easement. The land has been in the Thompson family since 1855, and what began as a small 40-acre homestead expanded over the next hundred years. This special property contains cropland, pasture, prairie, grassland, oak savanna and pine relicts. In addition, Gordon Creek, a Class 2 trout stream, runs along its western boundary.

On 13 October 2010 Gene and Merle Oimoen ensured the perpetual protection of their 204-acre dairy farm, a blend of cropland, extensive grasslands and oak savanna. This property has been in their family since 1908 when Gene's great grandfather, Iver O. Oimoen, bought the former William Flint farm. The property provides a crucial buffer for the 510-acre Mounds View Grassland Preserve. The

addition of the Oimoen farm creates a 714-acre expanse of open space, providing important nesting habitat for threatened grassland birds like the rare Bell's Vireo.

Each of these important places support a host of unique native plants and animals. Wisconsin grassland birds of special concern, including bobolink and eastern meadowlark, benefit from the habitat protected by these families. In addition, these special places will continue to be working farms well into the future. The Driftless

Area Land Conservancy would like to thank each family for their generosity and commitment to land conservation. And we would also like to thank Wisconsin DNR's Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program, Wisconsin DATCP's Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easements program (PACE), USDA's Farm and Ranchlands Protection Program (FRPP), F. Maytag Family Foundation and the Paul E. Stry Foundation for their financial support. 🌿



*Peggy James (NRCS), David Kopitzke (DALC), Nancy and John Meyers and Jim Welsh (NHLT) Conservation Specialist.*



*Left to right: Johanna Alex (attorney), Steve Thompson, Peggy James (NRCS), and Jim O'Brien (DALC).*



*Back: Jim O'Brien (DALC), Pam Lunder (attorney). Front: Gene and Merle Oimoen.*



# Leaving Your Land Legacy

One of the most meaningful ways to save those places important to you is to gift money and/or personal property through your will or living trust – your legacy gift. Also known as a bequest or planned gift, a legacy gift is an excellent way to plan the management of your estate, provide for your family and/or friends and ensure a lasting legacy for the causes that have meant so much to you in this lifetime.

They are easy to set-up and, if need be, change, and they provide you with comfort and peace of mind in knowing that your actions will help forward the mission of the charity that you support. There are many ways to structure a planned gift. For example one may include a percent of one's estate or a specific dollar amount that can be gifted to the charity.

It is recommended that one consult an estate-planning attorney when designing your estate plan; and, because states have varying requirements with regard to bequests, it is recommended

that you speak with an attorney in the state or community where your charity is located. With that in mind, we suggest that you give the following suggested bequest wording to your attorney:

"I give \$\_\_\_\_\_ [a specific amount, or alternatively, "\_\_\_\_percent of the residuary of my estate'] to the Driftless Area Land Conservancy (tax ID#: 39-2017802), a nonprofit corporation incorporated in the State of Wisconsin and having its principal offices at 338 N. Iowa Street, P.O. Box 323, Dodgeville, WI 53533, for its general purposes." General purposes may include the myriad personal and overhead costs associated with completing conservation easements.

Please be certain to consult your attorney on the language and tax effect of any charitable gift. If you are interested in learning more about bequests, or any other ways of making a planned gift, please feel free to contact David Clutter, executive director, at 608.930.3252 or [dave@driftlessconservancy.org](mailto:dave@driftlessconservancy.org). 🌿



Left to right: Senator Dale Schultz, Field Trip Leader Jim Theler and DALC members.

For more information on Driftless Area Land Conservancy and our latest efforts please visit our website at [www.driftlessconservancy.org](http://www.driftlessconservancy.org).



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Non-profit org.  
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 One  
 Madison, WI

If you're not a member of our organization PLEASE join by giving a gift TODAY! **Thank you very much for your consideration.**

## Future of Stewardship Easements and PACE Program in Question

Governor Walker has proposed eliminating Wisconsin's Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easements (PACE) program, as well as easement purchases (with limited exceptions) through the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program. The Driftless Area Land Conservancy, as well as many other land trusts throughout the state, utilize Stewardship funding to help purchase easements on properties of high scenic, recreational and ecological value, and PACE funding to purchase agricultural easements on working farms.



In March and April the legislature's Joint Finance Committee will review the executive budget and hold public hearings, and therefore it is important to let your state legislators know what you think. It is likely that the state budget will be signed no later than 30 June 2011. For more information on the Stewardship program please visit <http://gatheringwaters.org/conservation-policy/knowles-nelson-stewardship-fund/>; and for additional information on the PACE program please visit [www.wisconsinfarmland.org](http://www.wisconsinfarmland.org).

We accept donations in any amount through PayPal. With PayPal you can use your credit card or bank account without exposing your account numbers. You can link your credit card or bank account to your PayPal account so you don't have to enter your card number or address. Please visit our "donate" link on our website to utilize PayPal: [www.driftlessconservancy.org](http://www.driftlessconservancy.org).

### Driftless Area Land Conservancy Membership Form

YES, I want to help the Driftless Area Land Conservancy protect the special places in Southwest Wisconsin.

Enclosed you will find my gift of:

- Prairie Conserver (\$35.00)
- Oak Savannah Protector (\$50.00)
- Farm Guardian (\$100.00+)
- Driftless Area Defender (\$500.00+)
- 100 Friends of the Driftless Area (\$1,000.00+)
- I'd like to volunteer my time as well.
- I'd like my copy of *Prairie Legacy*. (\$50 level or above)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Make checks payable to the:**

**Driftless Area Land Conservancy  
 and return this form to:**

**P.O. Box 323 • Dodgeville, WI 53533**

All donations are tax-deductible as allowed by law.  
 Financial statement available upon request.

