



The Malabar Farm News

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Malabar Farm Foundation

**Summer
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Exciting New Changes Coming For The Malabar Farm Foundation

Pulitzer Prize winning novelist Louis Bromfield, founder of Malabar Farm in 1939, died on March 18, 1956. For the next year his estate lawyers kept Malabar Farm operating, before selling it in 1957 to the Friends of The Land (FOTL), an environmental organization that Louis had been president of at the time of his death. In 1958 the Louis Bromfield Malabar Farm Foundation was incorporated as a non-profit entity. At that point the FOTL turned over ownership of the farm to the Foundation. For the next fourteen years (1958-1972) the Louis Bromfield Malabar Farm Foundation operated Malabar Farm, doing so in a manner that preserved both the physical property of the farm and the legacy of land stewardship that Louis Bromfield had established there. In 1972 Malabar Farm was deeded to the State of Ohio, with the understanding that it would continue as an operating farm promoting Louis Bromfield's conservation ethic. In 1976 the farm became Malabar Farm State Park. With the passing of ownership to the state the Louis Bromfield Malabar Farm Foundation was disbanded.

Recognizing the need for a community based group to advise in the agricultural operations of the only

working farm in the state park system, in 1994 the Malabar Farm Foundation was incorporated as a community based non-profit organization. Over the years since then the role of the Malabar Farm Foundation has evolved from that of an agricultural advisory board to one of providing financial support to the park and to promoting the literary and environmental legacies of Louis Bromfield.

The list of contributions that have been made to the park since 1994 is far too long to include here. However, since 2005 the Foundation has provided support to Malabar Farm in the amount of more than \$1,800,000. This includes \$630,000 contributed toward the construction of the Visitor Center in 2005, and in 2006 \$144,200 for exhibits and the solar and wind power equipment for the new Visitor Center. The average annual financial support to the Park from 2007 through 2020 was more than \$32,000. Over the past seven years the Foundation has donated nearly \$100,000 to the restoration and preservation of Louis Bromfield's extensive art and artifacts collection in the Big House. Unfortunately, the future of this on-going project is now in question.

Unexpectedly, in April the administration of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources decided not to renew the Malabar Farm Foundation's office lease at Malabar Farm, thus removing the Foundation from an on-site presence at the Farm for the first time in nearly 30 years. Despite the difficulties involved in operating off site, the members of the Board of Directors of the Malabar Farm Foundation intend to honor their commitment to preserve and promote the Legacy of Louis Bromfield in the fields of literature, the arts, and the environment; and to uphold their duty to manage the copyrights of Louis Bromfield's extensive writing. Malabar Farm continues to be an important element in Bromfield's legacy and will remain a part of the Foundation's mission now and in the future. However, we will also be exploring additional

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ways of promoting Malabar Farm and the literary and environmental legacy that is Louis Bromfield within the Richland County community and beyond.

We gratefully acknowledge and thank all of our Louis Bromfield Society members and many other friends for your generous support over the past years. We hope that it will continue into the future as we guide the Malabar Farm Foundation forward. Please explore our newly redesigned and upgraded website malabarfarm.org for an introduction into what we expect will be a bright future. We consider all of you valued associates of the Malabar Farm Foundation and will keep you updated on the Foundation's evolving focus and activities. If you have questions or comments, please e-mail them to Tom Bachelder at thomasbachelder@yahoo.com.



Malabar Farm Restaurant Re-Opens

Closed since 2018 the much anticipated Malabar Farm Restaurant re-opening occurred early last June. Louis Bromfield Society members receive a 10% discount for themselves and one guest. Be sure to show your LBS membership card. For restaurant information, reservations, etc. call 419-938-5204

Malabar Farm State Park Tours Return

Memorial Day Weekend marked the resumption of Louis Bromfield's Big House and Malabar Farm Tours at the Park. Call the Park for times and tour prices, 419-892-2784 or see the Ohio Department of Natural Resources online at ohiodnr.gov for information.

The 2021-2022 Malabar Farm Foundation Board Officers

In July the Malabar Farm Foundation Board of Directors elected a new slate of Officers. The term for these officers will run for 12 months. President - Robert

Huge; Vice President - Thomas Bachelder; Treasurer - David Crawford; Secretary - James Reed. These four individuals, plus one new non-officer, Louis Andres, will make up the Foundation's Executive Committee.



Malabar Farm Foundation Scholarship Program

The Malabar Farm Foundation was founded in 1993 as a nonprofit 501(c)3 corporation, organized for the purpose of providing resources for the promotion of the principles and ideals, of Louis Bromfield in the areas of agriculture, literature, the environment, and the arts; and/or the preservation of Malabar Farm and the legacy of Louis Bromfield.

The Foundation sponsors scholarships to Ohio resident students that are enrolled or are enrolling in a full-time higher education program. Students should be pursuing degrees in agriculture, literature, conservation, environmental science, or related areas. Normally one scholarship is presented annually. Scholarship application requests and details can be made at **Malabar Farm Foundation** P.O. Box 551, Lucas, Ohio 44843, ATTN: Scholarship Committee. They can also be downloaded from the Foundation website: malabarfarm.org

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Listening to the Past and Seeing the Future:

The Shame of Our Local College

By Paul Sukys

Professor Emeritus, Philosophy, Law, and Literature, North Central State College

In 1953, Louis Bromfield penned an article titled "The Shame of Our Colleges" in which he condemned the state of higher education in American. Bromfield's complaint was that higher education had failed to produce graduates who were "well-informed about circumstances of the world, capable of making opinions through a process of thought and holding intelligent and sustained conversations upon a serious subject."¹

Bromfield identified three causes for this failure: (1) a lack of discipline at home and at school; (2) leftist
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faculty members intent on indoctrinating students rather than encouraging debate, and (3) a curriculum designed to produce job seekers, rather than critical thinkers.

Bromfield has been vindicated on all counts. In this column, however, we focus on Bromfield's third charge, that a curriculum designed to produce job seekers, rather than critical thinkers, produces neither.

There is, of course, some logic in the plan to provide students with professional skills and nothing more. After all, graduates must make a living and that means having the skills to do the job. Such skills are, of course, taught in the professional courses, not in the humanities like philosophy, literature, and art.

As a result, the humanities courses were often stripped from the curriculum to make room for professional courses. The result of this ill-advised strategy, (Bromfield called it "pedagogic dry rot,") was that our colleges had, at the time, failed to provide students with an in-depth education beyond the mechanics of their professions and helps them appreciate those lovely intangibles that make human beings, well, human beings.

Consequently, instead of well-rounded critical thinkers, Bromfield argues, we had graduates with professional degrees "who cannot think at all." All this could have been prevented by retaining the humanities courses in which students learn the value of art and literature as a way to understand the human condition and the role of ethics and philosophy in preserving truth, justice, and liberty, among other things. Having been deprived of that knowledge, Bromfield insists, the students of the 1950s were ill-equipped to deal with the culture war between democracy and communism.

Bromfield was correct in 1953 and he remains correct today. Many college administrators support programs designed to produce only materialistic job seekers, rather than, humanistic, critical thinkers. In fact, here in Bromfield's hometown, North Central State College has done exactly what Bromfield warned against. At NC State, in five Associate of Applied Science programs students can graduate without taking single humanities course.²

College administrators who defend these narrowly focused programs claim (1) that the students want professional courses, not humanities courses; (2) that the Ohio Department of Higher Education and

professional accrediting bodies demand changes in the curriculum that force the elimination of humanities courses, and (3) that, if necessary, the humanities can be embedded in the professional courses. Let's look at these arguments.

First, students do often prefer programs devoid of the humanities. That much is true. However, college administrators have a duty to help students see things to which, because of their youth and inexperience, they are blind. Fledgling students must be taught that being educated is more than receiving a skill set. It also involves learning how to use those skills in an honorable and ethical way, which they learn in the humanities.

Second, governing bodies, such as the Department of Higher Education and the accrediting bodies do often change curriculum requirements that lead to the elimination of humanities courses. However, there are ways to adjust a curriculum without decimating the humanities. This, in fact, was the case at North Central State College until 2012. Up until that time, students were required to take a core of courses in English, speech, the humanities and the behavioral sciences. This formula was adhered to for decades, despite changes to the curriculum dictated by the accrediting bodies.

Maintaining that standard was possible because the administration refused to support any changes that threatened to water down or eliminate core courses. This is no longer the case at NC State. If it were, then the humanities courses that have disappeared (five in philosophy alone, leaving only two) would still be on the books.

Finally, administrators often claim that the material found in humanities courses can be embedded into any professional course. Embedding, however, is complicated and rarely works because it means more than simply adding a few reading assignments or showing a few videos in the middle of a professional course.

Rather, embedding requires a well-developed, long term, institution-wide process. Such was the experience at the University of Idaho where it took a decade to determine how to embed effectively. Changing to an effective embedded system means involving faculty members from all parts of the university, developing a failsafe system to maintain quality instruction, and, obtaining administrative support to preserve "the

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framework and integrity of the humanities content.”³ As far as I know, there is no such program at NC State, nor has there ever been.

This, of course, only scratches the surface. In the next issue, we explore Bromfield’s charge that higher education in the 1950s had been hijacked by leftist faculty members dedicated to eliminating dissenting voices, and the equally troubling claim that this hijacking process continues today.

¹ Louis Bromfield, “The Shame of Our Colleges: The Uneducated People with All Their Degrees--How Did They Get that Way?” *Esquire Magazine*, March 19, 1953, pp. 32-33, 94.

² Academic Programs and Description (sic), 2021-2022 College Catalog and Student Handbook, North Central State College, Online.

³ Jean Henscheid, Michael O’Rourke, and Gary Williams, “Embedding the Humanities in Cross-Disciplinary General Education Courses,” *The Journal of General Education*, Vol. 58, No. 4, 2009, pp. 279-295.

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The Malabar Farm Foundation

Contact Us

Website - www.malabarfarm.org

Facebook - www.fb.com/malabarfarm

e-mail - mffspecialevents@yahoo.com

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 551 Lucas, Ohio 44843



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