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Conservation Matters

Hunterdon Land Trust Alliance

Vol. 7, No. 1

Spring 2003

We're Making Great Progress: Preservation in the Delaware River Bluffs and Lockatong Creek Watershed

HHLTA is proud to announce a series of recently preserved properties that will enhance and preserve the natural beauty and ecological integrity of Hunterdon County. Each of these protected parcels highlight unique, and extremely valuable aspects of the county's natural resources and rural character.

The Faigle Family's Meadow Creek Farm on the Lockatong Creek

We are pleased to announce that Jeffrey Faigle has donated a 14-acre conservation easement to HLTA. The easement, which includes one acre



Rob Eberhardt, HLTA Land Preservation Project Manager, HLTA President Deborah Woodard and landowner Jeffrey Faigle celebrating Mr. Faigle's donation to HLTA of a 14-acre conservation easement on his Delaware Township land.

photo by Mimi Upmeyer



*Lockatong Creek
photo by Joel Coyne*

that will be set aside for a future public trail, is located on Mr. Faigle's Meadow Creek Farm in Delaware Township. The 19-acre property, consisting primarily of deciduous forest and bordering the Lockatong Creek, includes a five-acre "residential exclusion" that is not covered by the easement. The benefit of this gift is amplified beyond saving this special land – HLTA will receive "donation credits" from the Green Acres Program, which we can use to match other land preservation projects near the Lockatong Creek.

When asked why he donated a conservation easement to HLTA,

Jeffrey Faigle answered that preserving the property was "the right thing to do".

The Lockatong Creek, an area of unspoiled beauty and significant natural resources, has been one of HLTA's priority target areas for preservation. It is thirteen miles long and flows through farms and woodlands in Franklin, Kingwood and Delaware Townships, providing drainage for a 28 square-mile watershed. It empties into to the Delaware & Raritan Canal, making it an important source of drinking water for the region. The argillite geology deters groundwater recharge

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President's Message

With the passing of the vernal equinox Nature and HLTA are both hard at work keeping our open spaces green and growing. Our land stewards have waited out the last of the snow and ice to do baseline studies for our newly acquired spaces. The Land Acquisition Committee, driven by Rob Eberhardt's boundless energy, has worked hard to keep our projects on line in spite of the Green Acres delay in funding. HLTA's trustees have rallied to declare this the fundraising year. Last, but I hope not least, HLTA has a new president, me. Alison Mitchell will certainly be a hard act to follow. Happily, her knowledge and devotion to open space will still be a part of HLTA as she continues to actively pursue committee and board responsibilities.

The goal of HLTA will always be to preserve and to facilitate the preservation of open space. My goal is to see that continue with fundraising a priority to finance more projects. We'll be actively seeking the addition of corporate funding and increased membership dollars in the coming months. We will increase our visibility through outreach at public events and request financial support from members of the county business community.

A look at the county open space map shows significant progress being made by us and other county, local, and non-profit groups. We need to do more. Dollars, time and the continued support of the community and our members will help us reach and even to exceed our current goals.

For now Happy Spring! ●

DEBORAH WOODARD

Preservation

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and increases the importance of the forest as a stream buffer. The riparian woodland environment provides habitat for deer, turkeys, owls, red tail hawks, and the threatened long-tailed salamander.

Thank you, Jeffrey Faigle, for your gift to the future!

Preservation of the Delaware Bluffs ... a Continuing Success!

In October of 2002, Richard and Rebecca Schuck stepped forward to preserve a unique area of Hunterdon County. After consulting with HLTA, the Schucks worked with the New Jersey Department of Transportation, Green Acres, and the NJ Conservation Foundation to preserve 228 acres in Delaware Township bordering Route 29, New Jersey's first and only scenic by-way.

Much of this property is located along Quarry Road, which runs up into the hills from Route 29 across from Bull's Island State Park. It is thickly forested with typical species of the region, including north red oak, black birch, sugar maple and pine. Also located on the property is the abandoned Raven Rock quarry, which now acts as a reservoir, as well as open fields and natural wooded wetlands located along Federal Twist Road and Route 29.

The Schuck parcel, in close proximity to several other preserved properties, adds to an important concentration of protected lands. Just to the north in Kingwood Township are Kugler Woods (220 acres) and Martin Woods (25 acres), two properties that HLTA manages and preserved in partnership with Green Acres. Nearby are the county's Wescott Preserve, the Peters' estate (preserved by NJCF) and Stone Rows Farm (preserved by the farmland preservation program).

Richard and Rebecca Schuck have set an example for other large property owners in Hunterdon County and across the State. They hope to encourage more people to look into the possibilities of preserving land. "There are many alternatives...if people can resist searching for the highest bidder it will work out better for all in the future," Mr. Schuck noted.

Keeping the Falls Tumbling

A little further up Route 29 in Kingwood Township there are nine wooded acres in a sloping, rocky section of the Delaware Bluffs. The southern boundary of the property borders an intermittent waterfall, known as "Tumble Falls."

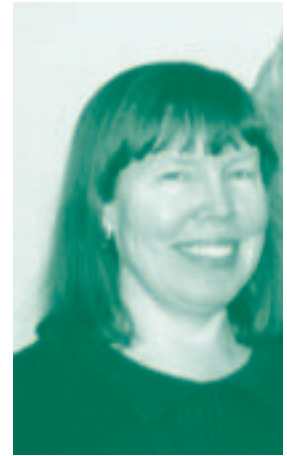
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*As spring approaches, and winter snow-melt makes its way down the river, Tumble Falls is particularly dramatic. Just adjacent to the falls, remnants of old stone walls and a cart path can be found amid the forest.
photo by Stefanie Miller*

Volunteer Profile

Sandy Madon has worked on many outreach and education events, and is serving in her fourth year as secretary of the board of trustees. Sandy and her husband Ross have lived in Readington Township for 19 years and have two children, Zubin, a sophomore at Stanford University and Shireen, a junior at Hunterdon Central.



Sandy Madon

What occupations have you had? What are you currently doing?

All of my jobs have been related to teaching. First, after obtaining a degree in early childhood and elementary education from the University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee, I taught English as a second language to adults. Then I taught preschool. After receiving a master's degree in special education from The College of New Jersey, I began teaching at Franklin Township School in Warren County, where I still work. I began as a special education teacher. However, because of my fluency in Spanish and a new requirement in New Jersey that all students learn a world language starting at the elementary level, my principal asked me to teach Spanish, which I am currently doing. I teach nearly 400 students from kindergarten through sixth grade. I am also pursuing certification as a world language teacher.

What are your interests/hobbies?

I enjoy doing a variety of activities, including taking long walks along the beautiful paths and roadways of Hunterdon County, reading, music (especially opera), bicycling, and sewing when I have time. I am a newly-appointed member of the Open Space Committee in Readington Township.

How did your interest in preservation evolve?

I grew up in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. While it's a city, my family and I enjoyed spending weekends going into the countryside and to State parks. We hiked many of the State's trails and drove past mile after mile of farmland, woods, and meadows to get to them. I also spent part of each summer at my great-grandmother's home in northern Wisconsin, where I would pick wild berries and flowers, go fishing at the many lakes, hike and even go to see beaver dams. It was a sparsely populated area and still is.

Even in Milwaukee, I spent a lot of time along the shore of Lake Michigan, where I loved to watch the sun sparkling on the water and listen to the waves. Milwaukee has a lot of parkland along the Lake and elsewhere. Whether admiring the beauty of the Lake or enjoying the changing of the seasons, I have always been drawn to nature. So it is only natural that I would admire and want to conserve the open space here in Hunterdon County.

What is your favorite place in Hunterdon County?

I enjoy going to the Delaware River. I often walk the towpath along the River. I have walked the path near Lambertville, Stockton, Bull's Island Park, and Frenchtown. I also enjoy bicycling along the towpath.

How would you like to see residents more involved in the community/environment?

It would be wonderful if more landowners realized the importance of preserving their land for future generations and if residents realized the impact development has on such things as water quality and quantity and endangered species. Any time a piece of land is developed, it is lost forever. People need to realize that they can have a say in their local and county governments. They can also involve themselves in organizations such as HLTA as volunteers and/or supporters.

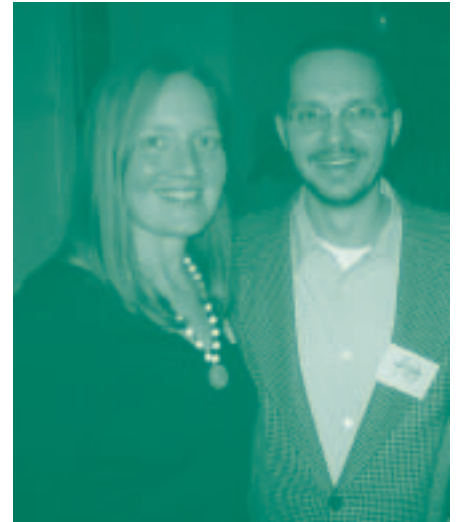
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Annual Dinner and Art Auction

John Mathieu and Deborah Woodard organized a beautiful dinner and art auction at the Prallsville Mills in Stockton. Held on October 27, the event featured the works of many local artists and food donated by our finest area restaurants. Volunteers Denise and Frennd Royle, Pam Thier, Joyce Koch, Neil and Mariana Upmeyer, and Alix Bacon hung art and filled the mill to overflowing with colorful autumn leaves. ●



Trustee John Mathieu, HLTA president Deborah Woodard and trustee Martin Rapp. Martin presented the annual “pitchfork award” to John for his tremendous contributions over many years to HLTA. John has organized pig roasts, our buffalo watch event, and all of our fundraising dinners.



Margaret Waldock and trustee Kurt Steinert. Margaret has moved on from Green Acres, where she worked on many land preservation projects with HLTA, to The Trust for Public Land. Kurt has been active on the HLTA fundraising committee.



Stanley and Nancy Baron with advisory trustee Fred Allen.



Trustee Martin Rapp shows the capacity crowd of 150 a painting donated by Bob Beck of Lambertville. New trustee Suzanne Perrault, who’s an auctioneer and manager of Perrault-Rago galleries, ran the live auction.



Deborah Saunderson, HLTA trustee Jim Amon, and Pam Thier. Pam has stepped down as an HLTA trustee since she is now responsible for Hunterdon County in her position with Green Acres. We’re lucky to have her there working with us to preserve land in the county.

photos by
Neil Upmeyer

Thank you to our wonderful donors – February 6, 2002 to February 28, 2003
You make the work of HLTA possible

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Hunterdon Land Trust Alliance

To Preserve and Protect the Rural Landscape of Hunterdon County

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Name _____

Address _____

Municipality _____

Phone _____

Fax _____

Email _____

- \$25-49 Contributor
- \$50-99 Supporter
- \$100+ Steward
- \$500+ Protector
- \$1,000+ Leadership

Please check this box if you would like to learn about volunteer opportunities on our land acquisition, fundraising or public outreach committees. Whether you are a beginner, an expert, or somewhere in between, HLTA could use your help.

Make checks payable to:
 Hunterdon Land Trust Alliance
 PO Box 143
 Sergeantsville, NJ 08557

What do you feel is the most important part of HLTA's mission?

There are several important facets to HLTA's mission, and it is difficult for me to narrow it down to the most important part. Two that stand out in my mind are advising and educating. By advising, I mean guiding landowners who wish to preserve their land, helping them through the process, and finding sources of funding for this purpose. In some cases this also involves advising townships. By educating, I mean reaching out to landowners and residents of the County and getting them to realize the importance of conserving land. This can be accomplished by making certain people understand what we have to lose to development and, at the same time, showing them what we can gain by preserving land. We gain a better quality of life for us and future generations, better water quality, and much more. The future is in our hands, and we can all make a difference. ●

STEFANIE MILLER

HLTA Takes Advantage of Guided Self Assessment

The Land Trust Alliance (LTA) offered to lead HLTA trustees through a “self-assessment” of our organizational strengths and opportunities for improvement. HLTA is a member of LTA, a national organization that provides education and training to over 1200 land trusts throughout the nation.

Jen Adkins, a former staff member and now consultant to LTA, joined us for the session in December. In her report to HLTA, Jen said she found the board to be “very active, engaged and skilled.” Her recommendations focused on the need to improve our fundraising and community outreach functions as the organization matures. ●

Thank You!

Thanks to Stefanie Miller for helping with this newsletter and for designing display materials for HLTA, to Frank Banisch for providing production help with our map and displays, John Burgess and Walter O'Brien for volunteering their computer expertise, to Neil Upmeyer for serving as HLTA speaker's bureau, and to Kurt Steinert and Rob Eberhardt for newsletter editorial assistance. ●

Volunteer

We're looking for volunteers to help organize and staff our fundraising and outreach events. If you have ideas, energy, or time and would like to work with other committed folks, please give us a call at 908-996-4421.

When HLTA learned that this property was going up for sale, we quickly approached the landowners, Sharon Chaplinsky and Marie Maruskanic, to discuss preservation options. In some niches of the river byway, residential development continues to fragment the landscape—HLTA's hope was that the Tumble Falls property would not fall to this trend.

Fortunately, our friends at the NJCF were able to purchase the property quickly in December 2002 with funding from the William Penn Foundation; HLTA covered the cost of an appraisal of the property and helped negotiate the deal. Under the agreement, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection eventually will own and manage the property for natural resource protection and passive recreation. ●

STEFANIE MILLER

The Delaware River Bluffs is one of Hunterdon County's most dramatic landscapes – jagged, forested cliffs, where waterfalls tumble their way down to the D&R Canal and Delaware River. The “Bluffs” – shale and argillite rock formations located in the Piedmont Plain – are also of significant ecological and scenic importance for New Jersey. Due to the region's hills and steep slopes, excessive surface drainage, erosion, flooding and siltation are common. Therefore it is critically important that forested land in the area be preserved to help prevent erosion, and protect the quality and abundance of the local water supply, which is quite limited. Preserving forested areas in the “Bluffs” will also provide wildlife habitat and recreational opportunities.

Hunterdon Land Trust Alliance

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Gabriella Klein

HLTA is pleased to announce that we received a bequest of over \$27,000 from the estate of Gabriella Klein. Ms. Klein, who was born in Hungary in 1904, was a long time Flemington resident. Widowed for many years, she loved cards, the theater, and music. She was also an avid tennis and golf player. Ms. Klein, who had no close relatives, died in June of 2001.

She heard about HLTA from Bill Rawlyk and his family. Bill is a founding HLTA trustee who is active in many environmental causes. HLTA was one of 15 organizations that received a bequest.

We are grateful to this community-minded individual. Her generosity will have a lasting effect on our community.



Hunterdon Land Trust Alliance

P.O. Box 143
Sergeantsville, NJ 08557

Presentation Available

If you know of a civic or community group that would like to schedule a presentation about land preservation and HLTA's role, please call the office at 908-996-4421.

Web Site

There's a "protected lands" feature on the HLTA website. Check it out at www.hlta.org.

To Reach HLTA

Web: www.hlta.org

Email: hlta@earthlink.net

Phone: 908-996-4421

Fax: 908-996-2552

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