

2007 PCLT Honorees

There are many Putnam residents who are worthy candidates for the Putnam County Land Trust's Annual Blue Heron award which aims to recognize and acknowledge those individuals who have made and/or continue to make contributions to environmental values here in Putnam County. This year we are pleased to announce that the award will be given to Cherie Ingraham and Rick Feuerman for their work in establishing and nurturing the Chuckie Goodnight Foundation for the Environment.

The Foundation is dedicated to environmental education focusing on youngsters. Using their background in the design field, Cherie has created the Chuckie Goodnight character as a spokesman for the environment. His job is to educate children about the importance of being kind and respectful and taking good care of our earth. She has written a book about the character Chuckie and his friends and has published a calendar and a journal as well. To fund the Foundation, childrens' sleepwear has been designed and marketed.

To quote from the Chuckie Goodnight Foundation website, "Children are our focus. They are our future generations. We must teach them social ethics and earth stewardship." Well said.

There are two ways that PCLT is supported. One is through the donation of money; the second is through the donation of time and talents. The Leadership in Giving Award, initiated in 2006 recognizes individuals who have led in giving to PCLT. Victor Grossman, a resident of Southeast and an attorney with a law office in Carmel has been designated the recipient of this year's Leadership in Giving Award. Dating back to the early nineties Victor has donated hundreds of hours of his time as counsel to the Putnam County Land Trust. His constant help and his advice have truly been an essential part of helping PCLT grow and thrive.

The awards will be presented at the Annual Benefit Dinner on April 28th. We hope to see you there. (Learn more about our Annual Dinner on Page 5 of this newsletter!)

"Children are our focus. They are our future generations. We must teach them social ethics and earth stewardship."

New Rules Encourage Land Protection

Property owners who have protected their land are well-acquainted with the benefits of donating conservation easements. Easements help keep water quality pure. They keep wildlife habitats intact. They protect the character of our communities.

Those are the benefits to society. But there are also individual benefits. Protecting the environment through land preservation is important enough that the federal government lets you take an income tax deduction for it.

The IRS has allowed that for years, in fact. But now the rules have changed and the tax benefits are better.

If you donate a conservation easement before the end of 2007, you might be eligible to take an ever bigger federal income tax deduction. And New York State has sweetened the pot by allowing easement donors past and present to get a credit of up to \$5,000 on their property taxes.

Land trusts expect these new rules to make a significant difference in our efforts to protect land. Landowners who in recent years have been weighing the benefits of conservation easements may well decide there is no time like the present and we think it will attract landowners who until now might not have been able to take advantage of the income tax benefits.

See "Land Protection" on Page 7

