

Pines and Prairies

Bastrop Caldwell Fayette Lee Counties of Texas

Newsletter of the Pines & Prairies Land Trust Vol. 5, No. 3 Fall 2007

Two New Easements Bring Us To More Than 1800 Acres Protected

Monroe Reuther signed the conservation easement protecting his 160 acres of cherished family land on November 28, 2007. This lush property with giant pecan trees shading Middle Yegua Creek as it flows gently past has been in Mr. Reuther's family since his great-grandfather purchased it more than a 100 years ago.

On one of our visits to determine the suitability of taking on this property for perpetual protection, Mr. Reuther proudly showed us the wheelbarrow his grandfather had made more than 75 years ago, which he still uses to haul materials from place to place on the land he's known and loved throughout his life.

The smokehouse his grandfather built, its ceiling and walls black from decades of use, now serves as a storage shed for ancient and modern tools, even his childhood bicycle, which needs a little work.

We're proud to help Mr. Reuther keep this beautiful piece of land intact beyond his lifetime, honoring his memories and the hard work of his ancestors who lived and died there.

The next week, on December 4, Albert and Wilda Pecore signed their conservation easement document in La Grange. Their 193.7 acre farm has 17 acres of never plowed, native blackland prairie in pristine condition....very exciting to the botanists who came

to check it out. This is the first conservation easement ever established in Fayette County.

Mr. Pecore has carefully put together several pieces of property over the years as they became available, to create this delightful country estate. It is mainly pasture and hayfields with some rather ancient forest on Haw Creek, the northern boundary of the tract.

With the addition of these two properties, PPLT now has more than 1800 acres of pastures, woods, creeks and wildlife habitat protected from fragmentation in perpetuity.

With your continued support we will keep adding to this treasure of open, fertile, productive lands as the pressure for development and subdivision grows.

We've worked with these landowners to provide a means of keeping their property intact and pristine as they have envisioned it on into the future.

We wouldn't be involved with protecting farm and ranchland and wildlife habitat if we didn't personally enjoy and appreciate being in these varied environs.

It is extremely satisfying to get to know the people who have found land they love and who understand the importance of protecting it against a future that will chop it up into "ranchettes" and pave it over.

If you have family lands you want to keep intact, or if you've just purchased property you love, we'll be happy to visit with you about keeping it just so.

Pines & Prairies Land Trust Conservation Easements

Albert and Wilda Pecore at the Pecore Farm



With the addition of our two newest Conservation Easements, we now have the honor, pleasure and responsibility of assuring four families that their beloved lands will remain as they wish forever. We are actively protecting farm, ranch and open space lands in each of the four counties we represent.



Spring fed creek on Dennis and EvaJean Kestner's Double D Ranch



Each family has its own reasons for asking us to help them keep their property protected from being subdivided or in some way altered from the way they've carefully kept it. But all of them, all of us and all of you share the same goal of keeping fertile land, pristine forest, flowing creeks and wildlife habitat secure for generations to come.

**We are all stewards of the earth.
We are all in this together.
We Can Do It!**



Monroe Reuther with his grandfather's wheelbarrow in front of the smokehouse

Conservation Corner

Protecting land is a wise and worthy goal and Greenprinting is the scientific, map-based way to determine what land to protect. Maps of areas such as flood zones, parks, trails, wildlife and habitat, native prairies, historical areas, aquifers, rivers and lakes, special ranch and farm lands, all are entered into the Greenprint program. A community's priorities can be then put into the Greenprint and the maps manipulated according to those priorities. For example, if a community chooses water resources as its top priority, all the maps will be used to assemble a representation of the water resources from every viewpoint. The system creates multiple layers of all of this information which can then be used to reach different conservation and development goals. Bastrop County recently adopted "Opportunity Bastrop County," a planning document for the county's future. One component of this plan includes using Greenprinting to identify conservation and environmental areas. This will aid in roadway location, endangered species habitat management, flood zone ordinances, parks creation, new development and many other tasks. Travis County has also adopted the use of Greenprint to understand and justify their conservation decisions. For more information about Greenprinting, please contact www.tpl.org or PPLT at 512-308-1911



President's Message

Well folks, the year is drawing to a close and I'm thinking about what PPLT has accomplished. I'm thrilled about our new Conservation Easements, excited about finishing the Colorado River Refuge, enlightened by the scientific research at Yegua Knobbs Preserve, humbled by the donations of money and services by folks like you, and optimistic about the future of water, farm, ranch and wildlife habitat conservation.

As more landowners become aware of how land protection agreements can help them with planning for the future, I expect 2008 to bring more special places under PPLT's protection. Conservation Easements are a way to "have your cake and eat it too." As a donor you can take equity (in the form of tax breaks) from your land and continue to use it as you always have. As a lover of the land you can be secure knowing that your precious place will never change.

About our free public park, the Colorado River Refuge. We took a hard hit from the wild and wonderful Colorado River last summer but we have repaired the damage, finished the construction and gotten enthusiastic feedback about the place. I encourage you and your family to take a stroll down the shady Forest Trail or along the breath-taking Cliffhanger Trail. Bring your binoculars and fishing pole. There is a wheelchair/stroller accessible trail down to the river and all are welcome.

If you have not made it out to the Yegua Knobbs Preserve, I encourage you to come out for the Spring 2008 field day. Scientists of all types are conducting fascinating research about this unique area. Geologists, hydrologists, botanists, entomologists, ornithologists and others are studying everything from the formation of the knobs in the area to the composition of the (highly unusual) bog. If you are lucky, you might see our resident beavers or owls.

As Will Rogers said, "They ain't makin any more land." I'm proud that more and more people are donating time, resources and money to PPLT. The entire board and staff work hard to earn that trust. Thank you.

Because of your continued support I'm confident about the New Year and the years that follow. We will protect and nurture the special places we love. We can ensure enough water, clean air and peaceful land is left for future generations. We can continue to make our elected officials and other decision makers aware of our priorities. We are making a difference!

I wish you all a healthy, happy and prosperous New Year. Remember, land conservation is for all, forever.

Carrie F. Knox, President

Our Winter issue will feature the Colorado River Refuge. Congressman Lloyd Doggett walked the trail with a group of us this Fall when we unveiled the sign created by Margie Crisp and carved by Don Chapman. The trails of the CRR are open for your enjoyment, with a wheelchair ramp making it accessible to everyone.



SEASONS GREETINGS!
CELEBRATE THE EARTH



Board of Directors

Carrie Knox *President*
 Jeremiah Jarvis *Vice-Pres.*
 Dennis Kestner *Treasurer*
 EvaJean Kestner *Secretary*
 Lee Fritsch
 Alan Jaeger
 Priscilla Jarvis
 Bill McPherson
 Joan Russell
 David Vogel

Executive Director

Tom Dureka

Please help us maintain our region's quality of life. Your tax deductible donation will support our education programs, distribution of information and direct land preservation.

___ \$25 Individual ___ \$35 Family
 ___ \$50 Business ___ \$100 Steward
 ___ \$500 Sponsor ___ \$1000 Champion

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Tel. _____ E-mail _____

Make your check to Pines & Prairies Land Trust and mail to:
 106 Conference Drive
 Bastrop, TX 78602

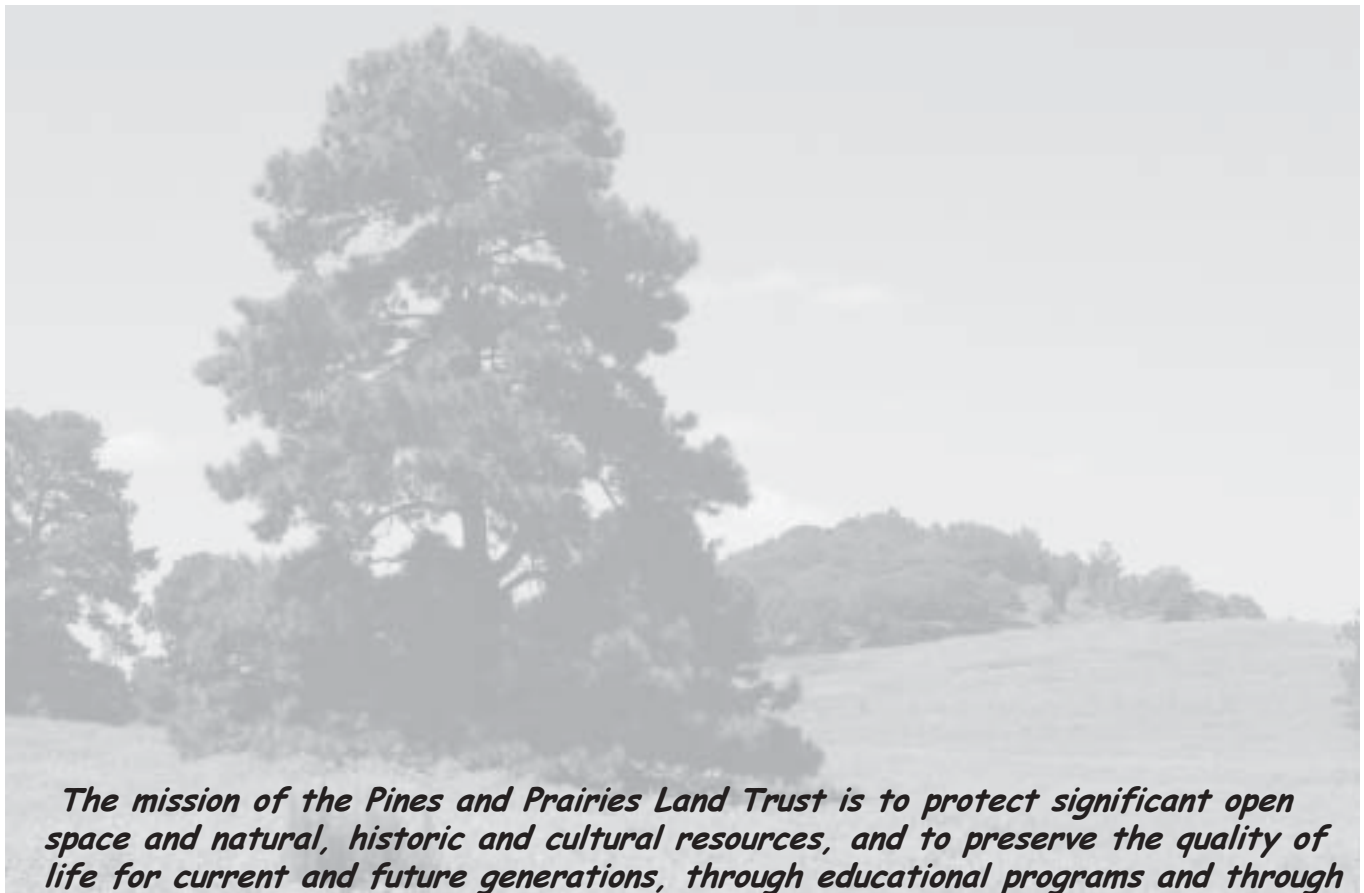
printed on recycled paper



106 Conference Drive
Bastrop, Texas 78602
512/308-1911

www.pinesandprairieslandtrust.org

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION
US POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT #19
BASTROP TX 78602



The mission of the Pines and Prairies Land Trust is to protect significant open space and natural, historic and cultural resources, and to preserve the quality of life for current and future generations, through educational programs and through owning and protecting easements and land.