

The Flanagan Farm

Grattan Township, Kent County, Michigan

On April 12, 2006, the 146.3 acre Lloyd and Kathleen Flanagan farm was the second to be preserved through the Kent County Purchase of Development Rights program. The Flanagan farm is situated in the Bear Creek watershed and is located in the southern half of Section 32 of Grattan Township, Kent County, Michigan (see map below). The property has access to one paved road, Murray Lake, and one unpaved road, 4 Mile. The Flanagan Farm is a part of a long chain of targeted farmland to be preserved called the “Parnell Corridor.”



The Flanagan farm was purchased by Perry and Lena Flanagan in 1947 and then sold to Lloyd and Kathleen Flanagan in 1964. This farm has been in the family for 57 years and Lloyd and Kathleen continue to farm it with their son, David Flanagan. Lloyd and Kathleen Flanagan stated, “We want to keep it a family farm so it cannot be developed into housing.”

Approximately 75% of the farm is devoted to agriculture, along with 10 acres of wetland and 24 acres of mixed hardwoods located around the edge of the property. Approximately 62% of the farm is located on prime agricultural soils including Marlette, Capac, Houghton, and Owosso series.

The Flanagan’s raise beef steers on the property along with corn, soybeans, wheat, oats, and hay grown in rotation. Lloyd and David Flanagan manage the wooded areas on his property for timber production according to an informal forest management plan. Deer, turkey, water fowl, song birds, crows, sand hill cranes, woodchucks, squirrels, and rabbits have all been seen on the property.

The Development Rights of the Flanagan Farm were purchased for \$3,991/acre. Funding sources for this farm included USDA-FRPP, the Wege Foundation, Grand Rapids Community Foundation, and the Urban Cooperation Board.

The Lowell Ledger

Volume 34 Issue 28

Serving Lowell Area Readers Since 1893

Wednesday, May 17, 2006

Flanagan farm second to be preserved in Kent County

By Dan Schneider



Peter Wege of the Wege Foundation, farm owners Kathleen and Lloyd Flanagan, Kent County Agricultural Preservation board chair Dennis Heffron, county commissioner Jack Horton and Natural Resources Conservation Service representative Jack Bricker stand with a sign that will denote the Flanagan farm as preserved.

There wasn't a lot of rain Monday morning, but some did fall on about 30 people who gathered near a farm field in southern Grant Township. They were there, most under umbrellas and a few sitting on hay-bales arranged into a makeshift amphitheater, for the dedication of the Flanagan farm as the second farm to be preserved through the Kent County Purchase of Development Rights program (PDR). The 145-acre farm has been in the Flanagan family since 1947, when Lloyd Flanagan's parents moved there in the spring.

"The farms are just as important to our citizens of this country as the Fortune 500 companies."

- Peter Wege

Flanagan took over farming the land in 1968 and has since passed that role on to his son, David Flanagan.

David Flanagan, 39, has worked the farm since 1985.

"I've never worked another job other than here and another job working for another farm," he said.

He's grateful for the measure of security that will come with the PDR agreement, at least the land won't be developed.

"As a small farm, it's really going to help that," David Flanagan said.

Tough economic times and the pressure to sell to developers is brought to bear most acutely on the small-scale farmers, who don't reap the benefit of economies of

