

Madison-Morgan Conservancy

Newsletter
Winter, 2016-2017

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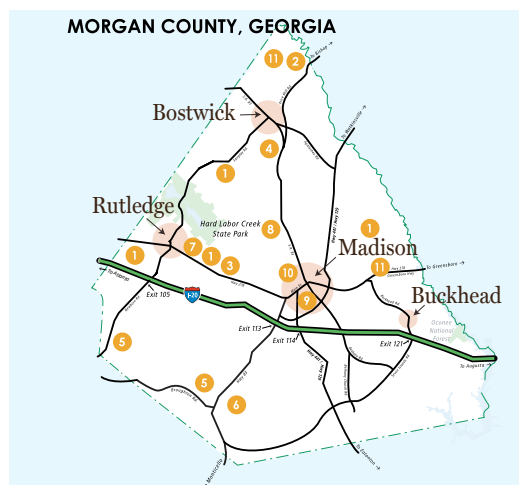


Letter from the President

The Next Five Years

What's next you ask? We have been asking ourselves that same question this last year through our strategic planning process. We realize there is more to do than can be done by this small, yet successful, non-profit, but we're working at it and growing our capacity in the process. We have created strategic partnerships that allow us to leverage our resources to more efficiently accomplish our mission, and we will be asking you for your input and influence over the next year to do some exciting work.

In addition to what you already help us do (educational forums, resource protection, development review, farm to market alliance, and Derby Day), we will be calling on you to help us identify the most special places in this county. Think unique wildlife habitats, river shoals, historic schools, beautiful public vistas, etc. and tell us about them. We will be launching the Greenprint process in early 2017, which will require a significant amount of public input if it is to serve as the long-term strategy for preserving Morgan County's valuable resources and quality of life. Please look for notices in your mailbox, email box, and Facebook pages about this (and like us on Facebook if you haven't already).



A revised website should be ready for your review, too, at the beginning of the year. We hope you'll take a look to learn more about Georgia's first countywide conservancy. We are serving as a model for other communities, making an impact beyond our own county lines, and we want you to know about it. Visit us at www.mmcGeorgia.org.

As a founding board member, it was satisfying for me to reflect on the last 16 years during the Conservancy's strategic planning sessions with the board and staff. We assessed our many successes and took a hard look at our struggles in an attempt to refine our work plan for the next five years. We believe our Strategic Plan 2017-2021 is aspirational and strategic and embodies our entrepreneurial spirit. Please check it out on our new website.

We recognize the critical role the Conservancy plays in this community, and we are dedicated to providing excellent programming. We hope to also serve this community by providing cultural experiences that inform us all about the value that land conservation and historic preservation play in Morgan County's quality of life. With your support, we will continue to make an impact in this beautiful and healthy place. May we never call it anything different.

If you're not already a member, please join us. We need the moral and financial support of our members to continue this important work. If you are already a member, I thank you, on behalf of all of us here at the Conservancy. We wouldn't be here without you.

Sincerely,

Robert Trulock, President

Left: Image of successful preservation projects since 2004

Educational Forum

Conservation Easement Workshop Recap



This August we hosted our 12th Annual Conservation Easement Workshop. 74 people from across the Southeast spent the day at Burge Plantation - an intimate gathering of lawyers, CPAs, appraisers, and landowners – all discussing the future of conservation easements. Hosted by the Conservancy in partnership with the Georgia-Alabama Land Trust and the Atlanta Chapter Appraisal Institute, the event provided professional continuing education for lawyers, CPAs, appraisers, and foresters, and provided a morning of information for interested landowners. Attendees enjoyed a packed day of presentations and a delicious lunch from Chef Andrew Featherstone and Burge Organic Farm. We thank our partners for another successful event and thank the presenters for providing such sound and timely information.

Educational Forum

Sustainability Symposium Recap



On Saturday, August 13th, the Madison-Morgan Conservancy and Madison-Morgan Cultural Center partnered again to present the third in a series of symposiums: the Sustainability Symposium. Inspired by the Sustainability Expo in 2008 and by a recent “Grants to Green” grant received by the Cultural Center, the Sustainability Symposium included lectures by Bourke Reeve of Southface Institute and Luis Imery of the Imery Group, both of whom are experts in their fields of sustainable building technology. Following the lectures, attendees were invited to take tours of the Cultural Center, Steffen Thomas Museum, and Camp Twin Lakes, all Grants-to-Green recipients. Pictured above are Rebecca Bonas, Luis Imery, Bourke Reeve, and Lisa Conner.

Land Use Planning

Greenprint Morgan County

Join us in 2017 to create the next Greenprint for Morgan County! Stay tuned for notification of meeting dates, and please participate to make the Greenprint represent ALL people in Morgan County.

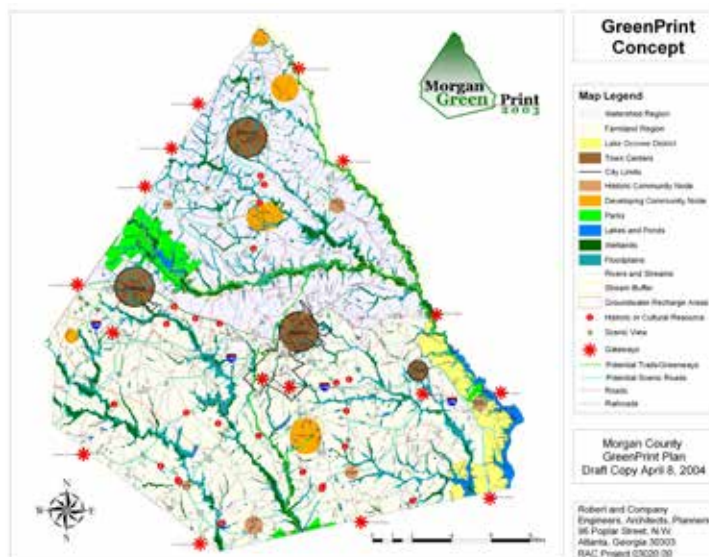
What is a Greenprint?

Basically, the Greenprint is a map/inventory of a community's important places. The Greenprint also provides guidance on how to protect those places.

The 2004 Morgan County Greenprint Plan has served as the long-term conservation strategy for Morgan County for over a decade. The County Commissioners have relied on it, and of course, the Conservancy has relied on it to create the Greenprint Ramble and help protect over 3,550 acres of land through conservation easements. The City of Madison relies heavily on their Greenprint in the TDR program, and a variety of land trusts, preservation organizations, and state agencies use our Greenprints to gauge their interest in proposed preservation projects.

Thirteen years later, it's time to update the Morgan County Greenprint. You will be asked again: “What are the critical resources in Morgan County?” “Where are they?” Then we'll map them and do some research and compile the Greenprint Map. We want to hear

from young and old, new and native, black and white, rich and poor – the Greenprint needs to represent ALL people in Morgan County because it protects resources that ALL people use (clean water, fresh air, productive soils, wildlife habitat) and it helps guide the growth that we will ALL experience.



Landowner Technical Assistance

A Century of Clack & Broach

Regina and Wilson Broach love their farm, and for good reason: it's beautiful, productive, a significant part of Morgan County's history, and of course, it's their home. It's been home to Wilson Broach and his ancestors, the Clacks, since J.J. Clack moved here in 1873.

Regina and Wilson wanted to honor their family and the history of this special place by listing it as a Centennial Family Farm. The Conservancy assisted them in the application process, and in October they received their award.

We were thrilled to have been part of this project. If you or someone you know would like to explore this option for your family farm, please contact us. In order to be listed as a Georgia Centennial Family Farm, the farm must be owned continuously by members of the same family for 100 years or more.



Clack-Broach Family Farm Story:

Legend has it that J.J. Clack came to Morgan County from Alabama in 1873 and "squatted" on "a good number of acres" in a two-room house, all of which had been abandoned by its owner, presumably during the Civil War. J.J. Clack brought with him his thirteen-year-old nephew, Arthur Broach, to help him on the farm.

37 years later, Arthur Broach bought 36.7 acres from J.J. Clack. The land included one house, where Arthur and his wife, Ellen, raised their five children. One of their children was named after Mr. Clack: James Clack (J.C.) Broach, born 1903.

In the early 1900s, the boll weevil came to the South moving eastward from Texas. In 1920 cotton yielded 36,197 bales on 76,041 acres in Morgan County. But during the 1920s this pest devastated the cotton crop, causing many farming families to lose their land.

Presumably in response to the devastation of the boll weevil, J.C. Broach moved to Florida to make enough money to save the family farm. He was successful and in 1927, he paid off the 36.7 acres his father, Arthur, had bought from J.J. Clack in 1910.

In 1929 J.C. Broach married Nannie Ruth Moon (from Godfrey), and they had three children. While farming the 36.7 acres in cotton and corn, J.C. Broach grew the farm to almost 500 acres by purchasing other tracts of land, and started a dairy operation. And to complete the circle, in 1945, J.C. Broach bought the c. 1842 "Clack House" that was his name-sake J.J. Clack's house original two-room "squatter house."

J.C. Broach left to his son, Wilson Broach, the 489-acre farm, including the c. 1842 Clack House. Wilson married Martha Regina Watkins in 1955, and they built a house next door to the Clack House, in which they still live. Wilson and Regina continued to dairy until 1983, and today they raise beef cattle and hay.

Conservation Easements

IRS Issues Notice on "Syndicated" Conservation Easements

In 2016 landowners in Morgan County permanently protected over 1,000 acres by donating conservation easements to land trusts. This brings Morgan County's total to over 3,550 acres in conservation easements since 2004.

The Internal Revenue Code allows for taxpayers to obtain a charitable deduction related to income taxes for a qualified conservation contribution. A qualified conservation contribution must be a qualified interest in real property, such as a restriction, in perpetuity, to develop property for residential, commercial or industrial uses, donated to a qualified organization, such as a land trust. The Department of the Treasury and the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) have issued guidance for creating legitimate conservation easements and obtaining valid charitable deductions, and many land trusts around Georgia and the Southeast hold these legitimate easements for a wide range of conservation purposes.

On December 23, 2016, the Department of the Treasury and the IRC issued Notice 2017-10 to alert taxpayers and their representatives of a "tax avoidance transaction" that does not qualify as a legitimate charitable deduction. The Notice identifies features of these unqualified "syndicated" transactions, including the receipt

of promotional material, either written or oral, by taxpayers that offers a charitable deduction that equals or exceeds an amount that is **two and one-half times the amount of the investor's investment**. If you would like details about the Notice, please contact us.

The IRS intends to challenge the purported tax benefits of these "syndicated" conservation easements. Furthermore, the Notice puts certain taxpayers who entered into "substantially similar" transactions going back to January 1, 2010, as well as material advisors (including appraisers) on notice to file a disclosure about such syndicated conservation easements.

Morgan County landowners have been donating legitimate conservation easements since 2004, thanks in part to the Conservancy's efforts. In the last few years, Georgia as a whole has seen more of these syndicated conservation easements. The Conservancy continues to advise landowners who intend to donate legitimate conservation easements and views that tool as the most effective way to protect public resources without using public dollars.

Member Spotlight

Congratulations Whitey Hunt!



On November 11, 2016, Lowry “Whitey” Hunt, Jr., was presented with the Award of Excellence from the UGA College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences (CAES) Alumni Association. Whitey is a sixth-generation Morgan County, farmer, and the founding Board President of the Madison-Morgan Conservancy.

Whitey was the first in his family to seek a college degree in agriculture and graduated from UGA’s CAES in 1980 with a bachelor’s degree in agriculture. He majored in animal science and minored in agronomy, knowing these areas would help him run the family business, Godfrey’s Warehouse, and the family farm, Innisfail Farm. Innisfail, a 2,200-acre timber and cattle farm, has been in Hunt’s family for six generations and has produced numerous award-winning cows.

The Conservancy congratulates Whitey on this much-deserved honor!

Organizational News

Georgia Gives Day

The Madison-Morgan Conservancy participated in Georgia Gives Day on November 17, 2016, a state-wide online fundraiser that drives awareness and donations for nonprofits across Georgia. While it was the Conservancy’s first time participating, over \$2190 was raised, \$1,700 of which was provided as a match by board members. This funding will help support the Conservancy’s programmatic work to protect special places for future generations. We appreciate the generous support of those who contributed and Gave Green to Save Green!

Our Vision: We envision a thriving Morgan County to be a healthy, beautiful place to live and work for current and future residents, where clean air and water, abundant wildlife, healthy forests, and thriving agricultural and heritage tourism industries are vital and contribute to the regional economy. We aim to preserve the beautiful public vistas, agrarian heritage, rural crossroads, and small town atmosphere while attracting small to medium sized businesses to provide essential jobs and sustain our balanced tax digest. We envision an organization that makes an impact locally and uses its success to promote conservation and balanced growth throughout Georgia.

Advocacy

Talk About It

Communication is key. So is accurate and timely information. For example, if you don’t know what a conservation easement is, you won’t know if you want to use one on your own land. Right? Similarly, we think our elected and appointed officials of Morgan County, all four municipalities, our State, and our Nation make better decisions when they have the facts about the benefits of land conservation and historic preservation – benefits like reduced taxpayer dollars used to clean water so we can drink it, or like an increased tax base from reinvesting in existing historic neighborhoods. We want you all to have the facts. That’s why our educational programs are designed as they are and our events are designed to be fun – so you’ll come... and maybe learn a thing or two while you’re there. It’s also why we invest in building relationships with political leaders. A recent trip to DC proved so very fruitful for conservation and for this conservancy.

Please join us in advocating to our leaders – tell them why protected farmland, wildlife habitat, clean water, and beautiful places matter to you. And ask them to do more to encourage land conservation and historic preservation. They will want to hear about it – it’s one of the few truly bi-partisan issues out there. If you would like to know more, please see the advocacy page on our website, or contact us to discuss. In the meantime, start having the conversation.

U.S. Senator: David Perdue

www.perdue.senate.gov | (202) 224-3521

Georgia U.S. Senator: Johnny Isakson

www.isakson.senate.gov | (202) 224-3643

Georgia State Senator, District 25:

Burt Jones, Burt.Jones@senate.ga.gov | (770) 775-4880

Georgia State Representative District 112:

Dave Belton, davebelton112@gmail.com | 470-441-5334

Mayor & Madison City Council Members - (706) 342-1251

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District 2: Bobby Crawford, bcrawford@madisonga.com

District 3: Joe DiLetto, jdiletto@madisonga.com

District 4: Rick Blanton, rickblanton@madisonga.com

District 5: Chris Hodges, chodges@madisonga.com

Morgan County Board of Commissioners - (706) 342-0725

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District 2: Andrew Ainslie, Jr., aainslie@morganga.org

District 3: Ben Riden, briden@morganga.org

District 4: Philipp von Hanstein, pvonhanstein@morganga.org

Vice Chair/District 5: Ron Milton, rmilton@morganga.org

Organizational News

A New Strategic Plan for 2017-2021

The Madison-Morgan Conservancy has experienced moderate, steady growth for sixteen years and has made significant contributions to the community. We provide services that the local, state, and federal governments and private industry do not provide but that landowners still find valuable, and we want to continue to do so in a strategic and efficient way.

With an improving economy, increased development pressure, and more staff capacity, the Conservancy is poised for success. In the next five years we are planning for more strategic land protection, a more vigorous growth in membership, and a more robust culture of conservation in the public. The Conservancy will continue its educational programs, advocacy, and technical assistance, because it believes education is the foundation of good land use decisions, which ultimately affect all of us here in Morgan County.

As part of an ongoing planning process, our Strategic Plan 2017-2021 maps out the next five years of the Conservancy's work through stated goals, objectives, strategies, and action items. The plan is aspirational and strategic and embodies our entrepreneurial spirit, and we're looking forward to putting it into action.

If you would like to know more, please visit our website, www.mmcGeorgia.org.



“Look deep into nature, and then you will understand everything better.” - Albert Einstein

Organizational News

We're Moving!

We are amazed at what can happen in a year. Last December, the Vason Building burned, and since then, our appreciation for the Madison Fire Department has swelled. So much so, that we have spent the last year next door to them. We thought it would be safer that way.

A few days after the fire, and in our first real organizational crisis, the Madison Downtown Development Authority offered us an office space that suited our needs perfectly. We cannot thank them enough for their kindness and generosity and have absolutely loved our time at 162 N. Main Street. We would like to thank Monica Callahan and Mollie Bogle specifically for being excellent landlord representatives.

On Saturday, January 28th, we will be moving back to the Vason Building into a new, beautifully renovated space. Suite C will be our new home, just upstairs from the Artist Guild. We thank the Vason's for the first eight years of office space (2007-2015) and are looking forward to the next eight years (maybe more). Isn't there a Ozzy Osbourne song about coming home?

There is no place like Madison. No place like home. And to quote a brilliant gal, “Madison is better than Mayberry.” We are so grateful for all the support from so many in this amazing town.



Wish List

1. Moving Assistance – remember Dog Ear Books' Book Brigade? We need a smaller scale volunteer effort to help us move back to the Vason Building on Saturday, January 28th. It's a short distance, but we need help moving boxes and furniture from one side of Main Street to the other. Bring your strong friends and your kids. All are welcome and can help move something.

- Pick up trucks and strong people on Saturday, January 28th – many hands make light work

2. Furniture – we need furniture for our new office.

- Two desks
- One desk chair
- Conference table
- Set of shelves for books and files
- Credenza or accessory tables

3. Office Supplies

- New Mac Computer, software, and accessories (*cash donations can be donated to this cause, of course*)

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MR. & MRS. CHAD WRIGHT
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Join or Renew Your Membership Today!

Madison-Morgan Conservancy
P.O. Box 752, Madison, GA 30650
706-818-8046 | www.mmcGeorgia.org | info@mmcGeorgia.org

Annual Membership Form

Support the Conservancy's mission with your annual membership:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Daniel Morgan Society \$5,000 +
(Watershed Donor Level) | <input type="checkbox"/> Donor - \$250 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor - \$1,000 +
(Watershed Donor Level) | <input type="checkbox"/> Preservationist - \$100 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Supporter - \$500 | <input type="checkbox"/> Conservationist - \$50 |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Naturalist - \$20 |

Name(s) as it should appear on the Membership list:

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone 1: _____

Phone 2: _____

Email 1: _____

Email 2: _____

Membership

Watershed Donors Needed

Each year, the Conservancy attempts to match a \$50,000 grant we received from the Waterfall Foundation in 2009 by raising \$50,000 through private donations of \$1,000 or more. Those donors are known as Watershed Donors.

Watershed Donors contribute significantly to the financial stability the Conservancy needs to be an effective and agile organization. This year, with our growing organization and expanded programming, we need an influx of capital. We hope you will become a Watershed Donor to support our mission. Please see the membership form in this newsletter to see the Watershed Donor Membership Levels or contact us if you would like to know more: 706-818-8046 or tdickinson@mmcGeorgia.org.

Afterglow

By Rose Koralewsky

The sun has set behind the hills,
But limpid skies its radiance show;
The heavens bloom like one vast rose -
It is the afterglow.

Dear Lord, when my life's sun has set,
And I am gone, as all must go,
Grant that I too may leave behind
A lovely afterglow.



MADISON-MORGAN
CONSERVANCY

SERVE † SAFEGUARD † SUSTAIN

Madison-Morgan Conservancy
P.O. Box 752
Madison, GA 30650

Return Service Requested

Need to Renew? Check Your Mailing Label.

The date printed above your name on the mailing label is the last date on which you paid your annual membership dues. Please renew annually to support the Conservancy's work and to expand our programming.

Winter, 2016-2017

This newsletter is printed on 100% post-consumer waste recycled paper.

Upcoming Events

Save the Dates

January 12, 19 & 26 - Land Stewardship Workshop Series

The Conservancy in partnership with Georgia Power, the Georgia Forestry Commission, and the Greene-Morgan Forest Landowners Association, presents a workshop series designed to inform landowners and land managers about land management techniques through three separate Thursday workshops:

- January 12, 2017 - workshop on Forestry Management and Prescribed Fire
- January 19, 2017 - workshop on Wildlife Habitat (Quail and Deer) Management.
- January 26, 2017 - workshop on Cost-Share Programs for Land Management

Workshops are 5:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. at the Chop House Grille in Madison. Registration is \$25 per person per workshop or \$60 per person for all three workshops. Ticket price includes light supper. Space is limited, reservations are required. Visit the Conservancy's website to register - www.mmcGeorgia.org.

March - Membership Supper

Date to be announced! The Annual Membership Supper will be on a Friday in March, 2017, at Dan Rather's barn at Malcom's Crossroads. More details to come.

May 6 - Derby Day at the Godfrey-Hunt House

Mark your calendars - Saturday, May 6, 2017 - we'll be getting down and derby again! We are so grateful for Lyn and Whitey Hunt hosting Derby Day this year. More details to come.



The mission of the Madison-Morgan Conservancy is to provide public education on conservation matters and to protect and enhance the heritage and quality of life of the residents of Morgan County by preserving historic sites, greenspace, farmland, and timberland.