



# MADISON-MORGAN CONSERVANCY

CREATING A CULTURE OF CONSERVATION

SUMMER, 2013

## MEMBERS MAKING IT WORK

There is something special about the Conservancy's membership. It's hard to put a finger on it, but the evidence is clear – a "culture of conservation" exists here in Morgan County, like nowhere else in the state, thanks to the contributions of time and treasure from our many members: land is being permanently protected through voluntary, donated conservation easements at a faster pace than most places in the southeast; our agricultural industry is thriving and retaining the county's historic agrarian landscapes; and our explorations of our special places through FARMeander, the Ramble, and Derby Day are both fun and educational, providing members and many others an opportunity to enjoy Morgan County's natural, agricultural, and historic resources.

Together we can do anything. We can even weather a storm under tents and surpass a fundraising goal at the same time! Yes, Derby Day was a success and showed just how generous Conservancy members are. On behalf of all of us here, I would like to thank the sponsors, hosts, auction contributors, winning bidders, volunteers, IB students, and the committee who pulled it all together. Next year we will be at Goose Creek Farm again and are confident that you will actually get to see the beautiful farm. So mark your calendars for May 3rd. You don't want to miss what has been listed as one of the seven best derby parties in the country!

With a positive financial outlook for the next year, thanks in part to Derby Day, we are planning to achieve a number of goals. Our educational forums will consist of a Conservation Easement Workshop on September 5th at Burge Plantation and Land Talks/Realtor's Forum in October, we will expand FARMeander yet again and work with the GA State Legislature to designate FARMeander as a state scenic highway, and we will continue to work with interested parties in making a regional food hub a reality in Morgan County.

And the year would not be complete without mention of the Ramble. The Conservancy's next Greenprint Ramble will be in October of 2014 – a year and a half away. However, you will be pleased to know that the GA Trust for Historic Preservation has chosen Madison and Morgan County as the site of their Ramble this coming October. As a partner, the Conservancy will assist by giving tours of the Nolan Crossroads, so be sure to buy your ticket for an up close and personal tour of one of Morgan County's most beloved historic homes – abandoned and in disrepair but majestic all the same. Of course with the same ticket you'll get to see many of the "saved" historic sites and houses. You're not going to want to miss this Ramble.

Your conservancy was the first county-wide conservancy in the state, and you, our members, are responsible for our successes that have helped create a culture of conservation that is such a big part of our quality of life here. Thank you all for your support, and please continue to support our work by renewing your annual membership dues. If you are not a member, we hope you will join our membership (see page 7 for membership form). Together we can protect our natural, agricultural, and historic resources for future generations. We are already enhancing our quality of life for this generation, but a long look to the future will show the path to a healthy, thriving region.

Sincerely,

Robert Trulock, President

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## GEORGIA'S FIRST COTTON MILL (C. 1810) RIGHT HERE IN MORGAN COUNTY

Laura Duvekot is interning with the Conservancy this summer, researching and documenting the Walton Mill site in southern Morgan County. A Florida native with a Bachelor's Degree in History from the University of South Florida, she was excited about the change of scenery that pursuing her Masters in Historic Preservation at the University of Georgia would afford.

Laura said of her internship, "Once I began doing research on Walton Mill's history, I learned pretty quickly that there is a long and exciting history connected with the deceptively peaceful site. What remains includes two cemeteries, a late-nineteenth century tenant house, the foundations of a twentieth-century grist mill, the frame of an old truss bridge, and the foundations and chimneys of a handful of early- or mid-nineteenth century buildings. The property owners, Bill Killmer and Wayne Vason, set me on the right track by handing off research they and others had done in the past, and I began digging."

*"I CAN'T IMAGINE A BETTER WAY  
TO SPEND A SUMMER."*

*Laura Duvekot,  
Conservancy Summer Intern  
for Walton Mill Project*

Virginia, moved to this site in 1810 and built GA's first cotton mill. A few years later, in 1814, the GA General Assembly authorized "a Lottery for the purpose of raising the sum of \$7,000, the better to enable Henry Heald, Jacob Gregg, and Robert Pearman, to erect a Woollen Factory at some convenient place in the upper part of this state." The funds raised through this lottery would provide for the continued expansion of the commercial venture on Little River.

After a nation-wide recession, the Whatleys sold much of their property to the Waltons, who owned land north on Little River. In the mid-1820s the reign of the Waltons began, and descendants of the Waltons still own portions of this property today (the Vason families).

"In addition to searching for information about the origin of industrial activity at the site," Laura says, "I have truly enjoyed exploring its more recent history, since the mill was in operation until shortly after the Second World War. On June 26th, I was able to do an oral history with Clyde Folds, a man who



"Deed and archival research have revealed that this has been the site of grist mills, cotton mills, and saw mills since 1811. In the 1810s and 1820s, it was in fact the home to a growing community called Antioch, even boasting a post office called 'Whatley's Mills'. During this time the Whatley family reigned and Antioch Baptist Church, whose congregation still thrives just a few miles down the road, was located at the site." There is even reference to the "Town Plan of Antioch" in deeds – this remains a mystery and only leads us to believe that the Whatley family was developing a thriving town on Little River.

Research shows that Georgia's industrial revolution began right here on Little River. Jacob Gregg, a watchmaker from

now lives in Social Circle but shared his amazing memories of living in a house overlooking the mill in the 1930s and 40s, when he was a small child and his father ran the grist mill."

"I will be spending the next few weeks putting together a document that tells this incredible story: writing the story of the way the land has been used over the past two centuries, drawing and mapping the marvelous resources that stand as reminders of the different stages of its development, and bringing together all of the sources, from deed books to conversations, that have allowed me to begin to understand this site. I'm looking forward to sharing what I've learned and encouraging others to continue this research. I can't imagine a better way to spend a summer."

## NOLAN HOUSE ELIGIBLE FOR THE NATIONAL REGISTER FOR HISTORIC PLACES

In a continuing effort to protect the Nolan House, Conservancy staff has been working with the owners of this beloved home to list the structure on the National Register of Historic Places. We were recently notified that the structure was eligible for listing. We will continue to work with the landowners and GA's HPD on the final application. If you have a structure you would like to list on the National Register, please contact Mollie Bogle (mollie.bogle@gmail.com, 706-342-9252).





## MEET THE CONSERVANCY'S NEW BOARD MEMBERS



**BOB BEAUCHAMP.** Mr. Beauchamp is a retired attorney and currently operates a working cattle farm in Morgan County. He has served with the following civic organizations: State Bar of Georgia (Member, Board of Governors 1980-85), Managing Board of Directors and Vice Chairman of Metropolitan Atlanta Boys and Girls Clubs (Board Excellence Award 1991), Advisory Committee of the Atlanta Bureau of Cultural Affairs, Mayor's Advisory Board, Atlanta Committee of the Olympic Games, Camp Fire Atlanta Council, and the Madison-Morgan Cultural Center Board. Mr. Beauchamp was also a community torch-bearer during the 1996 Olympic games. Mr. Beauchamp served as the Conservancy's President in 2011, and has returned to the Board after a year off.



**DAVID DODGE.** Mr. Dodge's career was in civil engineering (structural design) and real estate development. He began his real estate development career with Cousins Properties, Inc. in 1968, becoming President of the retail division in 1971. He subsequently founded two companies that developed retail and office projects throughout the Southeast. After retirement, Flossie and David moved to Morgan County in 1997 to pursue various interests, including horses and, in Flossie's case, gardening. Members of the Madison-Morgan Conservancy, they are also members of the Sierra Club, the Nature Conservancy, Georgia Wildlife Federation, and the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Flossie continues her long involvement with the Atlanta Botanical Garden and, in recent years, the State Botanical Garden of Georgia.



**BRAD KELLY.** Mr. Kelly is a Morgan County native who graduated from the University of Georgia with a BBA in Economics in 2009. While at the University he also pursued a minor in Environmental Economics and Management. In 2011 he went back to UGA to enroll in the Certificate Program in Organic Agriculture. In the process of completing his certification he began working for his father at Kelly Products, Inc. in Covington, GA, where he was and still is involved in new product and business development. Over the past several years Brad has become increasingly interested and involved with the local and organic food movements, and after completing his certification he was hired part-time at the UGA Horticulture Farm where he still works. While working full time at Kelly Products he has had time to start a 1-2 acre organic plot at his parents homestead in Morgan County, which is grown for experimentation and to provide the company's employees with fresh fruits and vegetables. He also worked with the Morgan County school system recently, and was able to install a small raised bed teaching garden at the elementary school.

## WILLIAMS FARM JOINS THE RANKS OF GEORGIA'S CENTENNIAL FAMILY FARMS

The rich history of the Williams Family Farm is similar to many in the area. Joseph Williams purchased 307 acres near Newborn in 1887 and throughout the past century, innovative techniques such as contour plowing - introduced to control erosion - were employed. In the 1950s, a shift to dairy farming occurred, and in 2008, the Williams Family Farm, LLLP was created by fourth generation stewards. The land is leased to local farmers who cultivate timber, winter wheat, and canola, and the farmhouse may soon be used by the Williams family to host farm stays.



The Georgia Centennial Farm Program was developed in 1992 to distinguish family farms that have contributed to preserving Georgia's agricultural history by maintaining working family farms for more than 100 years. Administered by the Historic Preservation Division of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Georgia Farm Bureau Federation, Georgia Department of Agriculture, Georgia Forestry Commission, and the Georgia National Fairgrounds and Agricenter, the program has recognized 426 farms around the state.

Each year, qualifying farms are recognized at the opening day of the Georgia National Fair in Perry, Georgia. During the awards luncheon, farm owners receive a Georgia Centennial Farm certificate of honor signed by the governor. The Williams Family Farm will receive the Centennial Family Farm award at this year's Georgia National Fair on October 3, 2013.

In an effort to promote Morgan County's agricultural community, the Conservancy assisted the Williams family in applying for the Centennial Family Farm Award. If you are interested in being listed and would like the Conservancy to assist you, please contact Mollie Bogle (mollie.bogle@gmail.com, 706-342-9252).



## LAND STEWARDSHIP WORKSHOP SERIES A SUCCESS

In Partnership with the Georgia Forestry Commission (GFC), the Conservancy held a series of three forums for landowners about land stewardship. Approximately 150 people attended to learn about prescribed fire, forest management, wildlife management, habitat restoration, and cost-share programs available to landowners to implement these land management practices.

Speakers included: Scott Griffin, GFC; Sharon Holbrooks, USDA/NRCS; Jeff Kastle, GFC; Lynn Lewis-Weis, National Wild Turkey Federation; Reggie Thackston, GA DNR Private Lands Program; Shane Wellendorf, Tall Timbers Research Station and Land Conservancy. Landowner panelists included: Jim Branch, Devon Dartnell, Hoyt Dennard, Rollin Dennard, Art Domby, Zeke Lambert, Jerry McCollum, and Luke Wilkins. Moderators included: Dennis Brooks, NRCS; Todd Holbrook, GA Wildlife Federation; and Buford Sanders, GFC.

A few of the lessons:

- Deer and turkey are thriving here, and there are many land management practices that can increase populations.
- Morgan County is considered in the moderate zone for quail restoration.
- On the whole, cost-share programs are not well funded today, but a few programs still have funding. Once a new Farm Bill passes in Congress, we will know more about what programs will be available and what funding is available for landowners.

GFC's partnership made these forums possible. We are so very thankful for their support and appreciate their efforts to provide this type of education to landowners in Georgia. We thank all the speakers who traveled to Madison to share their expertise - their knowledge and leadership in Georgia's conservation community is powerful and precious. And a big thank you goes out to the Brady Inn and the Chophouse Grille for their hospitality.



*Left: Shane Wellendorf of Tall Timbers Research Station and Land Conservancy discusses prescribed fire. Center: Buford Sanders, GFC; Devon Dartnell, GFC; Jeff Kastle, GFC; Shane Wellendorf, Tall Timbers; and Chuck Williams, GA State Representative. Right: Reggie Thackston of GA DNR discusses wildlife management, quail restoration, and DNR's Private Lands program.*

# SAVE THE DATE

## CONSERVATION EASEMENT WORKSHOP

Thursday, September 5, 8:30-4:30, Burge Plantation

## LAND TALKS FOR AREA REALTORS

Date to be determined in October

## FARMEANDER WITH A GOOD SHOVEL

Meander through the farms in Georgia's Heartlands. Sounds fun, doesn't it?



Over the last year, a few representatives from Morgan, Newton, Putnam, and Walton counties have been working to create a regional identity that focuses on the growing agritourism industry and other green industry in this region, now known as Georgia's Heartlands. In July this group met with GA's Commissioner of Agriculture, Gary Black, and representatives from the Dept. of Agriculture, GA's Farm Bureau, and the University of Georgia to explore partnerships in marketing the many agritourism opportunities in this area.

Featured prominently in the meeting as one of Georgia's successful agritourism branding pieces was FARMeander. It was a pleasure to hear the compliments and accolades, and it has inspired us to grow FARMeander again this year.

Sean Dunlap interned with the Conservancy last year on the FARMeander project, and this year returns as a consultant in his new consulting venture, A Good Shovel. Sean will be creating, designing, and distributing the next version of FARMeander, which you can look forward to seeing in October.

If you or someone you know would like to list their farm or farm-related entity on FARMeander, please contact us: [farmeander@mmcGeorgia.org](mailto:farmeander@mmcGeorgia.org) or 706-342-9252.



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## GOING LOCAL - WHY REGIONAL FOOD HUBS ARE THE KEY

Partially reprinted from ATKearney. See more at: [http://www.atkearney.com/paper/-/asset\\_publisher/dVxv4Hz2h8bS/content/buying-in-to-the-local-food-movement/10192#sthash.IsaBWDYj.dpuf](http://www.atkearney.com/paper/-/asset_publisher/dVxv4Hz2h8bS/content/buying-in-to-the-local-food-movement/10192#sthash.IsaBWDYj.dpuf)

People across all segments are willing to pay more for local food. And grocers are taking notice. Wal-Mart - the world's largest retailer has made local food a cornerstone of its long-term strategy. In 2010 the company announced a program to focus on sustainable agriculture from its suppliers, with a specific push to put more locally grown foods on store shelves. The company vowed to double the amount of local food sold in U.S. stores to 9% by 2015; in Canada, the goal is 30%. The company also pledged to invest in small and medium-size farmers, particularly in emerging markets.

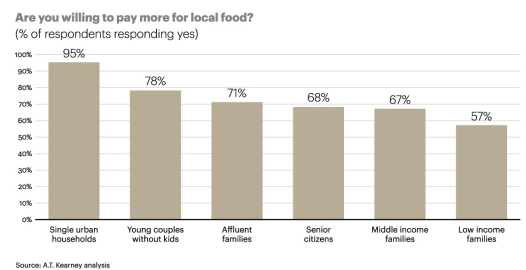
Local food cannot be ignored as a growth segment of the grocery industry. Customers are not only willing to spend more for local products, but also are willing to switch to competitors to find what they are looking for.

But how do you get that food from the farm to the grocery store? Grocers need washed, packaged, labeled food to sell to consumers, and the processing of that farm fresh food is the key to fulfilling the consumer's preference for purchasing local food.

Morgan County's central location in the state, its proximity to more than 60% of the state's population (within 60 miles), and its proximity to productive farms make it the perfect place for locating that processing facility (aka regional food hub). And it's happening... Harvest of the Heart Garden is building a USDA certified vegetable processing facility and commercial kitchen in Madison, which will be available to local producers for canning and other processing needs. And thanks to the Morgan County Board of Commissioners' food hub feasibility study, we are now equipped with good market information about the need for animal processing facilities and the economic viability of building such.

The Conservancy's goal in promoting regional food hubs is to provide economic opportunities to local farmers and to provide healthy food to consumers. Help keep farmers farming, we say! It's good for our tax base and for our quality of life.

Figure 3  
Shoppers across all segments are willing to pay more for local



## MEMBERSHIP SUPPER HIGHLIGHTS NEWTON 2050 PLAN AND LEADERSHIP COLLABORATIVE

The annual Membership Supper, affectionately known as the "barn party," continued to grow and this year was the largest ever. Approximately 140 members gathered at Dan Rather's barn at Malcom's Crossroads for the ninth year for a celebration of the Conservancy's successes over the last year. Special guest, Kay Lee of the Center for Community Preservation and Planning in Covington, shared with us Newton County's 2050 Plan (their comprehensive plan) and the active role of their Leadership Collaborative. To learn more: <http://www.centernewton.org/plan/the-2050-plan/>. Thank you Dan Rather, Sweetwater Brewery, The Caboose, and all the chili cooks and donors of local beef, venison, and veggies. Supper was delicious as always!



## DERBY DAY - ONE OF 7 BEST IN THE COUNTRY!

Someone is taking note! We don't know who, but here we are, your conservancy, listed as having one of the seven best Derby party's in the country. Wow! To read more, see: <http://blog.shermanstravel.com>.

If you attended this year's party, you'll understand why we were noted. Even in the downpour, we can have a good time. More importantly for the financial stability of this organization, we were able to meet and surpass our fundraising goal! Thank you to all who sponsored, hosted, contributed auction items, and volunteered to make it happen! A very special thanks goes out to Emily Buck and Melissa Martin for co-chairing the event.

Mark your calendars for next year: May 3rd, 4:30pm, at Goose Creek Farm. Just wait until you actually SEE this farm!





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### Madison-Morgan Conservancy

P.O. Box 752, Madison, GA 30650 | 706-342-9252 | [www.mmcGeorgia.org](http://www.mmcGeorgia.org) | [info@mmcGeorgia.org](mailto:info@mmcGeorgia.org)

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Support the Conservancy's mission with your annual membership:

Name as it should appear on the Membership list:

Address:

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

Phone 1: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone 2: \_\_\_\_\_

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- ☐ Daniel Morgan Society \_\_\_\_\_ \$5,000 + (Watershed Donor Level)
- ☐ Benefactor \_\_\_\_\_ \$1,000 + (Watershed Donor Level)
- ☐ Supporter \_\_\_\_\_ \$500
- ☐ Donor \_\_\_\_\_ \$250
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If you are a Conservancy member, please check the mailing label on the front of this newsletter. The date printed above your name is the date on which you last paid your annual membership dues. Please consider renewing your membership at a higher level, so that we can continue to expand our programming.

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Madison-Morgan Conservancy  
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Summer, 2013