



# Bluegrass Conservancy News

## Conserving the Bluegrass Forever

Fall 2010

### 10,719 ACRES

of the Inner Bluegrass Region are permanently protected by conservation easements donated to Bluegrass Conservancy.

- Bourbon County  
2,117 Acres
- Clark County  
735 Acres
- Fayette County  
1,952 Acres
- Franklin County  
87 Acres
- Jessamine County  
262 Acres
- Mercer County  
154 Acres
- Scott County  
12 Acres
- Woodford County  
5,400 Acres

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## Profiles in Conservation: BEN AND JAN TAYLOR

Ben Taylor and his wife Jan are committed to preserving land along the Kentucky River corridor in southern Woodford County. Within the past six years, they have purchased and protected two farms along the River. Their first purchase in 2004 is located on Mundy's Landing and consists of 144 acres of open-space and wooded land with significant river frontage. Their most recent purchase, in 2009, includes 193 acres along Brushy Run Road and historically served as a cattle farm. Ben believes protecting this region's most valuable resources and encouraging landowners to make their land permanently available for agriculture rather than development is the key to success for Kentuckians. By placing conservation easements with Bluegrass Conservancy on his two farms he is confident he has done his part. An interview with Ben Taylor follows:

### *What is the history of your farms?*

I have roots in the horse industry. My brothers and I own Taylor Made Farm, a Thoroughbred operation in Jessamine County. Several years ago my wife and I started searching for property for recreational purposes and the farm on Mundy's Landing was the perfect fit. The property contains four well-forested tributaries and frontage along the Kentucky River. The farm was historically used as a cattle operation and since our purchase we have introduced native grasses in order to encourage the natural flora and fauna to re-inhabit the areas. My sons and I spend time out on the farm watching the wildlife and occasionally hunt on the land.

We purchased the farm along Brushy Run Road at auction in 2009 because of its close vicinity to Mundy's Landing and we were pleased to discover that the land has a rich history in this part of

*Continued on next page*



*Brothers Clay and Brooks Taylor enjoy spending time on the family farm.*



## Profiles in Conservation *Continued from previous page*

the county. The farm has approximately 1 1/2 miles of Kentucky River frontage and one of the area's few easily accessible entries along the River. A highly traveled historic road developed along Brushy Run Creek, the boundary of the farm, which led down to a ferry crossing to Cummins Ferry Road in Mercer County. The remains of old grist mills and a distillery are still quite visible today.

Farther downstream, a waterfall empties into the Kentucky River. This waterfall is a scenic wonder and focal point of a campground across the River in Mercer County. The area is integral to the settlement of the Bluegrass because the River served as the most accessible mode of transportation and commerce until the introduction of the highway system.

### *Why did you decide to donate conservation easements on your farms?*

It was a great deal for us not only from a conservation standpoint but also from a tax perspective. Jan and I have always been interested in land conservation but were unsure how to put it to practice. Good friends of ours, Drs. David and Laurie Haas, encouraged us to contact Bluegrass Conservancy to learn more about conservation easements as a vehicle for land protection. We initially thought this was something we would do at a later date... that it was not pressing. But after speaking with staff at Bluegrass Conservancy we learned the tax incentives available for a donation of a conservation easement were too beneficial to put off any longer. We decided to move forward with the process and have been thrilled with the results.

It is our opinion that conservation easements on land in the Bluegrass Region will enhance and eventually increase the value of our farm and surrounding land over the long term. It has been proven in other parts of the country that if you can build a core area of



protected land then it may appreciate more than unprotected land over time. Our two farms in southern Woodford County are in the vicinity of several other properties with conservation easements. Hopefully more landowners in the area will see the benefits and consider placing conservation easements on their land as well. We are confident that a substantial section of the Kentucky River corridor will be protected in the future.

### *Do you have any advice for a landowner considering the donation of a conservation easement on their farm?*

A few suggestions for anyone interested in donating a conservation easement on their farm:



Photos courtesy of Ben Taylor.

1. Obtain good tax advice from a CPA. Not all accountants are familiar with the benefits associated with the donation of a conservation easement, so find one that is. A knowledgeable CPA in this area will be able to give you advice that may even enhance your contribution. They can simplify the process for you and with an experienced accountant, you will not pay for their time to get up to speed on the technicalities of a donation.
2. Select the right appraiser. I suggest selecting an appraiser that will work with you to understand the significance of your property. Some appraisers have a greater appreciation for natural areas, historic values, and agriculture. Also, make sure your appraiser understands the real estate climate in your geographical area and uses the most relevant comparables to your property.
3. Know all of the fees involved (CPA, appraiser, etc.). Find out if the fees may be tax deductible because in many situations, such as mine, they have been. Don't miss out on this opportunity because of the expense. It is very likely that the rewards will more than make up for any cost.
4. Negotiate your easement terms. Try to put in place the exact easement restrictions relative to your property that maximize your goals. We wanted to preserve the land and maximize our potential tax savings. After discussing several options with an appraiser, we settled on restrictions that limited the number of parcels that could be sold separately in the future and included building restrictions that maximized our tax benefits. This allowed us to protect the land from extensive future development but maintain the ability for ourselves and our heirs to sell a portion of the property (still subject to the terms of the easement) if needed.

For more information on conservation easements and how you can protect your land contact Ashley Greathouse at 859-255-4552.



## Preserving a Legacy

Bluegrass Conservancy would like to honor **Tom Foster**, easement donor who departed this life in October after a brief illness. In 2008, Tom and his wife Marijo created a lasting land legacy by donating a conservation easement on their historic property known as La Fon in Jessamine County. La Fon is located on Keene-South Elkhorn Road and includes a five-bay, two-story brick main residence constructed in the 1820s. The Fosters' conservation easement protects critical limestone formations, prime farmland soils, soils of statewide importance, and valuable open space. Their property is in close proximity to other conserved lands. Tom was a wonderful, kind man. He will be greatly missed.

## A Special Thank You

**THANK YOU** to the **Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commission**, for awarding Bluegrass Conservancy one Fall White-tailed Deer Permit and one Spring Wild Turkey Permit to auction. All proceeds raised from the online auction went directly to the Conservancy.

Consistent with its mission, the Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Resources Commission engages in partnerships to enhance wildlife diversity and to promote sustainable resource use, including hunting, fishing, boating and other nature-related recreation.

—AND—

**THANK YOU** to *The Bourbon Review* for donating a portion of proceeds from their bourbon tasting at Keene Place in October.

## Conservation Society

The Board of Directors and Staff gratefully acknowledge our Conservation Society, those donors who have permanently protected their irreplaceable land for future generations. These are true leaders in the field of conservation.

Helen C. Alexander,  
*Middlebrook Farm & Spring Station Farm*  
Anonymous  
Nelson & Linda Barnes,  
*Barnes Stoner Bend Farm*  
Michael & Gay Barnett, *Blackburn Farm*  
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Dr. & Mrs. Smiser West, *Waterford Farm*  
Mr. & Mrs. Bob Wilson,  
*The Judge Place & Pleasant Grove*  
Craig & Sheri Wood, *Millwood Springs Farm*



# 4th Annual Bluegrass International Cup

The Kentucky Horse Park's Man o' War Field was the site of the fourth annual Bluegrass International Cup at Polo in the Park presented by UK HealthCare on Friday, July 9th to benefit Bluegrass Conservancy and The Fayette Alliance. Tent patrons and tailgaters gathered to watch Team USA, sponsored by Sophisticated Living, prevail 13-11 over Gainesway Farm's Team South Africa.

A special thank you to Greg and Becky Goodman of Mt. Brilliant Farm, event chair Gay Haggin VanMeter, and the polo players, officials, and volunteers who made the event so successful. Plans are already underway for the 2011 benefit match.



Photo by Mathea Kelly

*Sophisticated Living's Team USA celebrate.*

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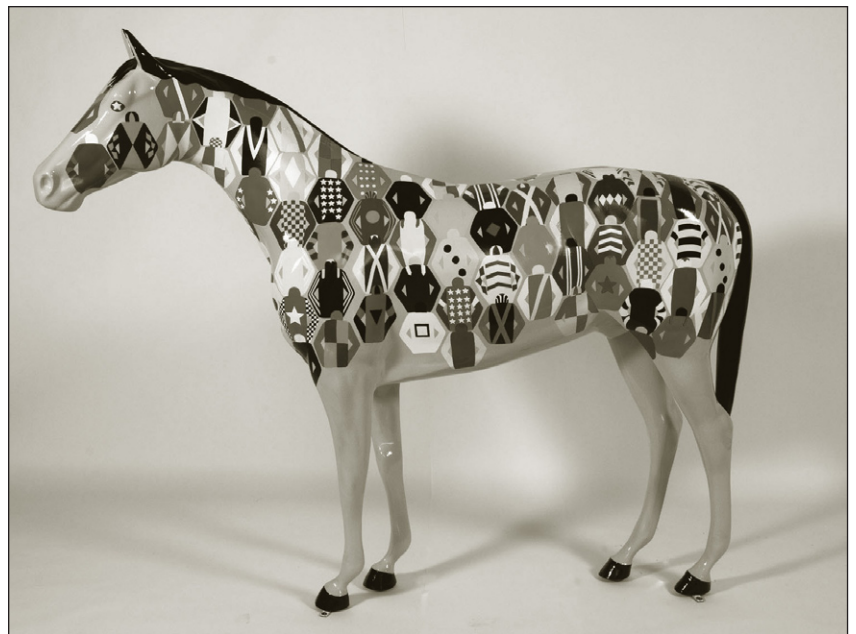
Photo by Paul Atkinson

*Tailgaters of both the two- and four-legged variety enjoy front row seats during the match.*



# Your Chance to Bid on a Horse of a Different Color

Mark your calendars for an exciting opportunity to purchase one of the horses-turned-art that has had Lexington abuzz since they went on citywide display earlier this year. On **December 3rd** the Horse Mania 2010 horses will be auctioned at Keeneland to generate funds to support local charities. Bluegrass Conservancy has been named the recipient of the Auction proceeds for *Me and My Gal* by artist Paula Wilson of Newmarket, England and sponsored by Balatro Gallery. BGC will also benefit from the sale of *Pegasus Flight* by artists Tony Higdon and Erika Strecker and sponsored by Calumet Farm. Additional information can be found at [www.horsemania2010.com](http://www.horsemania2010.com). Bid for BGC!



© LexArts, Horse Mania 2010, photo credit M.S. Rezny Photography

*Pegasus Flight* by Tony Higdon and Erika Strecker

*Me and My Gal* by Paula Wilson

## Young Friends Looking Forward to Another Festive Event

Local music, great art, door prizes, cocktails, and hors d'oeuvres...a perfect combination to kickoff the holiday season. The 4th annual Jingle Bell Bash at Cross Gate Gallery on **Thursday, December 9th**, 7-10 p.m. will serve as a membership drive for Young Friends of Bluegrass Conservancy. Young Friends is a membership group of young adults, ages 21-40, who are committed to protecting the Bluegrass region's endangered farmland. All ages 21+ are welcome to attend.

Visit [www.bluegrassconservancy.org](http://www.bluegrassconservancy.org) to purchase your reservation today!

## Save the Date! Farmland Conservation Benefit Auction

The 11<sup>th</sup> annual Farmland Conservation Benefit Auction will be held on **Thursday, April 14, 2011** at Fasig-Tipton. Join us after the races for live music by The Swells and an exciting variety of live and silent auction items. For information on sponsorship or to donate an auction item, call Lindsey at 859-255-4552.

Thank you to our 2011 sponsors (at time of print): Charles T. Creech Inc., Graviss McDonald's Restaurants, Hilliard & Lyons, Nicholson Insurance Agency, UK HealthCare, & Mr. and Mrs. William T. Young, Jr.



## Bluegrass Conservancy

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Lexington, KY 40508-2560  
[www.bluegrassconservancy.org](http://www.bluegrassconservancy.org)  
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Founded in 1995, Bluegrass Conservancy is a private, nonprofit land trust. Our mission is to protect the Inner Bluegrass Region of Kentucky through land conservation for future generations.

We encourage the preservation of these lands through the use of conservation easements for agricultural viability, natural habitat, rural heritage, and scenic open space.

## We are pleased to announce three additions to BGC's Board of Directors

**JOHN MAHAN** is a fourth generation Fayette county farmer, the current president of Fayette County Farm Bureau Federation, and a former member of the American Farm Bureau Young Farmer and Rancher Committee. John attended the University of Kentucky where he studied production agriculture and in 1995 took over the family farming operation. John and wife Jill have a five-year-old son named Lane, and own a turf grass company called Sodworks LLC that specializes in the production of Bluegrass and Fescue sod. John also produces Burley tobacco, corn, wheat, soybeans, and alfalfa hay. Their farming operation includes land in Fayette, Bourbon, Scott, and Harrison counties. John is a strong advocate for the preservation of farmland and believes, "This is the only land we've been given and it must be treasured and treated like gold."

**BART MCFARLAND** was raised on a farm in Bourbon County and at an early age started dreaming of owning an Angus cattle farm. After receiving his dental degree from the University of Kentucky and opening a practice in Paris, he started acquiring the acres to achieve this dream. Bart, his wife Pam, and their two children Houston and Hagan live on Resting Acres Angus cattle farm in Paris. In 2009, Bart and Pam donated a conservation easement to Bluegrass Conservancy on 702 acres of Resting Acres. With extensive road frontage along five public roads as well as over 10,000 feet of frontage along Stoner Creek, this is our largest single easement to date.

**CONNIE JO MILLER** is the energy and drive behind Group CJ Creative Communications. She founded the downtown firm as CJ Advertising in 1987. Connie is a third generation Lexingtonian whose grandfather Barney Miller began business on Main Street in 1922. She and her brother Barney continue to be avid supporters of our downtown and community. Connie received her BA in Communications from the University of Kentucky. She is married to Lynn Cravens, a graduate of UK School of Architecture - a distinguished preservation architect. Since its inception, "marketing that matters" has been an important facet of Connie's advertising agency, the firm helped to launch Ky Proud for the Department of Agriculture and works closely with Lexington's Department of Environmental Quality. In addition to offering design and marketing strategy services to local non-profits and worthy causes, Connie served 6 years on both LexArts and Blue Grass Trust Boards. Connie is very active in the final stages of Horse Mania, and was recently appointed to the Keep Lexington Beautiful Commission. Connie is passionate about our heritage, our downtown and the arts; she is an avid gardener, world traveler and part-time epicure.