



Educational Farm & Nature Preserve

Legacy Series

An ongoing series of articles recounting the history of the Stratford Ecological Center and the Warner family

Legacy Series: Part 9 October, 2011

Continuing with the story of Gale Warner



Gale Warner

Gale's post-college years....

Following an internship at Hidden Villa in 1983, Gale joined her soul mate, a freshman medical student at Harvard Medical School in Boston. David Kreger had been a Stanford student and was already heavily involved in the environmental movement – having been mentored by David Brower, who is recognized as a father of the modern environmental movement. In fact, it was in a class taught by Brower at Stanford that Kreger first met Gale.

In Boston, both became activists in the anti-nuclear movement and formed a medical student branch of the Nobel-Peace-Prize winning organization International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW). The President of IPPNW was Harvard-based Dr. Bernard Lown, well known as the originator of the Cardiac Care Unit and inventor of the defibrillator. The organization's Soviet counterpart, Dr. Evgeni Chasov, served as physician to President Mikhail Gorbachev. David and Gale organized several trips to the Soviet Union in the mid-'80's, culminating in a climb, along with Soviet medical students, of Europe's tallest peak (Mt. Elbrus) in the Caucasus Mountains (1986). Dr. Chasov saw them off at base camp.

While in Boston, Gale volunteered at Massachusetts Audubon's Drumlin Farm Sanctuary and enrolled in a Masters Program in English at the University of Massachusetts. Her free-lance articles and poems appeared in the Boston Globe, the Christian Science Monitor, Parade, Sierra, Sanctuary (Massachusetts Audubon Society) and various nature publications. She won the American Poet's Prize in 1985 and also published her first book, *Citizen Diplomats: Pathfinders in Soviet-American Relations* (1987) with co-author, Michael Shuman.



David, Dr. Chasov, Gale

Meanwhile, Gale's parents in Ohio were alerted to an article in the Delaware Gazette outlining major residential/commercial development plans south of the city of Delaware, encompassing the 236-acre site designated by the Warners as a future educational farm and Nature Preserve. Gale's expertise was immediately tapped by her parents. Just how does one go about starting an educational farm? One day (September 26, 1986, to be exact) while Gale's parents were visiting her in Boston, she typed up a step-by-step plan for creating a non-profit educational center. It also addressed what staff and facilities would be needed, and a budget. She articulated three goals (which are still in place today) and temporarily dubbed the project "Buttonwood Farm." All that was now needed was for her parents to implement her plan!