



SPRING 2011 ♦ VOLUME 14, ISSUE 1

## FARTHER AFIELD: ALT CONSERVATION EASEMENTS NOW PROTECT LAND IN HABERSHAM AND FRANKLIN COUNTIES

In December 2010, Athens Land Trust accepted two donated conservation easements protecting 175 acres of forest, wetlands and trout streams in north Georgia. The properties—110 acres in Habersham County adjacent to the Chattahoochee National Forest, and 65 acres in Franklin County—consist of scenic rolling hills, oak and hickory forest, beech trees, rocky shoals and creeks that flow to major rivers. These protected lands directly contribute to water quality and wildlife habitat for their communities and those downstream.

The Habersham tract is a beautiful oak-hickory forest with fern glades and slopes of rhododendrons. The creek, shown at right, flows into Shoal Creek, an important trout stream and source of drinking water for many in the area. The land is protected by a group of friends who have selected two disturbed areas where a cabin can be built. The public benefits from the protection of the creek, and the landowners can enjoy the forest which sweeps across the ridges, giving them beautiful views as well as hiking trails and fishing opportunities.

The Franklin County tract protects a substantial wetland with two creeks and riparian areas. Owners of both tracts wanted to balance limited development with the protection of a major portion of these properties and to be able to pass the land to their heirs with the natural resources intact. Furthermore, in return for permanently protecting important habitat, landowners may be eligible for

very attractive tax benefits, both federal and state. These easements are ALT's first in Franklin and Habersham Counties, bringing the total acreage protected by ALT to 1,203.

### ALT RECEIVES GRANTS FROM OCONEE STATE BANK AND WELLS FARGO FOUNDATION

For the fourth year, Oconee State Bank donated \$5,000 to ALT to provide Homebuyer Education and housing

counseling for low-to-moderate income families who hope to purchase a home.

ALT also received a grant of \$2,500 from the Wells Fargo Foundation to support ALT's housing development and homebuyer education.

Thank you to these organizations that support homeownership opportunities in Athens-Clarke County! With their help we are addressing the low homeownership rate in

Athens-Clarke County, which is 42%, while the state average is 68%. With the recent struggles in the housing market, some wonder about homeownership for first-time buyers; however, ALT homebuyers have had zero foreclosures. Financial education, payments they can afford, and good loans are the recipe for success. Also, families that purchase through ALT know that we will be here as a continuing resource.



*ALT's newest easements protect land near Clarkesville in Habersham County (above) and near Carnesville in Franklin County.*

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**MONTHLY BOARD MEETINGS**

Our monthly meetings are held on the third Monday of the month at 6:30 pm in our office and are open to the public.

**FIND US ON FACEBOOK**

at <http://www.facebook.com/athenslandtrust>

**OUR MISSION**

The mission of the Athens Land Trust is to promote quality of life through integration of community and the natural environment by preserving land, creating energy-efficient and affordable housing, and revitalizing neighborhoods.

**BOARD & STAFF NEWS**

Many thanks to retiring Board members Malcolm Palmore and Niesha Blasingame for your years of service!

**STAFF UPDATE**

Stephanie Bergamo joins the Community Garden Network through the Senior Employment in Community Service program of the Athens Community Council on Aging. Stephanie comes with a wealth of experience, including a Ph.D. in botany and her success as coordinator of the Victory Garden in Madison County.

Patty Freeman-Lynde is ALT's new Volunteer Coordinator. Patty has many years of experience with local non-profits, including the Athens Area Homeless Shelter. With funding from the BCS grant, Patty will be developing a volunteer program to assist ALT homeowners with their yard maintenance.

**INTERNS AND VOLUNTEERS**

ALT is deeply grateful for the work of many dedicated volunteers: Dyan Holt, for her help with our conservation program; Kate Blane, for her help with our computer system; Patty Freeman-Lynde, for her help with our housing program; and Beth Gavrilles, for her help with our website, newsletters and grants.

ALT has two interns this semester: Natalie Daniels, a Master of Landscape Architecture student, has been working with GIS mapping for the garden and housing program. Kristin Ward, Environmental Economics major, has been helping out with all our programs. Thanks, interns, for all your hard work!

**ALT GREENFEST AWARDS**

Nigel Wright and his partners are ALT's 2010 Conservation Easement Donors of the Year for their protection of 110 acres in Habersham County adjacent to the Chattahoochee National Forest. (See photo on page 1.) Nigel's brother-in-law, Russell Bennett, received the award on their behalf at the annual GreenFest Awards Ceremony on April 15.



*Dev and Gene Weeks are Donors of the Year*

Also at the Greenfest Awards, ALT honored Dev and Gene Weeks as Donors of the Year. They were very generous to ALT during 2010, especially supporting the Harvest Moon Dinner. Dev has served on the Athens Land Trust Board for the past few years, and Gene and Dev hosted a reception for our capital campaign. Thanks, Dev and Gene!

**ALT ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

**LAND CONSERVATION**

- 1203 acres permanently protected by ALT conservation easements
  - 766 acres of working family farmland
  - 437 acres of forest, wetlands, neighborhood open space, and scenic vistas

**HOUSING**

- 287 individuals currently in affordable ALT housing
- 144 permanently-affordable housing units owned or developed by ALT

**HOMEOWNERSHIP PROGRAM**

- 48 single-family properties (homes and lots)
- 47 residents currently ALT homeowners
- 9 residents lease-purchasing homes

**FOURTH STREET VILLAGE**

**APARTMENTS**

- 231 low-income residents
- 96 affordable units
- 24 market-rate units

**HOUSING COUNSELING/CLASSES**

- 91 individual participants in 2010
- 24 individual participants in 2011

## CONSERVATION NEWS

### EVERYBODY BENEFITS

When landowners donate a conservation easement to ALT, they maintain ownership and management of their land and can sell or pass the land on to their heirs, while foregoing future development rights. Unlike the Conservation Use Valuation Assessment, (CUVA) which provides a property tax break for landowners who restrict development for 10 years, conservation easements donated to ALT are permanent.

### ECONOMIC

Because the conservation easements are permanent and transfer with the ownership of the land, the donors of the easements may be eligible to receive income tax deductions for the value of the easement. Congress recently renewed a tax incentive through the end of this year for easement donors to encourage them to protect their land. The incentive applies to the donor's federal income tax: it raises the deduction a donor can take from 30% of their income in any year to 50% (or 100% for farmers), and increases the number of years over which a donor can take deductions from six to sixteen years. In addition, donors of easements may also receive income tax credits from the State of Georgia.

### ECOLOGICAL

A recent University of Georgia study by Rebecca Moore of the Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources found that the 22 million acres of privately-owned forestland in Georgia provide \$37 million each year in carbon storage, water filtration, wildlife habitat, and scenic value, in addition to timber, forest products and recreation. Applying these research methods on a local level, we found that the land protected by conservation easements held by Athens Land Trust provides over \$2 million dollars per year in benefit to the general public. Undeveloped land provides many intangible services, and it is often difficult to appreciate the true monetary value of conservation. Our calculations serve as a concrete reminder that conservation has real, quantifiable benefits.

Our protected forests, wetlands and pastures provide many ecosystem services that are enjoyed by the entire community. The calculations were based on an assessment of the ecological characteristics of the protected land and monetary values transferred from relevant economic studies such as UGA's.



*ALT's new conservation easement in Franklin County.*

These values do not include profits from agricultural production, timber harvesting or recreation activities. Each year the land protected by ALT provides \$2,018,708 in ecological and aesthetic value alone. Everyone benefits from these vital natural services, even those who never directly access the land.

### FUNDS FOR FARMLAND PROTECTION

Athens Land Trust has been allocated \$243,187 by the National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) to permanently protect farmland in Oconee County through their Farm and Ranchland Protection Program (FRPP). The property is a historic family farm that plans to raise grass-fed beef for local markets.

The property owners will be paid to give up their development rights in order to keep their farm in agricultural use. Oconee County is providing funds through their Special Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) to protect the farm.

With 605 acres protected as part of FRPP, Athens Land Trust is a state leader with six agricultural conservation easements. Check our website for updates on farmland protection!

### THANK YOU TO VOLUNTEERS!

Thanks to Kevin Thomas of Sutherland, Asbill and Brennan for review of our conservation easements. Thanks to Josh Koons of Koons Environmental Design, Inc., and interns Jules Krinsky and Jay Wansley who have helped us greatly with mapping.

## HOUSING NEWS

### NEW HOMES!

The house at 289 Evans Street is a new EarthCraft-certified home in the Hancock Corridor! It is "super tight," according to EarthCraft inspector Luis Imery. Built by Traditional Southern Homes, the three-bedroom house is highly energy-efficient, and is for sale to a family making less than 80% of Area Median Income (\$46,150 for a family of four).



### VOLUNTEER WORKDAY AT TARA WAY

On February 12, more than 30 UGA Horticulture students, Athens Time Bank volunteers, and others planted trees, shrubs and perennials at the ALT home on Tara Way. Thanks to Ben Liverman for the design and to Eastside Ornamentals, Angel Creek Nursery, and Pinebush Nursery for donating plants!



*Before and after: this formerly burned-out house was demolished and replaced with this beautiful new home.*

ALT also purchased a vacant home and will be renovating it for a new owner. The house is located at 635 Fourth Street, close to Fourth Street Village, the Boys and Girls Club, and our new subdivision.

### NEW SUBDIVISION TAKING SHAPE

The infrastructure of ALT's first subdivision is almost complete. The developer of the vacant tract was foreclosed on, and ALT was able to purchase it with federal HOME funds from HED. The tract will have 15 affordable, energy-efficient homes for sale to qualifying families. With funding from the Community Affordable Housing Equity Corporation and the support of UGA Center for Community Design and Preservation, ALT held a charrette for the surrounding community.

Thanks to a suggestion by area residents, the neighborhood will now be called Cottages at Cannontown rather than Springfield Village. "Cannontown" is the historic name for the area and many long-time Athens residents chuckle when you ask them about the old days there. Over the course of two weekends, students from UGA and local designers met with neighborhood residents to discuss their vision for the community. We are now designing the neighborhood to meet their vision.

### HOMEBUYER EDUCATION

In March, we had an outstanding turnout of 19 participants for our Homebuyer Education Class, taught by Mary O'Toole. This was our second offering of classes in 2011. ALT provided homebuyer education to 91 people in 2010, and 24 so far in 2011. The eight-hour workshops discuss the benefits and responsibilities of owning a home, as well as credit scores and the closing process. Thank you to Jackie Dallas from Cooperative Extension, Laurie Lunsford, attorney, Cici Mercer, attorney, and Heather McElroy, realtor, for being our guest speakers during the workshops.

### CDBG AND HOME FUNDS

ALT received a grant of \$193,509 from Athens-Clarke County Department of Human and Economic Development to build two new houses, renovate a third house, provide down payment assistance for ALT homebuyers, and to cover a portion of the operating costs to carry out these construction projects. These funds are federal HOME dollars that come to Athens-Clarke County from HUD. The three homes will be for sale to low-to-moderate income families

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



and will be permanently affordable. Also in April, the Athens-Clarke County Commission approved an allocation of Community Development Block Grant funds for ALT's Affordable Housing Program next year.

## CONGRATULATIONS HOMEOWNERS!

Addie and Robert Gilham are the proud new owners of the home they had been lease-purchasing at 861 Waddell Street. Robert has already planted his garden and Addie has the home beautifully decorated.



*Jeff Bishop of Athens First and closing attorney Molly Talley congratulate Addie and Robert on their accomplishment.*



*Ruth, Jontavius, and Tyler Sims moving into their new home.*

Ruth Sims and her son John purchased the newly-renovated home at 474 Nellie B Avenue. Ruth has rented the house next door for the past 22 years. After seeing the transformation of the house, Ruth and her son decided to purchase the home for their family, which includes John's younger sons, Tyler and Jontavius.

## FOURTH STREET VILLAGE NEWS

Solomon and Lora Smothers moved into Fourth Street Village in December of 2010. With support of the CARES organization of Apartment Life, they will be hosting community building activities, connecting residents with local resources, and getting the children of the neighborhood involved in extracurricular activities.

## SOUTH CAROLINA COMMUNITY LAND TRUST (CLT) FORUM

Jeff Bishop of Athens First Bank and Trust and ALT Executive Director Nancy Stangle were panelists at the CLT Forum in Columbia, SC, on April 20. The forum was sponsored by the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond for state and local officials and community members who are interested in establishing

community land trusts in South Carolina. Jeff spoke about the mortgage program for ALT homeowners that was established by Athens First/Synovus Mortgage and Nancy spoke about the creation of Athens Land Trust and the reasons for ALT's dual mission of affordable housing and land conservation. John Davis of the National Community Land Trust Academy gave an overview of the origins and recent successes of community land trusts. In addition to a foreclosure rate eight times lower than the national average, studies show that more than 90% of community land trust homeowners continue to be homeowners after 5 years, as compared to 50% of other first-time homebuyers.

## THANK YOU!

All of our successes would not be possible without the help of our community. From the support of Athens-Clarke County to create the homes, to the support of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs which provides funding for our first-time homebuyer classes, to the professionals who share their expertise with the families in the classes, to our housing counselor who donates much of her time, to Athens First Bank who has made a commitment to help our community by providing loans for first-time buyers, to Mike McCleary at Fortson, Bentley, and Griffin who meets with our buyers and explains the process to them, to the attorneys at Blasingame, Burch, Garrard, and Ashley for closing the loans and volunteering to talk to our homeowners about wills and estate planning, by the time a family closes on their home many committed people have been involved to make it happen. A big THANK YOU to all who make it possible!

## COMMUNITY GARDEN NEWS

### SPRING PLANTING HAS BEGUN!



*Members of the Pinewoods Community Garden prepare beds for spring planting.*

### COMMUNITY GARDEN UPDATES

**GARNETT RIDGE COMMUNITY GARDEN:** Community members are working with the Boys and Girls Club to build a garden next to the neighborhood soccer field. Garden members and volunteers have been clearing tree limbs and brush, building a fence, and laying out garden beds in preparation for planting.

**CHURCH AND JOHNSON FOUNDATION COMMUNITY GARDEN:** At this garden on Smokey Road, garden members are clearing brush and weeds, adding compost and tilling the soil, improving the existing fence to repel deer, and planting for spring.

**HILL CHAPEL BAPTIST CHURCH COMMUNITY GARDEN:** Garden members have received permission from Mr. Jackson of Jackson's Upholstery on West Broad Street to build a garden behind his shop. Special thanks to UGA Horticulture professor David Berle for tilling the new garden site and adding fertilizer. Garden members and volunteers have laid out garden beds and pathways, added compost, and planted for a summer harvest.

**RIVERWOOD APARTMENTS COMMUNITY GARDEN:** Off Tallassee Road, garden members are working with property manager Tony Oscar to install a raised-bed garden for neighbors in the apartment complex. UGA's David Berle and students are building the raised beds and residents will soon be planting.

**PINEWOODS COMMUNITY GARDEN:** Garden members are holding weekly workdays to weed and clear garden beds and plant for summer harvest. Gardeners

also plan to build a fence around the garden and have created a children's garden area.

**ACCA COMMUNITY GARDEN:** At the Athens Community Council on Aging (ACCA), garden manager Stephanie Bergamo is working with volunteers and Senior Center participants in preparing beds and planting for spring. Volunteers from David Berle's Horticulture class are working on installing brick walkways and addressing stormwater issues in the garden. Volunteers from UGA's Athletic Department also recently participated in a workday at the garden.

**FRIENDSHIP CHRISTIAN CHURCH COMMUNITY GARDEN:** Members of the church at Tallassee and Whitehead Roads have generously offered their land for use as a large-scale community garden. Community outreach is happening now to find interested gardeners. The site will serve as a market garden, where gardeners will raise food for themselves and to sell at local markets.

### SEED SORTING WORKDAYS AT ALT



*Volunteers James Favors (right) and Tammy Anthony and her daughter sort packets of seeds.*

On March 17 and 18, over 20 volunteers spent two beautiful spring days sorting, counting, organizing, and recording over 25,000 packets of seeds for use in community gardens across the state. ALT joined several Georgia organizations in applying for a seed grant from the America the Beautiful Fund, which provides flower, herb, fruit and vegetable seeds for community gardens nationwide. ALT's Community Garden Network (CGN) now has a seed library of over 5,600 packets of seeds available for community gardens. Contact Kate Austin at [kate@athenslandtrust.org](mailto:kate@athenslandtrust.org) to receive a list of available seeds.

## COMMUNITY GARDEN NETWORK KICK-OFF

In December 2010, ALT celebrated its newest program with the Community Garden Network Kick-off at the Athens Community Council on Aging. The Kick-off began with a presentation introducing the initiative by ALT's Executive Director Nancy Stangle, Community Garden Coordinator Kate Austin, UGA Horticulture professor David Berle, and community garden members from Pinewoods Community Garden and the ACCA Community Garden. Community members then toured the ACCA Community Garden and enjoyed delicious refreshments from local businesses. We would like to thank Sundance Family Farm, Roots Farm, Grove Creek Farm and Pinewoods Community Garden for providing fresh produce for Mimi Maumus of home.made catering to prepare as delicious hors d'oeuvres, as well as Donderos' Kitchen and Marti's at Midday for contributing appetizers and desserts. Thank you to 1000 Faces Coffee and Coca-Cola for providing beverages, and to the ACC Recycling Division for their 'zero waste kit' of plates, glasses, mugs, utensils and napkins. Special thanks to the ACCA for hosting the event and to all of the volunteers who helped make the Kick-off a success.

## SCHOOL GARDEN COMMITTEE

Members of the Community Garden Network Advisory Board voted to create a School Garden Committee to help promote school gardens and engage the community in gardens at local schools. Chaired by Stacy Smith of Keep Athens-Clarke County Beautiful, the Committee seeks to serve the students and educators of Athens-Clarke County by maintaining a central database of school garden projects and connecting local schools with the community resources to build and maintain garden sites as outdoor classrooms. Currently in the county, gardens have been built at 11 out of 14 elementary schools, 3 out of 4 middle schools, and 1 out of 3 high schools.

## COMMUNITY GARDEN WORKSHOPS

In February and March, the Community Garden Network held a three-part Saturday workshop series for new community gardeners. The workshops were led by Kate Austin and Dani Adams of ALT, and Amanda Tedrow of the Cooperative Extension Service. Topics included site selection, community outreach, land and water use permission, gardening techniques and design, pest and disease control, garden maintenance, and resources for gardens. The CGN will continue working with workshop attendees to support community gardens this spring.



*CGN Assistant Stephanie Bergamo and Mary Thrasher discuss early spring planting at the ACCA garden. Photo courtesy of Claire Boozer of ACCA.*

## SEED SOWING WORKSHOP AT ACCA

Despite the bluster of a chilly and overcast early March morning, Athens Community Council on Aging (ACCA) Senior Center participants joined Stephanie Bergamo of ALT's Community Garden Network for a seed sowing session. Cool-season crops such as carrots, beets, spinach, leaf lettuce, snow peas, and turnips, sown in raised container beds, mark the beginning of the 2011 vegetable growing season for the ACCA Intergenerational Garden. Participants also harvested collards and cabbage planted the previous fall.

## GREENFEST GARDEN WORKDAY

As part of Greenfest, on Sunday, April 17, the Community Garden Network held a volunteer garden workday from 12-5 pm. In coordination with Global Youth Service Day, more than 60 volunteers of all ages helped local garden groups with construction and planting projects at CGN gardens. This year's garden sites included Hill Chapel Baptist Church, Garnett Ridge, and the Church and Johnson Foundation garden. Thank you, volunteers!

## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Are you interested in participating with the Community Garden Network? Long-term volunteers are needed to grow food at the ACCA Community Garden for the Meals on Wheels program. Volunteers of all levels of experience who can contribute 3-5 hours per week working in the garden are welcome. If interested, contact Kate Austin at [kate@athenslandtrust.org](mailto:kate@athenslandtrust.org).

## ON THE HORIZON: COMING EVENTS

### RIDING FOR A REASON: A BIKE RIDE TO BENEFIT ALT

Supporters of the Athens Land Trust came up with a great new way to raise money for the organization and have fun at the same time—a bike ride! The ride, called Riding for a Reason, starts at 9 am on May 21, as part of the Winterville Marigold Festival. The appealing rural route follows back roads from Winterville to Washington, Georgia, a distance of about 48 miles. Three stops with food and drink will be set up along the way. Participants will receive a Riding for a Reason t-shirt and lunch at the end of the ride. A celebration at the historic Fitzpatrick Hotel will begin when the first riders arrive in early afternoon.

Participants can register online at [www.active.com](http://www.active.com) or visit [www.athenslandtrust.org](http://www.athenslandtrust.org) to print the registration form and mail it in. The early registration fee is \$25. After May 17, registration is \$35. Special rates at the Fitzpatrick Hotel are available for riders and guests, with a portion of the room revenue benefitting the Athens Land Trust. Please contact the Fitzpatrick Hotel at [info@thefitzpatrickhotel.com](mailto:info@thefitzpatrickhotel.com) for more information or to make reservations.



A van and trailer will be available to return a limited number of riders and their bikes to Winterville. Register early to reserve one of those places.

Also needed—lots of volunteers! Call or email Patty at 706-613-0122 or [patty@athenslandtrust.org](mailto:patty@athenslandtrust.org) if you want to help. We hope you'll join us on the first Riding for a Reason. Bring your friends and spread the word!



A big thank you to all our sponsors, including Leon Farmer & Co., Farmers & Merchants Bank, Dayne & Donna Shannon, Earthfare, and the others shown here!



### GROUNDING: NEW ATHENS NATURE WRITERS GROUP FORMING AT ALT



Here's a quick preview of something exciting we've got in the works!

We're starting a nature-writing group based out of our offices on Pope Street, just off Prince Avenue. We'll hold weekly, hour-long gatherings on Wednesday afternoons at 4:30 that will cost just \$5 to attend, with the money raised entirely benefiting the land trust. The first meeting will be on June 1. There's no commitment—people can come any or every week, paying as they go. Fees will be waived for low-income participants.

The group will be led by Pat Priest, a freelance writer and radio producer. She's had pieces on the NPR series "Living on Earth" and in the Washington Post, among other venues. She holds a doctorate from UGA's Henry W. Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communication, where she's taught broadcast writing every now and then. You've probably seen her letters and Op-Ed pieces in the Athens Banner-Herald; her most recent columns were about birds

and the scourge of plastics in the oceans and on the shore.

She had this to say about the writing group she's calling "Grounding": "We'll examine some great nature writing and have speakers (naturalists, poets, essayists, and other writers) and opportunities to see animals and other aspects of nature close at hand. Sometimes we'll head out walking, as the neighborhood is lovely and humming with nature. We'll do bursts of timed writing that we'll sometimes share and shape. We'll talk about placing writing—locally mostly—and we'll be building a network of people who care deeply about the natural world around us."

Some of the writing generated may (if the writer wishes) be published in the Athens Land Trust's newsletter and maybe online as well. Priest mentioned that people who sketch and photograph are also welcome to join the group. Listen out for news of the group—or contact us if you want to be sure to be included!

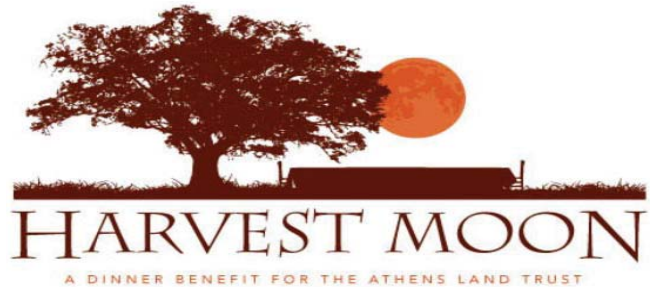


### MAGIC HAT BIKE RAFFLE

Come by the office to buy your tickets to win an orange and black beach cruiser! Buy one ticket for \$3 or 2 for \$5! The adult-size bike was made by Nirve for Magic Hat Brewing Company and was donated by Leon Farmer & Co. to raise money for Riding for a Reason. We will pick the winner on May 21 at the Riding for a Reason Bicycle Ride.

### SAVE THE DATE: HARVEST MOON DINNER SEPTEMBER 16, 2011

Mark your calendar for the 2011 Harvest Moon Dinner on Friday, September 16. This year's chefs will be Peter Dale of The National and Eddie Russell of Epting Events and The Four Coursemen. Our location will be on the terrace by the pool at The Hill. The fourth Harvest Moon Dinner will be another magical evening! Thanks to Tony Eubanks and Epting Events for planning Harvest Moon again this year.



## RECENT NETWORKING

### SMALL FARM CONFERENCE: MAKING EVERY ACRE COUNT

Conservation Director Laura Hall gave a presentation on ALT's Farmland Protection Program at the 2011 Georgia Small Conference on April 1. Laura explained how ALT works with local farmers to pay them for development rights through the Natural Resources Conservation Service's Farm and Ranchland Protection Program (FRPP). Dale Wiley of Walton County also told why he chose to protect his 166-acre farm. Dale explained how the agricultural conservation easements are very flexible and how important this is for landowners because of the different goals of farms. The conference, "Making Every Acre Count," was sponsored by the Georgia Soil and Water Conservation Commission, NRCS, RC&D Councils, Georgia Department of Agriculture, and other organizations that work to protect local farmland.

### ATLANTA BELTLINE COLLABORATIVE

ALT staff hosted a group of Atlanta residents, including neighborhood activists, a City Councilwoman, and staff of the Atlanta Land Trust Collaborative, who are working to ensure affordable housing around the Atlanta Beltline. Currently the largest urban revitalization undertaking in the country, the Atlanta Beltline is a \$2.8 billion transit, redevelopment and greenspace project in the form of a 22-mile loop that traverses 45 city neighborhoods. A significant challenge for the project is to preserve affordability and prevent current residents from being displaced by gentrification. The Beltline Partnership researched strategies to prevent displacement and chose the community land trust model as their proactive approach.

ALT staff have collaborated with Beltline representatives over the past several years. On January 8, a group of representatives came to Athens for a tour of ALT's work. Board member and homeowner Rob Robinson answered questions, and Heather Benham and Nancy Stangle led tours of ALT's properties. On February 16, Heather and Nancy traveled to Atlanta for a discussion of land acquisition strategies and mortgage products with the Atlanta Land Trust Collaborative, the Beltline Partnership, National CLT staff, bankers, city officials, and others.

For more information about the Beltline and the Atlanta Land Trust Collaborative, go to Shelterforce Magazine online winter 2010 <http://www.shelterforce.org/archive/issues/164/>



### CHRISTMAS BIKES FROM BIKEATHENS

BikeAthens donated 28 refurbished bicycles for children of ALT homeowners and Fourth Street Village residents. Children from ages 3 to 14 received bikes, as well as helmets! Thanks, BikeAthens, for making the holidays brighter for these children and their families!

### BUILDING COMMUNITY SERVICES GRANT

The Building Community Services that Grow Local Economies grant has provided funding for a new computer network, technical assistance and training through the UGA Institute for Non-Profits. ALT staff members have attended trainings on program evaluation, fundraising, public relations, and other topics. Several UGA graduate students are working with us to develop a volunteer management plan and a fundraising plan. Thanks to Elizabeth Barnard, Christa Bruce, Amanda Morlas, Amanda Newsom, Peter Norris, Kate Pavlich, Chelsea Smith, and Darla Svich.

On May 2, ALT was awarded an additional \$2,500 from the Building Community Services Grant administered by ACTION, Inc. With these funds, ALT will obtain expertise to clarify our message and to design new organizational materials.

### ANNUAL MEETING

More than 50 people attended the 2010 Annual Meeting on December 5 at the ALT office. Staff members told the group about ALT's recent activities, introduced new staff, recognized homeowners, and elected Board members. Door prizes were donated by Casa Mia, Kroger and Speakeasy, and refreshments were provided by Elisa Vick, Rob Robinson, Gene and Dev Weeks, Donna Shannon and Lynda Stipe.

### PLANNING ALT'S FUTURE

Athens Land Trust is updating our Strategic Plan! With funding from the Building Community Services that Grow Local Economies grant, ALT is working with local consultant Gail Kurtz. Dedicated ALT Board members and staff have interviewed our partners and have met several evenings and Saturdays to discuss ALT's vision and plan for the future.

Since our last strategic plan was adopted in 2007, ALT has had many accomplishments. These include:

- an office building that we own;
- completion of 96 affordable apartments at Fourth Street Village;
- national accreditation as a conservation land trust;
- the homestead exemption ballot initiative passed by local voters;
- the Community Garden Network funded with a three-year grant;
- more than doubled single-family properties;
- more than doubled the acres protected;
- homebuyer education program established

### EASEMENTS, HOUSES, AND GARDENS - OH MY!

You might have noticed that ALT has been growing. The community garden initiative is our newest endeavor and it might have you wondering – what all are they doing over on Pope Street? Our goal is to positively impact land use decisions in our community and beyond. Land use ties all our programs together -- from identifying what land should be protected, to what land should be used for housing, to providing access to land for low-income families. So while these activities may seem like three totally different programs, they are all working toward ALT's ultimate goal of improved quality of life -- where all families have access to fresh food, clean air, clean water, and a stable home environment. We believe that this is an important goal for the long-term health and sustainability of our community.

Thank you to all the state and federal employees who are contributing to ALT through payroll deduction as part of the Combined Federal Campaign and the UGA Campaign for Charities! We deeply regret that we have not been able to thank you personally, but individual donors' names are not provided to us. Thanks for your support!

## THANK YOU TO OUR NEW & RENEWING MEMBERS & DONORS

### DONORS & PARTNERS

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### FOREST

Anonymous  
Elena Brown & Jared Harper

### GROVE

Mary & Laurence O'Toole

### OAK

Gregg Bayard  
O.C. & Manita Dean  
Hubert & Joan Harris  
Neal & Pat Priest  
Elinor Rees

### SEEDLING

Betty Jean Craige  
Susan & Dick Field  
Charles Hawkins  
Rebecca Horne  
Eugenia Langdale  
Dennis Mason & Eleanor Walker  
Angela Meltzer  
Pat & Neal Priest  
David Sweat & Kay Giese

### ACORN

Charles Apostolik

### FAMILY

Sarah & Wilson Barmeyer  
Clay Bryant  
Mark & Linda Dodson  
Rebecca Horne  
Charlie Jameson  
Cardee Kilpatrick  
King Family  
Elizabeth Little  
Tracy Mathews & Neal Crumb

### INDIVIDUAL

Bill Black  
Samuel & Elaine Carleton  
Nancy Lindbloom  
Katha Massey  
Pat McAlexander  
Nelda Parker  
Helen Plymale  
Sandra Wyld & J. Wright

### STEWARDSHIP GIFTS

Mt. Burton LLC  
Jagdish Sheth

### IN MEMORY OF JIM

**CREECH**  
Anonymous  
Marilyn Adams  
Charlie & Patricia Cook  
Beth Gavrilles & Philip Juras  
Anne & Tom Glass  
Mary & Laurence O'Toole  
Adele Patrick  
Nelda Parker  
Susan Willson

### HOLIDAY DINNER

**SUPPORTERS**  
John Amidei  
Paul Bombouljian  
Shannon Frank-Ball  
Tom Edwards & Nancy Hunter  
S. Gilchrist & E. McNally  
Karen & Jim Porter  
Nancy Stangle  
Candace Turner  
Gertrude Willey

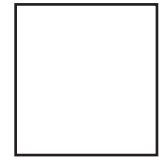
Thanks to Chris Aubry of Aubry's Arbor for the beautiful azaleas now planted in the front of our new office and for many shrubs and plants for the landscaping of our affordable homes!

### HOLIDAY DINNER

For the second year, a group of dedicated ALT supporters led by Kate Blane presented a wonderful Renaissance Dinner to benefit ALT, Rose of Athens Theatre, and Nuci's Space. On a freezing cold night in December, guests were treated to delicious food, beautiful music and lively entertainment at the Taylor-Grady House, presented by volunteers wearing period costumes provided by Jennie Alvernaz and Kate Blane. The Lord and Lady were Paul Boubouljian and Heidi Davison. Cooks included Kate Blane, Jeannine Collins, Karen Cosgrove, Dan Everett, Christy Gray, Greg Krakow, Barbara Odill, Tina Tinsley, and Wanda White. Dan Everett was the Jester and musicians were Hillary Barber, Charly Carrigan, Lisa Cesnik, Jenny DeRevere, Fiona Sheehan, Sam d'Entremont, Owen Devine, Joe Willey, and Bill Sheehan. Servers for the evening were Beth Akin, Kate Bentley, Arwen Blane, Anna Helgøy, Nicole Johnson, Angela Mullis, David Johnson, and Keith Waterman. The dinner was enjoyed by everyone present and raised more than \$1,000 for ALT.



*Choral Entertainment at the Renaissance Dinner*



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- OAK \$250+    PHONE #(S) \_\_\_\_\_
- SEEDLING \$100+    EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_
- ACORN \$75+    WOULD YOU LIKE TO JOIN OUR LISTSERV?  YES    NO
- FAMILY \$50+    WOULD YOU LIKE TO VOLUNTEER?  SKILLS OR INTERESTS: \_\_\_\_\_
- INDIVIDUAL \$10+    \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to **Athens Land Trust, Inc.** ALT is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit corporation. All donations are tax-deductible as provided by law.

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