

MALABAR FARM NEWS

The Malabar Farm Foundation

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"Our prosperity, our high standard of living, our very liberties will disappear as they have disappeared in other countries all over the world when soil was washed away and there was no longer any adequate supply of water. The hour is already much later than we think."

- Louis Bromfield

In The Spotlight

Ellen Bromfield Geld Scholarship Program Essay by Leah Francis

Earlier this year the Malabar Farm Foundation offered an Essay Contest to all 7th graders in Richland County as part of a new Ellen Bromfield Geld Scholarship Program. The following essay was written about the importance of soil conservation by our successful applicant, Leah Francis after her day at Malabar Farm State Park.

When Louis Bromfield said "All of civilization rests on six inches of topsoil" I think he meant that the human race or all life in general, cannot survive or thrive without healthy soil.

Louis Bromfield was passionate about soil conservation and had a love for all animals. Many animals rely on plants for a food source. As an example, a field mouse might eat grain, and then later, a hungry cat might prey upon the mouse.

The mouse relies on the grain to survive. The grain though relies on the sun, water, and healthy soil to grow. If the soil cannot support the grain, the grain will die. Then, mice will not have a food source, and the population of field mice will decrease. If the population of mice decreases, so will the population of cats.

Even though this is a small example, it can have great effects on the ecosystem. All animals, even though the might not be herbivores, depend on the plants one way or another. If the soil can't support the plants, many populations and animals will decrease or even die out. This can have a great effect on humans too.

Humans partly rely on animals for a food source. Common animals we rely on are cows, pigs, and chickens. Each of these animals use plants as a food source. If we cannot keep the soil healthy, we can't grow the food that will keep these animals available to us. We will no longer have those sources of meat and poultry. (Cont. page 2)

Join ~ Donate ~ Volunteer!

The Louis Bromfield Society is the membership program established to raise funds in support of Malabar Farm State Park's mission.

Your membership dues help the Malabar Farm Foundation, an independent, non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization, continue to make education, development, and preservation projects possible at Malabar Farm State Park. All contributions are tax deductible, as provided by law. **Member \$50.00 / Friend \$100.00**

Looking Back

The History and Progress of the Spinning and Weaving Guild by Victoria Cochran

In December 1990, during the Malabar Farm State Park Holiday Tours of the famous park "Big House", former home of Pulitzer prize-winning author and conservationist Louis Bromfield, park volunteer Stan Rickel noticed an old weaving loom in the "big house" basement. Rickel asked Park Manager (at that time) Scott Doty, if the loom could be used by a group interested in starting a spinning and weaving guild, and possibly holding their meetings at the state park. Rickel, with wife Sally and the help of friends who were involved in living history presentations, made plans to see if there might be a local interest in starting a spinning & weaving guild in the area. Working with other living history participants and park volunteers, Ruth and Jack Heichel, Nancy and Carl Ganyard, Jane and Gerald Sargent and Kathy and Don Yockey, an organizational meeting was held with many people showing an interest. The first official meeting of the guild was held in March 1991.

Today, members of this Guild enjoy a wide variety of fiber arts including spinning, weaving, bobbin lace, quilting, basketry, knitting, crocheting, rug hooking and rug braiding, to name a few. Our work area is located in the Farm Office Building. (Cont. page 2)

The Malabar Farm Foundation

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In the Spotlight – Ellen Bromfield Geld Scholarship Program Essay (from page 1)

Not only do humans need animals for a food source, we also need fruits and vegetables. Without the proper soil, they will be impossible to grow. Even though factories produce a majority of today's products, fruits and vegetables cannot be made artificially. They must be grown.

We do not need the soil for only fruits and vegetables, but also to grow trees, flowers and vegetation that are important for life. Trees and other plants turn the carbon dioxide we breathe out into oxygen that we can use again. If we ruin the soil and kill the plants, how will oxygen be replaced?

In conclusion, we need the soil to survive. The soil is a valuable asset that provides us with fruits, vegetables, plants that produce oxygen, and plants that help the ecosystem thrive.

I believe this still applies in our Industrial age, and always will for several reasons. No matter how many factories we build, we cannot artificially make the basic foods necessary for survival with the same nutrients. All animals rely on plants and the plants that provide us with oxygen rely on soil.

Even though we have made many strides with new inventions, or improvements in some people's opinion, we will always depend on some variables. Machines make a majority of things in today's age. We can talk to someone miles away with a push of a button and carry all the information of the world in our back pockets. However, despite our accomplishments, we owe our existence to a six inch layer of fertile soil.

It might be hard to go back to a time where phones and machines didn't exist, but there are some things that are impossible to live without, like oxygen and proper organic food.

So, it's important to learn about the environment around us in order to preserve the things around us that are mandatory for survival. If we don't, how will we survive?

Looking Back - Spinning and Weaving Guild (from page 1)

The Farm Office is open on Mondays from 11:00 am to 4:00 pm for members to come and bring whatever fiber art they are presently working on or to learn new skills in a particular craft. The Guild offers several classes each year for beginners through those with advanced skills. Members are highly active in charity projects for veterans, cancer patients, hospice, and the homeless and educating children's groups.

It was determined that the monthly meetings of the Guild would be held the first Tuesday of every month at 7:00 pm. with meetings open to the public. In addition to the regular business meeting a program is presented and members bring fiber arts they are currently working on or have completed for a Show and Tell portion of the meeting. Members range in age from babes-in-arms to grandparents. There are currently over 80 members from 60+ families. There are several men in the guild who take an active part. The membership fee for a household is \$20 per year, set by the Guild board.



One of the charitable projects accomplished by the Malabar Spinning and Weaving Guild was the dressing of 100 plush animals for the Hospice of North Central Ohio's Grief Camp. Plush animals were dressed in sweaters knitted by the Spinning and Weaving Guild.

From the left: Guild members Peggy Eller and Pam Beam who organized the dressing of the plush animals, member Desi Stoy who coordinated donations from the Irvin Hiskey American Legion Bellville Post for the plush animals, members Brian & Susan Lee who obtained the donation of many plush animals for the project, and Hospice of North Central Ohio Children's Grief Camp Coordinator.

***** The Malabar Farm Market Stand *****

The Market Stand is operated by the Malabar Farm Restaurant and is located adjacent to the restaurant. It is open Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays from 11:00 to 5:00 selling flowers, vegetables, fruit, and more! Call 419-938-5205, or follow on Facebook.

Listening to the Past and Seeing the Future: The Turning Point: Bromfield's Evolving Political Philosophy

By Paul Sukys, Professor Emeritus of Philosophy and Law, North Central State College

As might be expected, it is difficult to determine the moment at which Bromfield's political ideas reached full maturity. In fact, from a distance, Bromfield's political views seem a bit erratic. In the late 1920's, with the writing of *The Green Bay Tree*, he appears to be something of a Marxist. After all, one of the most sympathetic and compelling characters in that novel is Stepan Krylenko, the charismatic union leader who instigates a strike against the steel mills in The Town and who goes on to become one of the most feared political activists in the United States.

After having read *The Green Bay Tree*, no intelligent and informed reader in the 1920's could have been blamed for concluding that Bromfield was either an avowed Marxist or, at the very least, a dedicated socialist. Yet, Bromfield was neither. By the 1940's, we see Bromfield criticizing a generation of politicians who had attempted to solve the nation's economic problems by establishing the ill-conceived New Deal, which Bromfield saw as a quasi-socialistic government project that created dependency and stifled human initiative and self-reliance.

Yet, Bromfield was not against government projects in and of themselves. Rather, he opposed governmental intervention that used temporary fixes aimed at symptoms rather than causes and were, thus, doomed to fail. In contrast, he consistently supported initiatives led by individuals who knew how to diagnose a problem, find the causes, and then design solutions aimed at attacking those causes.

For example, in his first book length political treatise, *A Few Brass Tacks*, he declares his support for the Farm Security Administration because loans to farmers under that program were predicated on the condition that loan applicants promise to use effective farming techniques (p. 35). Presumably the point was to make certain that the use of ineffective techniques would not be repeated in the future.

Still, Bromfield was skeptical of large governmental projects, favoring, instead, projects that would finance small farms and small industrial centers. For instance, in an article entitled "To Clear the Dross", which Bromfield wrote for an anthology named, *Cities Are Abnormal*, Bromfield explains that the Tennessee Valley Authority succeeded because it decentralized both farming and industry, thus, allowing "enterprises in both fields (to) exist side by side without the disadvantages that exist in our crowded industrial areas" (p. 196).

By the early 1950's Bromfield had changed his mind again. He was still convinced that only those projects that attacked causes rather than symptoms would succeed. However, he was beginning to see that large scale projects could be beneficial given the right set of circumstances. This is significant because by 1954 in *A New Pattern for a Tired World*, Bromfield endorsed a global plan that pushed for the establishment of four geo-economic zones of development that would be led by the core nations of the United States, Canada, Brazil, Russia, China, Japan, India, Pakistan, and a unified Europe.

What may have influenced his shift to this position was a huge undertaking known as the St. Lawrence Seaway. We know little about what Bromfield thought about the St. Lawrence Seaway project, but what we do know is chronicled in one of his radio broadcasts. In the early 1950's Bromfield broadcast a weekly radio show each Saturday afternoon on NBC, entitled *Bromfield Reporting*. On Saturday May 24, 1953, he issued Broadcast Number 23, the subject of which was the St. Lawrence Seaway, then in the planning stages.

Ironically, but perhaps not unexpectedly, in his defense of the St. Lawrence Seaway, Bromfield finds himself in a new and unfamiliar role, as an advocate for industry. However, he adopts this role only after a careful diagnosis of the situation which prompted the plan for the seaway in the first place. The steel industry, which you will recall, Bromfield blasted in *The Green Bay Tree* is in need of iron ore. The vast deposit of iron ore located in Minnesota is about to run out. This ore is needed to supply what Bromfield refers to as "our great heavy industry, extending from Pittsburgh west to Chicago".

Other rich deposits of ore are available in Labrador in Canada, and extracting that ore is easy enough. However, extracting the ore has never been a problem; the real problem lies in transporting the ore in an efficient and economical way. Using the railroad is possible, of course, but Bromfield dismisses this solution as hopelessly expensive, noting in the transcript of the broadcast that "transportation by rail would enormously increase the cost of steel to you and me and the whole nation".

In contrast, the St. Lawrence Seaway will provide an effective, affordable alternative, one that the United States cannot pass up. Bromfield supports this project for the same reason that he supports many other projects – the initiative was led by individuals who properly diagnosed the problem, found the cause, and then designed a solution aimed at attacking the cause. However, the most interesting thing about Broadcast Number 23 is not the Seaway, nor the steel mills, but something much bigger. That however, is a subject for a later column.

Gifts That Keep on Giving

The Malabar Farm Foundation recently established an endowed fund at the Richland County Foundation. The fund's purpose is to help plan for the future of the beloved Malabar Farm State Park. The endowed fund was made possible through the hard work of all the volunteers and donors. The Foundation board members decided to preserve a nest egg to extend the legacy of Louis Bromfield in the fields of agriculture, conservation, the arts, and literature. For more information on how to volunteer or donate, visit malabarfarm.org or contact a Malabar Farm Foundation board member.. You can also donate to the Malabar Farm Foundation Endowment Fund at richlandcountyfoundation.org. The Malabar Farm Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

*Malabar Farm Foundation
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CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2018: (August – October)

August

Kid's Farm Fun Day & Fishing Derby, Aug. 4th 10am – noon (Fun Day), 1pm – 3pm (Fishing Derby)

Barn Dance, Aug. 4 @ 7pm – 10pm

Night Haunt, Aug. 25 @ 8pm - Midnight

September

42nd Annual Ohio Heritage Days Festival, Sept. 29 & 30 @ 10am – 4pm

Barn Dance, Sept. 29 @ 7pm – 10pm

October

Old Fashioned Film Festival, Oct. 13 @ 7pm

Haunting at the Harvest, Oct. 19 & 20 @ 7pm – 10pm & Oct. 21 @ 12pm – 3pm (New Event)

Fall Hike for Health, Oct. 20 @ 9am – 2pm

Harvest Barn Dance, Oct. 27@7pm-10pm

Visit www.malabarfarm.org for more details

Around the Farm – Hay is being cut. The cows and hogs are coming along fine and so are the goats and sheep. The chicken coop needs some work, but it will house 20 – 25 peeps when it is ready. There are currently 2 old turkeys in the coop.

Wagon tours, house tours & preparations for summer activities are always in progress!