

## Cultivating Environmental Stewardship in the Lakeshore Region

MEMBERSHIP

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# The Source

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## A Message from the Executive Director

Don Pirrung, long time board member and President since 2006, retired recently from the LNRP Board of Directors. It's hard to think of anyone in our community who has done more--albeit in such a quiet, modest way--to help protect the lakeshore region and all that we love about living here.

New LNRP President Chris Goebel fondly remembers Don as being incredibly friendly and welcoming to all new Board members. "He demonstrated incredible dedication towards protecting this special place, and it's been wonderful to watch the LNRP grow and prosper over the past six years under his unwavering leadership."

From our early Community Grant Program to the current restoration project on Centerville Creek, Don knew the right community members and partners to assist with these efforts. He also brought a unique sense of humor to our gatherings and was one of our very best storytellers who shortened every drive to our monthly board meetings. Please join us in sincerely thanking Don and wishing him the best in all future endeavors. Our *Sense of Place* article on Fischer Creek in this issue is a tribute to Don and his lifelong passion for that wonderful gem along the Lake Michigan shoreline. We're happy to report that Don plans to stay engaged with LNRP through his involvement with the Friends of Hika Bay and our restoration projects.

Our new President Chris Goebel looks forward to building upon the traditions set by Don and facilitating the continued growth of LNRP. "We are entering a new phase with our Lakeshore Stewardship Program that is designed to leverage support for projects and programs from the private sector along with grants from state, federal, and private foundations." Chris moves into the Presidency from the Vice Presidency, a position he has held since 2009. He brings exceptional strengths to the position as past Executive Director of Glacial Lakes Conservancy and significant time working on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C. We welcome Chris as President and look forward to continued success in cultivating environmental stewardship in the lakeshore region.

It's an honor to serve you,

Jim Kettler, Executive Director

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## Spring 2012



## News from LNRP

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## LNRP Receives Grants

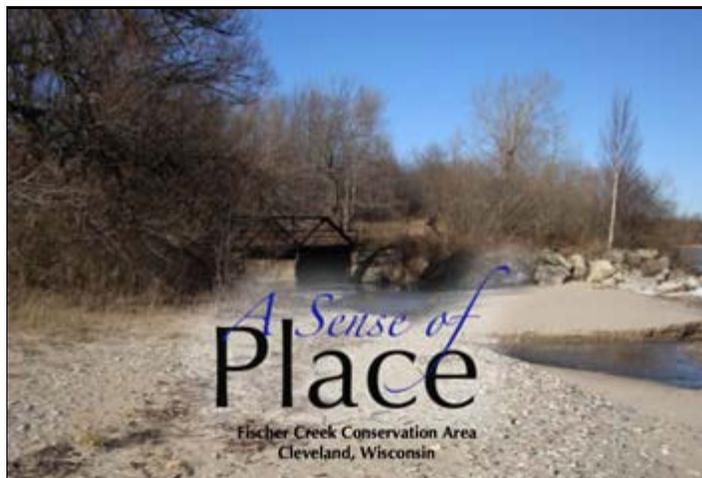
The Lakeshore Natural Resource Partnership has received several grants in the last few months including a substantial award from the Brico Fund and two project grants from Freshwater Future.



The Brico Fund supports a commitment to building stronger synergies and influence by collaborating and aligning the Lake Michigan Stakeholders and LNRP with state-wide and regional groups such as Sweet Water, the Water Table groups, the Compact Implementation Coalition, the Great Lakes Caucus, among others. It also supports the process of capacity building for the Lake Michigan Stakeholders and

## Fischer Creek: 'Worth Fighting For' – A Sense of Place

A 160-acre Conservation Area lies in the Village of Cleveland, Wisconsin, thanks to a group of concerned citizens who came together in the early 1990s to save it from development. This story includes a mention of the contentious aspects often underlying and driving such projects throughout the decades before and after the first Earth Day in 1970, and attempts to express what captured the hearts of this passionate group of area residents.



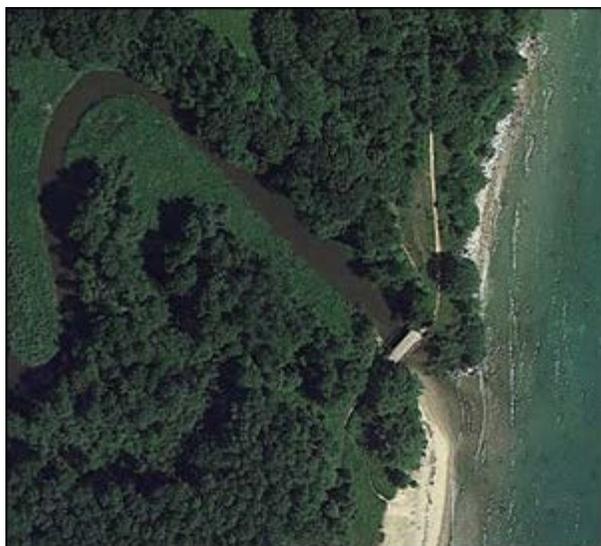
On the website, Fischer Creek is described as the most recent addition to the Manitowoc County Park System. "This 160-acre site was purchased by the State of Wisconsin using Stewardship money along with a contribution from Manitowoc County (and) is owned by the State and developed and maintained by the County."

So, why was Fischer Creek 'Worth Fighting For', included in a feature documentary narrated by James Taylor in the latter 1990s as the Wisconsin poster child alongside three other citizen-based projects in Canada and Michigan?

First is its beauty and regional

significance: Fischer Creek Conservation Area includes 1800 feet of Lake Michigan shoreline flanking the mouth of the Creek. The view is magnificent, with abundant bluffs reminiscent of their celebrated sisters to the north in Door County. Wildlife, bird species and wildflowers adorn its beach and trails through the park. It provides a sweet respite to the soul and song to the senses dulled by life's stresses and crying out for the renewal only Nature can provide. And, families of fishermen and women can bring their children there to recreate and bond.

Lifelong resident Don Pirrung, featured in the film with John Kirsch, Rolf Johnson and others, were part of a citizen's group who came together as Friends of Fischer Creek in the early 1990s when a Chicago-based developer wanted to put condominiums on the property, requiring annexation by the Village Board. Don brought to the group an engineering perspective.



*Fischer Creek draining into Lake Michigan*

Don says when they looked at the cost/benefit analysis of the proposed development, "What we'd gain in the short term would have been a drop in the bucket. We then distributed fact sheets to the community and we became a majority with a groundswell of support.

"This journey was a wild rollercoaster ride of emotions, from the highest highs to the lowest lows, sometimes in the same afternoon," he adds. "What makes (the area) so special is its natural beauty and impressive bluffs.

"It also has archeological significance with State Historical Sites registered on the property. An old steel bridge dates back to a military road connecting Green Bay to Milwaukee. A woman who met with our Friends group said that for hundreds of years the site was considered sacred where Native Americans came to pray because of its unique overlook of Lake Michigan.

"The property has a special relationship with residents in the area. As kids we played there and as adults we still savor its natural beauty. Nature is its own entertainment center. Trout migrate in the spring through its stream."

FOFC faced an enormous battle. They first decided to create the state conservation area in order to preserve it and subsequently had to raise the funds and work with the Village Board to approve the park's creation. They persevered, despite the challenges, and on January 30, 1995, the Board officially voted to deny the annexation request from the developer.

Don reflects, "In over 37 years of engineering projects I've overseen and developed, participating in the creation of Fischer Creek Park was the most amazing thing I've ever been involved with. It shows how a group of people coming together can make a huge difference in our lives and environment. We focused on the elements of Nature as inspiration and let her speak for herself through a committed group of local residents."

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provides the funds for the costs of LNR staff to continue to play the role of Co-Chair of the Steering Committee. Finally, it supports the core interest in our efforts to organize and mobilize our members to action, and educating policy makers at the local, regional, and state levels, keeping them engaged and educated about the impact of the decisions they make.



The grants from Freshwater Future continue our efforts to develop stronger groundwater protection for the lakeshore region and to host a forum on adapting to climate change.

We thank the Brico Fund and Freshwater Future for their generous support!

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### Farewell to Barb Bundy-Jost



Our Board of Directors member, Barb Bundy-Jost, stepped down at the beginning of the year to focus on her growing set of responsibilities at the Manitowoc Public School District. Barb teaches digital art and handles a number of community service programs, including the International Baccalaureate Program, for the schools. We wish her the best look forward to working with her again in the future.

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### New Group forms on the Manitowoc River

A new Friends of the Manitowoc River Watershed (FMRW) formed this spring and is being supported by the Wisconsin Maritime Museum, the City of the Manitowoc, the Manitowoc-Two Rivers YMCA, and LNR. The Mission Statement is "to provide a unified voice to enhance the Manitowoc River Watershed." The group had a very well attended beach and river clean-up event on April 14. FMRW seeks to connect people to the river: individuals, businesses, organizations, and government in order to increase awareness of the river, its history and ecosystem, and show that people care about the Manitowoc River and desire to enhance the watershed. For more information or to join in their activities, contact Kim Kettner at [kkettnerm@hotmail.com](mailto:kkettnerm@hotmail.com).

## LNRP Welcomes New Board Members

We're pleased to announce two new additions to our Board of Directors.

**Colette Blum-Meister** grew up in western NY State, where her father, a noted botanist, honed her love of nature with ecological field trips to creeks, ponds, rivers, oceans, bogs, swamps and salt marshes. At an early age, she was aware of the need to protect, preserve and restore our finite natural resources.

A transplant to Wisconsin, she and her geologist husband Ron raised their three children on five acres of a former dairy farm outside of Denmark in Brown County. Since 1974, they have transformed their 'little house on the prairie' into extensive perennial beds, a large organic garden, wildlife ponds, woods and two small prairies. Colette has parlayed an MS in Health Services Administration into a 30-year career in emergency management, including service as State Administrator for former Gov. Tony Earl, and as Brown County Director. Currently, she is a national disaster reservist with the Federal Emergency Management Agency. She has also served as Director of Viking Rescue Squad, on the Brown County Solid Waste Board and the WPS Citizen's Advisory Board. She is a member of Water's Edge Artists and says her love of art developed early.



And, we welcome **Marko Sosa**, co-owner and roaster with wife Melissa of Terra Verde Coffeehouse in Chilton. The Sosas are two of only 16 certified baristas in the state of Wisconsin. However, not only is Marko passionate about coffee, he earned a Master's Degree in Agricultural Economics and works as a Dairy Specialist for Vi-Cor Company of Mason City, Iowa, helping dairies use new technologies and best management practices. He works with all size dairy farms, from 15-20 cow operations to large CAFOs with herds greater than 5,000 head in the Upper Midwest and internationally. Marko and Melissa also stay busy raising their three children and live in rural Manitowoc County. Growing up in Honduras, Central America, he helped manage his family's farms and owned his own dairy. Working close to nature helped him gain a greater appreciation for the conservation of water, land and air.

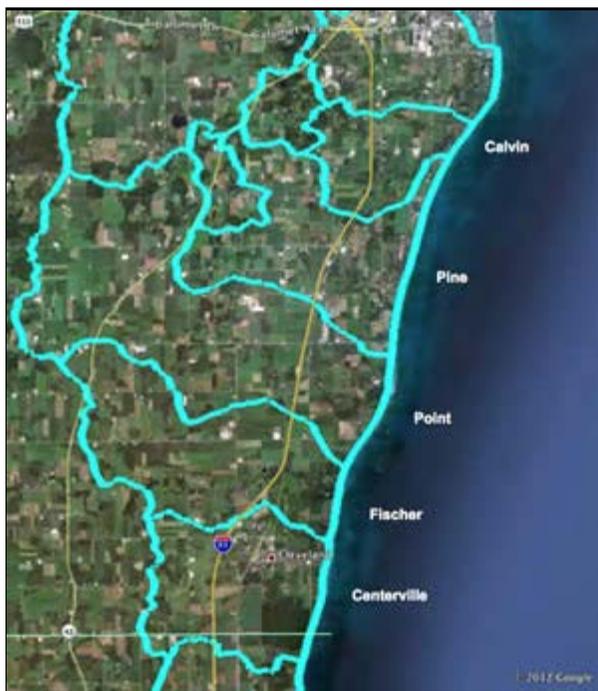


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## Report from the Friends of Hika Bay

LNRP has been working with the Village of Cleveland since 2009 to develop a framework to comprehensively restore the abandoned millpond on Centerville Creek and enhance Hika Park. The project will restore 2,000 feet of Centerville Creek and 500 feet of the South and North Branch of Centerville Creek by removing sediment and creating a gradient to restore flow. In the late 1800s, a dam was erected one mile east of Cleveland (WI) creating the 12-acre Cleveland Impoundment. Prior to dam removal, approximately 8-10 feet of sediment had accumulated behind the dam, and much of this sediment remained in place following draw-down and removal of the dam. Since then, the stream continues to erode, releasing tremendous amounts of fine sediment into Lake Michigan, destroying fish habitat and causing aesthetic and public safety concerns revolving around *Cladophora* algae.

As part of the process, LNRP created an active Citizen Advisory Committee to guide the design process, offer insights to potential opportunities and challenges, and provide recommendations to the Cleveland Plan Commission through LNRP. This Committee became the Friends of Hika Bay in Spring 2011 and now has created a five-year work plan that includes the five frontal watersheds draining into Lake Michigan: Calvin, Pine, Point, Fischer, and Centerville Creeks.



A partnership with the UW-Manitowoc has been established and one of its interns has collected weekly measurement of physical, chemical, and biological characteristics of five different sampling points in 2010 and seven sampling points in 2011. There will be 10 testing points in 2012. Testing measures the pH, temperature, flow, turbidity, conductivity, dissolved oxygen, ammonia, phosphorus and *E.coli*.

A bird monitoring program will be implemented in 2012 and include weekly sampling in the Centerville Creek corridor and complement the existing weekly monitoring in the Fischer Creek Conservation Area. Tom Ward, the invasive species coordinator for Manitowoc County,

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## Lake Michigan Stakeholders to Meet at Concordia College, Mequon

Non-point pollution issues facing Lake Michigan will be the focus of discussion at a Lake Michigan Stakeholders meeting May 16 at the new Center for Environmental Stewardship at Concordia College in Mequon.



Beyond the general business aspects of the meeting, Bill Hafs from the Brown County Land and Water Conservation Department will discuss the challenges of phosphorus loading. A panel will then take a fresh look at non-point prevention and will include Paul Linzmeyer from the NEW Wilderness Alliance, Melissa Malott from Clean Wisconsin, Kevin Kirsch from the DNR, and Greg Banek from the Outagamie County Land and Water Conservation Department. The meeting is open to groups, organizations or individuals interested in the restoration of Lake Michigan. For further information contact Jim Kettler at [jim@lnrp.org](mailto:jim@lnrp.org). Also check out the new LMS website at [lakemichiganstakeholders.org](http://lakemichiganstakeholders.org).

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## LNRP Welcomes Jenn Hansmann as our New Administrative Assistant



Join us in welcoming Jenn Hansmann to our LNRP staff as an Administrative Assistant. Jenn was born and raised on the shores of Lake Michigan in Cleveland, Wisconsin. She studied at Northern Michigan University until she further pursued a 2-year internship at Baird Family Farms in South Carolina. Her studies included organic methods of fruit and vegetable farming, raising goats, sheep, cows, beekeeping and community building. She spent a summer at a small CSA farm in western Wisconsin, and then moved back to the area to work at Springdale Farm in Plymouth, Wisconsin. She brings a passion for healthy lifestyles and the



Tom Ward training the Friends on controls for invasive species in the barn of LNRP Board Member, John Kirsch

will target invasive species in all natural areas of the watersheds through training sessions for the Friend's group. The first training was held on April 30 and focused on honeysuckle, buckthorn, and garlic mustard. This summer, we will focus on Japanese knotweed and, later in the summer, on *Phragmites*.

We also plan to do a major upgrade of facilities and habitat enhancements for Hika Park. We plan to expand upon the ridge/swale community through additional plantings to establish a wet meadow. A pedestrian bridge will link the south and northern portions of the park. Finally, interpretive signs will be established along a boardwalk and walking path that will run throughout the park.

Funding for the restoration of Centerville Creek has already been secured through a significant grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and a donation from Cleveland State Bank. We have also received funding from a number of private individuals as well as funding from LNRP members and are grateful for the outpouring of support.

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## Water's Edge Artists, LNRP and Woodland Dunes Celebrate Spring

On a recent blustery weekend, 16 Water's Edge Artists gathered on Friday April 6th at Woodland Dunes Nature Center and Preserve, located near Two Rivers (WI), for their monthly plein air 'paint-out'. Several more showed up on Saturday along with many from the day before for more painting, camaraderie and a special event, 'Water Inspirations: Share the Arts with Bells Ringing in Spring.'

The genius of Bonnita Budysz, Jim Kettler and Jim Knickelbine, the event was loosely based on the original launch of the WEA in December of 2008 with a similar event at Woodland Dunes.

Thirteen artists displayed more than 40 of their professional paintings inside Woodland Dunes on Saturday, and the exhibit was extended through April 19th.

Late in the afternoon, over 40 people gathered inside for an entertaining and engaging variety of poetry, music, and presentations by LNRP Executive Director Jim Kettler, Woodland Dunes Director Jim Knickelbine and some of the artists, all sharing their love of the land and water.

Bells rang every 15 minutes to differentiate the presentations and draw the audience's attention.

Local poets Kathryn Gahl and Jean Biegun shared some of their favorite works, transporting the audience through the depths of their imaginative wordplay and expression. Liysa Callson, encouraging the audience to 'hear with our eyes', presented a gifted interpretation for the hearing impaired with Kathryn's last reading in both sets.

Rebecca Markvart entertained us with her beautiful singing voice and guitar playing, presenting renditions of her original works and those of other musicians. A



LNRP Board Member & WEA Artist Colette Blum-Meister and her "red red" gloves.

local food movement. She attained her Chiropractic Assistant license from Moraine Park Technical College and has 5 years of administrative experience. Jenn continues to be surrounded by great people and is very excited to promote stewardship with LNRP.

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## Kewaunee Groundwater Program

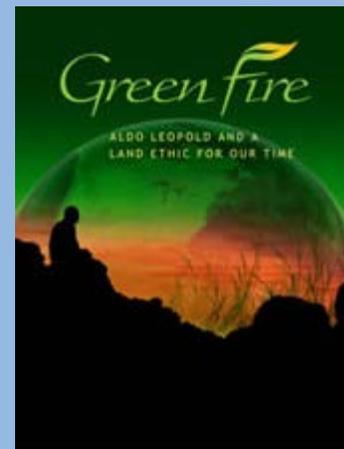
The Kewaunee County Groundwater Guardians are planning a well testing results seminar on Wednesday, June 6. Kevin Masarik from UW Stevens Point will discuss the well test results and their implications. The event will be held at the Luxemburg Primary School Cafeteria at 601 Marcks Lane in Luxemburg beginning at 6:00 p.m.

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## MAGIC in Mishicot showing Aldo Leopold documentary 'Green Fire'

The Mishicot Area Growth and Improvement Committee has partnered with the Lakeshore Natural Resource Partnership to show the documentary film, 'Green Fire', about Wisconsin naturalist and environmental advocate Aldo Leopold and his land ethic. The community showing is on Friday, May 11, at 6:00 at the VFW Hall at 314 W. Main Street in Mishicot.

Admission is free and free popcorn and refreshments will be served. After the film, we will discuss how Aldo Leopold's land ethic philosophy might be applied toward environmental stewardship of the West Twin and East Twin Rivers including the newly planned river walk in Mishicot.



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*Rebecca Markvart singing water songs.*

PowerPoint presentation ran throughout underscoring our connection to water as the source of all life. We had locally made soups, bread and desserts to share.

The atmosphere was enveloping and electric with life and gratitude. We're already setting our sites on next year and looking to expand it to two consecutive weekends with the exhibit running between. For those of you who were there, thank you for your participation and engagement. For the rest of you, we hope you can make it next year!

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## New 'Wisconsin Ledge' Viticultural Area 12th Largest in U.S.

March 19, 2012 brought seven years of planning, persistence and focus to fruition for Trout Springs Winery owner Steve DeBaker and associates. Their collective vision: to literally put approximately 3,800 miles of East, East Central and Northeast Wisconsin on the map as a major wine growing region.

This vast area, now known as the 'Wisconsin Ledge,' is part of the Niagara escarpment corridor with unique underlying geology, soils and climate conditions making it especially conducive to grape growing and wine production. More than two years after DeBaker initially applied to the federal government for an American Viticultural Area (AVA) designation, news finally arrived and regional wineries will now be able to label their products as 'Wisconsin Ledge' beginning on April 23, 2012.

DeBaker explained, "We are now branding a huge area same as any other great grape growing region in the world -- Napa Valley, Finger Lakes, Beamsville Bench: *Wisconsin Ledge*. Our area is not just a place to visit; it is a destination spot to spend time exploring the many unique opportunities we have to offer in this special region.

"By making wise land use decisions, using sustainable value-added farming, we complement the scenic landscape of the Niagara escarpment corridor rather than exploiting the natural benefits this area offers. Enhancing the Wisconsin Ledge with picturesque vineyards on rolling hillsides should attract agri-tourism second to none, and with all the unique flora and fauna associated with the Niagara escarpment, our region will become a major stopping place for people to experience now and for many generations to come."

Others who shared DeBaker's vision include Eric Fowle, Executive Director of the East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission and Founding Co-Chair of the Niagara Escarpment Resource Network (NERN), and Jim Kettler, Executive Director of the LNRP, as well as other area grape growers and wine producers. NERN provided technical support and assistance along with moral support.

"This designation "means we can market our region as a grape-growing area just like any other AVAs in the country; it means extra tourism. It means it becomes a destination spot. There are a lot of good things it will mean for the whole area, not just the wineries. There's going to be a trickle down effect for small businesses," DeBaker said.

Fowle said, "The Niagara escarpment corridor and its unique geology are the main reasons for the existence of the Wisconsin Ledge AVA. This designation will help increase the economic productivity of our region's lands and improve the long-term viability of a Niagara escarpment geo-tourism program which NERN, LNRP and our partners continue to develop.

"The AVA also illustrates one more 'value' associated with the escarpment landscape, that being its use to produce local food. The AVA designation will surely add to the unique sense of place that the escarpment provides, as well as serving to promote additional land stewardship," he added.



*Trout Springs owner Steve DeBaker at his vineyards in Greenleaf, WI*

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LNRP's Jim Kettler explained, "We believe strongly in promoting and developing partnerships and programs to enhance the lakeshore region's quality of life and sustainability. We have worked with Steve and Eric over the years and are so pleased to finally see this designation in place."

The new AVA contains nearly 320 acres of vineyards with an additional 70 acres of vineyards projected in the next two years. The Wisconsin Ledge AVA lies in Door, Kewaunee, Manitowoc, Sheboygan, Ozaukee, Washington, Dodge, Fond du Lac, Calumet, Outagamie and Brown Counties. It also ranks 16th in the nation for number of wineries in the state with 15 bonded wineries to date within the new AVA.

The Wisconsin Ledge will be added to 203 other wine-growing regions in the country, and becomes the third in Wisconsin. The other two were designated in 2004 and 2009. All together these three AVAs cover four states (Wisconsin, Illinois, Iowa and Minnesota), making this region the world's largest designated wine-growing region.

Watch for forthcoming news of a Ledge Tour winery tour in the works for September 8th as well as the upcoming AVA celebration at St. Martin Heritage Park near Chilton on August 19th.

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