

CENTRE COUNTY



FARMLAND TRUST

Faces of Farmland Preservation

**Pete & Carol
SCHEMPF**
HARRIS TOWNSHIP



Generosity is often what motivates a land owner to donate a voluntary conservation easement to the Centre County Farmland Trust. This is often inspired by many things including love for the Centre County region, feeling a personal connection to the land, and the desire to leave a legacy for future generations. All of these things motivated Pete and Carol Schempf to permanently protect their 42 acre farm in 2009. Located in Harris Township, 2.5 miles east of Boalsburg at the intersection of PA Route 45 and Cedar Run Road, Schempf Farm is rich in historic, agricultural and natural resources. Preserving

this farmland assures that all of these attributes will continue into perpetuity.

Both Pete and Carol were raised with an understanding and commitment to preserving green space for agricultural purposes. Carol's roots go back several generations to before the civil war when her great-grandfather farmed in Puddintown, PA and her grandfather started Bathgate Dairy there as well. Schempf Farm was purchased by Pete's father, John, in 1946 following World War II. The original farmhouse is documented as a Historic Home of Centre County with

an origin date of 1816. The Schempf family has gone out of their way over the years to maintain many original features of the farm. Pete always felt connected to the land, and with Carol's support they worked out a family agreement with his siblings and parents to take over the farm in 1994.

In recent years, they have watched as enormous amounts of nearby farmland have been sold for residential development. Pete shared, "Carol and I knew that we wanted to enable the property to remain in agricultural use while protecting its natural, scenic, historic and



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water resource values forever.” After researching conservation options, the Schempfs chose to work with the Trust. “The Trust offered up-front monetary, technical, administrative and moral support throughout the entire process. Norm Lathbury (Executive Director of the Trust) made everything so easy to understand and really walked us through the entire six month process.”

Currently, the farm produces corn and soybeans in prime agricultural soil on the western portion of the property. The farm also includes a sloped pasture for beef cattle and a six acre woodlot of oak, black walnut, locust and pines. Native shrubs of maple-leaved viburnum, witch hazel and honeysuckle flourish in the borders. This property is critical to the headwaters for Cedar Run, a tributary to Spring Creek. Cedar Run is classified by the Pennsylvania Department of



Environmental Protection as a High Quality Cold Water Fishery and is the perfect spawning area for stream bred wild brown trout. In addition to the stream, Schempf Farm is the source of four natural springs that feed Cedar Run.

The property is a nature lover's paradise. Wildlife commonly seen include white tailed deer, bear, red fox, ground hogs, minks, muskrats, geese, ducks, herons, kingfishers, rabbits, hawks, crows, gray and red squirrels, cardinals, blue jays, wood thrush, wood peckers and a variety of song birds. The woodlands and field areas provide cover for species adapted to more sunlight such as: blue birds, nut hatches, chickadees, ruffed grouse and woodcock.

Pete is a retired Navy pilot and Carol is still a lifelong preschool and primary educator. In typical military fashion, they moved 13 times and lived in two countries and five states while raising two children. Despite that “jet set global lifestyle”, the decision for Pete and Carol, both Penn State graduates, to return to their roots to live life on the farm came easily. Together, they peacefully watch the birds come and go on their many feeders, while the beautiful flowers and waterside grasses blow in the breeze, knowing that year after year, in an ever changing county landscape, one thing will remain the same: Schempf Farm.