



# CENTRAL VALLEY FARMLAND TRUST LEGACY

## Brandstad Farms – Preserving the Past, Stewarding the Future

The Brandstad Family has already conserved 175 acres of their family property and now the remaining 158 acres are in the final stages of completion – on its way to a forever-farm thanks to the family's commitment to their 150-year old farming legacy and a partnership with Central Valley Farmland Trust. This picturesque farm is located in San Joaquin County near the community of Linden. Their journey to conserve these two highly productive farms began in 2011 and now will reach its close in early 2014.

Central Valley Farmland Trust worked with owners Jon and Christine Brandstad and John's brother, both owners of their own portion of the total farm acreage. CVFT also leveraged funding from the Department of Conservation's California Farmland Conservancy Program, Natural Resource Conservation Service's Farm and Ranchland Protection Program and local mitigation fees to conserve the remaining portion of the farm. Using the tool of an agricultural conservation easement maintains their private ownership and the rights that come with owning land, but extinguishes the ability to ever divide or convert the land away from agriculture.



Brandstad Family Farmhouse

This prime farmland produces walnuts and cherries, and also boasts a small olive orchard. The fourth-generation farmers, the Brandstad brothers, made this decision collectively with their families and children to commit their lives and their land to farming forever. John's nephew Jeff is the new manager of John's portion of the farm maintaining the family's tradition on the land. Jeff's oldest son Richard works the farm during harvest in the summers, making six generations on the farm.

The farming operation focuses on efficiency and closely manages their trees. "We are very happy to have our nephew Jeff come and manage our portion of the ranch," said John Brandstad. "He knows this land, our trees, and how to take this operation to the next level. As the second half of the farm nears completion of our conservation project we know our history and stewardship will go on."

The property is also home to the original farm house that Jon's great-grandfather built; they moved into the house on New Year's Day 1900. Their grandfather bought the original conserved property for his own during the Depression for \$15 per acre. "He struggled to get it and struggled to keep it," said John. "We are passionate about preserving farmland; we have a lot of pride in what we do because of who came before us."

"It would break our hearts to see this place with so much history and hard work invested in it turned into houses or a development one day," said Christine. "No matter who owns this place in the future, its history will live in the land and continue to provide for our next generations."

"These easements are good for everybody," said John. "It protects the environment and teaches future generations to care for the land. We must pass these concepts onto our children so their children will know it too."

"The Brandstad Farm is a highly productive asset and generates significant economic benefit to the local community and the State. We have been delighted to work with this family and our conservation partners on this project," said Bill Martin, executive director of CVFT. "The Brandstad family members are passionate stewards of the land and their gift to us all is a legacy of farming and family values whose indelible mark will live on in perpetuity." ♡

FALL 2013

*Merry Christmas  
& Happy Holidays!*

Save the Date

### Crab Feed for Conservation

February 1, 2014 Waterloo Gun  
and Bocce Club, Stockton

Check Out Our  
New Website!

[www.valleyfarmland.org](http://www.valleyfarmland.org)

*"We make a living  
by what we get,  
we make a life by  
what we give."  
-Sir Winston Churchill*



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*Help us reach 200 friends on  
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## Rally Wrap-Up:

Staff members Bill Martin and Susan Hooper and board member Ron Dolinsek attended the Land Trust Alliance's National Land Conference (Rally) in New Orleans, La. in late September. This highly anticipated, annual event is the premier occasion to learn the latest news and techniques for successful land conservation and to network with partners and colleagues.

The three attended classes on policy, risk management, leadership and fund raising training, land stewardship, and board development. It was three days full of education and inspiration.



"It was an excellent learning opportunity. Not just academically but through collaboration with other land trust folks from across the country. I seem to always pick up a nugget or two from others who have been around much longer than me," said Bill Martin, executive director for CVFT. "I'm pleased to report that the risk management class I took was an affirmation that CVFT is doing things right when it comes to our documentation process. Another class was most valuable in helping me to refocus on how best to lead through collaboration. We will do it again next year!"

## Our Vision:

Preservation of the Central Valley's agricultural lands is vital to protecting our agricultural economy, heritage, unique agricultural resources and quality of life. We envision a future in which the Central Valley can accommodate population growth and urban development while preserving the most productive agricultural lands, thus creating and maintaining our irreplaceable farmland and high-quality environment for future generations.

## Our Mission:

To work with landowners and conservation partners to preserve agricultural lands in the California Central Valley for future generations.

### Website address:

[www.valleyfarmland.org](http://www.valleyfarmland.org)



## Director's Message

Did I just miss 2013? Someone once told me the older you get the slower the years pass. This is proving to not be true. This past year was a transition year for Central Valley Farmland Trust (CVFT). We started in mid-2012 to renovate much of our outreach and public relations infrastructure, which included significant improvements to our annual report and Legacy newsletter.

We are very pleased to announce that just last week we put the final touches to the overhaul of our website, [www.valleyfarmland.org](http://www.valleyfarmland.org). Add to that a revised corporate sponsor program, brand new membership program, and active participation via several electronic media venues. Did I also mention the three CVFT hosted events successfully held during 2013!?

To the untrained eye we made it look simple! But trust me when I say, the effort expended by Susan Hooper, CVFT's associate director, along with our very capable partners and volunteers was nothing less than spectacular! It is not just the fact they worked tirelessly, but the quality of their collective efforts has firmly ensconced CVFT in the upper echelon of land trusts. How do I know this? It is not that complicated. The corporate sponsorship program has proven highly successful, the new membership program is already bearing fruit, our members continually comment on how the annual report and Legacy newsletter are so well done, and our electronic media exposure is gaining geometric momentum. But the biggest compliment of all is when other land trusts call and ask to duplicate some of the things we have done.

Lastly, but most significantly, we closed a 166-acre agricultural conservation easement (ACE) in Sacramento County and have several thousand acres of pending ACEs in the pipeline. These achievements are great, but so are YOU, our supporters. Without your contributions of dollars, time and expertise – we would not be where we are today.

As the year comes to a close, please continue supporting our mission-driven work or start by making your first contribution today. Join our family of farmers, land-lovers, and legacy-leavers! You will not be disappointed - \$.94 of every dollar goes directly to land conservation – a legacy worth leaving. ♡

Please contact us if you are interested in getting involved.  
Thank you in advance,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "W. Martin".

Bill Martin,  
Executive Director



Brandstad Farm Walnut Orchard



# AN EVENING AT THE CARNEGIE

*featuring Picasso: the edition ceramics*

TO BENEFIT  
THE CENTRAL VALLEY FARMLAND TRUST

Our third occasion of *An Evening at the Carnegie*, our largest fundraiser of the year, proved once again a success for farmland conservation! Nearly 100 dedicated supporters of the Central Valley Farmland Trust enjoyed famous art by none other than Pablo Picasso, plus wine, food, conversation, and a keynote speaker to capstone the night.

During the silent auction, frenzied bids filled the bidder sheets with the "Fishing at Kelsey Bass Ranch" being the most popular item. There were also unique gift baskets, Crabs for Conservation event tickets, wine selections and educational gift sets. As bidding closed, guests made their way to their tables of cornflower blue and grey hues adorned with beautiful floral arrangements.

Beau Williamson, featured speaker, got folks on their feet, out of their chairs, and delivered a memorable message that resonates far beyond the evening event. "I hope we all do our part to invest our lives in protecting this industry and the land that supports it," said Williamson. "I am so glad organizations like Central Valley Farmland Trust exist. Thanks for the opportunity to celebrate agriculture with you." ✎

Please plan to attend this event next year to show your support for farmland conservation and your organization that works to ensure it happens. Thank you for joining us!



Bill Martin and George Gomes



Drew Woods and Beau Williamson



Thank you to our donors, buyers, and sponsors:

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Sacramento County Farm Bureau





## Director's Message - Ron Dolinsek: Mission and Management

My wife, Georgetta, and I attended the Land Trust Alliance Rally in New Orleans this last September. This event is the nation's largest gathering of land conservation leaders, drawing more than 1,600 participants from across the country. More than 110 workshops provided opportunities to educate and share real life experiences related to effective governance and organizational management of land trusts. This event provided an opportunity for boards and management to hone its skills to be "the best it can be."

*"I introduced myself and seven years later I could not be more proud of all that has been accomplished by this amazing group of people. From formation, to accreditation, to the premier land trust in the valley I am truly inspired at all that the Central Valley Farmland Trust has achieved."*

Evident was the strong passion and commitment portrayed by those leaders who attended. My participation caused me to ask, "What was the common interest shared by those of us attending the conference?" The first was the strongly shared "belief in their organization's mission." Land trusts are nonprofits whose mission is to conserve land in its natural or traditional state through voluntary agreements with landowners. The second was their high level of "confidence in the organization's ability to get the job done."

Consistent with this, I agreed to serve on the Central Valley Farmland Trust (CVFT) board because I strongly believed in our own mission - to work with farmland owners and conservation partners to preserve agricultural lands in the California Central Valley for future generations. Also, I have faith and confidence in the CVFT's ability to administer operations and your contributions - as promised. Much of what we have today is because of the vision of our founding board members, founding members, management, and your support to meet those goals through giving.

*"I have great confidence in the existing board and management to ensure we stay true to and carry out our mission as our community and founding members intended."*

In 2014, we will celebrate our 10th anniversary to recognize the contributions of those who have made this possible. I have great confidence in the existing board and management to ensure we stay true to and carry out our mission as our community and founding members intended. CVFT appreciates the trust you place in management and the board of directors to support this very important mission.

Our success is reflected in the growth in conserved acres and our national accreditation status. However, this growth comes with additional administrative and financial demands required to ensure sufficient support will be available to sustain our mission and provide for the long-term stewardship and monitoring of the conservation easements held. Your generous gift to the campaign is a very important component to our success. Therefore, we ask that you maintain your level of support through the Annual Giving Program. It is the lifeblood for sustaining the important programs developed by CVFT.



This is truly an exciting time in the life of our organization. We thank you for your support and ask you to spread the word about us and encourage others to support our program through our Annual Giving Program - critical in preserving the best farmland in the world! ♡





## We are LIVE! [www.valleyfarmland.org](http://www.valleyfarmland.org)

Function and form meets beauty and technology! Our new website is now live and features more information on our work, your support, and how you can interact with us. The best part is the site is so easy to navigate that if you are looking for something you will find it!

We love that this new site also gives you the ability to donate online, buy tickets to events right from your computer, and even better, you can control your giving in your own online account - whether you want to donate once a year or a little every month - it's your way, your choice!

You can also read about, and see on our conservation map, all the properties we have worked with landowners and our partners to conserve. And what about when a friend asks you, "Why do you support CVFT?" What do you say? How do you explain what we do? We've outlined it for you so it's easy to spread the word. ☺

***Check out our new site and visit us often to stay engaged and connected to land conservation!***

## Join Our Annual Membership Program

By now, many of you have received our invitation to join our Annual Giving Program. In case you did not, we are inviting you today, please join us!



Each member will receive this beautiful membership decal to show your support.

As we prepare to celebrate our 10th anniversary, we can look back on the many achievements we have made together:

- 13,000 acres of farmland forever protected.
- 33 family farm operations served.
- A running average of 600 acres of farmland conserved each year - and growing!
- Land Trust Alliance Accreditation - the stamp of "approval" from our national governing body.
- Successfully facilitated the creation of farmland mitigation policies with city and county jurisdictions throughout the valley.
- Outreach to over 4,000 constituents each year providing them opportunity to support, in both heart and action, the conservation of our valley's irreplaceable farmlands.

To add to this list, we can protect another 3,700 acres with conservation easements with your support. By joining our Annual Membership Program today, you will help make this happen.

Read our membership brochure on our website where you can learn how to become a Milestone Member and even have your farm or family name included on our perpetual plaque - simply visit our membership page or call the office and get started today! ☺





## Welcome, Ed Nishio, Trustee Council Member

Central Valley Farmland Trust (CVFT) welcomes Ed Nishio, Roseville, as a new member of the Trustee Council (Council). Recently named 2013 Agriculturalist of the Year by the California State Fair, Nishio is also newly retired from his position as vice president and lead relationship manager in CoBank's Regional Agribusiness Banking Group. His career with CoBank and its predecessors spanned 41 years.

As a member of the Trustee Council, Nishio will serve the organization as an ambassador to the public in the communities in which CVFT serves to further our goals and mission. Council members are leaders who advise and support the CVFT staff and board of directors.

"I have known Ed for nearly 30 years and a man of more intelligence, commitment and tenacity I have yet to find," said Bill Martin, executive director. "Ed has spent a lifetime serving the interests of farmers and agribusinesses throughout California. His passion for making certain that we are able to conserve farmland is at the center of our mission."

While Nishio's professional career was in the corporate sector, his roots are in farming and his perspective is filtered through the eyes of one who has seen the land from both sides. "As a child my father farmed vegetables of many kinds in Whittier, Huntington Beach, and later Ventura and Oxnard as farmlands were paved over by highways and neighborhoods," said Nishio. "During the first 10 years of my career in southern California, I watched the shutdown of small agri-businesses – as farmers and farmland was lost – so were agribusinesses that were supported by them. As kids we used to visit Disneyland and you had to search for it among the orange groves. We talk about the highest and best use of the land and I guess L.A. has found it, but it's a shame." ☹

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*"There are still a lot of family farms in this area of the state and I want to see it preserved as ag land and not go the way of L.A.," said Nishio. "Central Valley Farmland Trust's mission is worthy of support and my service on the Trustee Council is my first step in that direction."*

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Brandstad Farms





## Friends of Farmland Annual Event with



### Board Officers:

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Families  
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Susan Hooper  
Jim Jorgenson  
Bill Martin  
Ed Nishio  
Meredith Rehman Ritchie  
Beau Williamson

This exclusive event is held to honor and bring together volunteers, easement holders and donors who have made a significant impact to the Central Valley Farmland Trust (CVFT) during the calendar year in which it is held. Coming together in this way provides an opportunity to give our thanks in person and to directly connect individuals with similar ideas and values for the furtherance of our mission.

This year's event was held at the Hilmar Cheese Company Event Center. The evening began with a tour of Hilmar Cheese given by Denise Skidmore, Hilmar Cheese Company's director of education and public relations. Following the tour, guests were treated to appetizers, including a beautiful display of Hilmar cheese and a selection of wines from the Central Valley. After dinner, guests enjoyed a presentation by Richard Clauss, one of the founders of the Hilmar Cheese Company.



Pictured left to right: Ron and Nonine Freitas, Ron and Getta Dolinsek, Diane and Maxwell Norton

"We spent a delightful evening at the Hilmar Cheese Company as a 'thank you' to our supporters, landowners and volunteers for all they do throughout the year," said Bill Martin. "The venue was very nice, the food delicious, and Richard Clauss's video presentation of the history of Hilmar Cheese Company was well received. I look forward to celebrating the contributions of our supporters again next year."

Jim Jorgenson, an event attendee and landowner with a CVFT easement, was impressed with Hilmar Cheese Company's presentation during the event. "I think it is terrific for CVFT to partner with Hilmar Cheese. Hearing from the founding father was impressive – what a remarkable story of the Jersey dairyman in the San Joaquin Valley who supported the early vision of milk deliveries. It's similar to the vision and dedication of the founding board members of CVFT." 𐄂



Mid Valley Agricultural Services, Inc. Staff





## CENTRAL VALLEY FARMLAND TRUST

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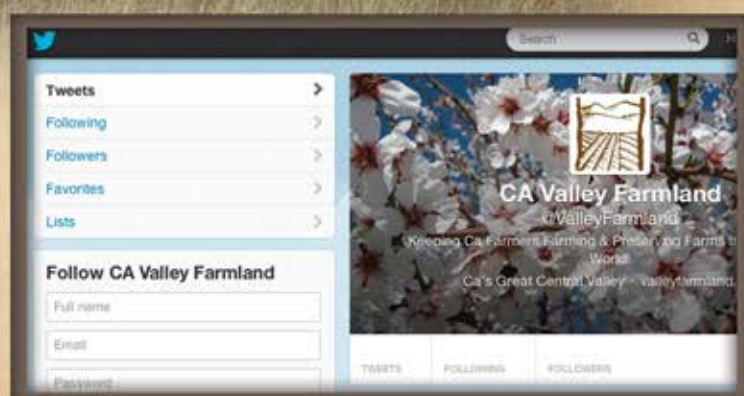
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# CENTRAL VALLEY FARMLAND TRUST LEGACY

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