

# SAVE THE BLUEGRASS SAVE THE DATE

## Fourth Annual Farmland Conservation Auction

Wednesday, April 21, 2004  
Woodford Reserve Distillery

Do you have exciting race tickets, vacation spots,  
or other ideas for live auction items?

For information about **donating very much appreciated auction items** for the event,  
please contact Tara Loyd by email at [tloyd@bluegrassconservancy.org](mailto:tloyd@bluegrassconservancy.org)  
or by phone at (859) 255-4552.

**Bluegrass Conservancy**  
For further information about  
current projects, please contact the  
Bluegrass Conservancy at  
(859) 255-4552.  
The Bluegrass Conservancy is a non-  
profit regional land trust.  
Our mission is to promote the  
conservation of Bluegrass farmland.  
The Bluegrass Conservancy's Board  
of Directors include:  
Helen Alexander, Chair,  
Libby Jones, Vice-Chair,  
Lucy Breathitt, Lendy Brown,  
Michael Burns, Robert Clay,  
Douglas Dean, Laurel Garrett,  
Hoppy Henton, Nancy Lampton,  
Boo McDonald and John Phillips.  
The Conservancy currently holds  
2,263 acres  
of Bluegrass farmland.

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Permit No. 191

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[www.bluegrassconservancy.org](http://www.bluegrassconservancy.org)  
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



# THE BLUEGRASS Conservancy News



Conserving the Bluegrass forever...

WINTER, 2004

## EASEMENT DONATION HELPS BUILD A CRITICAL MASS OF PROTECTED FARMLAND IN FAYETTE COUNTY

Mike and Jeanne Owens donated a conservation easement to the Bluegrass Conservancy in December, on their new farm, Cornerstone Farm. The farm is located on Iron Works Pike, a Kentucky designated scenic byway in Fayette County.

The farm includes twenty-five acres of prime farmland and is very near several other farms that have sold conservation easements to the Fayette County Purchase of Development Rights Program. "The Owens' donation helps build a critical

mass of protected farmland in this important agricultural area of Fayette County. We are very grateful to Mike and Jeanne for their commitment to conserving Fayette County farmland and hope their donation will inspire others to consider placing an

easement on their property. This easement is an excellent example of how the Bluegrass Conservancy, a private non-profit organization, and the Purchase of Development Rights

Program, a publicly funded farmland preservation program, can work hand in hand to conserve a critical mass of farmland." said Executive Director, Margaret Graves.

The Bluegrass Conservancy currently holds 13 donated conservation easements protecting 2,263 acres of farmland in Fayette,

Clark, Jessamine and Woodford Counties. The Fayette County Purchase of Development Rights Program has purchased or has a contract to purchase 78 conservation easements protecting over 10,257 acres of Fayette County farmland.

*"We believe in preserving our Bluegrass heritage which in turn preserves our way of life in the Thoroughbred industry. No matter how large or small the tract of land, every land owner should take the responsibility to maintain the worldwide reputation of the Bluegrass area for all the generations to come."*

—Mike and Jeanne Owens

## CONSERVATION SOCIETY

The Bluegrass Conservancy proudly acknowledges our Conservation Society. Members have given the extraordinary gift of a conservation easement on their land. These leaders in conservation deserve thanks on behalf of all associated with the Conservancy.

Please contact Margaret Graves for information about donating a conservation easement on your land by email at [mgraves@bluegrassconservancy.org](mailto:mgraves@bluegrassconservancy.org) or by phone at (859) 255-4552.

### CONSERVATION EASEMENT DONORS:

Helen C. Alexander	Alice Kinhead
Joseph and Mary Carter Family	Mike and Jeanne Owens
Mr. and Mrs. Robert N. Clay	Anne J. Parker
Mr. and Mrs. Leon Creek	Dr. and Mrs. John van Nagell
Mr. and Mrs. Hoppy Henton	Dr. & Mrs. Smiser West
Governor Brereton C. Jones and Elizabeth Lloyd Jones	Mr. and Mrs. Bob Wilson

## It's not too late for a few good NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS!

Exercise? Lose weight? or...  
HELP SAVE BLUEGRASS FARMLAND!

Let the lifestyle choices you make in 2004 be your daily commitment to farmland preservation. Here are a few New Year's Resolutions (some big and some not so big) we'd love to see you keep!

- Buy local farm products
- Convince organizations that serve meals to buy local farm products
- Support businesses that support preservation
- Be aware of resource use and reduce, reuse, and recycle in your home and office
- Show off Bluegrass farmland by visiting area farms and biking the nearly one-thousand miles of lightly traveled Bluegrass back roads

(See **Resolutions**, page 5)



# PROFILES IN CONSERVATION: Susanna Parker Creek

*Please tell us about the background of Polohunt Farm.*

My grandfather, Thomas Jefferson Johnson, was stationed in Lexington in the early 1930's and decided that when he retired from the Army he would buy a farm within a 10-mile radius of the Fayette County Courthouse. He bought the farm on Pisgah Pike in Woodford County in 1937 and named it Polohunt Farm for his two favorite sports. The farm sign depicts a man playing polo on the left side of a tree and a woman on a horse jumping a fence on the right side of the tree.



When my father, John Richards Parker, retired from the Army in 1956 we moved to the farm. In two generations of officers and their families always living in Army quarters, the farm was the only "home" we ever had. My grandfather deeded the farm to his only child, my mother, Anne Johnson Parker, in 1956, and she gave me a portion of the farm in 1964.

*Why did you and your mother decide to donate a conservation easement on your farm?*

My mother was active in establishing the Pisgah Rural Historic District, which is listed on the National Historic Register and on the state historic register. On Polohunt Farm, the large pre-1900 horse barn, the house, and several outbuildings were contributing structures for nominating the district to the registers.

So when I suggested to Momma that we could ensure that the natural scenic beauty of the farm would be preserved forever through a conservation easement, she was enthusiastic and relieved.

I approached Margaret Graves, and she guided us through the process with great skill and tact, and the easement was given to the Bluegrass Conservancy in December 1999, the fifth one to be completed. The emotional satisfaction was great; the tax benefits were an additional advantage.

Sadly, by 2003 we realized we could no longer maintain the farm and we sold it in January, 2004 to neighboring Brittany Farms; the two tracts had originally been part of the same farm and are now back together.

One constant comfort for us is that the conservation easement continues to protect the farm no matter who owns the land. **It is satisfying to know that we have preserved a bit of the beauty of the Bluegrass Region forever.**

## SPECIAL GIFTS

If you would like to remember a special person or occasion, what better way to honor those who appreciate the Bluegrass than by helping to protect the farmland that makes this area unique?

We accept donations in honor of birthdays, graduations, anniversaries, and other holidays as well as donations in memory of loved ones.

The honoree or their family will be notified of your contribution, so please include a clearly written address.

*Many thanks from Lucy Breathitt and the Bluegrass Conservancy to all who have given in tribute to Governor Edward Breathitt. His incredible work as a conservationist will be remembered by the newly coined "Breathitt Bees Award" to be presented by the Bluegrass Conservancy each year. Thanks to Bluegrass Conservancy Board member Nana Lampton for thoughtfully sponsoring the Breathitt Bees Award.*

2,263 Acres Protected  
by Conservation Easements  
Held by the Bluegrass Conservancy

Woodford County: 1,107 acres  
Fayette County: 910 acres  
Clark County: 56 acres  
Jessamine County: 190 acres

10,529 Acres Protected  
by Conservation Easements  
Held By the Fayette County  
Purchase of Development Rights Program



## RESTORE AMERICA: COMMUNITIES AT A CROSSROADS

Preparations are underway for the National Trust for Historic Preservation's national conference "Restore America: Communities at a Crossroads" to be held in Louisville September 28 through October 3, 2004.

The conference will provide an opportunity for preservationists from across the country to talk about issues such as affordable housing, diversity and inclusion, and inventive ways to get people interested in preservation issues. Leaders in the preservation movement will be recognized and preservation successes in Kentucky and Indiana will be celebrated and shared with a national audience.

More information about the conference objectives and **details regarding scholarships available for local Kentuckians who would not otherwise be able to attend the conference** are available online at [www.nthpconference.org](http://www.nthpconference.org).

## RESOLUTIONS! *Continued from page 1)*

- Create workplace incentives for people who bike to work
- Write editorials in support of farmland preservation
- Encourage elected officials to support public funding for local and state farmland preservation programs, agricultural zoning, and other laws that help keep farmers in business
- Live in an old house in a central neighborhood that makes sense in respect to your work and daily needs
- Host events to introduce the Bluegrass Conservancy to friends and family
- Give Conservancy gift memberships to help spread the word
- Vote to elect leaders who support farmland preservation
- Wear you "SAVE OUR FARMS" buttons with pride
- Become a member of the Bluegrass Conservancy, Central Kentucky's only Land Trust
- Protect your own farm with a conservation easement
- **Read your Conservancy newsletter and go to [www.bluegrassconservancy.org](http://www.bluegrassconservancy.org) for further information.**

## Many Thanks to the KEENELAND FOUNDATION

Many thanks to the Keeneland Foundation for their generous donation to the Bluegrass Conservancy in December. Margaret and Tara have Fran Taylor to thank for the rare opportunity to be photographed with Fayette County Farm Bureau representative Frank Penn and Santa Claus!



## HOME

By Claudia Miller

Now and then I long  
to walk the family farm...  
feel the pacing of the seasons,  
breathe the honeysucked purity,  
touch the roughened edges...  
to go home again;  
but it's not possible;  
the old place is gone.  
The jungled growth of forty summers  
has erased familiar lines,  
and the trees are all strangers now.  
The house was burned,  
outbuildings all cleared,  
the land sold twice over,  
only a rise of terrain  
marks where the farmhouse  
once shouldered itself between  
towering walnut and twin cedars.

A lone bee drones  
among weeds and brambles,  
echoing in my memory  
until—as suddenly as a breeze  
lifting on a calm summer day—  
I am walking down  
that earthen road once more.  
One scent, then another,  
and I am surrounded  
with the sweet symphony of crickets,  
wildflowers dancing in the sun,  
and visions of home.  
The rutted lane still stretches sleepily  
from the main road and elbows back  
in a gentle embrace of the memory  
of family gatherings,  
kinfolk preparing food and swapping stories,  
laughter and squeals of children  
at hide-and seek.

In a fertile field  
a sunbonnet bobs between  
lusty rows of corn and beans;  
farther on,  
a man leaning into a plow  
shouts primeval orders to a balking mule.  
Near the barn a horse lowers a velvet nose  
to be stroked over a rough-hewn gate;  
curious cows amble up to see  
if I have any sweet grass for them;  
and there is the hen house  
where I sang hymns and honky-tonk  
to the chickens.

By the wagon shed  
are leathery sounds  
of an impatient horse  
hitched to a creaking wagon,  
and the rhythmic force of an axe  
thudding against firewood.  
Wheelbarrow and sawhorses are corralled  
for a carpentry project  
and a child's free ride.

From the back yard I meander  
to the meadow beyond,  
and down a gentle hill;  
sunlight warms the cowpath  
beneath my bare feet.  
On a grassy bank I sit awhile,  
reflecting on the old creek below  
whose currents still flow  
in slow and silent accord  
with a time gone by  
—and I am home  
once again.



# BLUEGRASS CONSERVANCY MEMBERS REACH 404!

**Many thanks to all our devoted members!** Your support is crucial to our efforts to preserve Bluegrass farmland forever. Without our 404 supporters, we would be nowhere in 2004!

Please take a minute to review our newest membership list and encourage your friends and family to learn more about the Bluegrass Conservancy's importance to our future in Central Kentucky. **With nearly 500,000 citizens in the Conservancy's seven-county region, we know there are more concerned citizens who would like to play a part in saving our farms.**

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