



# MADISON-MORGAN CONSERVANCY

Perpetuating a Culture of Conservation

NEWSLETTER  
SUMMER, 2011

## EXCITING TIMES FOR THE CONSERVANCY

These are exciting times for the Madison-Morgan Conservancy. Much has been done to promote those things that enhance and preserve our environment. This is in large part due to the hard work of Christine McCauley as our full-time executive director. Chris has done an outstanding job of making our mission a reality.

As a donor of conservation easements on my family's Goose Creek Farm, I am a strong supporter of conservation easements and am working with Chris to promote this practice to other landowners in Morgan County. If you are conservation-minded and have the need for the tax incentives provided by donating conservation easements, this is the land protection tool for you. The tax incentives are changing – some good changes, some potentially harmful changes – so please see our article on page 2 that discusses this in detail. If you are interested, please ask us to help you figure out if conservation easements are right for you.

We have been working now for over ten years to build a culture of conservation...and it's working. With over 1,000 acres of permanently protected land, a booming local food movement, and a sustained heritage tourism industry, Morgan County is a leader in the state in conservation. Even the GA Trust for Historic Preservation thinks so, awarding the Conservancy a 2011 Preservation Award for Excellence in Preservation Service, and awarding Jane Symmes, one of our founding board members, their highest honor, the 2011 Jewett Award.

Just to summarize our work since our last newsletter: September – Farm/Estate Transition and Conservation Easement Workshop; November – Historic Preservation and Sustainability, The Next Great Debate; February – FARMeander was launched; March – Annual Membership Supper; April, Land Talks; and in May??? Well we had a great Derby Day party that raised a good bit of money so that we can do it all again next year.

More good things are on the way too: FARMeander is expanding to Newton and Walton Counties; we'll host a conservation easement workshop in August, and among other things, we'll host the 3<sup>rd</sup> bi-annual Greenprint Ramble. I hope you'll join us on October 22 on the bus for a tour of the southeastern portion of Morgan County and for supper at Willow Oak Farm. Thanks to many of our local farmers, the menu has been set, and supper will again be made of Morgan County ingredients.

So there's a lot more to do that we think is important. Morgan County has so much to offer our region and can certainly contribute to a quality lifestyle if we plan now to use our precious natural, agricultural, and historic resources wisely. The Conservancy will also continue to stay vigilant in protecting those resources.

Lastly, I want to thank each of you, our members, for your support over the last decade. Our capacity is growing as our membership is growing, and we look forward to building even more for the next decade. Please renew your memberships, or join if you are not yet a member. I look forward to seeing you at the Ramble.

Sincerely,

Bob Beauchamp  
President



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Christine McCauley



Derby Day, 2011

## CONSERVATION EASEMENT WORKSHOP



**August 25, 2011**  
9 a.m.—4 p.m.  
Burge Plantation  
CLE Credit (6 hours) available  
Registration Fee for Morgan County  
Landowners: \$50  
Registration Fee for all others: \$100  
Lunch provided by Burge Organic  
Farm

Please join us for our 7th Conservation Easement Workshop. Special Guest Speakers include: Katherine Eddins (GA Land Trust); Stephanie Surlles, CPA (Howard Moore & McDuffie); Morgan Mellette, Appraiser (Mellette Forestry Group); Jeffrey Pfitzer (Benwood Foundation); Kristina Sorenson (GA DNR, GA Tax Credits); Sharon Holbrooks (NRCS Easement Specialist); and a group of landowners who have executed conservation easements including Bob Beauchamp, Wayne Vason, Mary McCauley, and Tom Hamby.

## MEET INTERN MOLLIE BOGLE



Mollie Bogle is finishing her third semester in the Heritage Preservation program at Georgia State University. She began her internship with the Madison-Morgan Conservancy in January 2011. Her interest in the preservation of natural and historic resources brought her to the Conservancy and fuels her work in Morgan County, which includes, among other duties, the creation of the implementation plan for the Conservancy's recent conservation easement mapping and prioritization project. Mollie has volunteered with the Atlanta History Center and the Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation. She is also a graduate research assistant for Georgia State University, where she is secretary of the Heritage Preservation Society 2011-2012.

## WHY CONSERVATION EASEMENTS IN MORGAN CO?

People donate conservation easements to protect their land because they have two things: 1) a love for their land and desire to protect it, and 2) an interest/need for the tax incentives associated with donating conservation easements.

In fact as of 2010, approximately 40 million acres had been protected by conservation easements in the U.S. Landowners have found that conservation easements can be flexible tools which provide a permanent guarantee that some or all of their land won't be developed, and that easements can be used to protect all types of land, including: farmland, working forests, historic structures, cultural landscapes, scenic views, streams, rivers, trails, wetlands, wildlife areas, and coastlines.

Morgan County is rich in natural, agricultural, and historic resources, so it is not surprising that many landowners here have chosen to use conservation easements to protect their land. As of January 2011, Morgan county residents have protected 1012 acres through the use of conservation easements.

## CONSERVATION EASEMENT TAX INCENTIVES CHANGING

We have found that landowners do not use conservation easements unless they have two things: a conservation ethic that leads them to want to permanently protect their property, and a need for the financial incentives brought by the charitable donation of an easement. Due to the up front costs of doing a conservation easement, there must be some financial reward in the end to make it worthwhile for landowners. At the same time, that financial reward is usually only large enough to be beneficial to conservation-minded donors.

At the end of 2011, the federal income tax deduction for donating a conservation easement is scheduled to revert to a previously lower level. However, a bill has been submitted that would make these incentives permanent, and the bill has wide bipartisan support at the federal level. We expect that we will not know what the 2012 federal income tax deduction will be until the end of 2011.

Additionally, the State of Georgia has passed a law to provide transferability of state tax credits for donations of conservation easements. In January 2012, this law will take effect, and we believe this new transferability will rapidly increase the donation of conservation easements in Georgia. The ability to sell tax credits will make donating conservation easements viable for a whole new group of landowners: low to middle income families who cannot necessarily take advantage of an income tax deduction.



### THE SHORT OF IT:

#### Federal Income Tax Incentives

December 2011

#### **Enhanced Federal Income Tax Incentive Ends:\***

Last chance to deduct 50% of AGI for 16 years.

January 2012

#### **Federal Income Tax Incentive Reverts:**

Landowners can deduct 30% of AGI for 6 years.

\*A bill has been submitted in Congress that would make these enhanced tax incentives permanent, and the bill has wide bipartisan support at the federal level.

#### State Income Tax Incentives

January 2012

#### **GA State Income Tax Credit Becomes Transferable**

The ability to sell tax credits will make donating conservation easements more viable for low- to middle-income families.

## EDUCATIONAL FORUMS REVIEW

### Land Talks: "Protect and Grow – Supporting and Encouraging Sustainable Agriculture"

On Thursday, April 7, 2011, 65 people from Morgan, Newton, and Walton counties attended the 7th Annual Land Talks. Discussion about Newton County's Leadership Collaborative, the Newton 2050 Plan, and tools available to protect farmland and grow communities was followed by a screening of the movie "GROW!" Land Talks was held at Burge Plantation in Newton County. Next year's Land Talks will be held in Walton County.

### Membership Supper

On Saturday, March 19th, 2011, approximately 135 members gathered on a perfect evening at Malcom's Crossroads with the Super Moon rising for our annual membership supper. Members feasted on homemade chili made from locally raised grass-fed beef from Goose Creek Farm as well as chili made from local venison and salad made from freshly cut Tewksbury Farm lettuce. Ed Gadrax of the Georgia Equine Education Project was our special guest speaker on the topic of bringing pari-mutuel gaming and horse racing to GA.

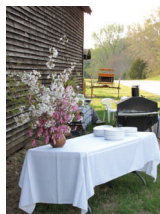
## SAVE THE DATE

### CE WORKSHOP

Thursday, August 25, 2011  
8:30 a.m.—4:00 p.m.

### GREENPRINT RAMBLE

Saturday, October 22, 2011  
Tour 2 p.m.-5 p.m. in and around Buckhead  
Supper 5:30 p.m. at Willow Oak Farm



Left to Right: Membership Supper at Rather Barn, Watershed Donor Gathering at Hundred Acre Farm, Hike at Hundred Acre Farm.

## 2011 GEORGIA TRUST AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN PRESERVATION SERVICE

The Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation presented 23 awards recognizing the best of preservation in Georgia during its 34th annual Preservation Awards ceremony in Macon on April 1. The Madison-Morgan Conservancy and Jane Symmes were two of the award recipients. A group from Morgan County attended the awards ceremony in Macon.

The Mary Gregory Jewett Award for Lifetime Preservation Service was presented to Jane Symmes for her life's work. And of the two awards presented for Preservation Service, the Madison-Morgan Conservancy received one for its successful efforts to protect over 1,000 acres through conservation easements.

"This year's winners represent a tremendous dedication to restoring and revitalizing Georgia's historic buildings and communities," said Mark C. McDonald, president of The Georgia Trust. "We are proud to honor such deserving projects and individuals."



## DERBY DAY A GALLOPING SUCCESS!

Thanks to Stephen Cooke our host, Erin Garrett and Claudia Goodwin our co-hosts, the generous group of sponsors and hosts, an adventurous and determined committee, and auctioneers Tommy Breedlove and Asa Marshall, the Conservancy's first fundraiser was a great success. Not only did we exceed our fundraising goals, we met lots of new members, experienced one of Morgan County's treasures in Soldiers Crossing, and had a really great time. Please plan to join us next year for Derby Day 2012!



## MADISON DOT LOCALLY GROWN DOT NET

[www.madison.locallygrown.net](http://www.madison.locallygrown.net)

Fresh cheese, sausage, steaks, veggies, and eggs. What more could you want? Oh, you want honey and cupcakes? Done.

And it's all at your fingertips. Literally. Sign up with Madison Locally Grown and make your orders weekly online. Order what you want by Tuesday, it will all be picked fresh Wednesday morning, and will be ready for you to pick up in Madison on Wednesday afternoon. Easy as pie.

And here's where all that delicious food comes from:

### FARMeander Farms

Greendale Farm  
Hundred Acre Farm  
Tagyerit Farm  
Tewksbury Farms

### Other Farms:

Bee Factory	M&M Garden
Darby Farms	Sammy's Chickens
Double B Farm	Shiawassee Farm
Flower Mill Cupcakes	Straight From the Backyard
Front Field Farm	Tink's Grass Fed Beef
Green Knee Farm	Vickers Farm
JP Farms	Wilson Farm
Lisa's Lovely Layers	



## LOCALLY GROWN FOOD COULD BOOST GA'S ECONOMY

*Partially reprinted from the Gainesville Times*

If local fruits and veggies stick around, it could mean a big bonus for Georgia's economy. According to research conducted by the University of Georgia's College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences Center for Agribusiness and Economic Development, if each Georgia household spent \$10 per week on produce grown in Georgia, more than \$1.9 billion would be pumped back into the state's economy.

"When we spend dollars locally, that money then circulates in our community so we have indirect benefits," said Alice Rolls, executive director of Georgia Organics.

A good example is lettuce. The study found that the average Georgian eats about 30 pounds of fresh lettuce per year — about 285 million pounds statewide. Georgia farmers produce less than 245,000 pounds per year, which is less than one-tenth of 1 percent of the amount of lettuce that Georgians consume. Closing that gap would generate an additional \$83.6 million in lettuce sales. "Agriculture is our No. 1 industry in the state," Rolls said.

Georgia is far below the national average when it comes to consuming local produce, but the research points out the state's potential for increased sales with the addition of local processing and distribution infrastructure.

## FARMeander is EXPANDING TO NEWTON AND WALTON COUNTIES!

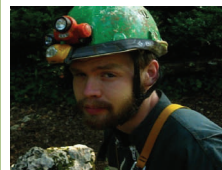
*By Sean Dunlap*



FARMeander East is the exciting next step for the Conservancy's Farm to Market Alliance program. After the success with our Morgan County FARMeander, we thought we would get our neighbors in on the fun too.

Expanded to include Newton and Walton Counties, in addition to Morgan County, FARMeander East displays for all to see the agricultural powerhouse that is our tri-county area. One look at this map, and there can be no arguing that we reside within a bountiful breadbasket primed to become the center of Georgia's Local Food movement. This movement is more than a fad, and its importance cannot be overlooked: the promotion of small working farms supports the family, the community, local economies, and the natural environment. Thus, FARMeander East is not solely a guide to your local farms, but also a roadmap to sustainability.

## MEET INTERN SEAN DUNLAP

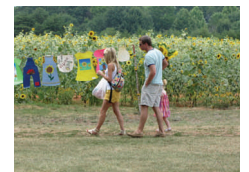


Sean Willson Dunlap works as the summer intern for the Madison-Morgan Conservancy. He recently completed his first year in the Master of Historic Preservation Program at the University of Georgia, where he focuses his studies on preserving cultural, rural, and historic landscapes. When he is not promoting family farms by working on FARMeander for the Conservancy, you can find him working at Full Moon Farms in Oconee County. He also loves to play banjo, listen to the Braves on the radio, and get lost exploring Georgia back roads.

## FARMeander TO THE SUNFLOWER FARM FESTIVAL

Glorious sunflowers, how you make us happy! Thanks to the West and Holt families for yet another great Sunflower Farm Festival this year. Approximately 9,000 of their closest friends descended on the farm during the three-day festival, coming from near and far. Scoring a Perfect 10 on their 10th year anniversary, the festival included tours of the recently saved and relocated 1811 House (celebrating its bicentennial). Great music and food was accompanied by a local artist market, the new (old) Sharecropper House Market, the Enchanted Forest, and a 12-acre field of sunflowers in full bloom, ready for the picking.

Plan for next year's festival the weekend before July 4th (Saturday and Sunday, June 30-July 1).



## ARE YOU READY TO RAMBLE?

It's time again for the Greenprint Ramble! This year we will take you on a tour of the southeastern portion of Morgan County, in and around Buckhead. Wait until you hear what we've found down there! Gems, I tell you (hint, hint).

A 44-mile jaunt will take you through pastoral agrarian landscapes and past beautiful and interesting historic structures, all the while exploring the history of the families who lived in and built the communities of Swords, Bethany, Buckhead, Kingston, and Blue Spring.

Supper will be held at Willow Oak Farm, the Carter Family's Wildlife Preserve. Guests will be treated to a mini ramble through the farm (weather permitting), exploring the wildlife management practices, ecosystem restoration efforts, and the perfectly beautiful vistas within the farm.

We hope you will join us for our 3rd Greenprint Ramble on **Saturday, October 22, 2011**. Tour (\$5/person) starts at 2pm. Supper (\$100/person) starts at 5:30 pm. Call or email us for more information or to become a sponsor!

## CALL FOR RAMBLE SPONSORS

Secure your tickets now by being a 2011 Greenprint Ramble Sponsor! 2009 Ramble tickets sold out in 3 days after opening ticket sales to members, so don't delay.

Sponsors can sign up **now**.

Tickets sales will open to Conservancy members **September 12**. Tickets sales will open to general public **September 26**.

Sponsor levels and rewards are listed below:

Willow Oak Farm Rambler .....\$2,500

- ☐ Banner at Greenprint Ramble with your name and logo
- ☐ Designated table for 8 and 8 supper tickets
- ☐ 8 tour tickets
- ☐ Recognition in invitation, newsletter, and ads
- ☐ Memorialized in Ramble Tour Guide

Harriss' Revenge Patron (yes, correct spelling).....\$1,000

- ☐ Designated table for 6 and 6 supper tickets
- ☐ 6 tour tickets
- ☐ Recognition in invitation, newsletter, and ads
- ☐ Memorialized in Ramble Tour Guide

Hunter's Paradise Sponsor .....\$700

- ☐ 4 supper tickets
- ☐ 4 tour tickets
- ☐ Recognition in invitation, newsletter, and ads
- ☐ Memorialized in Ramble Tour Guide

Chestnut Preserve Sponsor .....\$300

- ☐ 2 supper tickets
- ☐ 2 tour tickets
- ☐ Recognition in invitation, newsletter, and ads
- ☐ Memorialized in Ramble Tour Guide

## HARD LABOR CREEK STATE PARK—NO ACTION



On a crisp March morning this spring, approximately 75 people gathered at the boat ramp at Hard Labor Creek State Park (HLCSP) to express their displeasure with the clear cutting and decimation of one of HLCSP's most visited and beloved areas: the boat ramp.

The HLCSP team of foresters and park managers addressed the public's concerns more sincerely than they had at earlier meetings, but adjacent landowners and park patrons were still outraged at HLCSP's decision to clear cut. It seems two visions were competing here: 1) HLCSP's vision of a working timber forest, and 2) the public's vision of a park where people go to learn about and enjoy nature.

The meeting was convened by Judy and Tommy Breedlove who live adjacent to the park and by Dan Rather, all of whom ride the horse trails regularly and are, therefore, intimately aware of the effect clear cutting would have on the patron's experience.

After much discussion, the Conservancy contacted the Director of GA State Parks and asked that the following happen:

- ☐ Stop all cutting immediately.
- ☐ Invite the public to a few meetings in the coming months to discuss resource management needs and practices.
- ☐ Design a cutting plan that balances the patron's experience with HLCSP's need for generating revenue.
- ☐ Share that plan with the public through continued dialogue.

Thankfully, HLCSP stopped cutting immediately. And they promised to do a few other things we requested (excerpts from their email below). However, to date, no action has been taken.

- ☐ Clean up of the salvage cut by the boat ramp.
- ☐ Planting of several larger oak trees near the boat ramp.
- ☐ Marking of 75 foot buffers along horse trails and all adjacent landowner properties.
- ☐ Developing a resource management plan for the park with public input.

Our latest request for an update on their project was met with an email from the interim park manager stating that they "are in the process of filling key positions in their Resource Management staff," and that they will resume in August with clean up and resource management planning for HLCSP. The Conservancy will be diligent in encouraging wise resource management planning at HLCSP and will keep you updated on the progress.

## WALLACE GROVE SCHOOL RESTORATION

Constructed in 1901, this school building was built by the Wallace Grove Baptist Church and is believed to be one of the last remaining black school buildings in Morgan County. After being contacted by the church in February for assistance, the Conservancy has been working with the Pastor to secure donations to the project. Thanks to the following for their contributions: Pastor Tommy Chatman, Conservancy Board and staff, Morgan County Landmarks, Champion Lumber Co., Georgia Metals, Thankful Baptist Church, Ken Kocher, Richard Simpson, and Tim Reilly. *If you would like to make a donation to this project, please contact us.* Restoration to be completed by Sept. 17.

# MADISON-MORGAN CONSERVANCY

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MR. & MRS. LOU WINSHIP  
KARL & LINDA WOODWORTH  
CHAD WRIGHT  
MR. STEVE YOUNG

## ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL CHECK YOUR MAILING LABEL

If you are a Conservancy member, please check your mailing label located on the back page of your newsletter to determine when your annual dues are scheduled to be renewed.

**The date printed above your name is the date on which you last paid your dues.**

Please consider renewing your dues at a higher level so that we can continue and expand our programming.

# MADISON-MORGAN CONSERVANCY

P.O. Box 752, Madison, GA 30650  
706-342-9252, [www.mmcgeorgia.org](http://www.mmcgeorgia.org)

## ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FORM

Yes, I would like to support the Madison-Morgan Conservancy by making a tax deductible contribution at the following level:

- ☐ Daniel Morgan Society \$5,000 or more (Watershed Donor Level)
- ☐ Benefactor \$1,000 or more (Watershed Donor Level)
- ☐ Supporter \$500 or more
- ☐ Donor \$250 or more
- ☐ Preservationist \$100
- ☐ Conservationist \$50
- ☐ Naturalist \$20

☐ I would like to contribute an additional:  
\$\_\_\_\_\_ to the Land Acquisition Fund.

☐ My company has a matching gift program.  
Please contact me to initiate a matching gift.

☐ I would like to volunteer.

☐ Please make check payable to **Madison-Morgan Conservancy**, and send to the address above.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Name as it should appear in the newsletter's membership list:  
\_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

BECOME A MEMBER OF THE MADISON-MORGAN CONSERVANCY TODAY!

## NEW MEMBERS

Lee Abney  
Katie & Rob Bennett  
Paul & Allie Bourgeois  
Judy & Tommy Breedlove  
Heather Rae Howard  
Maryann & Devon Dartnell  
Diane Davies  
Patricia & Wilson DuBose  
Ginger Gardner  
Martha Harrell  
Chris & Foss Hodges  
Melisa Howe  
Kim Jackson  
Marie & Mike Jeffrey  
Karen & Felton Jenkins  
Jennifer Johnson  
Elizabeth Jones

Bill & Linda Kilmer  
Jessica Royal & Tim Lewis  
Main Street Vet  
Mr. Lin Malcom & Mr. Frank Malcom  
Braden and Rob Maret  
Angie & Britt Moon  
Ashley and Matt Nichols  
Jennifer & George Palmer  
Diane and William Pharr  
Walt & Mari Rabern  
Emmie & Mickey Smock  
Johanna & Bryan Tate  
Nancy Vaughan  
Grayson & Frieda White  
Chip Wienges & Claudia Goodwin  
Annie B. & Philip Williams

## DERBY DAY THANK YOUS

**Host:** Stephen Cooke; **Co-Hosts:** Erin Garrett and Claudia Goodwin  
**Sponsors:** Mary & Bob McCauley, Smith Communications, Sweetwater Brewery, Brightwood Homes, Goose Creek Farm, John Garrett Insurance Agency, Jim Jones, Morgan County Citizen, Lambert & Nunn Farms, No Regrets Events, Ross & Associates, and Scherer Family & Cosmetic Dentistry  
**Committee:** Emily & David Buck, Gladys de Moulpied, Kim Jackson, Nancy Kuperberg, Christine McCauley, Mary McCauley, Angie & Britt Moon, Mari & Walt Rabern, Anne & Robert Trulock, Ellen Warren

## THANK YOU

Burge Plantation  
Joe Cardwell  
Conservancy Members  
Derby Day Committee, Hosts, Sponsors, and Contributors  
Georgia Power Foundation  
Ed Gadrix  
GA DNR  
GA Land Trust  
Terry Massey  
Georgia Metals  
GA Trust for Historic Preservation & Mark McDonald  
Champion Lumber Co.  
Morgan County Archives  
Morgan County Landmarks  
NE GA Regional Commission  
Allen Olson  
Ginny and Dan Rather  
Erin Spinks  
Sunflower Farm Festival  
Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE)  
Wallace Grove Baptist Church  
Waterfall Foundation  
Willow Oak Farm, Carter Family, & Luke Wilkins

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MADISON-MORGAN  
CONSERVANCY

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P.O. Box 752  
Madison, GA 30650

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