

Land for Conservation & Community

Newsletter

Spring 2013 • Volume 16, Issue 1

5,264 acres Preserved in 2012!

Athens Land Trust's Conservation Program worked with 15 landowners to preserve 5,264 acres of working lands and important forest and river habitats. These projects more than double the total number of acres that we permanently protect using conservation easements and extend our land protection work into the following counties: Cobb, Crisp, Dooly, Effingham, Fannin, Henry, Jackson, Meriwether, Spalding and Wilcox.

As a result of these efforts, Athens Land Trust now holds 44 conservation easements protecting a total of 8,123 acres in 20 Georgia counties. The new conservation easements protect land along the Ocmulgee and Oconee Rivers, and include natural habitats as well as working agricultural land, and land of historical significance. **continues on page 4*



York Property - 36 acres of mature hardwood forest along Shoal Creek in Oconee County.

ALT's Newest Homeowner

ALT is very excited to introduce our newest homeowner, Vitina McKinney, who recently purchased 300 Old Winterville Road. Vitina has been an employee of Athens Regional Medical Center for over thirty years. **continues on page 3*



Mayor Nancy Denson, Commissioners Kathy Hoard & Harry Sims, ALT President Angela Johnson & Reverend James Washington help Vitina (front row, second from the left) cut the ribbon on her new home on February 7.

West Broad Farmers Market Opening May 4th

Athens Land Trust will be launching the West Broad Farmers Market on May 4th at 10:00 am at the old West Broad School, 1573 W. Broad Street! The monthly market will feature a range of products including, fresh fruits and vegetables, value-added products, crafts, meat, eggs, honey, and prepared food. The market will be open every first Saturday from May-December from 10:00 am - 1:00 pm.

Young Urban Farmer Development Program

The inaugural class of ALT's Young Urban Farmer Development Project began on March 5th with 12 students from the Classic City High School. The program offers six months of classroom-based learning and experiential activities in entrepreneurship based at the West Broad Market Garden. The program is supported by a grant from the Turner Family Foundation and Work-Based Learning Funds from the Clarke County School District. **continues on page 8*

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Contact Information

685 North Pope Street
Athens, Georgia 30601-2331
706.613.0122 • 706.613.0143 fax
www.athenslandtrust.org

Bi-Monthly Meetings

Our Board meets on the third Monday of every-other month at 6:30 PM in our office; the meetings are open to the public.

Find Us on Facebook

www.facebook.com/athenslandtrust

Upcoming Events

Upcountry Oyster Roast

The second annual Upcountry Oyster Roast will be held on April 7th, to celebrate the collaborations that protected more than 5,000 acres in ten Georgia counties during 2012. Charlie Phillips of Sapelo Sea Farms will bring oysters from the coast, located downstream from many of the properties protected by Athens Land Trust. By working with landowners to protect their properties, ALT is helping to create healthy ecosystems that are necessary for oysters, shrimp, and other seafoods. The Upcountry Oyster Roast will be held at The Portico in Walton County from 3 until 6 p.m., and will offer oysters, beer, and other foods. A limited number of tickers are available for \$35.

For more information please contact Nathan
nathan@athenslandtrust.org • 706.613.0122



West Broad Farmers Market “Double Dollars” Fundraiser

A dinner at The National will be held on May 5th at 6:30 pm to raise funds to make the fresh vegetables affordable for customers at the West Broad Farmers Market. One of the primary goals of the Market is to provide an additional source of fresh, affordable produce to the low-income neighbors and shoppers of the Market. We plan to do this by doubling the customers' food stamp benefits, known as SNAP, WIC, and SMFNP, when they purchase produce at the Market. The dinner will be a five-course dinner with wine pairings by Chef Peter Dale that will feature products from the West Broad Market Garden as well as value-added products from vendors of the Market. Tickets are on a first-come basis and are \$120.

To reserve your spot, please contact West Broad Farmers Market Manager,
Kate Munden-Dixon • kate@athenslandtrust.org • 706.613.0122

3rd Annual Riding for a Reason

Athens Land Trust Riding for a Reason on Saturday, May 18th will feature a metric century loop (approximately 65 miles) from Bishop to the Wiley farm in Jersey and back. The route will be through Good Hope, Jersey, Social Circle, and Bostwick with shorter options available. The sign-up fee is \$30 before May 3rd and \$40 afterward.

For more information please contact Nathan
nathan@athenslandtrust.org • 706.613.0122.



Greenfest Awards Ceremony

Join us at the Greenfest Awards Ceremony on April 19th, at Flinchum's Phoenix in Whitehall Forest. Athens Land Trust will be recognizing volunteers, community gardens, and conservation easement donors who have made significant contributions during the past year. The Awards Ceremony is an acknowledgement of the numerous environmental achievements throughout the community, and Flinchum's Phoenix is a wonderful location on the Oconee River to celebrate them!

Affordable Housing



Vitina McKinney's new home at 300 Old Winterville Rd.



New home for sale at 310 Old Winterville Rd.

New Homes

The homes at 300 and 310 Old Winterville were built by ALT with federal funding that was allocated to ALT by Athens-Clarke County's Department of Human and Economic Development and construction financing from Athens First Bank and Trust. The home at 310 Old Winterville was designed by Chris Evans of e+e architecture, who donated his time. Contractor Chesser-Kennedy built the homes which are of Universal design, so that the residents can stay in their homes as they age and the homes are visitable by people with disabilities. Both homes are also EarthCraft certified, which ensures that they are energy-efficient and healthy for the future owners.



Architectural Elevations for new homes at 868, 870 & 872 Waddell Street that are now under construction.

ALT has awarded contracts for six new EarthCraft homes and is renovating two additional homes. JOMA Construction has broken ground on three new homes located at 868, 870, and 872 Waddell Street. These homes (elevations shown above) were designed by Paul Cassily, who donated his expertise. Chesser-Kennedy will construct the first three homes in Cottages at Cannontown. Two 1960's houses at 110 and 125 Stanelle are being renovated by JOMA Construction and Bar None Construction respectively. All of these homes will be sold to families making less than 80% of Area Median Income (\$42,050 for a family of three) and will be permanently affordable and owner occupied.

Homebuyer Education Workshop

ALT conducted its first Homebuyer Education Workshop of 2013 on January 5th and 12th. Eight households (11 individuals) received 12 services, including the Homebuyer Ed program, plus a financial literacy/credit class. In December, we held an abbreviated workshop for four ALT clients who needed to be re-certified, since their original certificate of completion was more than a year old. Additional one-on-one counseling is offered to all workshop participants and others in need by our housing counselor, Mary O'Toole. We have also scheduled workshops for the rest of the year in the months of March, May, July, August & October. ALT continues to rely on realtors, mortgage loan officers, closing attorneys and energy specialists to share their expertise with our workshop participants. We appreciate their commitment to an educated homebuyer.



Funding made available for these affordable housing projects by Athens-Clarke County Department of Human and Economic Development (HED) HOME and CDBG Programs of the Unified Government of Athens-Clarke County, an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Land Conservation

2012 Conservation Easements

The 5,268 acres of land protected in 2012 are diverse in habitat, size, and location throughout the state. The landowners are giving up their right to develop their property forever, by placing a voluntary conservation easement on the property that transfers to any future owner. By protecting their land, ALT's easement donors are providing \$13,619,572 in ecosystem services each year that benefit us now and our children and grandchildren in years to come.* These services include filtering stormwater, preventing sedimentation of streams, reducing flooding and erosion, cleaning the air, sequestering carbon, preserving prime farmland, protecting the habitat of endangered species and other wildlife, increasing pollination, preserving our history, and providing passive recreation and scenic value. In addition to giving up their development rights in perpetuity, these landowners provided a cash donation to ensure that ALT can monitor and enforce the conservation easements in the future.

*This figure is based on a study by UGA's Warnell School of Forest Resources and using the total acreage protected by ALT (8,123 acres)



David Green, his daughter Laura (shown left), and their family have protected over 2,000 acres adjacent to the Piedmont National Wildlife Refuge.



Green 2 Property

1,223 acres along 2 miles of the Ocmulgee River in Jones County. The tract includes natural and managed forest along 5.5 miles of Butler's Creek and its tributaries, and tributaries to the River. This is the second tract protected by the Green family (the first tract, of 1,162 acres, was protected in 2011). These properties are adjacent to the Piedmont National Wildlife Refuge.



Odom Property

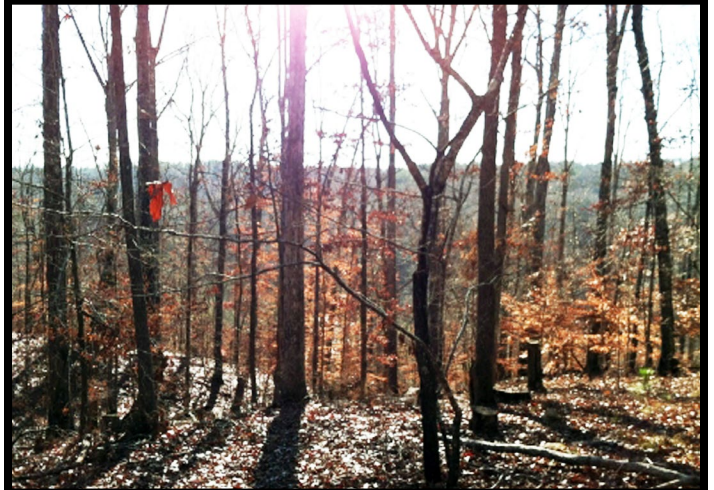
1,050 acres of working forests, natural forest, and agricultural fields and more than 4 miles of Blue Line Streams, in Crisp County. This property contains high-priority habitats including Longleaf Pine Wiregrass Savannas and extensive habitat for the gopher tortoise, a federally-protected species. The land has been in the Odom Family for over 140 years.

Land Conservation



Tallassee 2 Property

56 acres of mature Oak Hickory forest in Athens-Clarke County, and includes significant areas of holly forests with many native wildflowers, rare butterflies and moths. It connects with 544 acres of contiguous protected land (including the Kenney Ridge, Stangle, and the first Tallassee Conservation Easement, and 310 acres purchased by Athens-Clarke County as greenspace).



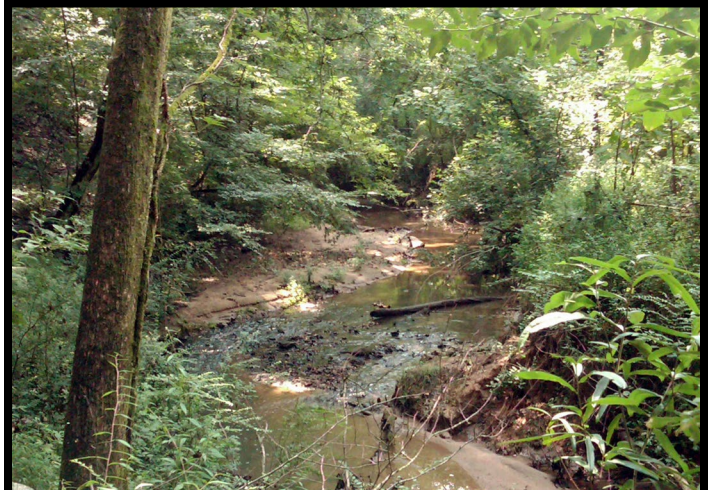
Stangle Property

18 acres in Athens-Clarke County of mature Oak Hickory forest, with a tributary to the Middle Oconee River. This property connects with 581 acres of protected forest land (including the Kenney Ridge neighborhood and Tallassee Properties held by ALT, as well as 310 acres purchased by Athens-Clarke County as greenspace), and is located along the Middle Oconee River and across the river from the 243-acre Bear Creek Conservation Easement.



Bear Creek Property

243 acres of natural forest and wetlands, including 1.6 miles along Bear Creek and Little Bear Creeks, in Athens-Clarke and Jackson Counties. The landowners will continue to use the property for hunting and passive recreation. It is just across the Middle Oconee River from 600 acres of contiguous protected land and protects Athens-Clarke County's water quality.



Chase Street Property

49 acres in Athens-Clarke County (behind the Boulevard Neighborhood) preserving a portion of an informal network of bike trails connecting with downtown Athens, the Oconee River and Sandy Creek Park. The landowners, Virginia and Carrol Beavers, are generously allowing Athens Land Trust to provide public access for the community with walk/bike trails and an urban farm.

Athens Land Trust now holds 44 Conservation easements protecting a total of 8,123 acres in 20 counties and 9 of the 14 watersheds in Georgia.

Land Conservation



Lost Mountain Property

19 acres in Cobb County, which is historically important, being adjacent to archeological resources from the Civil War. This property provides scenic viewshed preservation of Lost Mountain, with habitats of mature Oak-Hickory sloped forest and a major stream.



Jones Property

603 acres of working forest land, in Jones County adjacent to the Cedar Creek Wildlife Management Area. More than 160 acres of Oak-Hickory forest and wetlands are preserved along the streams. This land is adjacent to another 1,000 acre protected forest and wetland.



Hinton Property

108 acres of natural forest in Spalding and Henry Counties, along 1 mile of the Towaliga River and its tributaries. Protection of this tract helps preserve the community's water supply and public horse and walking trails located along the River.



Quail Preserve

199 acres of managed forest and wetlands along ½ mile of the Little Ogeechee River, with black water cypress knee swamps. The property is close to downtown Meldrim in Effingham County.

The new conservation easements protect large tracts of land along the Ocmulgee and Middle Oconee Rivers. ALT's 8,123 acres are located in 9 of Georgia's 14 watersheds.

Land Conservation



McLeod Farm

474 acres of family agricultural land and natural forest preserved in Wilcox County with 410 acres of prime and statewide important farmland soils.



Brent Dooly Farm

326 acres natural forest and agricultural land, in Dooly County, with 1.5 miles of Jallapo Branch. The farm easement preserves 242 acres of prime and statewide important farmland soils.



Martin Property

48 acres of Oak Hickory forest on Lake Blue Ridge. This property is surrounded by the Chattahoochee National Forest, in Fannin County.



York Property

36 acres of mature hardwood forest and 1/2 mile along Shoal Creek, in Oconee County. The landowner plans to use the land solely for passive recreation and preservation of habitat.

ALT is one of first of 201 land trusts in the US that is accredited by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission.



Community Agriculture

Fresh Food Options at the West Broad Market Garden

The West Broad Farmers Market (WBFM) is a community-driven, education-oriented market operated by Athens Land Trust, with a grant from USDA's Farmers Market Promotion Program. In addition to providing affordable, healthy food for the neighborhood, the monthly Market will include music, children's activities, cooking demonstrations, health screenings, nutrition education, food-based films, and rotating classes on topics such as organic gardening, canning, and composting. The Market is developing new food-based entrepreneurs and will contribute to community health and wellness while building a neighborhood-based economy in the Hancock Corridor community.

Tuesday Farmer's Tailgate Market begins on May 7th. Fresh locally-grown fresh fruits and vegetables will be available at the West Broad Market Garden every Tuesday from 4:00-7:00 p.m., following the tradition of last year's produce stand.

Community "Sponsored" Agriculture is ALT's spin on the traditional CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) model, in the sense that our subscribers are more than just supporters of our farm. All of our CSA shareholders are also directly contributing to our grassroots Double Dollars Program, through which we are able to offer sustainably grown produce at affordable prices to low-income community members. By participating in our sponsorship program, all of our subscribers are, in effect, saying "Yes, I believe healthy, naturally grown produce should be available to all individuals, regardless of income or location."



Vendor Development for West Broad Farmers Market

ALT is hosting an eight-week Vendor Development Course for fifteen individuals who are thinking of starting a business or wanting to further develop a business. The course is providing business planning basics and preparation for selling. The training began on February 23rd and runs through April 13th. The course is a learner-centered, participatory curriculum designed to give you the basic steps you will need to take in order to set up or strengthen your own business. Dr. Richard McCline of UGA's Fanning Institute, volunteers from the Terry College of Business, and Gwinnett Federal Credit Union are assisting ALT's Christina Hylton with the training.

Community Composting Program at the West Broad Market Garden

Using the no-turn composting method developed by the Truly Living Well Center for Natural Urban Agriculture in Atlanta, the West Broad Market Garden will be able to divert even more compostable food matter from the waste stream than the approximately 400 pounds per week it currently receives from the Daily Co-op, Earthfare Grocery, Ike and Jane's Coffee Shop, 1000 Faces and UGA Campus Kitchen. The food scraps are combined with leaf litter and mulch in 10-foot long piles, watered and left for 3 months. At the conclusion of this period an earthy, sweet-smelling, and nutrient rich fertilizer emerges, which is then applied generously to the garden.

Young Urban Farmer Development Program

Students in the Young Urban Farmer Program are being divided into teams and assigned responsibility for the development of a business plan as well as the operation of one of four, small, on-farm micro-enterprises: beekeeping, mushroom cultivation, floriculture, and vermi-composting. The youth are joining Community Agriculture Program Manager Fenwick Broyard, interns Jessica Reichard and Molly Canfield, and a host of local volunteers in the West Broad Market Garden two afternoons a week and spending an additional full day each week engaged in the National Foundation for Teaching Entrepreneurship's Business Plan Writing course.

Community Agriculture & Farmer Outreach

ALT's new Farmer Outreach Program is off to a great start

The Farmer Outreach Program is a collaborative effort with National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) to conduct outreach and educational activities for underserved groups in the ten counties surrounding Athens. Underserved groups are defined as individuals and groups who have not participated in or have received limited benefit from USDA or NRCS programs that may improve their quality of life or of the environment. The program objectives include introducing new and underserved groups to farming as a career; exposure to the NRCS programs currently available; increasing the opportunities for beginning, non-traditional farmers by providing educational activities; and a land - lease program.

The first educational session was held on January 26th at the Madison County Library. Sixteen people attended the session with presenters Carol Boss of the NRCS field office and farmer Todd Lister. As a result of the session, a beginning farmer is now in the process of applying for support through the NRCS assistance programs. The next session is being held on March 16 at the Oglethorpe County Library. Jeff Aaron (Cooperative Extension Agent) and Bryan Barrett (NRCS) are the guest speakers. The programs are open to anyone who would like to attend.

ALT currently offers free agriculture, education and business training at the West Broad Market Garden to underserved individuals interested in farming. Beginning farmers can learn how to raise organic vegetables and specialty crops that will be sold to markets. For more information please contact Shyeasta Cullars, Farmer Outreach Specialist at 706.613.0122



MLK Day of Service - Hill Chapel Nature Trails

Thank you to the group of volunteers from Zeta Phi Beta and Hill Chapel Baptist Church for their help building forest trails for urban children. The forest and trails are located on the property owned by the Hill Chapel Baptist Church, where they reach out to many neighborhood children by offering environmental education and opportunities to participate in the community garden located near the forest. ALT's Land Conservation Director Laura Hall led the efforts, which are supported by a grant from Toys R Us.



MLK Day of Service - West Broad Market Garden Preparations

As part of the MLK Day of Service, an annual event organized by ALT partner Community Connection and Hands on Northeast Georgia, 29 people, ranging in age from 2 to 79, volunteered at the West Broad Market Garden. To the tunes of 70's era music legends, volunteers built two 4' x 20' raised bed garden boxes, covered the hoop house with greenhouse plastic, and cleared the early spring field of weeds and fall crop residues. ALT staffers Fenwick Broyard and Dana Blanton led the volunteers.

Community Garden Network

Educational workshops for the participants of the Community Garden Network (CGN) have been held each month in various gardens. In January, the topic was vermicomposting, a method of composting that uses worms. The February Workshop discussed soil testing, preparing the soil for spring crops, sowing spring crop seeds, and other February garden tasks. At the March Workshop, the gardeners discussed spring crops, shared methods for planting and growing those crops, and learned how to identify, and what to do about, spring crop pests. The monthly workshops are led by Stephanie Bergamo, Dana Blanton and Fenwick Broyard. Beginning in May, the monthly workshops will be held at the West Broad Market Garden as part of the Farmers Market and open to anyone who wants to attend.

Athens Land Trust

Thank You to Our Partners & Donors since November 2012!

- ◆ Oconee State Bank donated \$3,000 to ALT for our homebuyer education program. Oconee State Bank has financially supported our efforts to increase homeownership in the community for the past six years! Their commitment has enabled ALT to assist hundreds of people to prepare for purchasing a home and improve their financial well-being.
- ◆ Many thanks to Emmanuel Episcopal Church Mission and Extended Ministries for a \$5,000 grant to address the needs of low-income communities and increase access to affordable, healthy food.
- ◆ ALT also received a grant of \$2,500 from the Briscoe Family Foundation for our affordable housing program! The grant will be used to increase the energy-efficiency of our homes so that they are even healthier and more affordable for the future homeowners.
- ◆ The Turner Family Foundation of Athens provided a grant of \$5,000 which enabled ALT to begin the Young Urban Farmer Development Program.
- ◆ St. Gregory's Episcopal Church provided a donation of \$1,200 to ALT.
- ◆ Many thanks to the community-minded people who supported ALT with Christmas gifts through the Benevolence Market!
- ◆ We are very grateful to the UGA and federal government employees who support ALT through payroll deductions as part of Georgia Shares!
- ◆ As a result of the generosity of Jared Harper and Elena Brown and Dev and Gene Weeks, ALT is a sponsor of the Eco-Focus Film Festival again this year.
- ◆ Thanks to Randall Abney and Slow Food of Greater Athens for providing ALT with the proceeds from the film showing of *Greenhorns*.
- ◆ Thank you to Chris McDowell and UGA for carpentry skills, coordination and material donation to the Community Garden Network through the Materials Reuse Program. ALT's office garden is receiving a tool shed made of wood saved from an old barn that was slated to be torn down. Thanks! www.thematerialreuseprogram.com.



Chris McDowell and Zeta Phi Beta volunteers help build forest trails.

Partners

Athens-Clarke County
Athens Area Habitat for Humanity
Athens Housing Authority
Clarke County School District
USDA NRCS
Athens First Bank/Enterprise
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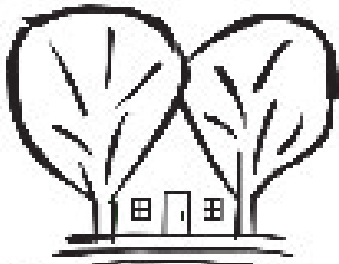
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In Honor of Adele Patrick

Vivienne Sturgill



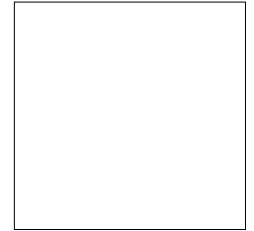
Athens Land Trust

Land for Conservation & Community

685 N. Pope Street • Athens, Georgia 30601

www.athenslandtrust.org

706.613.0122 p.



Athens Land Trust is a private, non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation whose mission is to promote the quality of life through the integration of community and the natural environment by preserving land, creating energy-efficient and affordable housing and revitalizing neighborhoods.

Please Join The Athens Land Trust

We welcome new supporters and thank all of the individuals and organizations that have supported our work over the years.

Your support is critical for our programs. We greatly appreciate all donations of time and money.

Please use this form to join or renew your membership.

Please Check One of the Following Levels:

- Forest, \$1000 +
 - Grove, \$500 +
 - Oak, \$250 +
 - Seedling, \$100 +
 - Acorn, \$75 +
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- _____

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Visit www.athenslandtrust.org and click either the Join Us or Donate link.

(online donations made through PayPal)

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